



# Just the Facts

## TWO RIBBON CUTTINGS!

The new **Center for Traumatic Stress (CTS)** was dedicated on June 13, 2011. CTS Director, Dr. Dana Holohan, introduced the staff and spoke about the years of work that went into making the CTS a reality. Among those present were representatives from the offices of Senator Mark Warner, Senator Jim Webb, and Congressman Bob Goodlatte, as well as Mr. David Knapp, Chapter Manager, Veterans Support Organization. Refreshments were provided by the Veterans Canteen Service. Tours were provided afterwards.

The CTS, Building 168, is an outpatient clinical, education, and research center that provides services to Veterans with PTSD, returning combat service members, and those who may have experienced military sexual trauma. The CTS provides initial assessment and treatment. Groups include psycho-educational, skills training, and exposure treatments. Individual therapy and marital therapy are offered, both focusing on health, interpersonal violence, PTSD and shame, and effectiveness of PTSD treatments. The CTS also provides outreach to returning service members, families, and community providers and agencies.

For more information about the CTS please call (540) 982-2463, Ext. 2934.



Photos Left to Right: Staff and visitors attend the event. Dr. LaPuz, Medical Center Director, and Dr. Dana Holohan, CTS Director, cut the ribbon to the new facility as Ms. Carol Bogedain, Associate Director; Ms. Pearl Washington, Nurse Executive; and CTS staff look on. The new CTS, Building 168, is a beautiful addition to the Salem VAMC campus. Photos by Marian McConnell.



The **Wytheville Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)** was dedicated on June 16, 2011, with a ribbon cutting ceremony on a beautiful sunny day. In attendance were many Veterans, visitors, volunteers, and staff, along with American Legion Post 9 (who provided the Honor Guard and Posting of Colors); VFW Post 2719; Representatives from the offices of Senator Mark Warner, Senator Jim Webb, and Congressman Morgan Griffith; C. Wayne Sutherland, Jr., Wytheville Town Manager; Trenton G. Crewe, Jr., Wytheville Mayor; City Councilman Jim Hunley; Tim Walsh, Manager, Wytheville Walmart and Member of Chamber of Commerce (who donated refreshments); and other community business leaders. Special music was provided by Mr. Carl Hamm.

The clinic is located on 165 Peppers Ferry Road in Wytheville. VA staff at this new site of care provide outpatient primary care and general mental health services. Management and staffing of the Wytheville CBOC are the responsibility of the Salem VAMC. This clinic provides primary care and general mental health services to Veterans from Bland, Carroll, Giles, Grayson, Pulaski, Smythe and Wythe counties in Virginia and Mercer county in West Virginia. It is estimated about 3,500 Veterans may seek care at the Wytheville Clinic. Veterans currently enrolled in the Salem or Beckley VA Medical Centers who are in close proximity to the Wytheville clinic will be given an option to enroll for their care at the new clinic site. Veterans who are not receiving VA health care should contact either the VA Medical Center in Salem or Beckley for registration and enrollment information. For more information contact the Wytheville CBOC at (276) 223-5400.



Clockwise: Refreshments by VCS and the Wytheville Walmart; flowers donated by local Florist; ribbon cutting by Mr. Hoffmann, Ms. Beaver, and Dr. LaPuz; cake from Voluntary Service; Sam Bailey, Naymon Mack, Barry Bonds, and James Deyerle from Ward Administration; American Legion Post 9 Color Guard; Carl Hamm singing the National Anthem; and the entrance of the new Wytheville CBOC. Photos by Marian McConnell.



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



## 1ST ANNUAL VA 2K WALK & ROLL

The 1st Annual **VA 2K Walk & Roll** on June 2nd around the facility was a great success! The event was held nationwide at all VAMC's to promote exercise, and to support homeless Veterans. Salem collected 51 boxes/bags of clothing and articles to donate to homeless Veterans, with a value of over \$3,000. There were 154 participants who walked, jogged, ran, or rolled in the event. The weather was perfect, especially after the previous week's heat wave.

