

# PUBLIC HEALTH MATTERS

A NEWSLETTER OF THE PUBLIC  
HEALTH MUSEUM



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## In Memoriam Chester "Chet" Kennedy, Jr.

Public health trailblazer, Chester "Chet" Kennedy, Jr., 91, founder, first President and principal creator of the Public Health Museum passed away peacefully on May 24, 2017.

Upon completing his tour of naval duty in the Pacific during WWII, Chet graduated with honors from Massachusetts College of Art. He went on to study at Boston University and Brandeis University and later became a lecturer and instructor at Harvard University, Boston University and Massachusetts College of Art.

His many and innovative professional efforts in public health include roles as the Director of Health Education, District Health Officer for Southeastern Massachusetts and President of The New England Public Health Association. Chet held leadership positions as President of The New England Health Education Association, Co-Chair of The Coalition Organized for Health Education in Schools (COHES),

*Continued on page 2.*

## In the News

The Museum is in the process of updating their website. Check it out at [www.publichealthmuseum.org](http://www.publichealthmuseum.org)

## Outbreak 2017

Outbreak 2017 will be held August 7-11, 2017  
Watch the Winter newsletter for a review of this fun and educational program.

## Chester “Chet” Kennedy, Jr. cont.



Executive Secretary of the Massachusetts Health Officers Association (MHOA), President of The New England Public Health Association, and Chair/Co-Chair of the Massachusetts Public Health Association and the Massachusetts Health Council.

Throughout Chet’s highly accomplished career, he was honored with the following awards – just to name a few:

- 1980 New England Public Health Association Ira Hiscock Award
- 1986 Massachusetts Public Health Association 25 Year Service Award
- 1988 Massachusetts Health Officers Association Curtis M. Hilliard Award
- 1989 Michael Dukakis Governor’s Award
- 1990 Massachusetts Public Health Association Paul Revere Award
- 1993 Governor William Weld Museum Founder Award
- 1998 Massachusetts Health Officers Association Michael D. Saraco Award
- 2001 New England Public Health Association President’s Award
- 2011 Public Health Hero Award
- 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award

Early in his career, he relinquished a lucrative position with Filene’s to venture into public health and design displays for story panels and sandwich boards, with puppets and on TV shows.

After over two decades of advocating for a public health museum while collecting and storing artifacts in his basement, Chet’s strong conviction, perseverance and determination paid off when his concept finally came to fruition and the museum opened in 1993.

A beloved pioneer in Massachusetts public health, Chet will be remembered by family, friends and colleagues with great fondness for his dynamic commitment, creative spirit and passion.

# Panel Discusses the Future of Public Health

A distinguished panel of local public health professionals emanating from various disciplines debated “The Future of Local Public Health” at the Public Health Museum on Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Dr. Monica Bharel**, the Massachusetts Commissioner of Public Health, delivered the keynote address emphasizing the Department of Public Health’s mission-specific programs and priorities that focus on health indicator disparities, geographic outcomes and the implications for local action using a data driven approach to the determinants of health. The Commissioner’s remarks were then followed by a panel discussion.

**Claude Jacob**, Chief Public Health Officer of the City of Cambridge, provided his perspective not only as the President of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) but also as the chief public health official of Cambridge. His review of the NACCHO national survey of local public health revealed the wide contrast and gaps in capacity and programming nationwide and also many issues facing both workforce development and limited resources in Cambridge.

**Marcia Testa** of the Wellesley Board of Health and President of the Massachusetts Association of Health Boards discussed the challenges that health boards encounter across the Commonwealth, including coping with authority, responsibility, accreditation and the competing demands for local resources.

Next, **Derek Fullerton**, Director of Public Health for the Town of Middleton and President of the Massachusetts Health Officers Association, talked about both the current and future challenges of a local health director which include balancing resources and responsibilities.

This was followed by **Kathy Whittaker**, Public Health Nurse for the Town of Winchester and President of the Northeast Chapter of the Massachusetts Association of Public Health Nurses, who examined the professional role of public health nurses, workforce development and development opportunities within the nursing profession.

Rounding out the panel, **Alan Perry**, Health Agent for the City of Attleboro and Past President of the Massachusetts Environmental Health Association, explored the demands on inspections and credentialing of the public health workforce.

Overall, the panel traded comments and opinions on the very real challenges associated with the opioid epidemic, communications among health departments, potential for shared resources, workforce development, accreditation, credentialing and other emerging issues.

*By Linda Dispersio*



*Pictured from left to right: Alan Perry, Kathy Whittaker, Claude Jacob, Derek Fullerton, Marcia Testa, Monica Bharel, and Al DeMaria (standing).*



# Dr. Lynn Eckhert Presents Reading from her Play, *Elizabeth Blackwell, First American Woman Doctor*

As part of our celebration of Public Health Week 2017, the Museum partnered with the Tewksbury Public Library to present a dramatic reading by Dr. Lynn Eckhert of her one-woman play: *Elizabeth Blackwell, First American Woman Doctor*. The presentation took place on April 6th, 2017 at the Tewksbury library to a very engaged audience of approximately 40 people.

