



# Friends of Public Health



Editor: Stephanie Polizzi

*Promoting the health of Coos County through enhancement of local public health services*

## Message from CCFoPH President



I love October—the weather—colorful leaves and less wind. It's the traditional time for CCFoPH to have a fundraiser, and again this October we could not hold our indoor event. But we are proceeding with our fundraising efforts, and WIC is the focus this year. (See page 2)

I used to work in the WIC program when I started my public health career in 1987. I could see the positive changes in the clients, and mothers told me how much WIC helped them and their children. Many things have changed in WIC in the past 30+ years—records are now automated, there are more options for nutritious foods, and education and consultations can be done through video-conferencing.

One thing that has not changed is the fluctuation in the federal funding for this critically important public health program. That is why we are reaching out for your help, and we are grateful to those who have already contributed!

*Frances Smith  
CCFoPH President*



## Join us!

CCFoPH Board meets monthly  
on the 3rd Tue of the month,  
4:00 to 5:30 pm virtually via Zoom platform

## Contact Us!

Coos County Friends of Public Health  
PO Box 203, Coos Bay, OR 97420  
541-269-9340

CCFoPH@gmail.com      www.ccfoph.org

## Foreign Seafarer Covid Vaccinations -Not a Typical Public Health Service



*Renee Menkens, Kelly Barnett, Michael Burton and Kat Burgess are ready to climb the stairs for a day of onboard vaccinating.*

For the past four months, Coos Health & Wellness (CHW), has been involved in supporting global health. Renee Menkens and Cathy Salyers, both registered nurses and CCFoPH members, Michael Burton, the CHW Public Health Emergency Preparedness Assistant, and others have provided Covid-19 vaccinations to foreign seafarers.

Cathy stated this about one ship, *"To administer the vaccinations we were taken up eight flights of stairs to the bridge!"*

They work closely with Rocky Richards of Jones Stevedoring Company, who communicates with ship captains about vaccination needs for the crew. According to Richards, *"We don't get the recognition that we should due to our small port. However, I've had many of calls from major international ports asking how we got it going. Like I said, we are one of the first to begin this and I credit you guys for all your extensive help, dedication and flexibility to make it happen."*

Of the more than 50,000 foreign seafarers vaccinated in US ports, Coos County has vaccinated over 200 seafarers!

*Renee Menkens, RN  
Treasurer, CCFoPH*



## WIC is Important for Families!

WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. It is the premier public health nutrition program that has influenced lifetime nutrition and health behaviors in millions of families in the United States.

In the late 1960s, advocates became aware of the extent of hunger in America, with special concern for the malnutrition found in many babies and children born into poverty. After a pilot project that showed the positive results of supplemental nutrition on the health of pregnant women and babies, WIC was established in 1975 as a permanent federal program under the

jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

WIC has been called best public health legislation that Congress has ever passed. Although WIC is a “permanent” program, the level of funding must be passed by Congress each federal fiscal year (October 1-Sept 30), and signed into law. Federal grants are then provided to each state, which in turn distributes funds to counties to provide services to local participants.

In Oregon, the state provides the WIC-approved foods for participants, and grants are distributed to counties to administer the program. Unfortunately, the amount of federal funds that reach the local level are inadequate to pay for labor costs of WIC staff who serve the clients, and Coos County lacks the funds to make up the deficit.

That’s why the Coos County Friends of Public Health has targeted WIC as our fundraising project this year. We are thankful to the many donors who have contributed so far!

WIC helps families in so many ways. WIC promotes healthy pregnancies and improves birth outcomes, reduces premature births and low birth-weight in babies, and promotes breastfeeding.

## SERVED IN COOS COUNTY 2020

2,223

Women, infants and children who participated in WIC

40%

of all pregnant women served by WIC

1,245

WIC families served

3 OUT OF 4

participants are infants and children under five



## BREASTFEEDING

93%

WIC moms start out breastfeeding

41%

WIC moms breastfeed exclusively for six months

The special foods available to participants (e.g., milk, cheese, beans, peanut butter, eggs, fruits and vegetables, whole grain bread and cereal, canned fish, infant formula and baby food) are a nutritional safety net that addresses hunger, and provides key nutrients such as iron, protein, calcium, and vitamins A & C.

The education by WIC staff and consultation with a registered dietitian help participants to make changes in their eating habits that can impact not only their health, but the health of their families for the rest of their lives.