Special thanks to the following for making this event "run" so well:

- ★ Dr. Shannon Cohen and Dr. Sarah Hartley—Co-Chairs of the Planning Committee; along with the members of the Planning Committee.
- ★ Dr. Miguel LaPuz, Director, for kicking off the event, and Dr. Maureen McCarthy, Chief of Staff, for walking (and dancing to the music).
- ★ Voluntary Service and Volunteers—Ann Benois, Terri McGuigan, and many volunteers.
- ★ George Davis, RN, ER Nurse.
- ★ Music by the "VA 2K Rock'n'Rollers" — Beth Woodward, Mark Realmuto, BW Kidd, Cody Woodward, Danny Miner, Michael Hancock, Shannon Starkey, Demp Maxton, and Hope Trachtenberg-Fifer.
- ★ Rural Health Team Members—Kari Wygal, Andrew Forest, Kimberly Jarrett, and Vicky Doss, accompanied by Virginia Wounded Warrior Coordinator Lisa Yost and New River Valley Resource Specialist Leanna Craig.
- ★ Wanda Henry and the Veterans Canteen Service—donated snacks and water.
- ★ VA Police—provided traffic control.
- ★ Naymon Mack and FMS/EMS staff for setting up tents, setting out trash cans, grounds work, and more.
- ★ Joe Woolwine and the Paint Shop—signage.
- ★ Worklife Improvement Team (WIT) - donated t-shirts.
- ★ Tim Woodrum—Finish line cheerleader and coordination of donations for homeless Veterans.
- ★ Employees Association—hot dogs to benefit the EEO Scholarship program.
- ★ ALL who participating by walking rolling, and/or donating items.
- ★ National VA 2K Program—furnished visors and buttons.

Top to Bottom: Participants begin their walk and roll around the facility. Rural Health Team. Energetic music by the VA Rock'n'Rollers Band with Veteran Frank Epperly clapping along. Officer Cutlip assists Dr. LaPuz. Dr. LaPuz and Dr. McCarthy. Some of the first participants to complete the walk, cheered by Tim Woodrum. Photos by Marian McConnell.



# 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, OEF/OIF/OND Coordinator, and other services.

In June the Team shared information about VA health care services at: the VA 2K Walk & Roll, the Pulaski Flea Market, the AmVets Conference in Lynchburg, the D-Day Memorial in Bedford, American Legion Post 7 in Pulaski, the Wytheville Farmer's Market, the Wytheville CBOC ribbon-cutting (see photos below), the Lexington Horse Center, Juneteenth in Christiansburg, First Battlefield of Martinsville, the Ruritan Club in Catawba, and the Chataqua Fair in Wytheville.

## Upcoming Rural Health Outreach Events are:

July 8—Stuart Farmer's Market—Stuart, VA—8a-12p

July 14-15—Wytheville Community College Lions Club Festival—5:30-10:00p

July 30—Shawsville Farmer's Market—9a-12p

August 13—Celebrate Catawba—10a-3p at the Catawba Civic Center

August 18—Tazewell County Fair—9a-2p

Upcoming events open to the public are posted on [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 at [marian.mcconnell@va.gov](mailto:marian.mcconnell@va.gov).



Vicky Doss, April Lopez, and Jennifer Noell provided outreach to rural Veterans at the Wytheville CBOC ribbon-cutting. Although the day was beautiful, it came with a stiff breeze which blew over a flag and threatened to blow down the Rural Health tent. James Bonds, Rural Health van driver, "held the fort" by keeping a firm hand on the tent pole. James always comes to the rescue! Photos by Marian McConnell.

## WOMEN VETERANS CALL CENTER

The VA Women Veterans Call Center (WVCC) was implemented June 1, 2011, and is an **outbound** call center. It is anticipated that approximately 40,000 calls per quarter will be generated. Veterans contacted through the WVCC will be given the option to receive information on VA services via email or standard mail, based on their preference. Standard mail will include a pre-loaded flash drive that includes links to information on VA benefits and services. The goal is to reach every woman Veteran. Veterans who are contacted and referred to VHA and or VBA responders and will receive a 30-day follow-up call to ensure their needs are met.

## WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

*You served, you deserve  
★ the best care anywhere.*



## EMPLOYEE TOWN HALL MEETING

An Employee Town Hall meeting was held on June 22 and was well attended. Medical Center Director, Dr. Miguel LaPuz and the Leadership Development Institute (LDI) Team gave a presentation about **Resource Allocation** and budget issues, with a question and answer period afterwards. A special employees issue of *“Just the Facts”* was published and distributed on June 21st for all staff to read about this topic.

