



# Just the Facts

## 3RD ANNUAL VETERANS ONLY JOB FAIR

Salem VAMC, Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), and community service providers are partnering to host the 3rd Annual Veterans Only Regional Job Fair on [Wednesday, April 30, 2014](#) from 9:00 am—2:00 pm in our Auditorium (Building 5).

About 30 employers and service providers will be available to discuss job opportunities and offer assistance to Veterans in completing the application process. Employers include Adams, Advance Auto, Atlas, Boxley, Dish Network, Dynax, Frito Lay, Goodwill, Home Depot, Lawrence Transportation, Lowes, Ply-Gym, Roanoke City, RR Donnelley, Salem VAMC, Starbucks, US Foods, Virginia Tech, and Walmart. Staff will be on hand to assist with application submissions, résumé preparation, and tips and tools to help them get started. Veterans benefits and resources information will be available.

Many Veterans returning from military service are faced with challenges in finding gainful employment. We are very proud to be in partnership with VEC and many other area employers who have expressed an interest in hiring and working with Veterans. Veterans bring a wide array of experience, skills, and training which make them ideal candidates for many positions.



**Miguel H. LaPuz, MD, MBA,  
Director**

*Last year's Job Fair was a success; about 340 Veterans and 32 employers participated.*





# Rural Outreach

Salem VAMC has a Rural Health Team to provide information and education to Veterans in our catchment areas. The team is under Salem VAMC’s Primary Care Service Line, and works closely with Home Based Primary Care, Tele-medicine, Women’s Health, Mental Health, the OEF/OIF/OND Coordinator, and other services. Rural Health staff can help Veterans enroll for VA health care!

### Upcoming Rural Health Outreach Events:

- April 11 from 10:30a-12p—Nutrition & Diabetes—Williamson Road Library
- April 14 from 10:30-11:30a—Management Your Diabetes—Carriage Hill Retirement, Bedford
- April 15 from 10a-12p—AHA Friends & Family—VFW Post 1033 in Covington
- April 17 from 10-11:30a—Pre-Diabetes—Bethel Ridge Assisted Living in Fincastle
- April 18 from 10:30-11:30a—Diabetes Self Care—Blue Ridge Library
- April 19 from 9a-3p—Prepper Festival on Main Street in New Castle
- April 21 from 10:30-11:30a—Complications of Diabetes—Carriage Hill Retirement, Bedford
- April 22 from 12-2p—Osteoarthritis—Cumberland Mountain Community Services
- April 24 from 10:30a-12p—Diabetes Self Care—Vinton Public Library
- April 25 from 10:30a-12p—Diabetes Self Care—Williamson Road Library
- April 26 from 9a-3:30p—Veterans Seminar—American Legion Post 104, Appomattox
- April 28 from 10:30a-12p—Emotional Wellness—South County Library, Roanoke
- April 29 from 11a-12p—AHA Friends & Family—Meadowbrook Library, Shawsville
- May 2 from 10:30-11:30a—Pre-Diabetes—Blue Ridge Library
- May 5 from 10:30-11:30a—Medication Management—Carriage Hill Retirement, Bedford

More information and upcoming events open to the public are posted at [www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov) in the events calendar. If you would like to invite the Rural Health Team to an event or to speak with your organization, please contact Marian McConnell at (540) 855-3460 or email [marian.mcconnell@va.gov](mailto:marian.mcconnell@va.gov).



### KEEP YOUR FINGER ON OUR PULSE! ONLINE, ALL THE TIME!

- ★ Salem VAMC’s website is [www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov)
- ★ Our Facebook page is [www.facebook.com/SalemVAMC](http://www.facebook.com/SalemVAMC)
- ★ Out Twitter account is [www.twitter.com/VASalem](http://www.twitter.com/VASalem)
- ★ Sign up today for **MyHealthVet** at [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)
- ★ VA’s National website is [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)



*Make these your “favorites!”*



## NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Submitted by Barrett Bass; Photo by Ryan Pleasants

April 6-13 is National Volunteer Week. At Salem we are thankful for every single Volunteer every single day! We currently have 425 regular scheduled Volunteers; last Fiscal Year they donated 45,319 hours (includes occasional Volunteer hours). The estimated value of Volunteer time for 2013 was \$22.55 per hour.

As spring arrives in full force, so have our Volunteers. We kicked off Spring with the annual American Legion Spring Carnival for our inpatient Veterans, and have several High School and College students donating their time and energy.



