



# MEHA BULLETIN



**President**

**Jim Topie**

**Fall 2014 Issue**

**Volume 43, No. 3**

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Article**

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## **President's Message**

**By President Jim Topie**

I continue to be amazed to see all the positive energy that our MEHA Board, Committees and members have. Our Publicity & Marketing Committee and Outreach Committee have teamed together to advance the ideas of both committees. Several new MEHA logo design options will be presented at our Fall Education Conference to receive input from our members. A MEHA community volunteer event is being scheduled in October at the nonprofit: *Feed my Starving Children*. There we will pack meals specifically formulated for malnourished children, which are then shipped to nearly 70 countries around the world.

Additionally, there are appointments being made on member's calendars to represent MEHA at college and university career fairs. Our Scholarship Committee is preparing for the announcement of opportunities. MEHA Student membership continues to grow plus EH job opportunities are being posted. MEHA study groups to prepare for the RS/REHS exam are meeting regularly. We are further embracing the use of technology by advancing the opportunity of using electronic balloting for MEHA elections, and have used FaceTime for MEHA Board meeting attendance. MEHA shirts are being worn by our members. Winter Education Conference planning is already taking place.

Financially, we are a very sound association and have funds to advance ideas that build upon our foundation. The MEHA Board of Directors feels that attending conferences benefits members by continuing education in the profession and expanding networking opportunities. At the same time, we realize that conferences are an expense and members or employers may not always have the budget to allow attendance. Since we had fund available, our Board decided to subsidize the cost of our 2014 Spring Education Conference by \$50.00 per attendee, by covering the cost of the day meeting package, refreshment breaks and lunch. That amounted to a MEHA subsidy, and treasury reduction (which was budgeted for), of over \$5,000.00. The Board felt this was a great way to make it easier for members to attend and to say thank you.

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Our combined energy is allowing our professional association to definitely gain speed and further advance Environmental Health. We continue to make this year awesome for MEHA and are showing the public in Minnesota and the world, what EH awesome really looks like.

**MEHA Volunteer Community Event**

Wed, October 22, 2014, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

At [Feed my Starving Children](#) we will be packing meals specifically formulated for malnourished children, which are then shipped to nearly 70 countries around the world.

Volunteers should plan to arrive at 5:30 PM. Michelle Koch, Food Quality Coordinator (and MEHA member) will give MEHA volunteers a brief introduction on food safety, food quality and her work at Feed My Starving Children. Please note that this introduction will take place before the scheduled packing event. Michelle is setting this up specifically for our MEHA group. The Volunteer Packing Event will then take place from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM. FMSC Website <http://www.fmsc.org/>.

**Volunteers will need to sign up ahead of time to reserve their spot. Click on the join URL below and confirm to sign-up.**

Join URL: <http://volunteer.fmsc.org/Register/Group/JoinGroup.aspx?gid=552735>

Group Name: MEHA

Join Code: 552735

Date and Time: Wed, October 22, 2014, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Location: FMSC - Chanhassen, MN18732 Lake Drive East, Chanhassen, MN 55317

Family members are encouraged to volunteer and attend as well. Please note that there is a minimum age for volunteering.

- The minimum age for volunteering is 5 years old. Children under 5 are not allowed in packing areas.
- If your group includes youth, the following age requirements apply: Kindergarten-2 grade: 1 student to 1 adult, 3-6 grade: 3 students to 1 adult, 7-9 grade: 4 students to 1 adult, 10-12 grade: 5 students to 1 adult

**Minnesota Environmental Health Association**

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**P.O. Box 441**

**Anoka, MN 55303**

**President.....Jim Topie**

***Charlie Schneider was a MEHA member since 1970 and was MEHA President in 1971. He was also “Sanitarian of the Year” in 1981.***

**CHARLES B. SCHNEIDER**

Charlie was born on August 9, 1932 in Peoria, Illinois, and died on May 26, 2014; he was 81 years old at the time of his death. He grew up with his parents Edward and Hallie Schneider and a brother, Ed, in South Minneapolis and graduated from Southwest High School. In 1954 Charlie graduated from the University of Minnesota, with a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in zoology and then worked in private industry for two years in a Minneapolis Malting Company laboratory.