WIC programs have sites in Bandon, Lakeside, Coos Bay, Coquille, Myrtle Point, Powers and the Coquille Indian Tribe Center. For more details about WIC in our region, please call 541-266-6705 or visit:

<https://www.oregon.gov/OHA/PH/HEALTHYPEOPLEFAMILIES/WIC/Pages/annual.aspx>

<https://cooshealthandwellness.org/public-health/clinical-services/women-infants-and-children>

Frances Smith

## Welcome New Board Member

Mary Carol Roberson, CCFoPH Secretary

Mary Carol and her husband Art moved to Bandon from Buffalo, NY. They did this primarily to get out of snow and be near their daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter. They have come to love the area.



Mary Carol retired from many years of working in the health care field. She started out of college as a Public Health Nurse working in St Louis, Missouri, and there developed her knowledge and appreciation for the need for good public health services in communities. CDC training was made available to her so that she took classes and worked with the CDC on communicable disease outbreaks in the area. After obtaining her Master’s Degree she held many administrative positions. St Louis County took the initiative

to merge traditional public health services with primary care for the underserved, and Mary Carol had the opportunity to lead this project. Along the way, Mary Carol served on many committees and boards. Among these were initiatives to reduce child abuse, and to raise awareness of children’s programs, service on hospital boards, and Vice chair of *Health St Louis 2004*.

She served as VP of a recently merged 10 hospital system in St Louis that needed to pull together all their community health programs. A move took her to Buffalo where she worked with individuals with developmental disabilities.

Since moving to Bandon, Mary Carol has been active in Rotary, working with Kids Hope Center, and other volunteer activities. She is pleased to be joining the CCFoPH board as she has a major commitment to public health for this area. Welcome, Mary Carol!

## Public Health Director’s Message

Anthony Arton, Public Health Director, looks back on a year of service to Coos County:



I want to say how appreciative I am to be a part of the Coos Health and Wellness team and how honored I am that I get to serve in this position and work alongside our amazing staff, volunteers and Friends of Public Health! My greatest source of pride is seeing how our teams and partners respond to adversities and challenges. It gives all of us an opportunity to serve the community and have a positive impact; in addition, a chance to grow and learn from times like this.

I have witnessed many of you develop and overcome challenges this year by adapting new skills or rise to the occasion. I understand it is not always fun; and sometimes it may seem overwhelming, but in the end our community has become stronger and more resilient, so please take time to pat yourself on the back and know that I and the rest of the CHW leadership team are very proud of the time and effort that our staff, volunteers, and community partners have dedicated to our efforts.

This year has been a roller coaster and most of my time has been spent managing and working towards mitigating COVID, but I am proud to report that much progress has been made within our department and our services. Some tough decisions were made in relation to programs and how they are managed, new partnerships formed in the community, and I hope my philosophy in leadership and culture building is taking a hold in Public Health.

Here are a few of the highlights and accomplishments I am proud to share this year:

- Formed and Chaired the Vaccine Distribution Committee and Equity Sub-committee with various healthcare partners in Coos County including FQHC’s, tribal governments, hospitals, pharmacies and other healthcare

clinics. That led to one of the most efficient distribution of the vaccine in Oregon as evidenced by our being one of the first counties to move into next phases/populations. Also led to one of the highest equity numbers in the state and highest vaccination percentage of population in all of Southern Oregon.

- Trained staff and volunteers in drive-through vaccine “point of distribution” (POD) operations, and led POD operations for first 4 months. CHW improved efficiency from 5 minutes a vehicle down to 2 minutes. Formed close partnership with Coos Bay Fire to use fire hall for POD operations that led to an amazing 850 doses in 8 hours and utilized over 50 volunteers and 10 staff members.
- Proud to report that only 4 fulltime staff members left the Public Health Division during this year out of 20 FTE positions for an 80% retention rate during a very stressful and challenging year. (Two of those who left retired.)
- Created new positions that combined job duties from other positions, leading to reduced labor spending while creating performance efficiency.
- All our programs had a lot of success throughout the year. I consistently hear from the Oregon Health Authority how well Coos County performs in our program areas, for instance:

**Our WIC program had the best program evaluation review in the State of Oregon.**

We also provided financial relief and education to many of our licensed establishments, especially the restaurants in the county, to help them stay open through the pandemic.

- Most importantly I got to meet and work with all of you!