**Service pins** were awarded to recognize employees for their dedication and years of service:

Yvette Spangler, QM—30 years (Left photo)  
 Tracie Dickson, Social Work—30 years (Right photo)  
 Starr Jones, Nursing Service—25 years  
 Carolyn Jones, PM&RS—25 years

**Going the Extra Mile (GEM)** 3rd quarter awards were also presented. This award recognizes an employee’s consistent exceptional courtesy, responsiveness, positive attitude, and willingness to help others. Nominations can be submitted by patients, visitors, or staff. GEM award recipients receive a \$50 cash award, and a GEM pin. Recipients were:

Sandra Albery  
 Emily Hundley  
 Nicki Campbell  
 William J. Austin  
 Anthony Jarrett  
 Rebecca Bayne  
 Mickey Thomas  
 Heidi Guilliams  
 Michelle Whittaker  
 Jan Grisso-Wright  
 Steve Parshall

Rebecca C. Moore  
 Chad Bortle  
 Irene Farnan  
 Shannon Willis  
 Kris Reich  
 Karen Stoots  
 Carolyn Hdoubler, MD  
 Darren Epperly  
 Tara Stone  
 Gary A. Wilson  
 Jackie Woodson-Pitts

Teresa Robertson  
 James Randolph  
 Robin Zebrasky  
 Phillip Weese  
 Aileen Moore  
 Bryanne Hamblett  
 Angela Cooper  
 Jody Duke  
 Renee Crosier  
 Robert Kuykendall

Anna Ball  
 Teresa Gross  
 Jean Harris  
 Samantha Harris  
 Phoebe Schuyler  
 April Ochelli  
 Diane Godman  
 Dixie Hogan  
 Natalie Rice  
 Twila J. Rush



LDI Team & Quad: (Left to Right): Dr. McCarthy, Ms. Bogedain, Susan Lundy, Judy Zeller, Rhonda Driver, Kim Slaughter, Tammy Snyder, Brenda Hart, Shelby Assad, Ms. Washington, Mike Jackson, Rod Hiduskey, and Dr. LaPuz.



Many of the GEM award recipients were at the Town Hall meeting to receive their awards; shown with Ms. Bogedain (far left), Dr. McCarthy (2nd from left), Ms. Washington (4th from right), and Dr. LaPuz (right). Photos by Marian McConnell.

## HUDSON IS FIRST SALEM PATIENT TO TEST SECURE MESSAGING

Mr. Robert “Louis” Hudson, Veteran, former employee, and current patient in Primary Care Clinic 2, was the first Salem VAMC patient to test My HealtheVet secure messaging.

As featured in last month’s issue of **Just the Facts** (June 2011, page 5), secure messaging is web-based, encrypted communication between patients and health professionals. For patients, secure messaging through My HealtheVet (MHV) offers convenient access to healthcare team members for non-urgent issues. For clinical staff, secure messaging provides a personal and efficient way to communicate virtually with patients. Healthcare team members find that online communication tends to be more efficient than telephone calls and also helps coordinate care. Secure messaging can be an alternate mode of communication and encounter, and improves the quality of in-person visits.

Mr. Hudson has been using MHV since it became available at Salem VAMC, and uses it to do such things as track his health information and request prescription refills. He was happy to help test the secure messaging feature by receiving and responding to messages from his provider until any glitches were worked out. He has been using secure messaging since the beginning of April to request appointments, request medication renewals, and even inform his provider of some non-VA care he received. “It’s usually only a matter of hours before I get a reply,” he says, “or perhaps half a day if I send a message late on Friday, then I hear back on the following Monday.” Before secure messaging was available he had to contact the team by phone. This system is confidential, easy, quick, and convenient. He plans to continue to use secure messaging, and hopes that future enhancements will enable him to download information such as blood pressures and blood sugars directly from the devices into the computer. In the meantime, he gives MHV secure messaging a big thumbs up!

Anyone interested in enrolling in MHV or being authenticated can stop by the MHV Connection located in the main lobby of Building 143, Room BA-101B on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 12:30 – 4:00; or visit the Release of Information Office on the first floor of Building 2, Room 124. Donna Lambert is the MHV Coordinator and can be reached at (540) 982-2463, Ext. 3272.



Left to Right: Samantha Harris, Medical Support Clerk; Carroll Copen, LPN; Lorna Oldson, RN; Shelby Mallory-Price, LPN; Lori Cranwell, NP; Robert “Louis” Hudson, Veteran; Suzanne Hanna, MD; and Donna Lambert, MHV Coordinator. Photo by Marian McConnell.

## MEMORY WORKSHOP

*Submitted by Katherine Luci*

The Memory Workshop is a monthly workshop offered to Veterans and their caregivers. The workshop presents strategies for maintaining maximum brain fitness (specifically, strategies for keeping one’s memory working well, and for as long as possible). Also, ways to cope with mild memory loss are discussed. The Memory Workshop is open to all Veterans and their caregivers—no referral is required. The workshop is presented in the Center for Neurocognitive Services, Building 9, Room 3 on the ground floor. It is offered on the first Friday of each month, from 9-10:00 a.m. For more information, please contact Dr. Katherine Luci at 982-2463, Ext. 4303.



