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## Drive-thru flu shots a big hit

BY: TAYLOR SEAY

More than 350 Decatur County citizens came out on Thursday to receive their flu shots in an unconventional way-never leaving their cars.

In addition to the Bainbridge Health Department, numerous services and departments including Bainbridge College Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) program students and teachers, the Salvation Army, Decatur County Fire and Rescue, EMS, Sheriff's Office and Bainbridge Public Safety, lent a hand to make the drive-thru flu shot event a success.



**RECEIVING HER FLU SHOT is Betty Elkins. Volunteering their services are three Bainbridge College students in the ADN program, from the left, Dionne Thomas, Cara Jones and Jana Donalson.**

Those who had already completed their paperwork were done in about six minutes and the longest time for those who filled out their paperwork there was around 14 minutes.

More than 150 people had received flu shots before 10 a.m. as the new method not only showed its speedy delivery, but tested emergency response procedures.

"This is giving us an opportunity to test our ability to disperse a lot of medication to a lot of people in a short period of time," said Carolyn Maschke, public information officer for the Southwest Georgia Health Department.

Julie Miller, the district emergency preparedness director, explained the event has two main objectives.

The first is to provide communities with vaccinations/flu shots in a friendly and easy way. The second is to introduce people to the plan that would be used in the case of an emergency like a pandemic flu, infectious disease outbreak or bio-terrorists attack, she said.

As only the third county in the 14-county district to implement the program, Miller praised Decatur County and Sherry Hutchins, Decatur County nurse manager for the County Health Department, for a job well done.

"They have raised the bar by involving volunteers, law enforcement and college students. It's nice they have improved upon the model," Miller said.

After receiving their flu shots, participants were asked to park for 15 minutes for observation if they had time.

Ruthie Butler and her mother, Ruthie Chavers, said they learned of the flu shots being offered by reading The Post-Searchlight and a family member taking part. Chavers' granddaughter, Neesha Martin, was one of the students in the ADN program at BC helping out for the day.

"It was really nice not to have to get out of the car or anything," Butler said. "It was really fast."

The final count for the drive-thru flu shot event was 364 and Maschke called it a resounding success.

If you missed the drive-thru event, you can still visit the Decatur County Health Department to get a flu shot.

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