Thanks to our volunteers, and special recognition of those who volunteered during the extreme weather this past winter.

To learn more about Volunteering, please see our website at [www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov), or contact the Voluntary Service Office at (540) 982-2463, ext. 2636.

## NATIONAL FORMER POW RECOGNITION DAY

A wreath-laying ceremony was held at the POW monument in front of our main building on April 9, 2014, to recognize former Prisoners of War.

Dr. Miguel LaPuz, Salem VAMC Director (left), and Bob Gray, former POW (right) are shown in a moment of silence. (Photo by Ryan Pleasants).

The following was read at the ceremony:

*We often forget how war, and the heroes of war, have so much impact in our lives. One of our very own staff members recalls her uncle who was a POW for two years and had been part of the Bataan Death March. She writes, "When my uncle came home, my grandma said he was unrecognizable and his life was changed forever. He managed to go on, get married, and worked for the DOD for many years in Richmond. I remember that he had terrible headaches most of his life and lived with terrible nightmares. When I lived in Richmond, he was like a father to me. Through all of this, I never saw any bitterness or hate, only a love for life and the small things of everyday living. He is gone now to a final peach and comfort."*

*Like this Veteran, we honor and recognize the men and women who have served valiantly to protect our freedom. Thank you for joining us today as we remember those who have made this ultimate sacrifice.*



## HOUSEKEEPERS OF THE MONTH AWARD

Article & Photo Submitted by Nathan Rivers

On March 25th, Housekeeping held their monthly staff meeting. Mr. Dale Ratcliffe (left) and Mr. Douglas Dixon (right) were selected as Housekeepers of the Month. Both men give great attention to detail to ensuring that our Nation's Veterans are well taken care of along with their families.

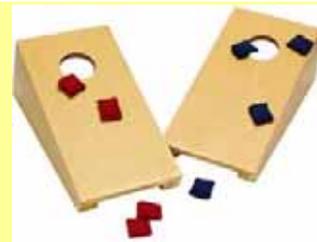
Please take the time to recognize these men on a Job Well Done and also please don't hesitate to recognize any of the Housekeeping Staff we have here at Salem VAMC!



## FIRST SALEM VAMC CORN HOLE TOURNAMENT

Submitted by Evelyn P. Sayers

The first Salem VAMC Corn Hole Tournament, sponsored by the Employee Association (EA) and spearheaded by EEO Manager Patrick Zimmerman and Evelyn Sayers, kicked off on Friday, March 28, with the help of Mr. Toby Smith, Corn Hole Tournament World Champion. The Tournament had 8 teams: "The Ringers" (Stephan Jones/Dan Hernandez); "Hole Fillers" (Naymon Mack/Keath Hampton); "Thin Blue Line" (Chief Dale Henley/Bryan Smith); "Rock'em Sock'em" (Willie Mae Bethea/Carl Luck); "The Ringer Crusher" (Tom Hrinya/Edward Harper); "I Thought It Was HUD-VASH" (Monica Veney/Will Kain); "The Knuckleheads" (Craig Long/Merenda Crotts); and "Double Trouble" (Sarah Palmer/Carolyn Tasco).



The eight teams played amongst each other until there were only two teams left. The Ringers and Hole Fillers played against each other until the Ringers, who were very sharp and impressive, ended up Champions, receiving trophies and medals! The Hole Fillers came 2nd; 3rd place went to the Thin Blue Line, and 4th place to the Rock'em Sock'em. The players enjoyed the competition, while displaying intensity, camaraderie and sportsmanship.

Special thanks to Mr. Smith who brought all his own professional equipment (corn hole board platforms, bags, scoring boards, etc.) and supervised the tournament to benefit our Employees and Veterans.

A big "shout out" goes to all the Salem VAMC Cornhole players who joyfully came out, showing off their prowess and talents, making the first Salem VAMC Corn Hole Tournament a very successful and memorable one! We hope to see more Teams next year!

*Left: Stephan Jones and Dan Hernandez. Center: First prize winners—Stephan Jones and Dan Hernandez with Toby Smith (Corn Hole World Champion). Right: Toby Smith with Stephan Jones, Dan Hernandez (1st place), Toby Smith at the Center, and Keath Hampton and Naymon Mack, 2nd place.*



## MY HEALTHeVET TESTIMONIAL

Submitted by David R. Palmer, Vietnam Veteran 1968-69

I, being a Vietnam Vet, thought I would try and put into words the gratifying experiences I have had in using these secure websites - "My HealtheVet" and "Secure Messaging." These online websites are a Godsend to the Vet needing access to his/her health care with the VA Medical Center. This access includes the following and I have used every one of them personally: (1) being able to view appointments online; (2) ability to order your prescription drugs; (3) ability to see notes your Doctor made during your visits; (4) ability to view lab results; and (5) ability to communicate with your Primary Care/Specialty Care clinics online without having to depend on a telephone.