## BRADLEY FREE CLINIC PRESENTS DR. HARPOLD WITH “PHYSICIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD”

The Bradley Free Clinic presented Dr. Gary Harpold with the “Physician of the Year” Award.

According to Carla G. Santos, Development Coordinator, Bradley Free Clinic, “We would like to honor this physician with the Physician of the Year Award’ because, first of all, the nurses adore him, and secondly, because of his dedication to the Free Clinic. He has remained steadfast in his loyalty to the clinic, even during tragic times in his personal life. He always puts the patients first and challenges us to obtain special care for the patient even when we don’t think it’s available. We feel honored to have him as a volunteer and very proud to present the Physician of the Year Award to Dr. Gary Harpold, VA Medical Center Neurologist.”

*“Bradley Free Clinic has provided free medical care since 1974 for low-income, uninsured families in the Roanoke Valley. The care is made possible by financial and in-kind donations and the unpaid efforts of professional and lay volunteers. Their work keeps administrative costs down, thereby allowing the clinic to apply a larger proportion of donations to medications and other supplies. Every dollar donated results in \$4 worth of direct care for patients. Since its inception, the clinic has provided medical and dental care and medicines valued at more than \$50 million.”* See [www.bradleyfreeclinic.com](http://www.bradleyfreeclinic.com).



Dr. Gary Harpold, Salem VAMC Neurologist and Nancy Ferris, Bradley Free Clinic (BFC) Clinical Coordinator. Photo by BFC.

## JMU SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS VISIT SALEM

Submitted by Tim Woodrum

On May 27, James Madison University (JMU) Associate Professor Nancy T. Poe, PhD, MSW (daughter of former Salem VAMC Chief of Intermediate Medicine - Dr. William Poe) brought six Social Work students taking the “Military Families: Issues and Services” class to Salem for up close exposure of different aspects of Social Work with Veterans and their families. They were hosted by staff in three unique care settings – the PTSD Unit, the OEF/OIF/OND Program and the Community Living Center. Special thanks to Teri Sowers, LCSW, Dr. Robert Guthrie, Nancy Short, LCSW and Margaret Mulcahy, LCSW for educating the students at their respective sites. We hope this experience leads to more VAMC/JMU collaborations in the future.



Left to Right: Tim Woodrum, Terrice Travers, Gabriel Jones, Lindsey Shifflett, Nancy Poe (back), Felicia Gonzales (front), Hilde Knupp, and Kristen Priest. Photo by Leslie Hindle.

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY—DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is for every-one? All of us have the opportunity to apply for jobs, develop our careers, and have a workplace that is conducive to providing the best quality care for our Nation’s Veterans. Everyone benefits from a proactive and comprehensive EEO program. For more information contact Mr. Patrick Zimmerman, local EEO Officer, at Ext. 2727.



## FACILITY ENHANCEMENTS/CONSTRUCTION NEWS

Submitted by Wayne Johnson, FMS

The magnet for Salem's new open MRI is in place, and is currently being installed and tested. Upon completion of the magnet installation, final construction work will occur. This Project also included additional space for the Emergency Department (ED), and preparations are underway for occupancy of this much-needed ED space. Renovation of Building 9, 2nd floor for Mental Health Service Line (MHSL) is continuing, and current plans are for MHSL to reoccupy this space during the July-August timeframe. After the move back to Building 9, 2nd floor, MHSL functions currently housed on Building 7, 2nd floor will be relocated to allow for renovation of the Second Floor of Building 7. Progress also continues on the last of Salem's six American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) Projects, and this project (aimed at substantial energy savings for Salem VAMC) should be completed within the July-August timeframe.



During this timeframe, the following Projects will also see progress:

