



# Just the Facts

## SECRETARY SHINSEKI VISITS DANVILLE CBOC

Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Eric Shinseki, visited the Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Danville, Virginia on Friday, October 1. The Secretary met with Salem and Danville clinic staff, toured the facility, and viewed the telehealth capability at the clinic. While on his tour, the Secretary had an opportunity to greet some of the Veterans in the nearby waiting area. Veterans expressed their pleasure in having a clinic in the local area which cuts down on travel time to the Salem facility.

Following his tour of the clinic, the Secretary headed to Averett University

to join in a round table discussion with students who had been recipients of the Post 9/11 GI Bill. The Secretary pointed out to students the wonderful opportunity they had to pursue their academic studies through the use of the educational benefits. While students indicated the beginning process was somewhat confusing, it has smoothed out over time and pointed out some areas to the Secretary where changes need to be made, clarified, or reviewed to make the system more seamless. VBA representatives were available at the meeting to address specific questions from the students. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Secretary thanked those present for participating and encouraged students to focus on their studies. He added that their input was valuable in making the VA system improve and work well.



Front row left to right: Dr. Maureen McCarthy, Chief of Staff; Brenda Blackstock, RN; Susan Keatts, LPN; Secretary Eric Shinseki; Tracy Bousman, RN; Donna Ajo, PA; Shelby Assad, OEF/OIF Coordinator.  
Middle row: Dr. Ray Lanier, President, Valor Healthcare; Donna Lambert, CBOC Coordinator; Sharon Karr, CMA; Jennifer Phillippi, LPN; Congressman Tom Perriello; Carol Bogedain, Interim Director; Mary Sue Miller, LPN; Tim Woodrum, Chief, SCI/Social Work Service.  
Back row: Nicole Crews, Veterans Claim Agent; Jan Zampich, NP; Katelyn Peters, MSW; Dr. Charles Bethea, Medical Director, Danville CBOC; Dr. Thomas Eldridge, Chief, Primary Care Service Line.  
*Photo by TJ Rose.*

**CAROL S. BOGEDAIN**  
Interim Director



# Rural Health

Salem VAMC has a Rural Health Team to serve 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 Coordinator, and other services.

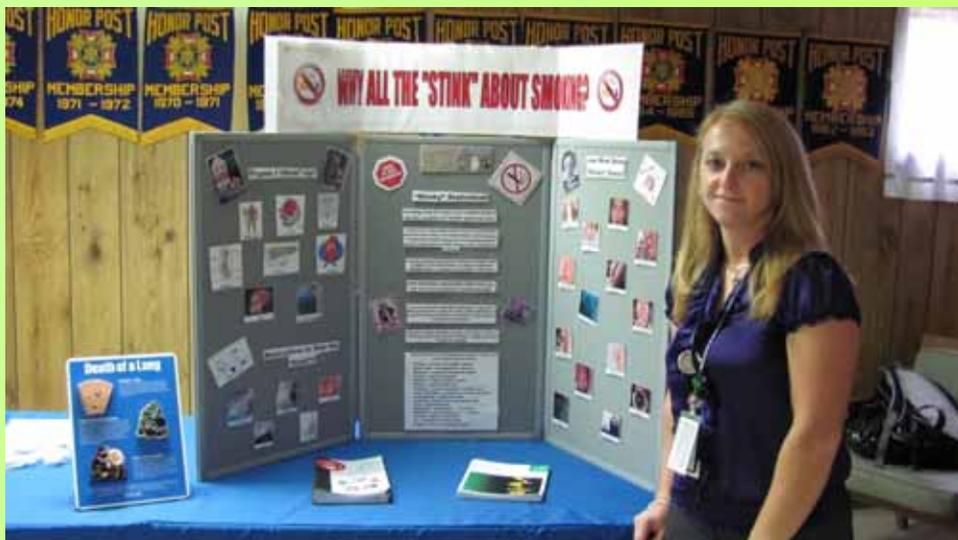
The Team recently shared information about VA services at: Frontier Days in Staunton, the Military Family Support Center in Staunton, the VFW in Hot Springs, the Amherst County Apple Harvest Festival, Martinsville Speedway, the Health Expo in Stuart, and the Wytheville Farmers Market.

