

THE GREENSBORO

Volume 133, Number 20 Published Weekly P.O. Drawer 550, Greensboro, Alabama 36744-0550

WATCHMAN

Thursday, October 14, 2010 8 pages Telephone (334) 624-8323

Small snake is unwelcome guest at cancer screening

The Hale County Health Department hosted a free prostate cancer screening this past Saturday in Greensboro, sponsored by Urology Centers of Alabama, the Urology Health Foundation and the Hale County Health Department. Not only did 57 men participate in the free screening, but an unexpected visitor was on hand. During the screening a snake was discovered in the health department building. After a considerable amount of work, the snake was ushered out the back door never to be seen again.

Prostate cancer is the second leading killer (behind lung cancer) among men in the United States. Early detection and treatment are key factors in addressing prostate cancer. No one knows the exact cause of prostate cancer. Doctors can seldom explain why one man develops the disease and another does not. Age and race are the strongest risk factors for prostate cancer. One in six men (one in four African American men) will get prostate cancer sometime in their life. African American men are at special risk for the disease, with the highest rate of prostate cancer in the world. One in four African

American men will get prostate cancer sometime in their life and are 2.5 times more likely to die from the disease. A man's risk of prostate cancer is higher than average if his brother, father or uncle had the disease.

Because there are no noticeable symptoms of prostate cancer while it is still in the early stages, Dr. Thomas Moody, President of the Urology Health Foundation, states that is why screening is so critical. In more advanced stages, symptoms may include difficult or frequent urination, blood in the urine or bone pain. Every man age 40 or over should resolve to be screened annually.

Screening for prostate cancer involves a simple blood test called a PSA that measures the level of protein called prostate-specific antigen in the blood. Normally PSA is found in the blood at very low levels. Elevated PSA readings can be a sign of prostate cancer. A physical examination is also given to detect prostate cancer. This exam is called a DRE or digital rectal exam. These tests take approximately 10 minutes to perform and could save a man's life.