- ◆ Construction of a New Education Center in Building 75: Work will continue.
- ◆ Various Energy Saving Improvements for Building 143 (ARRA): Should be essentially completed.
- ◆ HVAC System Replacement in Building 11: Will continue followed by similar work in Building 12.
- ◆ Replacement of Roofs: Buildings 74 and 143/2A roof work will continue, with Buildings 74 and Building 16 roof work to be completed; Corridor roof work between Buildings 2 and 4 will be completed; Re-roofing of the Chapel should initiate.
- ◆ SPD Renovation for Scope Processing: Construction work will continue.
- ◆ High Efficiency Heating Systems for Buildings 17, 18, 19, and 25: Design will be completed and construction should initiate.
- ◆ HVAC Humidification Corrections in Building 143: Should be completed.
- ◆ Front Accessible Entrance for Women's Health Clinic: Contract should be awarded.
- ◆ Building 76 Renovations for Relocation of Research: Construction should initiate.
- ◆ Building 8 Addition for Mental Health Service Line: Construction procurement will continue.
- ◆ Emergency Water Storage Project: Construction procurement should be completed.
- ◆ Repair of masonry above the roofline on Buildings 7, 8, and 9: Work will continue.
- ◆ Install additional lighting in Parking Lot G: Work should initiate by August timeframe.
- ◆ Community Living Center Dining Room Addition for Building 2: Design will continue.
- ◆ Emergency Electrical System Upgrades: Design will continue.
- ◆ Primary Electrical System Replacement: Design procurement will continue.
- ◆ Upgrade and Modernize Utility Plant: Design procurement will continue.

Projects which were completed in the last month include:

- ◆ Masonry restoration work at Building 7 corridors.
- ◆ East Loop corridor roofs.

A number of additional projects are under construction by in-house labor forces and others intended for contracted construction are in conceptual, design, or construction stages. It is our goal to conduct these activities in a safe manner. If you see unsafe conditions, please immediately report details of the situation to Safety (Ext. 2292) or FMS (Ext. 2700).

## NEW HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE DOORS

*Submitted by Dr. Shannon Cohen*

The Health Promotion Disease Prevention Program, in collaboration with the Therapeutic Garden Committee, is pleased to announce that handicapped accessible doors have been installed leading from building 7 to the outside courtyard. The existing brick path outside the doors leads to an outdoor seating area that Veterans who use wheelchairs can now enjoy. The courtyard is the site of the future Therapeutic Garden. The Therapeutic garden will be used for Veteran education and research, in addition to patient care, exercise, and rehabilitation. For information about the Therapeutic Garden, contact Sandy Lane in the Horticulture Department at (540) 982-2453, Ext. 1370.

Kenneth Anderson from Primary Care Clinic 3 graciously agreed to demonstrate the use of the new doors in the photos below. (Photos by Dr. Shannon Cohen).



## NATIONAL VETERAN SMALL BUSINESS CONFERENCE AND EXPO

The Department of Veterans Affairs is hosting this event on August 15-18th, 2011, at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, Louisiana being assisted by Halfaker and Associates LLC. The largest nationwide conference of its kind, the National Veteran Small Business Conference provides Veteran-Owned and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSBs and SDVOSBs) an opportunity to learn, network and market their businesses.

The only event of the year where you can learn, exchange ideas, and network with business peers, federal government agencies, prime contractors, and industry experts all in one location!

For more information see the website at: [www.nationalveteransconference.com](http://www.nationalveteransconference.com)



## VA AND EASTER SEALS OPEN FIRST ROUND OF CAREGIVER TRAINING

WASHINGTON (June 14, 2011) – More than 500 Family Caregivers who applied for new services offered to Post 9/11 Veterans and their caregivers through a program of comprehensive assistance for Family Caregivers by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) started their care-giving training June 9 and 10.

“There is no more valuable tool we can provide Family Caregivers than the knowledge and training needed to perform this highly demanding labor of love,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “This training we provided in partnership with Easter Seals will meet this need and support Veterans and their Family Caregivers with services and benefits they have earned.”

The core training, which was developed in collaboration with Easter Seals, is offered in traditional classroom settings, online or through home study with a DVD and workbook. The modules focus on the health and well-being of both the Veteran and the Family Caregiver. The training includes information on Caregiver self-care, home safety, practical caregiving skills, providing personal care services to the Veteran, managing challenging behaviors and locating additional resources.

Family Caregivers attending the Easter Seals training will receive respite care for the Veteran under their care, as well as mileage reimbursement and lodging, if needed. A Spanish version of the training materials will also be available.

Since May 9, more than 1,000 Family Caregivers have applied for the new services. The training program was developed by the Easter Seals in collaboration with VA clinical experts as part of a package of new services. The package also includes a stipend, mental health services and access to health care insurance, if they are not already entitled to care or services under a health plan.

Veterans may review the criteria for eligibility and download the Family Caregiver program application (VA CG 10-10) at [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov). The application enables the Veteran to designate a primary Family Caregiver and secondary Family Caregivers. Caregiver support coordinators are stationed at every VA medical center to assist with coordinating the training or assist caregivers in locating available services.

Support for all caregivers is also available via the National Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274. Caregivers of Veterans from all eras are also encouraged to use the Website ([www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov)) and support line to explore more than two dozen other services VA provides caregivers for their service.

