

Month of Reported Progress:

March

PACE EH Coordinator/Contact Name:

Herman Hale, RN

CHD Name:

Marion

EH Manager/ Administrator:

Dan Dooley

Has EH Manager/Administrator reviewed and approved this report?:

Yes

Is your PACE EH survey complete?:

No

If your PACE EH survey is complete, list your PACE EH community's top identified issues.:

Concisely summarize this month's activities.:

The Marion County Health Department's PACE-EH team continues its efforts in the communities of northwest Ocala and Poinciana Heights. Working with Brian Dougherty at the regional DEP office in Orlando, the PACE-EH coordinator Herman Hale, RN, has received information on bioremediation, which will be used by the group Neighborhood Citizens of North West Ocala (NCNWO). The proposed project will use vegetation in an attempt to reduce increased levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) found in soil samples obtained by the group. The information provided by the DEP representative is quite substantial and will require some time to digest. The plan is for Hale to review the materials and then give a presentation to NCNWO's president, Ruth Reed. A determination will be made at that meeting, as to when the formal presentation will be made to the group as a whole.

In the neighborhood of Poinciana Heights, the PACE team conducted a traffic study at Dr. N.H. Jones elementary school. This study was done at the request of the Poinciana Heights Homeowners Taskforce. The neighborhood has had a longstanding problem with congestion around the school. The problem is related to vehicles parking on streets around the school hours before school is dismissed. These vehicles, at times, block driveways and make it difficult to maneuver through the neighborhood. Initial results show an overwhelming percentage (84%) of the vehicles pick up only one child. Over a two day period, 158 vehicles were noted to pick up 193 children, from two different access points at the school. Vehicles began lining up as early as 12:30 pm and it took approximately 30 minutes (once school was dismissed) for all the students to be picked up. It was also noted, that seven buses picked up 150 students, while students from the neighborhood attempted to walk through the slow moving lines of traffic. On April 6th, Hale will present his findings to the group at their monthly meeting, along with possible solutions. In the past, the idea of a "Walking School Bus" was broached with the group as a possible alternative. Having walked the area around the school, Hale feels strongly that this is a

viable solution. This idea entails a centralized drop off point (away from the school), where the students would be escorted to school by adult volunteers.

On Thursday March 26th, PACE-EH participated in a Health/Science Fair at Blessed Trinity School. This was a very special outreach event that afforded the program an opportunity to talk to 100's of students about the importance of environmental stewardship. In addition to a display that explained the PACE projects in Marion County, the students were given a chance to participate in a hands on experiment, related to the attraction water molecules have to each other, cohesion. The students were given a penny and an eye dropper filled with water. They were tasked with putting and keeping as many drops of water on the penny as possible. One steady handed 5th grader dispensed 120 drops before her water cascaded over the penny and much to her delight; no one was able to surpass her record. One child was heard to say, "I am glad we got out of science class for this". When reminded by the PACE-EH coordinator that his presentation "was science" the student responded, "yeah, but it is fun science" and he was correct.