

Friday, Oct. 21, 2011

DHA board chairman steps down

Puhr selects Rick Strebing

BY BRIAN L. HUCHEL
bhuchel@dancomnews.com

DANVILLE — The chairman of the Danville Housing Authority stepped down from his seat Thursday.

Mike Puhr announced in an e-mail sent Thursday morning he intended on stepping down from the DHA chairman's seat at the authority's afternoon meeting.

Puhr has served on the DHA board for almost 15 years, serving as chairman for the majority of that time beginning in 1999.

In his e-mail announcement, Puhr said the position as DHA chairman "faced public scrutiny that affected my job, my political life and my personal life."

He indicated he now wants to devote his time to other things that are

"less controversial."

"I've dealt with a lot of controversy during my tenure," Puhr said during an interview Thursday afternoon. "There's a lot of misconceptions out there. It's sometimes a challenging chair to be sitting in."

He said many don't understand just what falls under the DHA's control.

"Everybody thinks the DHA controls all the rental and housing complexes in the city," he said. "We only have Fair Oaks, Madison Court, Beeler Terrace, Mer-Che Manor and Churchill Towers."

Puhr said he hears complaints for all

the others, nonetheless.

Puhr's announcement came the same day as the DHA board's annual meeting, which takes place each October.

Greg Hilleary, Danville Housing Authority's executive director, said Puhr runs the election, asking for nominations for the chairman and vice chairman.

Puhr indicated in his e-mail announcement that he planned to nominate board members Rick Strebing for chairman and Lon Henderson for vice chairman.

See **CHAIRMAN/PAGE 3A**

DACC helps potential students

ENRICH program free to those looking into education

BY CAROL ROEHM
croehm@dancomnews.com

DANVILLE — For low-income families who think college is out of reach, Danville Area Community College's ENRICH program can help.

DACC will host the 14th ENRICH program for low-income families in the college's district from 9 a.m. to noon Wednesday in Room 306 of Vermilion Hall on DACC's campus.

ENRICH, stands for Eliminating Negative Reinforcements — Inspiring Confidence and Hope, and is based on the philosophy that education can open doors to emotional stability, peace of mind and social, career and economic advancement.

The event is free and open to anyone who feels the need to better his or her life and sees education as a way to do it. The activities are targeted toward low-income housing residents and dislocated workers.

"It's something people can benefit from," Dawn Nasser, coordinator of recruitment in DACC's admissions and records office, said about the event.

"It's about inspiring people and giving them confidence," she said.

Candace McNeal, a DACC financial aid specialist who was involved with planning the event, said the workshop will help participants "take responsibility for their future and how to overcome their barriers."

The event will provide an overview of GED, associate and certificate programs, as well as the support services available at DACC.

"Different departments will speak about adult education, GEDs and the CNA program," she said. "I'll touch on financial aid."

Door prizes, campus tours and a free lunch will be provided.

"We will be giving away things that people can use, such as household items," McNeal said of the door prizes.

Participants also will have an opportunity to receive step-by-step instructions for completing the application for admission and the financial aid FAFSA form.

See **STUDENTS/PAGE 3A**

MORE INFORMATION

The 14th ENRICH program will run 9 a.m. to noon Wednesday in Room 306 of Vermilion Hall on Danville Area Community College's campus.

Transportation is available to those who reserve in advance. Contact Dawn Nasser at dnasser@dacc.edu or 443-8755, or Candace McNeal at cmcneal@dacc.edu or 443-8761 to reserve a seat or make transportation arrangements.

PANCAKE DAY



Above: Owen Strahl, 4, of Chicago, visiting his grandparents, of Danville, enjoys a plate of pancakes Thursday during the Kiwanis Pancake Day at the David S. Palmer Arena. The Kiwanis organization helps serve the community through area children's groups and scholarships. **Left:** Gabriella Sowers, 4, of Westville, scoops a fork of pancakes into her mouth.

SUSAN JOY MCKINNEY
/COMMERCIAL-NEWS PHOTOS

Hispanic/Latino fair set for Saturday

Immigration attorney on hand to offer advice

BY CAROL ROEHM
croehm@dancomnews.com

DANVILLE — The fifth annual Hispanic/Latino Awareness Fair at Danville Area Community College will provide valuable information as well as some family fun, too.

The free event sponsored by the DACC Hispanic Recruitment and Retention Team will run 3-6 p.m. Saturday in the Bremer Conference Center at DACC.

The fair will feature 17 area agencies, including Illinois Department of Human Services, Child Care Resource Services, University of Illinois Extension, City of Danville, Vermilion County

Public Health Department, Community Action Agency, Danville Family YMCA, Eastern Illinois University and, new this year, CRIS Healthy-Aging Center.

Ana Nasser, director of DACC's child development center, and Al Bello, director of radiology, have been involved with organizing the fair all five years.

Bello said he and Nasser have figured out how to put on a successful event by tweaking it during the years.

"We've learned from the first few events," he said.

Nasser recalls the first fair started in the morning and had a set agenda with speakers scheduled at certain times.

"The reality was, nobody liked it," she said.

So the team decided to move the fair to Saturday afternoons.

"It's after soccer and just for three hours," she said.

Last year, 60 to 80 people attended the fair, but Nasser and Bello hope at least 100 will participate Saturday.

Free information about education, health issues, child care, immigration reforms and citizenship will be available. An immigration attorney will be on hand to offer free advice.

"Sometimes people don't know all the programs that are available to them in the community," Nasser said.

"The fair lets the Hispanic community know what is available to them, like scholarships and citizenship classes," she said. "There are so many scholarships that people don't apply for."

Nasser likened the fair to a "one-stop shop."

"We will have translators available, and there will be games and a raffle," she said.

See **FAIR/PAGE 3A**



Today's weather
PAGE 6A



It's the dawn of a new day!

Grand Re-Opening

Open House

October 30, 2011 • 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

806 North Logan Ave. | Danville, IL

provena.org/usmc/cancer

PROVENA
United Samaritans
Regional Cancer Center