## Upcoming Rural Health Team activities:

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 11/4/10  | Martinsville/Henry County Community Services Board   |
| 11/6/10  | Veterans Parade in Roanoke                           |
| 11/9/10  | Patrick County Community Services Board              |
| 11/10/10 | Homeless Veterans Stand Down—Salem Civic Center      |
| 11/11/10 | American Legion Post 36—Alta Vista                   |
| 11/16/10 | Ruritan Club—Rockbridge County                       |
| 11/16/10 | Franklin County Community Services Board—Rocky Mount |
| 12/4/10  | Yellow Ribbon Event—Christiansburg                   |

If you have an event you'd like to invite the Rural Health Team to come to, please contact Marian McConnell at (540) 855-3460 or email at [marian.mcconnell@va.gov](mailto:marian.mcconnell@va.gov).

*Vicky Doss of the Rural Health Team, with one of the many educational displays for Veterans.*



## CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

*Submitted by Wayne Johnson*

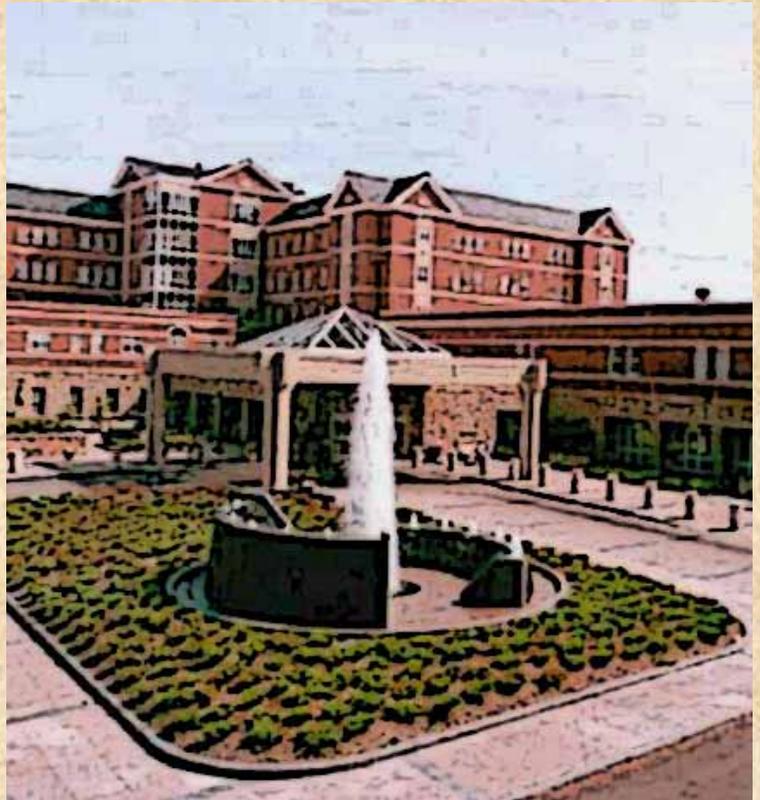
During November and December, significant progress will be made in construction of the MRI Addition to Building 2A, including related renovations in the Emergency Department. In addition, Mental Health Services will occupy newly constructed Building 168.

Other construction progress includes:

- Elevator renovation: Essentially all of the current elevator contract work will be completed during the November-December timeframe, with possible exception of Building 7. This work includes renovation or new installations in Buildings 4, 7, 9, 12 (two elevators), 74, 75, and 77.
- Building 143 Fire Alarm System Replacement: Work will near completion during this timeframe.
- Steam repairs - West Building Loop: Work will be completed and corridor restoration in Buildings 74 and 75 will initiate.
- Building 75 Education Center: Final design and construction will begin.
- Vehicle refueling station relocation and surface drainage work: Will be completed.
- Construction of a Contractor staging area near Parking Lot T: Will be completed.
- Replacement of roofs - East Corridors and Buildings 74 and 143/2A: Corridor work and preparation for Building 74 roof will continue. Building 143 work will progress as weather allows.
- HVAC systems replacement in Buildings 11 and 12 (in design): Should initiate.
- Installation of lighting in Parking Lots H and I: Should be completed.
- Installation of shuttle bus shelters: Should be completed.
- Renovation of Building. 9, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: Should initiate dependent on resolution of existing contract protest. Building. 7, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor renovation to follow.
- IT Infrastructure Security and IT HVAC: Work will continue in various areas.
- SPD Renovation for Scope Processing: Design will be initiated during this timeframe.
- Replacement of exterior lighting with energy efficient LEDs: Completed during this timeframe.
- Building. 8 Addition for Mental Health: Design has initiated and will continue.
- High efficiency heating systems for Buildings 17, 18, 19, and 25: Contract will be advertised.
- HVAC humidification corrections in Building 143: Changes currently being processed. Project should reinstate during the Nov.-Dec. timeframe.
- Retro-commissioning of Building 143 HVAC system: Contract changes being processed.