In 1958 Charlie began his career as a Public Health Sanitarian with the Minnesota Department of Health. His first assignment was the inspection of sanitary conditions at logging camps in northern Minnesota. The state issued Charlie a 1957 Chevy Bel-Air for transportation as most of the inspection sites were in very remote areas. A few years later, Charlie became responsible for food, beverage, lodging, swimming pool, and water supply sanitation.

Realizing the importance of continuing his education to advance his career, Charlie enrolled at the University of Minnesota’s School of Public Health from 1962 to 1964 and completed the course work for a Masters in Public Health (MPH).

With the increased experience and the knowledge he gained from his education in Public Health, Charlie left the MDH in 1965 to develop a new Tri-city Environmental Health Program in the cities of Crystal, Brooklyn Center and Golden Valley. Approximately one year after establishing a good basic environmental health sanitation program for the cities, Charlie was offered a promotional opportunity to return to the MDH. He was appointed the Chief of the Section of Hotels, Resorts and Restaurants in December of 1966. In 1975 he became Chief of a newly formed Section of Environmental Field Services and remained in that position until being appointed as Acting Manager of the Section of Community Environmental Health Field Services in September of 1993; he continued in this position until his retirement from the MDH, in January 1994.

Over his many years in the field of public health, Charlie participated in numerous professional association activities and received many awards and citations during his long career. He was the President of the: Minnesota Public Health Association; the Minnesota Sanitarians Association; and the Minnesota Environmental Health Association. Moreover, he was the recipient of the “Outstanding Sanitarian of the Year” award in 1981, given by the Minnesota Environmental Health Association (MEHA) in recognition of his tremendous contributions toward improving environmental health conditions throughout the state of Minnesota. Further, he was also the recipient of the first annual MDH Division of Environmental Health, “Career Service Award”.

Charlie was survived by his wife Carol, seven children (Karl, Kurt, Eric, Joe, Gretchen, Karen, and Mary), fourteen grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.



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Full schedule, registration and details at [www.cposeminars.com](http://www.cposeminars.com)

**2013/2014 Schedule Cost: \$250.00**

August 21 & 22	8-5:30pm - Oakdale, MN
September 17 & 18	8-5:30pm - Waconia, MN
September 18 & 19	8-5:30pm - St. Paul, MN
October 2 & 3	8-5:30pm - Elk River, MN
October 16 & 17	8-5:30pm - St. Cloud, MN
October 23 & 24	8-5:30pm - Bloomington, WI
November 6 & 7	8-5:30pm - Duluth, MN
November 20 & 21	8-5:30pm - St. Paul, MN
November 20 & 21	8-5:30pm - Onalaska, WI
December 4 & 5	8-5:30pm - Mankato, MN
January 15 & 16	8-5:30pm - Alexandria, MN
February 5 & 6	8-5:30pm - Rochester, MN
February 19 & 20	8-5:30pm - Waconia, MN



