



AT SAPPA PARK, Marilyn Horn and Peggy Gassman (above) walked towards the shelter house to check in before they headed to the trails for the community walk. Dana Koerperich, her daughter Melody and son Caleb (below) also took part in the walk taking the trail over the spillway.

Hospital sponsors community walk to promote good health

With warmer weather here to stay, the Decatur County Hospital helped kick off spring and summer fitness with a community walk at Sappa Park on Thursday.

Deb Klima, with respiratory therapy, said the hospital has been doing the walk for at least the last six years. It used to be that people would park in the gun club area and then walk the road. About two years ago, said Mrs. Klima, they decided to move the walk starting point to the shelter house because the Sappa Park Committee had started to put in trails.

There were even more walking paths this year than last, she said. Carolyn Burtis, with the park committee, even brought out maps, so people would know where the trails went.

Last week, said Mrs. Klima, was Hospital Nursing Home Week.

When the community walk first started, she said, it was done as part of that week to help promote healthy living for the employees. The idea, she said, was a fitness walk, as a way to spring into fitness.

Then the decision was made to open it up to the community.

Each year the hospital gives a present to the walkers. This year it was a tote bag, she said. The hospital also provides snacks.

Two or three years ago the Emergency Medical Technicians started volunteering to cook hot dogs, she said, so the hospital purchases the meat and the technicians do the cooking.

Sondra Fowler, a registered nurse who helps organize the walk, said last year there were 140 people who walked and this year around 84.

All of the new trails were open, she said, and the hospital is also trying to help promote the new trails