Several other projects are currently in the design stage and a number of smaller projects are also in progress around the Salem VAMC.

FMS will continue to coordinate these on-going construction activities, design efforts, and smaller projects with directly-affected personnel and services. We appreciate your continued patience as we strive to improve Salem VAMC facilities. Please immediately report any unsafe conditions or situations to Safety (Ext. 2292) or FMS (Ext. 2700).



## ETHICS– ASK ETHEL? AND ETHICS NEWS

The Integrated Ethics Committee will pose a question each month in *Just The Facts*. Questions and Answers will address boundaries 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).



### October Ethics Question:

Dear Ethel,

Is it appropriate for a VA employee to give a Veteran a ride home if there is no transportation available?

### October Ethics Answer:

It is not appropriate for VA employees to give Veterans a ride home from the Medical Center for several reasons, one of which is personal liability. There are numerous resources that Veterans can utilize to access transportation to and from the Medical Center. A common mode of transportation is that of the Valley Metro, City Bus. Bus tickets are made available for disbursement through the Social Work Service for Veterans who have no other means of transportation. Bus tickets are provided courtesy of Voluntary Service. Since donated funds are utilized to purchase bus tickets, the Voluntary Service makes tickets available based on funding accessibility. In order for a Veteran to access assistance with transportation, he/she will need to contact his/her Social Worker. If a Veteran needs assistance after hours he/she may go to the Admissions office. The AOD will recommend a plan of action.

*Voluntary Service accepts tax free donations any time of year.*

*Voluntary Service will apply donations to specific causes such as that of purchasing bus tickets.*

### November Ethics Question:

Dear Ethel,

If we are not supposed to talk about the patients that have appointments, why do we call the patient's name over the intercom heard throughout the medical center?

### Preventive Ethics News

Congratulations to Erin Skaggs, LPN (right) who submitted the winning drawing of Ethel; shown with Ms. Bogedain, Interim Director.



## STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Kristy Suhr, RD, is the Chief, Nutrition & Food Service.

Ms. Yvette Spangler, is the Chief, Quality Management Service.

Both will be featured in next month's issue of "Just the Facts."



## SICU NURSES AT CRITICAL CARE CONFERENCE

*Submitted by Mary Wright, RN*

The weekend of July 16-17, 2010 found these SICU critical care nurses venturing out of Salem to a conference at Caesar's Palace, in Las Vegas, Nevada. Pictured left to right are: Jasmine Robinson RN, BSN; Robin Cotter RN, BSN, and Bryanne Hamblett RN, BSN. They attended a CCRN review hosted by expert clinician and speaker in the critical care arena, Dr. Laura Gasparis Vonfrolio RN, PD. Dr. Vonfrolio's background includes CCRN and CEN certifications for 13 years and a critical care nurse for over 35 years in positions of staff nurse, tenured Professor of Nursing and development instructor. Jasmine, Robin and Bryanne commented on the dynamic personality of Dr. Vonfrolio and her ability to make learning fun! Attending the conference gave them the opportunity to collaborate with other critical care nurses outside the VA and bring back a wealth of knowledge to their unit. All three are now preparing to take the exam for their CCRN certification.



## WHAT IS ALL THE HYPE ABOUT ORGANIC FOODS?

*Submitted by Danielle Osborne, VTech Dietetic Intern*

A walk through any grocery store bombards even the most unobservant shopper with nutrition claims, labels, and choices. One label declares food to be "Organic." What does this mean? It refers to the methods used to grow or raise our food. USDA guidelines declare that to be organic, no antibiotics or growth hormones can be used, nor can farms apply most conventional pesticides, fertilizers containing synthetics, or sewage sludge. Bioengineering and ionizing radiation are also off-limits for organic foods. What does this mean for us as consumers? By choosing organic foods we support farming techniques that reduce pollution, improve soil, use less energy, and improve biodiversity.