I am very much looking forward to continuing on my professional journey with CHW for years to come. I am blessed to be here and make a difference in this wonderful community.

*Anthony Arton, Public Health Director*

### NUTRITION RESOURCE GUIDE

**Your local guide to finding fruits and vegetables, nutrition education, recipes and reputable health and nutrition links.**

We all know that eating fruits and vegetables is good for your health. But sometimes there are barriers like accessibility or cost. Would you like to can tomatoes or grow your own greens this winter? Maybe you want to avoid costly medications and learn how foods can lower cholesterol, blood sugars or blood pressure.

The Nutrition Resource Guide contains all the resources you need to eat more fruits, vegetables and other plant foods. Links to trainings, cooking classes and programs will guide you on the path to consuming the nutrients you need to get and stay healthy.

Many local agencies have printed copies of the Nutrition Resource Guide. But the best way to access the links is by having a digital copy.

Find your digital copy at these sites:

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/coos/healthy-families-communities>

Or <https://coosheadfood.coop/food-nutrition-group>

Or contact [stephanie.polizzi@oregonstate.edu](mailto:stephanie.polizzi@oregonstate.edu)

- Food & Agriculture Resources
- Nutrition Education
- Resource Reading & Cookbooks
- Trainings for Consumers & Professionals
- Helpful Web Links
- Health Coaches

## October Healthy Bytes Initiative Food Focus is DATES



Dates are the sweet, chewy fruit of the date palm tree. Although they are high in sugar, they are a whole food source with vitamins, minerals and fiber that make dates a better choice as a sweetener than granulated sugar.

Dates are a good source of B vitamins (thiamin, niacin and beta-carotene) for energy production, vitamin K for blood clotting and bone formation, and small amounts of vitamin C. This makes dates a good source for antioxidants that fight aging and chronic disease.

Dates also contain potassium that regulates fluid balance and blood pressure, calcium and magnesium for strong bones and iron that helps carry oxygen in the blood. Zinc in dates is important for wound healing and a strong immune system.

Date fiber promotes healthy digestion and feeds our microbiome to protect against constipation and some forms of cancer. Soluble fiber lowers cholesterol and helps to stabilize blood sugars.

### Things to do with DATES:

- Stuff dates with ground pistachios and top with unsweetened coconut or stuff with walnut half, pinch closed and roll in flax meal, or stuff with peanut butter
- Create date paste for an easy, all-purpose sweetener for use in sauces or baking recipes. Sweeten tea or coffee

- Add chopped dates to oatmeal, salads or unsweetened yogurt. Toss into veggie stir fry, mashed potatoes or nut breads

- Grind with nuts to form flourless pie crusts

- They don't need refrigeration so pack in school lunches or as a snack on long hikes

- Poke in skewers and use to decorate cakes, cupcakes, pies or seasonal food displays

To download posters, handouts with recipes or PowerPoint slides for your lobby or waiting room, go to:

[www.advancedhealth.com/healthy-bytes-initiative](http://www.advancedhealth.com/healthy-bytes-initiative)

To be on the monthly mailing list to receive free electronic materials, contact Shena Holliday, 541-269-3215 or email [shena.holliday@advancedhealth.com](mailto:shena.holliday@advancedhealth.com).

You can also download the poster and handout on the Coos Head Food Co-op site: <https://coosheadfood.coop/>

For content information on HBI materials, contact [stephanie.polizzi@oregonstate.edu](mailto:stephanie.polizzi@oregonstate.edu).

*Stephanie Polizzi  
OSU Extension Family & Community Health*

**amazon**smile

Because of those who placed their orders using Amazon Smile, CCFoPH received a total donation this year of **\$116.00**. Thank you! [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)



Oct 30<sup>th</sup> at noon **SCARY FOOD**

Halloween nutrition presentation sponsored by OSU Extension and the North Bend Public Library.  
Go to: <http://beav.es/UfW> to join online

Dec 7<sup>th</sup> 11:30 am to 1:00 pm Luncheon

Save the date for the CCFoPH Annual Meeting for all members (in person). Lunch with us at the Black Market Gourmet. Watch for details to come.



**Coming in Jan 2022  
Coos Odyssey Challenge**

A virtual exercise challenge that invites you to track your mileage or other physical activities on a map of Coos County!

We invite you to join CCFoPH.  
Visit [www.ccfoph.org](http://www.ccfoph.org)  
for information about membership.