The "Secure Messaging" is awesome; I have contacted my Primary Care clinic numerous times with questions and they respond ASAP with answers and address all of my concerns in a secure manner.

I really can't say enough good things about these programs. They truly help the Veteran in the management of their health care along with decisions needed in a simple and secure online manner; really helpful also to Vets with limited mobility and distance travelling by auto.

Both "My HealtheVet" and "Secure Messaging" have made management of my health care much simpler and most rewarding. Everyone associated with these websites is to be commended---I am truly impressed! Fantastic!

## SOCIAL WORK AWARDS

Submitted by Tim Woodrum, Photos by Marian McConnell

Social Work Service (SWS) celebrated Social Work Month on March 13 with several awards.

In the category of "Friend of Social Work" for outstanding support of our mission, the winners were: Ryan Pleasants - Chief Voluntary Service; Dr. Anjali Varma – Mental Health Clinic Psychiatrist; and Ocie Cephas – Owner, Magnolia Ridge Home For Adults. In addition, Annie Grause, Secretary to the Director, won the "Most Honorary Social Worker of All Time" award for her support of SWS. Robin Morris won the Trivia Contest. The final award was for the "SWS Above and Beyond" trophy for success in collateral duties with enthusiasm and grace. This well-deserving winner was Ashley Bradley, Med/Surg Social Worker, who excelled at other duties such as Fugitive Felon Program, Medical Foster Home and expansion of Ortho care to other VAMC'S.



Top L-R: Nancy Short and Ryan Pleasants; Joe Duehl and Kathryn Mustard accepting for Dr. Varma; Gayle Sanford, Ocie Cephas, Kathy Godbey.



Bottom L-R: Annie Grause and Tim Woodrum; Robin Morris; Chris Bradley and husband.



## COMPLIMENTS CORNER

- ☺ "I would like to thank **Dr. Perez** and her staff for making me feel welcomed for my first visit to the **Women's Clinic**. Dr. Perez explained in detail what my medical condition as and what necessary procedure it would take to help me before surgery. I am from the Mountain Home VAMC. Your staff in the Women's Clinic made me very comfortable the whole time I was there. Dr. Perez is doing a great job for our Veterans."
- ☺ "**Carolyn [Parker in the My HealthVet Connection]** is great! Very helpful, very knowledgeable, and a genuine pleasure to work with. Don't EVER lose her!"
- ☺ "I would like to thank the **[ER/EMD]** nurses, Dr.'s, Aides, Secretaries have been more than excellent. They have asked me if I need anything. They seem to really care about you. When I got up here Tuesday, 2/11/14, I parked in front of ER door. Went inside to ask if anybody could help me get my husband out of car. The Triage nurse was busy with a patient. The janitor went back in ER got 2 nurses who came out and helped him. We received excellent care from everybody. Even other workers ask if they can help me with anything. The ER staff were wonderful too."
- ☺ Veteran had cataract surgery **[Eye Clinic]**... "...from surgeon to staff...it was a great experience. All were professional - absolutely wonderful." In addition he was supposed to see doctor for post op but not until afternoon. The driver for Staunton wanted to head back as soon as possible. **Dana Garman** was able to get him seen so he could leave... She is ALWAYS willing to try and accommodate Veterans in the clinic and goes way out of the box to do so. She practices service recovery every day. Veteran was amazed he got to be seen and was most appreciative.
- ☺ "Last July I was seen in **Clinic 1** by my Primary Care Health Provider, **Joni Goldwasser**, DNP, FNP-C. This young lady I must say is relentless