There are a few different ways to label organic foods. The USDA "100% Organic" label can only be applied to foods that are entirely organic, whereas USDA "Organic" signifies at least 95% of the product's ingredients are organic. "Made with organic ingredients" marks food containing at least 70% certified organic ingredients.

Often, we assume organic means more expensive due to the smaller production scale of organic farms as compared to conventional farms. However, the cost of buying organic produce in-season is often equivalent in price to conventional versions. Organic foods are found at many farmer's markets and produce stores in the area, so be sure to check them out!

*Information for this article was obtained from ADA's website [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org).*

## PINK OUT!

Salem VAMC staff show their support for Breast Cancer Awareness by wearing pink to work on October 20th.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO LDI 2010 PROGRAM GRADUATES!

Article submitted by Roddy Hiduskey

Congratulations to Salem's 2010 Leadership Development Institute (LDI) graduates: Lindsay Hardy, Julie Manico, and Paula Kirtley. Through their participation in this VISN senior level leadership development program, they have taken a significant step in their own professional growth and marketability for senior managerial positions.

LDI is a seven-month didactic learning experience that is followed by a three and one-half month action learning project. LDI is designed to foster the leadership development of high potential employees across the 8 core competencies through both didactic and applied experiences. LDI participants engage in 360, Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and Emotional Intelligence continuous assessments. Participants produce and follow a personal development plan (PDP) and develop a professional portfolio that includes a behavioral resume and cover letter and documented HPDM Level III work samples. During the program, LDI participants engage in and provide a 1:1 mentoring experience. The capstone of the LDI program is the network-level project where participants demonstrate their systems thinking, systems redesign, organizational stewardship competencies, and project management and presentation skills. LDI is a competitive acceptance process and the next application period is targeted for August 2011.



Left to Right: Lindsay Hardy, MSN, RN-BC; Dr. Julie Manico, MSPT, DPT; Paula Kirtley, LCSW, CSAC, Rural Health Social Worker.

Photo by Russ Sanborn, Vet USAF

## KUDOS TO VONDA BROOM

Vonda Broom, Assistant Chief, Facility Management Service, was selected as the Environmental Program Outstanding Manager of the Year for 2010. Mr. Aubrey Weekes, Director, Environmental Programs Service, VA Central Office, presented her with the award. Congratulations!



Salem VAMC "Just the Facts"

## CARING FOR THE CAREGIVER

Submitted by Leslie Hindle

November is National Caregiver Support Appreciation Month. In honor of our Veterans' Caregivers we are celebrating their support and commitment to their loved ones at the second annual, National Caregiver Health Awareness Day, "Caring for the Caregiver." This event will be held on Tuesday, November 9, in the Auditorium from 9:00a to 1:00p.

According to American Association for Retired Persons (AARP), 21% of the U.S. population is receiving care by an unpaid Caregiver, yielding approximately 44.4 million caregivers. About three in ten Caregivers provide care at the higher range of the "Caregiver Level of Burden Index". Almost half of Level 5 (49%), the highest level of burden, Caregivers say they need help managing their own stress levels and have difficulty finding time for themselves.

Invite a Caregiver to come out and enjoy this time with us!



## HERE COME DA JUGS!

*Submitted by Tracie Dickson*

It all started many months ago with a little 8 year old red-headed boy named Eli. He came over to visit on a Friday evening and when he noticed that a plastic water bottle was being tossed in the trash, he asked questions. Why wasn't it being recycled instead of thrown in the trash?

Trying to rationalize my actions I quickly explained that the Wal-Mart drop-off container was too far from my house. Eli suggested that I collect plastic and when I had a large bag full, make the trip to drop-off.

After he left, I started thinking about what he said and the importance of protecting our environment that is obviously emphasized in schools now. I made the decision to take his advice and start to recycle. What a huge decrease in the amount of trash at my house now that all plastics are recycled.

In early April I noticed how many of the staff in the renal unit drank from plastic bottles, ate from throw-away plastic containers, and encouraged them to start placing all #1 and #2 plastics in a container that I agreed to then take to Wal-Mart along with my items from home. The idea caught on and the staff joined in making just a small difference in our area.