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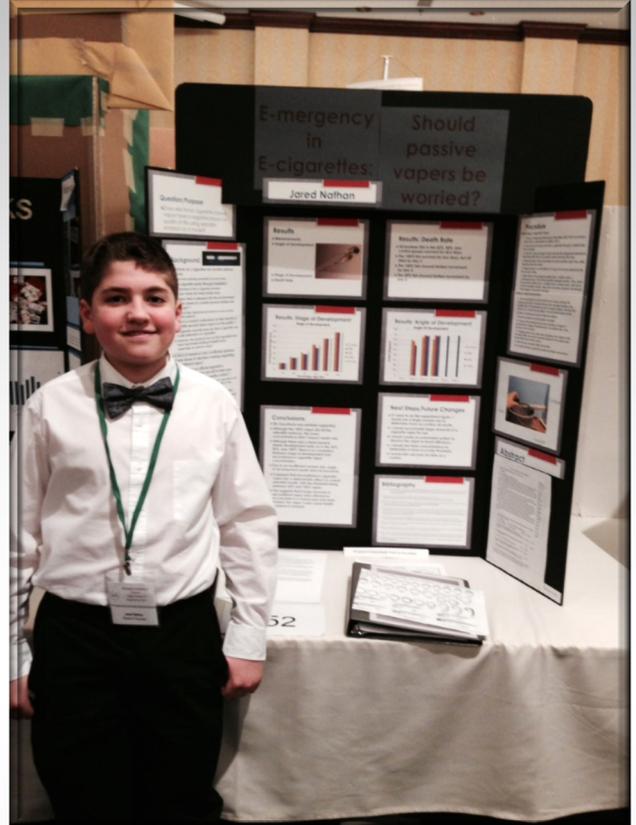
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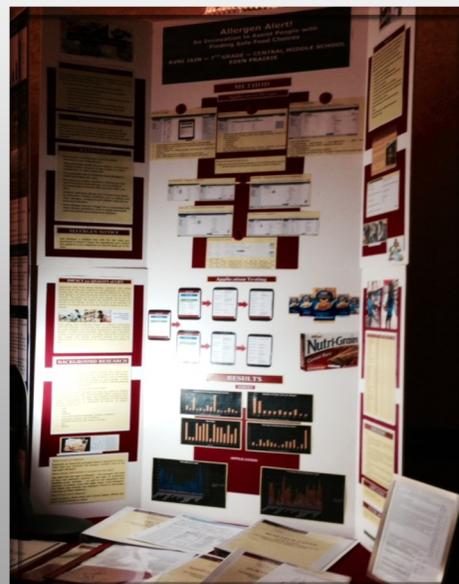
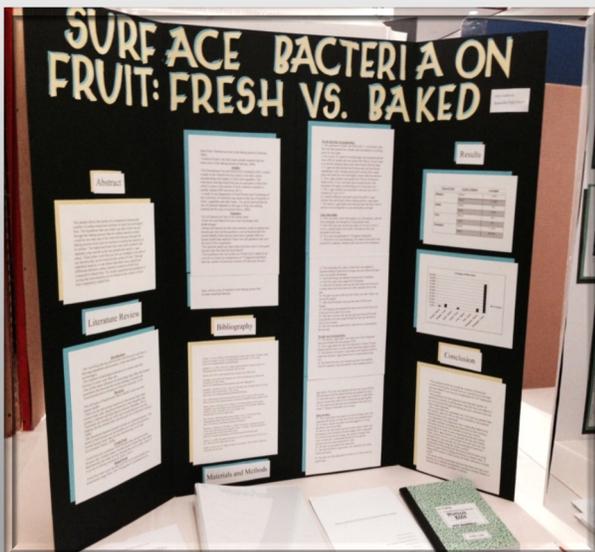
2014 Science Fair



Tim Renier's project entitled "Hand Hygiene Gone Viral? A study of Student Involvement in Social Media Campaign as a Method of Bringing Hand Hygiene to the Masses."



Second place project for junior high division, "E-emergency in E-Cigarettes: Should Passive Vapers be Worried?"



First place in the junior high division "Allergen Alert! An Innovation to Assist People with Finding Safe Food Choices".

## **Across the Ocean (and in Las Vegas) Our Food Safety Goals Are the Same**

Jodie Burke, RS, Winona County

2014 Stipend Recipient – NEHA Annual Education Conference

It was an honor to be chosen by MEHA to attend NEHA's Annual Education Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. The city has everything you can imagine, and the hotel and conference center was a beautiful venue. As an Environmental Health Specialist, one can't help but think of the multitude of establishments that need to be inspected in Vegas, as well as the various environmental health issues! My goal as a conference attendee was to attend educational sessions that were new to me, or that could provide information to assist with current issues in our environmental health program. It was difficult to choose the variety of great offerings to attend, and difficult to focus on just one or a few items for this article.

