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Page » A7

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SHELBY TOWNSHIP

Prescription drug collection nets 315 pounds of medications

By **SEAN DELANEY**

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After bringing in 167 pounds of prescription drugs at a Household Hazardous Waste Collection event in April, Shelby Township officials say residents have turned in an additional 148 pounds of unused medications as part of the township's Prescription Drug Take-Back Challenge, which was held throughout the month of May.

"This is what makes our community great," Township Supervisor Richard Stathakis said. "Anytime we issue a challenge to make the township a better place, the people of Shelby Township go above and beyond. We thought we might be able to collect 100 pounds, but to see 148 pounds turned in was truly amazing."

The Shelby Township Police Department and Da Francesco's Italian Cuisine and Taverna issued the Prescription Drug Take-Back Challenge to the community last month with Da Francesco's owner Domenic Belcastro pledging to donate \$1,000 to support the Police Department's drug education program.

"Our family has been blessed enough to be part of the Shelby Township community for more than 25 years, and it feels really good knowing we can help give back a little," Belcastro said. "This is a terrific place to live and do business because the people here genuinely care about one another and the community."

According to police, the Household Hazardous Waste Collection event in April and the Prescription Drug Take-Back Chal-

lenge in May were part of a yearlong effort to get unused, expired, or unwanted prescription drugs off the street.

"What's really gratifying about the success of this challenge is that, as police officers, we know our community is just as committed to fighting drug abuse as our officers," Shelby Township Police Chief Robert Shelide said.

According to statistics from the U.S Drug Enforcement Agency, four out of five heroin users start with prescription drug abuse, often obtaining the medication from family members or acquaintances. And, according to the Centers for Disease Control, the consequences of this abuse resulted in more than 24,500 fatalities in 2014 from heroin and prescription opioid overdoses.

According to the DEA, only ultimate users may dispose of pharmaceutical controlled substances. An ultimate user, which includes a household member of the person or pet that was prescribed the medication, may transfer pharmaceutical controlled substances to authorized collectors or law enforcement via a collection receptacle, mail-back package, or take-back event.

If someone dies while in lawful possession of pharmaceutical controlled substances, any person lawfully entitled to dispose of the decedent's property may dispose of the substances. A long-term care facility may dispose of a current or former resident's pharmaceutical controlled substances.

For more information, contact the Shelby Township Police Department at 586-731-2121.