in her pursuit for answers to the problems I was experiencing. While being evaluated for what turned out to be shingles, she took note of my difficulty walking and limited range of motion and my upper extremities with some tingling in a couple of my fingers bilaterally. She requested radiographic studies of my cervical spine, followed by a referral to **Dr. Robert F. Saul** in Neurology that resulted in a request to outsource me to a Neurological Surgeon with Jefferson Surgical Clinic... Four days later, much to my amazement, I was having corrective surgery. Needless to say, I am doing much better these days. Having served 24 of my 26 year career in the medical field, I am extremely familiar with the entire health care process. As an Independent Duty Technician serving on several ships in the capacity of senior medical representative aboard, and on several occasions, the only medical representative serving a ship's company of 450-500 crew members, start to finish. My goal was always a complete medical history, evaluation, necessary ancillary services, diagnosis, and ultimately treatment with a successful outcome. All while maintaining a good rapport with the patient. I must admit, I have nothing over on your entire staff. They all performed in a very professional manner, from greeting to salutation. I would be remiss if I didn't mention their names... **Jody Duke, RN; Sarah Bryant, LPN; the entire staff of Radiology, Laboratory, Dermatology, Cardiology, Vascular Clinic, and Neurology Clinic.**"

- ☺ "Thanks so much to the VA that done so much for [my husband]. He passed away in December. God bless all."
- ☺ "On behalf of our father... we wish to extend our sincere gratitude to the **social services** at Salem VAMC. Dad's assigned case manager was **Katelyn Peters**. We were able to bring Dad home with the assistance of **hospice care**, and he passed way peacefully last week. Our family is deeply grateful for the level of compassion and respect that Katelyn [Peters] displayed each time we were in contact with her — be it in person or via telephone. She kept us well informed, patiently answered many questions, and provided us with guidance and advice. We genuinely appreciate her efforts and kindness..."
- ☺ "I recently had the misfortune of stepping on an embroidery needle... the **ER** staff attended to me in a very kind and professional way... I met **Dr. Bonk** who would do the surgery to remove the needle. In each department I was given time to discuss the procedures... in every department I

was treated with respect and kindness. ... Tomorrow I will get the stitches out and I know I will be treated as though I were royalty. For such a thoughtless event, I experienced nothing but positive attitudes, encouragement, professionalism, and thoughtfulness from each department. I have written this so you will know that you have a wonderful and efficient staff of persons working at the VA hospital. These employees work hard and obviously care about their patients. I never met with an unhappy, sloppy, or thoughtless employee at the hospital there during this experience. Dr. Bonk was truly an energetic and delightful person to have as my foot physician, as well as being an efficient doctor."

- ☺ "Thanks to **Charles Hurd, Privacy Officer**, who showed professionalism and devotion to get my information regarding a name change."
- ☺ "The **Women's Health Clinic** is great. **Sherry** and **Dr. Perez** found two lesions that needed to be removed. They got me in quickly so I wouldn't worry. Then Dr. Perez and Jody helped remove them. They are great and I love the VA because of people like them."
- ☺ "I was impressed with the treatment by the staff; they are super and the cleanliness of the hospital is very impressive. I am totally happy the way this place is run and am telling everyone in Fayetteville, NC about this place."
- ☺ "**Robin Haas** [Patient Advocate] has really helped me out and I appreciate all her help."
- ☺ "[**Radiology**] I had a radiological procedure done. From the person who explained everything to the one who did the actual procedure, everyone was so nice to explain what was going on and what to expect. All professionals! I appreciate the care."

### VA Kicks Off Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic More than 400 with Disabilities Skiing in Colorado

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today that more than 400 disabled Veterans are hitting the slopes this week at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass Village, Colo., the largest adaptive sports event of its kind in the world, scheduled from through April 4.

"This Clinic is an excellent example of how VA uses a holistic healthcare model to provide every Veteran with physical and mental treatment options that work for them," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "Through sports and other forms of recreational therapy, we can greatly improve the quality of life for

many of our Nation's Veterans."

Last month, 18 military Veteran Paralympic athletes competed at the 2014 Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia. Many of these athletes received their first exposure to winter sports at this VA Clinic. Since 2005, VA has had a partnership with the U.S. Paralympics that establishes VA's Winter Sports Clinic as a pipeline to provide participants to American Paralympic teams engaged in national and international competition.

The Winter Sports Clinic, which is sponsored by VA and Disabled American Veterans (DAV), teaches Veterans with disabilities about adaptive Alpine and Nordic skiing. It also introduces them to a number of other adaptive recreational activities and sports.

Now in its 28th year, the Clinic is an annual rehabilitation program open to U.S. military Veterans with traumatic brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, orthopedic amputations, visual impairments, certain neurological problems and other disabilities, who receive care at a VA medical facility or military treatment center.

To meet the unique needs of participants, an estimated 200 certified ski instructors for the disabled and several current and former members of the U.S. Disabled Ski Team will serve as instructors.