One such interesting session was about nanotechnology. A friend of mine recently noted that his son, just graduating from high school, wanted to study the field of nanotechnology. Not knowing a lot about it, I now believe he has chosen wisely! A nanometer is the smallest size in the metric system, and nanoparticles are structures, or matter, that have greater reactivity and conductivity at this smaller size than some other substances. Nanomaterials are in consumer products now, such as cosmetics, paint, and golf balls. The food industry has been using nanotechnology for around ten years (much longer than I thought) to change how food looks and tastes, improve shelf life, and increase nutritional quality. Potential applications in agricultural settings include alternate ways to deliver pesticides to insects, target soil pathogens, and increase a plant's ability to uptake water (wow!).

Applications for food packaging include the prevention of microbial contamination of food, nanosensor "smart packaging" to detect pathogens, real-time radio frequency tracking of products, and reduction or elimination of counterfeit products in commerce. Imagine the potential use for the "smart packaging" to detect bacteria in a food processing or packaging plant – cutting down on lab samples, wait time, and most importantly reducing the likelihood of product reaching consumers and causing illness. This session's speaker noted that 25 percent of packaging will most likely be "intelligent" by the year 2025.

Another informative education session that stood out for me was, "Who's Missing From the Table? – Building Partnerships with the Medical Community in Foodborne Illness Surveillance". As this speaker describes, I sometimes feel as though there's a disconnect between health care providers and public/environmental health. A visit to a medical provider for one of our children last year resulted in a brief conversation about Norovirus, and the possibility of them having it. I was provided a response similar to, "Well, Norovirus typically only happens in situations like when people are on cruise ships", meaning he/she didn't feel it was a possibility in Winona. It is that disconnect that prompted me to think about how we could get on the same page with the medical community, and how we could deliver current foodborne illness information to them. One example cited by the speaker is that food consumers and workers often make statements such as, "My doctor says I have food poisoning", yet stool samples are not submitted for testing.

The speaker discussed a program implemented in their county to improve foodborne illness surveillance between environmental and public health, and the medical community, by inviting medical providers to a collaborative guidance training. Providing food for the participants was a must in order to highlight the point that everyone has to eat, and everyone has the potential to get sick from food. They stressed the importance of partnerships and reporting illness; discussed pathogens, specimen collection, and testing. The role of Registered Environmental Health Specialists was discussed, and how we factor into foodborne illness investigations. Other important aspects included patient-provider communication, making sure patients understand the importance of returning or submitting stool samples, and proper medical billing codes to ensure correct insurance payments. One of my "To Do's" is to provide a training similar to this in Winona County should we have the opportunity. I believe it is much needed, and the process and results would be great to present to MEHA in the future.

One of the conference highlights for me was speaking with a lady from the United Kingdom (UK). She and her friend were very eager to hear how I and the other attendees at our table handle various environmental health situations, and how our environmental

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One of the conference highlights for me was speaking with a lady from the United Kingdom (UK). She and her friend were very eager to hear how I and the other attendees at our table handle various environmental health situations, and how our environmental health programs are structured. The United States FDA and USDA are similar to the UK's Food Standards Agency (FSA) and European Food Standards Authority. While there may be differences in the regulatory process, ultimately it was obvious we both had the common goal of protecting the public. We have a little bit of that here in Minnesota. Environmental health programs can still be effective with varying ordinances and department processes, as we all have a common expectation of protecting the public from risk.

Last, but not least, who could forget about the best part of visiting Las Vegas...eating out! I tried various places, including a great dinner with other MEHA members. But on the last night in the city with my husband, we ventured to Fremont Street where we saw one of the famous inexpensive dinners you hear about...."Lobster and Steak for \$11.99". I have to say, it was definitely worth the 45 minute bus ride! A BIG thank you to MEHA for providing me this travel and educational experience.