Dr. Eckhert's interest in Elizabeth Blackwell began after a visit to Hobart College (formerly Geneva Medical College) in upstate New York where Blackwell was accepted as the first female student. Dr. Eckhert began researching Blackwell's life utilizing the Library of Congress and the Historical Library at Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts among other resources. Deciding to write a play about Blackwell prompted Dr. Eckhert to take summer courses to learn the techniques of playwriting.

The play, written in 2003, was a great success. For more than 10 years it has been performed in a range of settings, including medical colleges, conferences and forums, usually by a professional actress. This is the first time Dr. Eckhert performed it herself. Old Sturbridge Village contributed a period costume. The resulting effect was amazing, both costume and performance.

Dr. Eckhert is the Director of Academic Programs at Partners Healthcare International. She served as the first woman Chairperson of the University of Massachusetts Medi-

cal Center Department of Family and Community Medicine for 15 years. Her promotion of health professions education includes starting a medical school in Lebanon.

Our thanks to Dr. Eckhert, Sturbridge village and the Tewksbury Public Library for their support in making Public Health Week a great success.

More on the life of Elizabeth Blackwell can be found at: <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/elizabeth-blackwell>

*By Linda Perry*

With information from

[Elizabeth Blackwell: One Woman Play as Part of Public Health Week](#) by Paige Impink, *Tewksbury Town Crier*

*Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell*

*Photo from the National Library of Medicine.*



*Dr. Eckhert reads from her one-woman play entitled Elizabeth Blackwell, First American Woman Doctor*



# 2017 Calendar of Events

## PUBLIC HEALTH MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

Museum open Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10 am to 2 pm.

### AUGUST

**5th**, Museum open from 10 am to 2 pm

**5th and 17th**, Walking tours, 10 am

**7th - 11th**, Outbreak 2017

### SEPTEMBER

**2nd**, Museum open from 10 am to 2 pm

**2nd and 21st**, Walking tours, 10 am

### OCTOBER

**7th**, Museum open from 10 am to 2 pm

**7th**, Walking tour, 10 am

## PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIVITIES

### AUGUST

National Breastfeeding Month

National Immunization Awareness Month

### SEPTEMBER

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

National Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month

**10th**, World Suicide Prevention Day

**28th**, World Rabies Day

### OCTOBER

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

**2nd**, National Child Health Day

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## BCBS Health Coverage Fellows Visit Museum

The Public Health Museum had the privilege of welcoming Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation Health Coverage fellows and members of the Department of Public Health to the museum for a tour. The event included discussion of our new redesigned tuberculosis exhibit, the iron lung, and mental health care reform. The fellows, primarily journalists across New England, were extremely impressed by not only our museum, but the events we offer, including Outbreak.

The fellowship “is designed to help newspaper, radio, television, and online reporters and editors do a better job covering critical health care issues,” particularly focusing on issues “ranging from public health and mental health to covering the uninsured, controlling skyrocketing costs, and upgrading quality.” The fellows appreciated the exposure to topics related to the history of public health as it provides a holistic picture when reporting on current public health related issues.

Group tours of the Museum are available upon request, call today for information - 978-851-7321 EXT 2606.

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## MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are always needed for a variety of projects at the Museum!

If you enjoy meeting new people, want to participate in educating the public and are available Wednesday or Thursdays or the first Saturday of the month, we encourage you to come help us with tours at the museum. Training is provided. If you are interested in public health, history or just want to spend some time with a great group of dedicated staff and volunteers, contact the Museum at 978-851-7321 EXT 2606 or complete the [application](#) and mail it to PH Museum, 365 East Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876.



# THE PUBLIC HEALTH MUSEUM IN MASSACHUSETTS

## Our Mission

The Public Health Museum is a non-profit educational and cultural museum. The Museum strives to preserve records and artifacts from our nation's public health history; educate the public about the achievements and contributions of public health; and inspire people to build upon the past and continue to advance the future of public health. Our Museum provides a space to explore public health artifacts, inspire future public health professionals, and foster community involvement.

## Our History

Incorporated in 1990 and open to the public since 1994, the Museum has the distinction of being the first of its kind in the nation. Massachusetts has a rich history of leadership and notable firsts in the birth of our nation. In the field of public health, Massachusetts was the first to record vital statistics; the first to implement a sustained board of health; and the first to implement a communicable disease surveillance system, among many others.

## MUSEUM HOURS

Wednesdays, Thursdays and the first Saturday of each month 10:00am-2:00pm  
OR  
By Appointment

## WALKING TOURS

Seasonal (May through October, weather permitting)  
The third Thursday and first Saturday of each month 10:00am-2:00pm  
OR  
By Appointment

## ADMISSION

\$5.00 per person for museum  
\$10.00 per person for walking tour

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others who may be interested in the Public Health Museum.

To subscribe to this newsletter, please reply with **SUBSCRIBE** to Newsletter in the subject line. To unsubscribe, please reply with **UNSUBSCRIBE** in the subject line.

## THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

### ADDRESS

365 East Street  
Tewksbury, MA 01876

### DIRECTIONS

### PHONE NUMBER

978-851-7321 EXT 2606

### EMAIL ADDRESS

[phmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:phmuseum@gmail.com)

### WEBSITE

[publichealthmuseum.org](http://publichealthmuseum.org)

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