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April 15, 2008

Press Release: Immediate

Heart Healthy G.O.L.D. Plate Restaurant Directories

The Tri-County Heart Health Coalition of Williams, Fulton, and Henry County announce the 6th annual Honor Roll of G.O.L.D. (**G**reat **O**ptions in **L**ower fat **D**ining) Plate Restaurants Directory.

All food service establishments were mailed a survey and asked about the availability of healthier choices on their menus. The directory is the result of those restaurants that completed the survey and those whose responses met at least 80% of the criteria. Criteria included allowing patrons to order their dressing/sauces/gravies served on the side; offering low fat or fat free salad dressing; offering cholesterol-free egg substitutes/egg whites for egg dishes; offering low fat entrees; offering reduced fat dessert; offering low fat milk if milk is available; allowing patrons to order menu items prepared without salt and identifying low fat menu choices.

In the tri-county area, 35 restaurants qualified for the directory and are recognized for offering lower fat menu options.

In Henry County, recognition goes to Peppermills-Your Family Restaurant, Ltd. for their sixth consecutive year. Those qualifying for their fourth year are McDonald's of Napoleon, Subway, and the Village Dairy Bar. The China Dragon qualified for a third year, while Wendy's qualified for a second year, and new restaurants include Stimmel's Market. All those who qualify receive a GOLD Plate plaque and inclusion in the directory.

According to the National Restaurant Association, eighty-three percent of adults said there are more healthy options available at quickservice restaurants than there were two years ago. "Educating people on the availability of healthier food options can help them make better choices when dining out," said Lindsay Wiemken, program coordinator of the tri-county coalition. Obesity is an emerging epidemic in our country; this includes Henry County. This public health concern is related to many medical conditions and diseases, including heart disease and cancer. When restaurants offer patrons healthier choices, it can make an impact on the health of our county residents. These restaurants are to be commended for their efforts.

The directory also includes a section on “Keys to Dining Lean,” which offers suggestions including:

- Look for the words “baked, broiled, roasted, or grilled” on menu items descriptions
- Ask for salad dressings, sauces, and gravies served on the side
- Eat with a friend and share an order
- Ask for ketchup, mustard, or BBQ sauce on burgers and sandwiches
- Ask for whole wheat bread for sandwiches and toast
- Avoid supersizing (which can add up to 800 calories).

Free copies of the Honor Roll of G.O.L.D. Plate Restaurants Directory are available at the Henry County Health Department, Chamber of Commerce, local libraries and at www.henrycohd.org.

The G.O.L.D. Plate is one of many heart health programs offered throughout the tri-county region funded by a cardiovascular health grant from the Ohio Department of Health. The grant has been in existence four years and operates on a regional and local level. Local coalitions work within their county in worksite, school, community and healthcare settings promoting heart healthy lifestyles and addressing all risk factors for heart disease. Some of the other activities include sponsoring the annual fall Lockport Bridge/Goll’s Woods 5K run/walk, providing a tri-county heart health resource directory for worksites and healthcare settings, promoting vending machine companies that offer heart healthy choices for worksites and schools, promoting clean indoor air policy changes, providing school nutrition/physical activity programs, a walking directory of measured mile/half mile courses in local neighborhoods, and pedometer challenges. For more information: in Williams County call (419) 485-3141 or (419) 636-4004. In Fulton County call (419) 337-0915 and in Henry County call (419) 599-5545.