Keeping unwanted prescription drugs off the streets

By Kortmy Hahn
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CHEBOYGAN — Several local entities teamed up Thursday morning to host a free prescription drug and needle take back event at McLaren Northern Michigan’s Cheboygan campus.

This event was done in cooperation with the Cheboygan County Sheriff’s Department, McLaren Northern Michigan and the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council. “Properly disposing of unused medicines at the community collection event reduces the risk that prescriptions will be mishandled and end up on the street and prevents avoidable poisoning of both children and adults, and prevents contamination of water resources.”

The take back was at McLaren Northern Michigan’s Cheboygan campus, in the circle drive, the door just north of the Emergency Department. Those who were looking to dispose of their medications, needles or other items such as old cell phones, eye glasses, hearing aids and shoes, were able to drive up to the door.

“We ended up collecting 31 pounds of medications, including two pounds of controlled substances, and 109.4 pounds of sharps from 29 people,” said Jennifer McKay, policy director for Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council. "Properly disposing of unused medicines at the community collection event reduces the risk that prescriptions will be mishandled and end up on the street and prevents avoidable poisoning of both children and adults, and prevents contamination of water resources."

Over 109 pounds of needles and other sharp objects were taken back during the event organized by McLaren Northern Michigan, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council and the Cheboygan County Sheriff’s Department. Photo by Kortny Hahn

See DRUGS, A2
will still be at the box before the Will Call.

Don’t moved all to a scanner print ticket giant step a lot transport our office, so ng it one step said Johnson. Expect glitches. to hear what is think before forward.”

Out at www.rouse.org. For thought inter... you can still tickets over the calling the Box (31) 627-5841.

more than pounds of community and local s through its retail distribution year, in addi- financial support the SpartanNash.

If someone dropped off needles or other sharp objects, they were given an approved, hard plastic container, which also showed the dates of the next drop off events.

[PHOTO SBY KORTNY HAHN]

DRUGS

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The other representatives would give those people an approved, hard plastic container in which to properly dispose of the needles and other sharps. “That way, they can put them in there for next time,” said McKay. “They can come in, drop that off and we’ll give them a new one.”

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Medication and needle take back events are held several times a year at the McLaren Northern Michigan Cheboygan Campus, to help keep the drugs and needles off the streets.

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For proper disposal,” said McKay.

These PODs are located in different places such as the Cheboygan Department of Public Safety and Tuscarora.
The plastic containers also listed the dates of future take back events, so the public knew when they could bring back the containers. These drug take back events are held three times throughout the year and the needle and sharps take backs happen every other month. The goal is to get as many of the prescription pills and other items disposed of properly, rather than ending up in a landfill, or as pollution.

"This is an environmentally safe, convenient and free way to dispose of your unwanted and expired

The event Thursday was part of the Tip of the Mitt Watershed and McLaren Northern Michigan's POD program that they have been doing for over 10 years.

POD stands for Prescription and Over the Counter Drugs, all of which can be disposed of in containers that are in many different locations throughout Cheboygan County.

"For those unable to attend the collection event, permanent POD drop boxes located at law enforcement agencies throughout Northern Michigan are available

For more information on the POD boxes, or their locations, visit www.PillsInThePOD.com.