



# Spotlight on... Highlands County

Highlands County was created in 1921, when it was separated from Desoto County. It was named for the terrain of the county.

The Highlands County Health Department was established in February 1937 and served a population of 10,912. Today the health department serves a permanent population of approximately 103,000, which is increased by about 35,000 seasonal visitors



during the winter. The residences are in good hands with their vital statistics team of Local Registrar, Robert Palussek, Chief Deputy Registrar,

Kim Pollard, Deputy Registrars, Carmen Zuniga, and Isis Flores-Rivera. Together the team has more than 13 years of service. Last year their office issued over four thousand birth certificates, and more than ten thousand death certificates, serving 13 local funeral homes and approximately 78 in the surrounding counties. CDR Kim Pollard notes, "I do like the fact that births are electronically done through the hospitals and the state office. The report is a lot easier to reconcile than going through stacks of hand delivered birth records. EBRS is a definite time-saver, which leaves us more time to work on other vital issues.



New parents also seem to be happy with how quickly the birth is registered too."

Kim, we at the state office are happy to be a part of making jobs more efficient. Keep up the good work, Highlands County Vital Statistics!

You can now find Florida Department of Health Vital Statistics quicker and easier at <http://www.floridavitalstatisticsonline.com>

# VITALS AND DOH WAREHOUSE

The Bureau of Vital Statistics would like to inform everyone, as of November 1, 2011, all of the safety paper and Vital Statistics' forms are now located in Jacksonville instead of the distribution center in Tallahassee.

On a monthly basis, Vital Statistics will be sending an updated inventory list to the Chief Deputy Registrar at each county health department. All orders will need to be completed on the electronic requisition form. There are two separate electronic requisition forms, one for safety paper ONLY and the other for all other Vital Statistics' forms. All other department forms will continue to be ordered from the distribution center.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Michelle Campbell, Purchasing Agent, at [michelle\\_campbell@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:michelle_campbell@doh.state.fl.us).

## Welcome Aboard

The following appointments have been made to the position of registrar in the county health department:

### Chief Deputy Registrar

- Suzanna (Susie) Moore ..... Franklin County
- Misty Revels ..... Holmes County
- Tammy Yzaguirre ..... Lee County
- Gladys Harper ..... Madison County
- Dianna Montemarano ..... Manatee County
- Donna Beck ..... Walton County

### Local Registrars

- Holly Holt ..... Walton County
- Charles Henry ..... Sarasota County

## Administrative Fine Awarded

An administrative complaint was filed against Coral Ridge Funeral Home, Cape Coral Florida, for failure to file death certificates and burial transit permits on time. The funeral home was ordered to pay an administrative fine of \$10,000 to the Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, pursuant to section 382.026, Florida Statutes.

# 2011 National MCH Epidemiology Awards



Each year the **Coalition for Excellence in MCH Epidemiology** recognizes individuals, teams, institutions, and leaders of institutions making significant contributions to improving the health of women, children and families. Two state level Vital Statistics leaders will be receiving awards from the Coalition at the upcoming 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Conference in New Orleans in December: our very own Meade Grigg, State Registrar of Florida and Isabelle Horon, Director, Vital Statistics Administration with the Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene. Congratulations to Meade and Isabelle for this recognition and for the contributions they have made to improve maternal and child health.

## EDRS Update

Implementation of the Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS) continues moving forward. QA staff have brought online Medical Examiner District 10, with the funeral home orientation and "go live" date set for early January. Medical Examiner District 6 will be coming online in December as well, with their go live date also in January. The support and input from the medical examiners offices has been invaluable in making EDRS stronger and more user friendly. Scheduling updates can be monitored through the website at: <http://floridavitalstatisticsonline.com/>. It is also possible to ask us EDRS questions via the website, so take the time to review the information posted.

The plan is still to be finished with EDRS implementation by the end of 2012. Funeral homes should stay in communication with their CDRs to know when certain actions are needed from them. Questions regarding EDRS should be directed to the website or to Kenny Higginbotham, EDRS Project Lead, 904-359-6911 ext. 1171 or [ken\\_higginbotham@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:ken_higginbotham@doh.state.fl.us).

## NAPHSIS Southeast Regional Meeting 2011

Florida hosted the annual National Association of Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) Southeast Regional meeting in October. There were representatives from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana, as well as from The National Center of Health Statistics (NCHS), and four from NAPHSIS. We even welcomed NCHS retiree, George Gay as a guest.

Some of the topics covered were Electronic Death Registration Systems, Processing Amendments, Information and Security, Safety Paper Accountability, and Disaster Recovery. We had guest speakers from the U.S. Passport Office, Aura Arauz-Figueroa and Kamaludden Ali from the Department of Homeland Security, ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) Forensic Lab. State office staff were able to attend many of the sessions and could see the similarities in what other states face in their day-to-day activities.

All who attended agreed that the discussions were enlightening and they appreciated the opportunity to get together in a small, informal group.

## BITS ' n PIECES

CDRs are reminded to please follow-up with midwives in their county who are filing late records. Midwives have the same statutory responsibility as a hospital. To assist the midwives with filing birth certificates, there is an enterable PDF of the 2011 version of the birth certificate. Any midwife interested in the enterable PDF should email [lorraine\\_kratz@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:lorraine_kratz@doh.state.fl.us). The midwife should include in their email request their name, license number, contact phone and address. The state office monitors who gets the PDF, and what version, so the county should not be providing this PDF to midwives, but referring them to the state office. If a county is interested in getting a copy of the enterable PDF for their use in filing home birth certificates, email Lorraine Kratz.

