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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dickinson-Iron District Health Department Celebrates Great American Smokeout November 21, 2013

The American Cancer Society marks the Great American Smokeout on the third Thursday of November each year by encouraging smokers to use the date to make a plan to quit, or to plan in advance and quit smoking that day. By doing so, smokers will be taking an important step towards a healthier life – one that can lead to reducing cancer risk. This year's Great American Smokeout will be held on Thursday November 21st.

Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in Michigan, killing more than 14,500 residents each year, yet many Michiganders still use tobacco. 23.3% of Michigan adults, and 14% of Michigan youth smoke cigarettes. However, more than half of these tobacco users have tried to quit for at least one day during the past year. Because tobacco products are highly addictive, most users make several quit attempts before they are successful.

“The Great American Smokeout is an opportunity to remind tobacco users that there are resources available to help them quit, and to support tobacco users in their efforts to quit,” stated Kelly Rumpf, Health Educator. “Quitting tobacco use is the best thing you can do for your health. Within minutes to hours after quitting blood pressure, heart rate, and carbon monoxide levels decrease, and the long term benefits continue over time including improved lung function and decreased risk of cancer and heart disease.”

Research shows that while quitting is difficult for most tobacco users, people who use tobacco can increase their success in quitting with help. Quitters are most successful when using a combination of therapies, including resources such as nicotine replacement, counseling, self-help materials, and a strong support network of family and friends.

Resources available to Michigan residents include:

- The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) Tobacco Quitline, 1-(800) 784-8669, continues to provide free telephone coaching for the uninsured and those with Medicaid and Medicare, and free nicotine replacement medications for those who qualify. Information on quitting smoking and a free printable Michigan Smoker's Quit Kit are available through MDCH by visiting: www.michigan.gov/tobacco.
- BecomeAnEX.org is a free, interactive website that shows smokers how to re-learn life without cigarettes. The site, developed by Legacy in partnership with Mayo Clinic, offers a free, personalized quit plan and an online support community to help people prepare to quit and stay quit.
- Dickinson County Healthcare System offers a smoking cessation class. Need 15 participants to hold a class. Cost is \$30. Call 776-5532 to learn more.
- The American Cancer Society has tools available to help with quitting. For more information contact the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345. Information is also available on the American Cancer Society's Web site at www.cancer.org.

For more information about the Great American Smokeout or tobacco prevention activities, contact the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department at 779-7234.

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