"This is a chance for some of our most profoundly injured heroes to challenge themselves beyond their perceived limitations," said DAV National Commander Joseph Johnston. "It's the biggest and most comprehensive event of its kind. There were 18 Veterans who competed in Sochi at this year's Winter Paralympic Games who got their start at this event and everyone who participates is forever changed by the experience."

At the six-day event, Veterans also learn rock climbing, scuba diving, snowmobiling, curling, sled hockey and self-defense taught by the U.S. Secret Service.

VA is a recognized leader in rehabilitative and recreational therapies, and operates more than 1,700 points of care, including 151 medical centers. DAV is a non-profit, congressionally chartered Veterans service organization with 52 state-level Departments, 1,355 active Nationwide Chapters and membership of more than one million disabled Veterans.

Learn more about VA's adaptive sports programs and partnerships at [www.va.gov/adaptivesports](http://www.va.gov/adaptivesports).



## REPORTING SAFETY & QUALITY ISSUES

Submitted by Quality Management

Anyone may report safety and quality of care issues to the Joint Commission (TJC); and any criminal activity, waste, abuse, mismanagement, as well as safety issues may be reported to the Office of Inspector General (OIG). (Concerns can be reported without fear of retaliation or disciplinary action against a reporting employee.)



The Joint Commission (TJC):  
Office of Quality Monitoring, The Joint Commission  
One Renaissance Blvd.  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181  
Phone: 1-800-994-6610  
Fax: 1-630-792-5636  
Email: [www.complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:www.complaint@jointcommission.org)

OIG:  
VA OIG Hotline  
PO Box 50410  
Washington, DC 20091-0410  
Phone: 1-800-488-8244  
Fax: 1-202-565-7936  
Email: [vaoighotline@va.gov](mailto:vaoighotline@va.gov)

Be sure to check out our website

[www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov)

For events, articles, photos, this newsletter, and more! You can also "like" us on Facebook and connect with us on Twitter

## JUST THE FACTS

The newsletter is published around the 1st of each month.

If you have ideas for *Just the Facts* articles (250 words or less), photos, or suggestions, please contact Marian McConnell at (540) 982-2463, Ext. 1400; or email [vhasampublicaffairs@va.gov](mailto:vhasampublicaffairs@va.gov) at least 10 days before the first of the month.

Remember, you can read current and past issues on the Salem VAMC Intranet homepage.

*Disclaimer: We reserve the right to edit/condense articles and information as appropriate. We will make every attempt to notify the author(s) first.*

Posted online under "Resources" at:

[www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov)



## EVENTS CALENDAR 2014

Also see [www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov) Events Calendar and Employees can view Intranet Events Calendar

Apr 1-30	Clothesline Project display to raise awareness about Military Sexual Trauma (MST), sexual assault, and sexual abuse—main Lobby 143
Apr 6-13	National Volunteer Week
Apr 11, 18, 25	Occupational Health displays on Fridays in the main Lobby 143 from 10a-12p
Apr 15	Be Physically Active display in the main Lobby Building 143 from 11:30a-12:30p
Apr 15	Tax Day
Apr 15, 22, 29	Teal Tuesdays—wear teal to show your support for MST and other sexual assault survivors
Apr 17	Employee Town Hall from 11:30a-12:30p in the Auditorium Building 5
Apr 18-20	PAIRS Marriage Retreat for Veterans at Hyatt Hotel sponsored by Chaplain Service; contact (540) 982-2463 ext. 2892
Apr 22	Red Cross Blood Drive from 11a-4p in the Auditorium Building 5
Apr 23, 24	Clothesline Project—informational tables about MST, sexual assault, sexual abuse. Main lobby 143 from 8:30a-4p
Apr 24	Administrative Professionals Day
Apr 30	Veterans Only Regional Job Fair in the Auditorium from 9a-2p
May 2	Virginia Blood Services Blood Drive in the Auditorium from 11a-4p
May 7	Education Fair—Nurses Week in the Auditorium from 7:30a-4p
May 9	Breakfast with the Director for the Night Staff—4-5a in 143-1C129
May 21	VA2K Walk from 12-1p around the perimeter of Salem VAMC starting at Building 5 Auditorium
May 22	Asian Pacific American Heritage Celebration in the Main lobby 143 from 11a-1p
Jun 1	Memorial Day Service for Veterans who passed away in past 6 months—in Auditorium from 2-3p