RITCHIE "SHED THE MEDS" EVENT HELPS DISPOSE OF OVER 1,500 PILLS

PATTY RITCHIE   August 14, 2014

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Additional Events to be Held on August 19 and September 16

More than 1,500 individual pills totaling 40 pounds were disposed of Wednesday evening at State Senator Patty Ritchie's "Shed the Meds" event held at River Hospital in Alexandria Bay.

The event—which was hosted in conjunction with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department, River Hospital and the Alexandria Bay Police Department—provided local residents with a safe, responsible way to dispose of unused, unwanted and expired prescription medicines.

"If you're like most people, you have unused or unwanted medications around your home. However, what many don't realize is that these little pills can pose a big threat; putting the health and safety of children, pets and others in jeopardy," said Senator Ritchie.

"I would like to thank the organizations that partnered with me to make this event possible; the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department, River Hospital and the Alexandria Bay Police Department. Working together, we have provided residents with not only a responsible way to dispose of prescription medications but also have increased the health and safety of the community."

Last month, Senator Ritchie hosted a similar event in Ogdensburg where thousands of individual pills totaling more than 150 pounds were disposed of. She will host two more "Shed the Meds" events on the following dates:

•   August 19: Carthage Area Hospital, 1001 West Street, Carthage

•   September 16: Gouverneur Hospital, 77 West Barney Street, Gouverneur

Americans filled a record 4 billon prescriptions last year and its estimated that millions of pills sit unused in consumers' medicine cabinets. Those medications can pose a danger to children and pets and improper disposal can pollute lakes and streams. Among the pills disposed of were painkillers, opioids and narcotics—substances which are often times the gateway drugs for addiction to illegal substances such as heroin.