## Photos from NEHA Conference in Las Vegas



(L to R) Sadie Pulk, Sharon Smith-MDH, Jodie Burke-Winona County, Mike Thiessen and Josh Aul-City of Bloomington, Lauri Clements and Mike Melius-Olmsted County and Jim Topie-MDH



Equipment from Vendor Displays at the NEHA Conference



**Congratulations to  
Colleen Paulus,  
Environmental Health  
Manager at Minnesota  
Department of Health  
on her retirement.  
Good Luck on this new  
chapter in your life!**

## **FOOD MANAGERS: ONLINE RENEWAL COURSE OPTION**

*Serve It Up Safely™* online course offers options to customize training. Choose four modules of interest:

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- Cooling Principles
- Emerging Trends I
- Emerging Trends II
- Personal Hygiene
- Preventing Foodborne Illness
- Ready-to-Eat (RTE) Foods

### *Updated 2013*

What participants say about our course:

*"I have practiced these guidelines for years. The material is good and a great review...very helpful for someone who wants exposure for the first time or the 200th time."*

*August 2013*



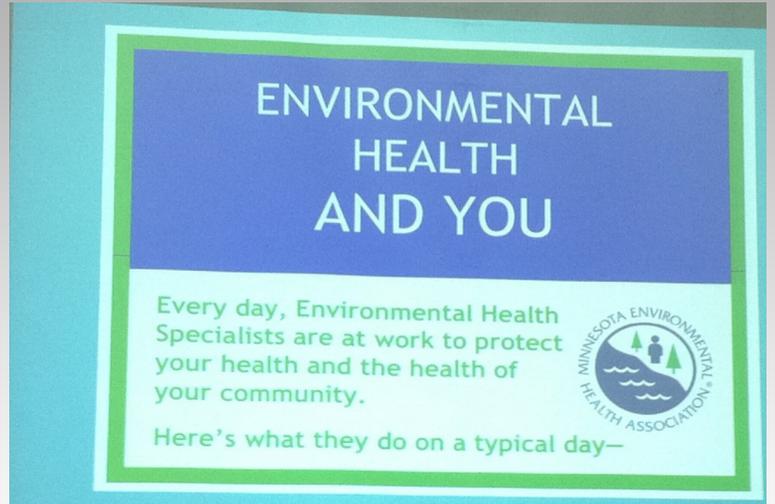
For more information and to register at [extension.umn.edu/food/food-safety/courses/](http://extension.umn.edu/food/food-safety/courses/)

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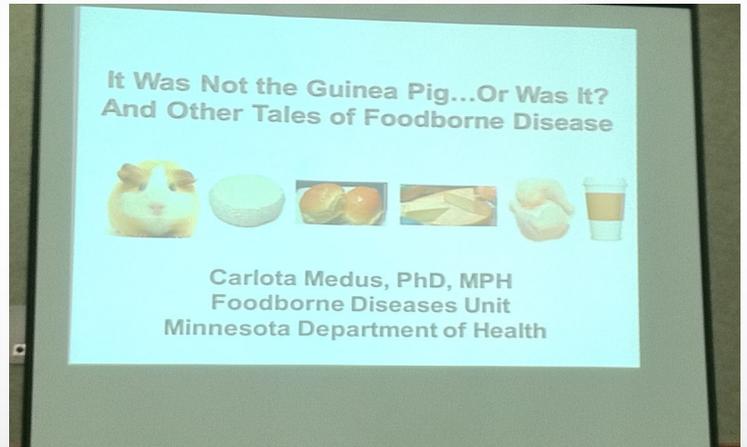
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Past President Kim Carlton addressing the membership at the 2014 Spring Conference



Carlota Medus-MDH Epi giving the annual "Epi Update" at the Spring Conference



Vendor introductions the first morning of the conference

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Vendor displays at the conference



Networking opportunity at the conference



Pool tract at the waterpark in Alexandria

You Know You're a  
**HEALTH INSPECTOR**  
When...

1. People ask you where NOT to eat...and you just smile.
2. You interrogate the cook at your own family's Thanksgiving dinner.
3. The waiter asks, "How would you like your burger?", and you reply, "Cooked to 155° F, please."
4. Vomiting, diarrhea, and parasitic organisms are just part of the dinner conversation.
5. You have a pool and spa test strips, alcohol wipes, thermometers, and spare change.
6. Your pockets contain test strips, alcohol wipes, thermometers, and spare change.
7. Examining septic systems and leach fields constitutes your daily aerobic workout.
8. You know how to pronounce words like "Escherichia" and "Staphylococcus".
9. Children avoid your neighborhood when setting up lemonade stands.
10. You have developed a HACCP Plan for your backyard barbecues.



