

**November 3, 2018**

## **Cannon Team gets Senior Bowl Charity Run started**

MOBILE, Alabama — For the third straight year, the Mobile County Health Department’s Cannon Team was honored to serve as the official starters for the Reese’s Senior Bowl Charity Run’s 5-kilometer and 10-kilometer events. This is the 31st year that the Reese’s Senior Bowl has sponsored the races.

The charity runs were presented by Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Alabama and Wells Fargo. Selected to fire the cannon were Jim Nagy, Senior Bowl Executive Director, for the 5-kilometer event and Kay Williams, Mobile District Account Manager for Blue Cross & Blue Shield, for the 10-kilometer race.

It was in 2016 that Dr. Bernard H. Eichold II, Health Officer for Mobile County, started an initiative called “Declaring War on Physical Inactivity.” He points out that Alabama has one of the highest percentages of obesity in America.

In an effort to encourage local residents to go outside and enjoy our beautiful surroundings while exercising, Dr. Eichold arranged to borrow a Civil War re-enactment cannon to serve as the “starting gun” for the Azalea Trail Run that year. The response was so positive that Dr. Eichold acquired funds to purchase our own weapon to battle obesity.

The Lyle Line-Throwing Cannon, which has a 2.5-inch-diameter barrel, was manufactured in the early 1900s by Coston. It is not a replica, reproduction or toy. The cannon was designed to fire a projectile attached to a rope to a boat or a victim in distress. Now it used to inspire those seeking a healthier lifestyle.

A team of MCHD employees has been trained to safely use the device. Present on Saturday with Dr. Eichold were Terry Carson, Edward Franklin, Eddie Jones and Alden Pendleton.

Any other groups interested in having the MCHD Cannon Team attend their event should contact the Office of Communications by calling 251-690-8823 or via email at mbryant@mchd.org.