

# Traveling Nurse Carries Immunization Program To Amish

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LEACOCK (Lancaster Co.) — Rose Grill's job is a labor of love and duty.

Winding roads through Lancaster County's rural countryside leads Grill to many isolated Amish homes. Packed into several carrying bags are vaccines,

needles, paper-work, bandaids, and even some children's stickers needed to complete Grill's job.

As a traveling community nurse, it's Grill's duty to immunize children whose parents lack transportation to doctors' offices and clinics. The Pennsylvania Department of Health administers the program to provide free immunizations to children who

might otherwise be overlooked.

National Immunization Week, April 14-20, highlights the need for all children to secure vaccines that can protect them from serious illnesses and side effects.

Recommended immunization programs include "baby shots" for children who are 2, 4, 6, and 12-18 months of age, and again at 4 years. The shots protect against diseases such as polio, haemophilus influenzae (Hib, measles, whooping cough, mumps, and rubella.

Grill's visits are met with both anticipation and trepidation. The little ones know that the needles that Grill brings with her are meant for them. They also know they will be rewarded with collectible stickers.

Although the state slogan of the immunization program is portray a love message to the recipient at the moment. But the pain of a needle is minor compared to the pain a child would feel if they contracted one of the illnesses the shots are designed to prevent.

Despite tears, kicking, and fearful cries typical of children who see a needle, Grill remains calm and cheerful. She knows the importance of immunization. About one million children in the U.S. have not been fully immunized. This puts them at risk for serious illness, even death, from vaccine-preventable illnesses.

During a recent visit to a Leacock farm, Grill immunized three of the family's four children. While she prepared the needles, Grill explained the vaccine and possible side effects. She discussed spring chores, grocery shopping, and how much the children had grown since her last visit with the family.

The mother, who desired to remain anonymous, said she much prefers the nurse coming to

her home rather than needing to find transportation to a doctor's office or clinic.

"It's much less hectic, and less expensive," the mother said. In addition to transportation, she would need to pay for a doctor's office consultation.

Grill has more than 100 Lancaster County children on her schedule. She needs to return four times during the first year of a child's life to complete the required immunizations.

As a nurse, Grill has held hospital and clinic positions, but her favorite is that of the community health nurse.

She said, "I love my job. The families are so receptive and enjoyable to visit."

Vaccines are one of the most effective tools to prevent serious illnesses of infectious diseases. If interested in knowing more about immunization services, call the Lancaster County State Health Center at (717) 299-2597.



Rose Grill completes the immunization records during a visit to an Amish family. April 14-20 marks National Immunization Week and is a reminder to all parents of the need to protect children from vaccine-preventable illnesses.

## Stay On Track

### 'It's A Matter Of Love'

The Lancaster County Immunization Coalition will be instrumental in the celebration of National Infant Immunization Week the week of April 14-20.

"Information bags" will be distributed to all new parents for the entire week in area birthing hospitals and other birthing sites. All items in the "information bags" are intended to encourage parents to have their infants immunized at the appropriate times. The bags will also include the location of immunization sites in Lancaster County in the absence of a private health-care provider.

For those parents agreeable to participate in signing a pledge card to have their infant immunized "on time — every time," their name will be entered in a drawing for several gift certificates to area restaurants as well as significant presents for the infant.

The Lancaster County Immunization Coalition is not-for-profit group of professionals whose goal is to improve immunization rates and in-

crease immunization awareness in Lancaster County for children and adults. The group consists of nurse practitioners, physicians, school and health department nurses, pharmaceutical representatives, and other hospital-based and community health professionals.

The goals of the Coalition include the following:

- Increase immunization rates through education of the community and their providers.
- Promote continuity of care through Primary Care Providers.
- Monitor immunization status of every child and adult.

The Coalition meets monthly and is always looking for new members interested in the immunization of children and adults. The meetings are held at the Center for Wellness/Lancaster General Health Campus, 2100 Harrisburg Pike, Lancaster, the third Wednesday of each month at 8 a.m. For more information, call (717) 290-3144.

## 4-H Leaders Recognized For Contributions To Youth

COLLEGEVILLE (Montgomery Co.) — Adult and youth volunteers from across the state received congratulations for a job well done at the 2002 Pennsylvania 4-H Leaders' Forum conducted recently at the Nittany Lion Inn at Penn State's University Park campus.

Leaders attending from Montgomery County were Laura Carroll of Spring City and Lori Benner of Schwenksville. Both are leaders with the Central 4-H Horse and Pony Club and also work at the Sebastian Riding Associates in Collegeville. They give special guidance to the 4-H therapeutic riding division in the county.

Also recognized at the Forum was Sarah Danehower of Lansdale, who was honored as a Pennsylvania nominee for the National 4-H Leaders Hall of Fame. Sarah founded the Lansdale Lassies 4-H Sewing Club 53 years ago and has been a 4-H supporter ever since. She was recognized not only for her longevity with the club, but for her efforts over the years in involving youth with disabilities in 4-H.

Ted Alter, Penn State associate vice president for outreach and director of cooperative extension in the College of Agricultural Sciences, delivered the commendations at the event, which featured workshops designed to help adult and teen 4-H leaders to become better teachers and youth counselors.

"Volunteer 4-H program leaders serve as educators, mentors, positive role models and friends to thousands of young people throughout the state," said Robert Lewis, professor of agricultural and extension education and coordinator of the forum. "On average, each 4-H leader gives more than 200 hours of their time each year and makes an important impact on the lives of young children at a time when the involvement of a caring adult or peer can play a critical role in a young person's ability to make good choices in some very challenging situations. Our 4-H leaders set a wonderful example for youth."

Almost 11,000 volunteers are involved in Pennsylvania's 4-H programs. Each year, these volunteers work with nearly 125,000 rural and urban youth between eight and 19 years of age. 4-H offers programs in such areas as the environment, clothing and textiles, photography, rocketry, horsemanship, entomology, plant and animal science, nutrition and global citizenship. Nationwide, it involves 5.4 million youth members and more than 500,000 adult volunteers.

Workshops at the forum featured information on how leaders can involve youth members in such 4-H programs as computers, animal science, textile science, wildlife and foods.



Conestoga Pony Club members winners in regional competition: First row, Celeste Flocchi. Second row, Twyla Flocchi, BreeAnn Delbler, Stevie Dissinger, Katie Hall, and Jessie Hall. Third row, Kelsey Stratchko, Adrienne Adams, Kourtney Conti, Zoe Lyrstis, and Lindsay Stratchko. Fourth row, Jamie Nagle.

## Pony Club Makes Clean Sweep At Regionals

SEAFORD, Del. — The Conestoga Pony Club recently took part in the regional competition for the Delmarva region of the United States Pony Club in Seaford. The Delmarva region consists of clubs from Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey.

The regional rally, called "Quiz," is a test of the competitor's equine knowledge. The four

phases of competition were oral classroom questions, identification activities in the Mega Room and at stations, and a written test.

There were 112 competitors, making up 46 total teams. They are divided into five different divisions, separating the members by age and level within their club. The youngest and non-rated team was the Junior-Junior

team. Levels then ascend to the Junior Ds, Senior Ds and Junior Cs and Senior Cs.

Conestoga Pony Club had four teams covering every division except the Senior Cs and captured top honors in each one.

Three teams won first place and one team came in second place to Conestoga Pony Club's other team in the same division. That particular division had 18 teams in it.