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Frank Sedzielarz and Chris Forslund accepting NEHA certificates at the awards banquet



Rob Carper presenting Chris Forslund, City of Burnsville with the Frank Staffenson Environmental Health Professional of the Year Award



Tim Jenkins, MDA, and Doug Edson, MDH, both receiving MEHA Merit Awards



Jesse Harmon, Brown Nicollet County, accepting the Emerging Professional of the Year Award from Past-President Carper

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“Vanna” Topie handing out prizes at the awards banquet



Raffle Girls



New MEHA Board: George Wahl-Secretary, Jeff Luedeman-Vice President, Kris Keller-Director, Sadie Pulk-President-Elect.  
Missing: Valerie Gamble-Member-at-Large



Passing of the gavel from Kim Carlton to the new MEHA President Jim Topie

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The following individuals passed the MDH administered REHS/RS exam of April 24, 2014:

Douglas Breitreutz, Douglas County Public Health

Sarah Conboy, MDH

Nicole Favata, MDA

Thomas Frame, City of Minneapolis

Marion Hinnenkamp, MDA

Sarah Hogan, City of St. Cloud

Lynnae Howe, MDA

Mark Kluhsman, MDH

Mark Latterell, Stearns County

Erin Norling, MDA

Caitlin Rosch, City of Bloomington

Janna Beard, City of Minneapolis



***Our deepest sympathy....***

Monica Loye was a MEHA member for many years. She lost her battle with cancer on March 31, 2014. She was an Environmental Health Specialist in the Community Development Department at the City of Bloomington for a total of twelve years. Our deepest sympathy to her family and coworkers at the City of Bloomington. She will be greatly missed.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Feed My Starving Children  
MEHA Volunteer Event

Wednesday, October 22

5:30-7:30 p.m.

Chanhassen, MN

MEHA Winter Conference

January 29, 2015

University of Minnesota  
Continuing Education and  
Conference Center

St. Paul, MN

NEHA AEC

Orlando, Florida

July 13-15, 2015



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MEHA is on Facebook! Visit our page and join the group! Please "like" us so we can share MEHA news and other interesting environmental health information.

# Calendar of Events



Governors Proclamation for Environmental Public Health Week

2014

***Stearns County Online Food Safety Training is now available on the Stearns County's website for anyone to use. Please feel free to share this information with anyone who may benefit from taking this training. Additional training will be added to the website by the end of the year. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Hank Schreifels at Stearns County Environmental Health.***

## MEMBER UPDATES

**On the Move...** Brian Crabtree, formerly with Olmsted County is now the Coordinator of the Southern Minnesota Water Analysis Laboratory which is part of Olmsted County's Department of Environmental Resources.

**On the Move...** Sadie Pulk from the City of Minneapolis to Target Corporation

**Welcome....** To Kevin Keopraseuth to the City of Minneapolis

**Our Deepest Sympathy...** to Denise Schumacher, MDH, on the loss of her son

**Our Deepest Sympathy...** to President Jim Topie, MDH, on the loss of his father

**Congratulations** to Nichelle Manchester, City of Minnetonka, on the birth of her son

**Congratulations** to Dave Boberg, City of Bloomington, on the birth of his daughter

**Congratulations** to Valerie Gamble, MDA, on the birth of her daughter

**Thank You** to the following people who contributed to this newsletter: Jessica Jutz, Kim Carlton, Karen Casale, Nicole Koktavy, Laura Scheinoha, Lisa Gsywt, Jim Witkowski, John Schnickel, Molly Wellens, Sadie Pulk, Kris Keller and Jodie Burke.

## Request From The Editor

An important part of the newsletter is the human element—  
what is going on with MEHA members. Please let the editor

know about any comings and  
goings, births, weddings, honors...

Deadline for the next issue is

**March 1, 2015**

Send to:

Lori Green, R.S.

St. Paul-Ramsey County Public Health

2785 White Bear Avenue N., Suite 350

Maplewood, MN 55109-1320

651-266-1172