**About Easter Seals:** *Easter Seals is a non-profit provider of services for individuals with autism, developmental disabilities, physical disabilities and other special needs. For more than 90 years, it has been offering help to children and adults living with disabilities and to the families who love them. Through therapy, training, education and support services, Easter Seals assists people with disabilities to live, learn, work and play. If you would like more information on Easter Seals, visit the Easter Seals website at [www.easterseals.com](http://www.easterseals.com).*



## LONG TERM CARE SERVICES AVAILABLE

Submitted by Tracy Turner



The following long-term care services are available to all enrolled Veterans. Note that some Veterans may be required to pay copays for care with the exception of hospice care.

**Geriatric Evaluation:** Geriatric evaluation is the comprehensive assessment of a Veteran's ability to care for him/herself, his/her physical health and social environment, which leads to a plan of care. The plan could include treatment, rehabilitation, health promotion and social services. These evaluations are performed by inpatient Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) Units, GEM clinics, geriatric primary care clinics and other outpatient settings.

**Adult Day Health Care:** The adult day health care (ADHC) program is a therapeutic day care program, providing medical and rehabilitation services to disabled Veterans in a combined setting.

**Respite Care:** Respite care provides supportive care to Veterans on a short-term basis to give the caregiver a planned period of relief from the physical and emotional demands associated with providing care. Respite care can be provided in the home or other non institutional settings.

**Home Care:** Skilled home care is provided by VA and contract agencies to Veterans that are homebound with chronic diseases and includes nursing, physical/occupational therapy and social services.

**Hospice/Palliative Care:** Hospice/palliative care programs offer pain management, symptom control, and other medical services to terminally ill Veterans or Veterans in the late stages of the chronic disease process. Services also include respite care as well as bereavement counseling to family members.

For questions or more information call 1-877-222-VETS (8387) or on the web at: [www.va.govwwwhealtheligibility](http://www.va.govwwwhealtheligibility)

## ? ASK ETHEL?

The Integrated Ethics Committee will pose a question each month in *Just The Facts*. Questions and answers will address resource allocation and other ethical Issues in the workplace. Answers will appear in the following month's issue. Employees are encouraged to submit questions to Ethics (122). Please include your name and Extension if you want a personal response (all responses are confidential).



**June's Question:** Why is the facility paying to replace the current gutters with copper gutters?

**Answer:** Your question about the use of copper to replace the old gutters on various buildings on our grounds touches on several important historical facts about our Medical Center. History reveals that the original manor (house) was built circa mid to late 1800's. The estate that our station is located on was purchased in the 1930's, and as you recall we celebrated our 75th anniversary in 2009. All of the main buildings that were constructed in the 1930's and 1940's are deemed "unique" and therefore have historical significance. In accordance with the State and Federal historic preservation laws, changes to the Exterior of the original buildings must be approved by the Commonwealth of Virginia's State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO). They have the authority to reject proposed changes to historic buildings that do not meet with the original appearance. Salem VAMC has attempted to maintain the appearance of the older buildings so they look the way they did when they were first constructed. Another example would be replacing damaged slate roofs with the same material. Slate roofs are another unique feature of our older buildings. Although the new copper gutters and flashing stand out when first replaced, they will in time oxidize or look weathered and much duller. This oxidization actually helps protect the copper which can last up to 50 years or more. Materials such as aluminum and steel will not last as long and would need to be replaced more often.

**July's Question:** Why are we purchasing all these new chairs when we keep hearing that the budget is so tight?

## NEW SKYLIGHT PANELS

*Submitted by Robert Rossbacher*

This photo shows the old, dark skylight panels (bottom) in Building 143, compared to the clear new skylight panels (top). The new skylights are superior in at least four ways:

1. The new skylights are watertight and do not allow water in between the panels which causes discoloration, mildew and leaks.
2. The new skylights allow more sunlight into the room.
3. The new skylight panels do not allow as much solar heat gain into the room which will allow the air conditioning system to operate more effectively.
4. The new skylight panels have greater insulation value than the older ones which will allow more stable interior temperatures summer and winter. This saves energy and reduces utility costs.





## SALEM VAMC ENCOURAGES ORGAN, EYE, AND TISSUE DONATION

With over 2,800 people waiting for a life-saving organ transplant in the Commonwealth of Virginia and 110,000 people currently awaiting an organ transplant in the U.S., Salem VAMC has been encouraged by LifeNet Health to strengthen our commitment to saving additional lives through organ, eye and tissue donation. Every day, talented employees like yourself provide excellent service and care to our patients and their families. As a result of your dedication to excellence, every day, we save lives. Because saving lives is what we do, we have whole-heartedly embraced this opportunity and are committed to creating an organizational culture that supports organ, eye and tissue donation.