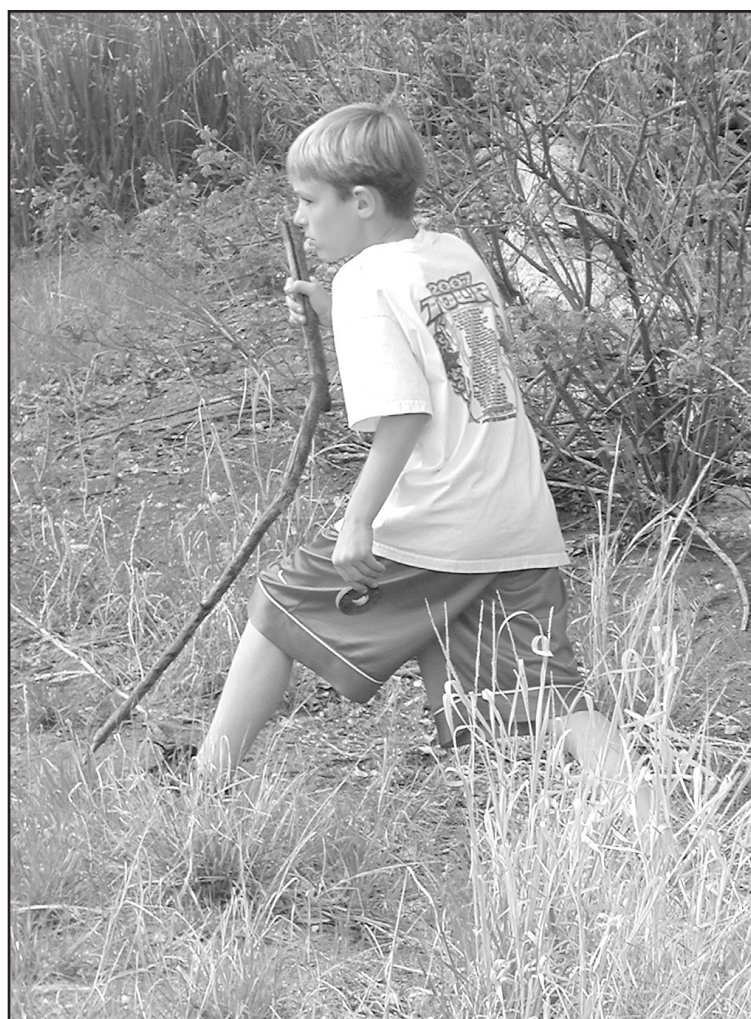
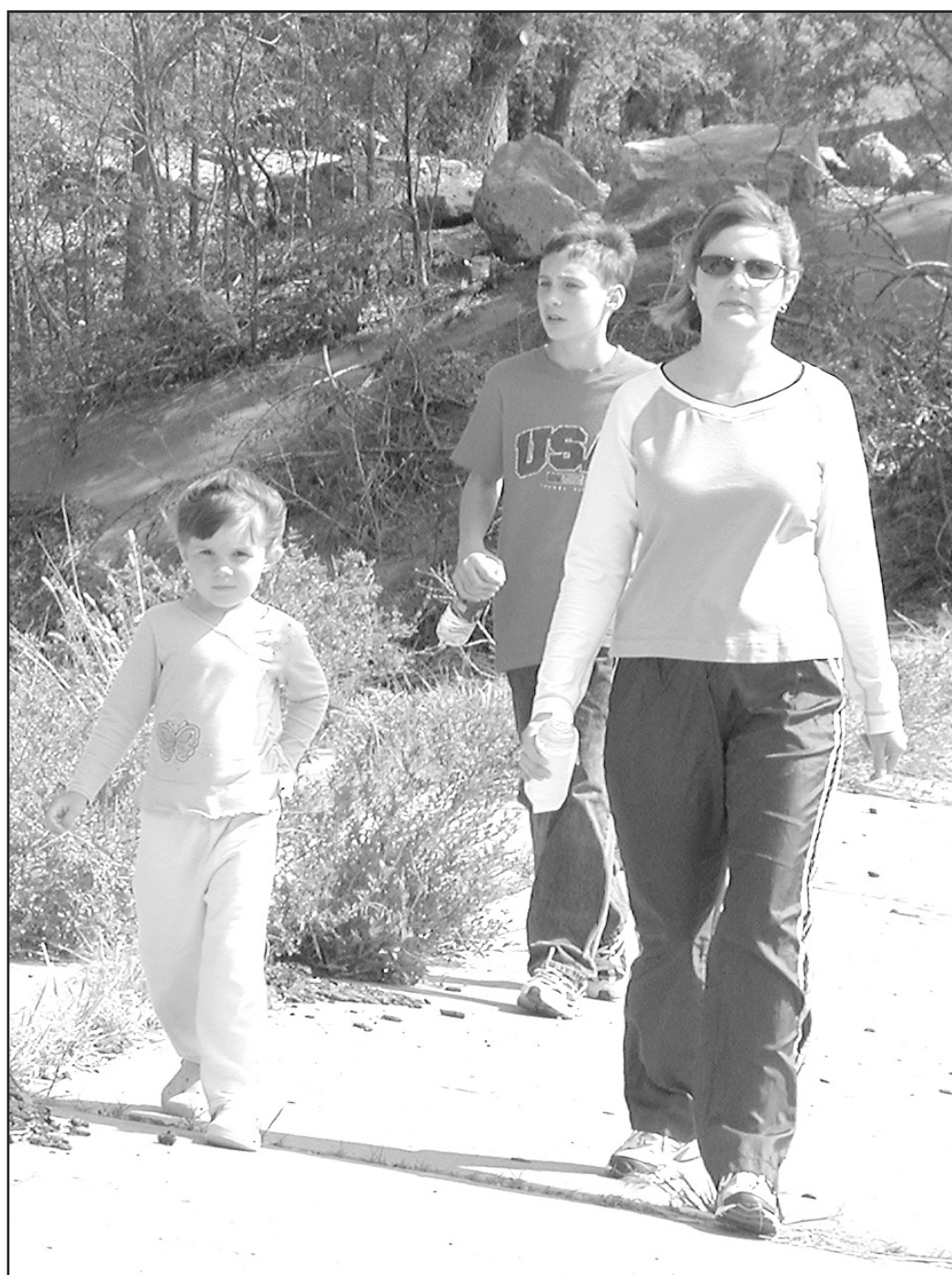
AT THE SHELTER HOUSE, Deb Klima handed out maps and made sure people signed in for the Decatur County Hospital-sponsored community walk Thursday.

and the park.

Mrs. Klima said the numbers were a little down this year probably because it was cloudy and a little on the rainy side. There were fewer older people and children this

year, she said.

The walk also gave people a chance to see the new picnic tables at the park, she said.



GATLIN HISSONG used a stick to help him walk up a hill.

— Story and photos by Kimberly Davis