Today, I encourage you to register to be an organ, eye and tissue donor and show your support for decreasing the gap between the number of available organs and those who desperately wait for a life-saving transplant. The decision you make today is a profound one with the potential to impact the lives of your family, friends and community.

### **Did you know that:**

- ♥ One donor can save 9 lives through organ donation (heart, split liver, pancreas, 2 kidneys, 2 lungs and small intestine), enhance more than 50 lives through tissue donation and restore sight to two people through eye donation.
- ♥ On average, eighteen men, women and children die each day waiting for a life-saving organ transplant in the U.S. On average, three die each week in Virginia.
- ♥ There were more than 28,000 transplants in the U.S. last year, and more than 700 of those were in Virginia.
- ♥ To be an organ, eye and tissue donor, the most important thing you can do in Virginia is to document your wish at a DMV office or on-line at [DonateLifeVirginia.org](http://DonateLifeVirginia.org).
- ♥ Your designation at [DonateLifeVirginia.org](http://DonateLifeVirginia.org) or on your driver's license is a legal document and your wish will be honored.

### **Just follow these easy steps to register your generous decision to become an organ, eye and tissue donor:**

- ♥ Visit [www.DonateLifeVirginia.org](http://www.DonateLifeVirginia.org)
- ♥ Fill out the registration form completely.  
In response to the question:  
How did you learn about Donate Life Virginia?, select Other from the drop-down menu.  
In the Please specify box, type: Hearts of Gold
- ♥ Once you are registered, tell your family and friends how easy it is and encourage their registration.

If you are already an organ, eye and tissue donor, I commend you on your dedication to saving lives. You can know that you are joining a hospital that is committed to advancing the cause of saving lives through donation and transplantation and bring hope to those who are waiting for a life-saving transplant. Please continue to spread the word.

Thank you for your time and attention to this initiative. Know that every day we are doing more and more to save lives!

## COMPLIMENTS CORNER

- ☺ “Thanks to the kindness of **Calvin Murrell** to see my father earlier than his scheduled appointment in Pulmonary; we appreciated this since we drove over 90 minutes to get here.”
- ☺ “Thanks to **Ms. Holloway** for helping us get an appointment rescheduled in Audiology for this Veteran. She went out of her way to get the appointment changed so we would not have to drive twice within a few days.”
- ☺ “Thanks to **Kathy Paddock**, CT Technologist, who was professional and courteous. She did my exam promptly.”

**Veterans: Do you have a compliment or suggestion to help us exceed your expectations? Our goal is to provide excellent care. Please ask to speak to the Service Level Patient Advocate (also known as “STAR”) in the area. You may receive a survey in the mail; we encourage you to complete it and return it with your feedback.**



## PAGERS FOR PATIENTS

*Submitted by Dr. Shannon Cohen*

The Health Promotion Disease Prevention program is pleased to announce that vibrating patient pagers have been distributed to the clerks working in the PCSL waiting rooms at the Salem VAMC. Our patients told us they were worried about missing their appointments if they left the area to go to the lab, bathroom, etc. The introduction of pagers for patients will help us manage waiting times before appointments and increase patient satisfaction. The system has also been designed to provide improved service for patients with visual or hearing deficits. The pagers work with our existing paging system and are easy to use. They are similar to the pagers used by patients awaiting outpatient surgical procedures.

Dr. Cohen is interested in patient and staff feedback on this new initiative and has left 1 page surveys with the clerks in each clinic.



## RELOCATION OF ROANOKE VA REGIONAL OFFICE (VARO)

The Roanoke VA Regional Office (VARO) and co-located Veterans Service Organizations are in the process of relocating to multiple sites within the City of Roanoke while our current building, the Poff Federal Building, is renovated.

The VARO will remain in these new locations for approximately three years. The new sites are:

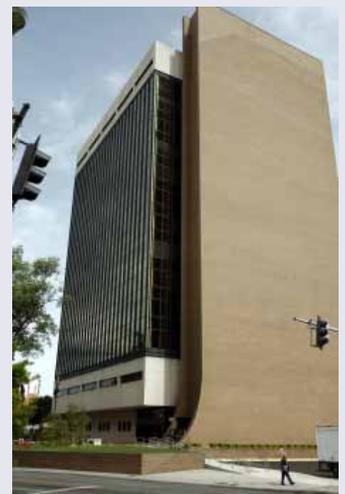
The **First Campbell Square Building** (210 1st Street, S.W., Suite 200) currently houses 80 employees from the Loan Guaranty and Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Divisions. They relocated on May 9, 2011.

The **Commonwealth Building** (210 Church Avenue) will accommodate 75 employees from our Director's Office, Support Services Division, Day 1 Brokering Center (D1BC), Information Security Officer, Office of Cyber Security, Buffalo Education Service employees, and the AFGE Union. These offices opened June 6, 2011.

The **Stone Printing Building** (116 North Jefferson Street, S.W) will house 285 employees from the Veteran Service Center. They are expected to move over three weekends in July 2011, with full operations NLT August 1, 2011. The Higher Education Center (108 North Jefferson Street, S.W.) will house 20 staff from our co-located Veteran Service Organizations (i.e. VDVS, DAV, MOPH, PVA, and AMVETS). These offices are expected to be operational not later than August 1, 2011.

The Regional Office will continue to use the Poff Federal Building for approximately 15 employees and to maintain a large number of Veteran claims folders. The phones and e-mail services will remain unchanged and operational during this transition. The website is:

<http://www.vba.va.gov/ro/Roanoke/> and the phone number is 1-800-827-1000.



## REPORTING SAFETY & QUALITY ISSUES

Submitted by Quality Management



Any employee of the Salem VAMC may report safety and quality of care issues directly to the Joint Commission, our accrediting agency. Concerns may be reported without retaliation or disciplinary action against the reporting employee. Reports may be reported to the Joint Commission through several means:

### Mail:

Division of Accreditation Operations  
The Joint Commission  
One Renaissance Blvd.  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60180

Phone: 1-800-994-6610

Fax: 1-630-792-5636

Email: [complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org)

Be sure to check out our website  
[www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov)  
For events, articles, photos, this  
newsletter, and more!

## 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.*

Now posted online at:

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



## EVENTS CALENDAR—2011

Jul 4	<b>Independence Day Holiday</b>
Jul 6-12	Alzheimer's Awareness Week
Jul 10-16	National Therapeutic Recreation Week
Jul 21	Operation Christmas Pets from 10a-4p in the Parking Lot Outside Building 4
Jul 22	"Color of Money" - Education on Resource Allocation for employees at Grand Rounds from 7:45a-8:45a in 74-232
Jul 27	Guilt-Free Summer Cookouts Demo from 12-12:30p in the Main Lobby
August	Cataract Awareness Month Psoriasis Awareness Month National Immunization Awareness Month National Spinal Muscular Atrophy Month MedicAlert Month Neurosurgery Outreach Month
Aug 1	Ramadan Begins (August 1-29)
Aug 1-6	National Veterans Wheelchair Games
Aug 2	Diversity in Christmas—10a-2p in the Auditorium (Building 5)
Aug 7	Purple Heart Day
Aug 23	Health Unit Coordinator Day
Aug 26	Women's Equality Day
Sept 5	<b>Labor Day Holiday</b>





## VA Core Values and Characteristics Quick Reference



### Because **I CARE**, I will...

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<b>Integrity</b>	<b>Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.</b>
<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.</b>
<b>Advocacy</b>	<b>Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.</b>
<b>Respect</b>	<b>Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.</b>
<b>Excellence</b>	<b>Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.</b>

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## VA Core Characteristics

### **Trustworthy**

**VA earns the trust of those it serves – every day – through the actions of all employees. They provide care, benefits, and services with compassion, dependability, effectiveness, and transparency.**

### **Accessible**

**VA engages and welcomes Veterans and other beneficiaries, facilitating their use of the entire array of its services. Each interaction will be positive and productive.**

### **Quality**

**VA provides the highest standard of care and services to Veterans and beneficiaries while managing the cost of its programs and being efficient stewards of all resources entrusted to it by the American people. VA is a model of unrivalled excellence due to employees who are empowered, trusted by their leaders, and respected for their competence and dedication.**

### **Innovative**

**VA prizes curiosity and initiative, encourages creative contributions from all employees, seeks continuous improvement, and adapts to remain at the forefront in knowledge, proficiency, and capability to deliver the highest standard of care and services to all of the people it serves.**

### **Agile**

**VA anticipates and adapts quickly to current challenges and new requirements by continuously assessing the environment in which it operates and devising solutions to better serve Veterans, other beneficiaries, and Service members.**

### **Integrated**

**VA links care and services across the Department; other federal, state, and local agencies; partners; and Veterans Services Organizations to provide useful and understandable programs to Veterans and other beneficiaries. VA's relationship with the Department of Defense is unique, and VA will nurture it for the benefit of Veterans and Service members.**