One of the renal nurses then pointed out the one-gallon plastic jugs used to store liquid used during dialysis; we looked on the bottom and it was #2. We use 35-40 of these daily times 6 days per week, and we had been trashing ALL of these. The nurses agreed to a "pilot" study to monitor the volume we could collect in a 4-5 day period. By the end of the pilot we had about 10 large plastic trash bags full of jugs. We realized the volume generated and have continued collection over the past several months. The idea, along with a picture of the collected plastic jugs was presented to the GEM Committee and the response was overwhelmingly positive.

The next time you drink or eat out of plastic check the bottom for #1 or #2. Designate an area in your unit to start collecting and have someone agree to drop off at local collection containers. Eventually Salem hopes to have a "plastic" recycle program in place, so that containers will be available here for drop-off.

REMEMBER you can make a difference in your area. Together, we can make a difference at this medical center!



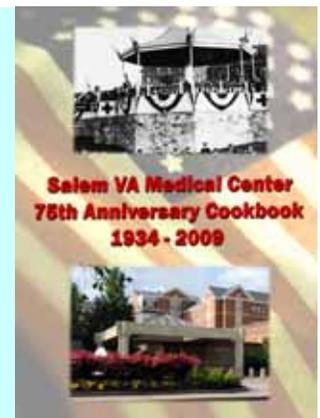
Jo Ann Munsey, Annie Gray, Tracie Dickson, and Beanie Johnson with plastic jugs to be recycled.

## 75TH ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOKS SOLD OUT!

Thanks to all who bought copies of the 75th Anniversary cookbooks! About 1000 were sold, which raised \$3,322 for the Employees Association.

The Employees Association sponsors many great activities for employees — watch this newsletter, the Weekly Bulletin, and the Intranet Events Calendar for upcoming events!

For more information, please contact Anita Phifer at Ext. 3596.



## MEDICAL FOSTER HOME CAREGIVERS TRAINING

Submitted by Leslie Hindle

The Medical Foster Home (MFH) program held its Fall Bi-Annual Caregivers training on October 25, 2010. The MFH Caregivers enjoyed the presentations and expertise of the presenters: Lisbeth Woodward, MT-BC, NMT and Nicole Drozd, Music Therapist Intern, "Music, The Universal Language" (*top photo*); Annette Clark, Outreach Director Alzheimer's Association Central & Western Virginia Chapter, "Building Your Skills for Dementia Care" (*middle photo*); and Dottie Rizzo, MSN, Palliative Care Coordinator, Salem VAMC, "Caring for Veterans at End of Life" (*bottom photo*).



The Salem MFH Program celebrates its first year of operating as a sanctioned program accepting referrals for placement in VAMC approved private homes operated within a thirty-mile radius of the Salem VAMC. We currently serve six Veterans ranging in age from 69 years old to 89 years old. MFH has 3 fully approved MFH Caregivers with plans to bring two more on within the next 30 days. Veterans who qualify for MFH ser-

vices include, but are not limited to: the Veteran's medical needs must be able to be managed by the Home Based Primary Care Team; meet nursing home level of care, either intermediate or intensive level of care; be unable to safely live independently because of physical, cognitive, or emotional limitations, etc. If you have further questions about the Medical Foster Home Program, please contact Leslie Hindle, LCSW, Medical Foster Home Coordinator at (540)855-5060.



Thank you to all of those who assisted the MFH Program with this training. A special thank you to Sandy Lane and the CWT Staff for donating three beautiful mums which were given to the speakers in appreciation of their contributions!

# **IS YOUR COMPUTER READY FOR DISASTER?**



## **Get IT Ready!**

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For more information visit:  
[vaww.infoprotection.va.gov](http://vaww.infoprotection.va.gov)



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INDIAN WARS + SANTIAGO + MANILA  
BELLEAU WOOD + MEUSE - ARGONNE + MIDWAY  
GUADALCANAL + ANZIO + BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC  
NORMANDY + ARDENNES - ALSACE + IWO JIMA  
BERLIN AIR LIFT + PUSAN + INCHON + SEOUL  
GULF OF TONKIN + ROLLING THUNDER + DAK TO  
KHE SANH + TET OFFENSIVE + COLD WAR  
GRENADA + PANAMA + GULF WAR I + BOSNIA  
SOMALIA + KOSOVO + TORA BORA + KANDAHAR  
FALLUJAH + SADR CITY + BASRA

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

# Veterans Day



November 11, 2010



## COMPLIMENTS CORNER

Submitted by Ann Benois

- ☺ “Compliments to **Neurology Clerk, Elsie Keys**. She is not only professional but provides care and concern to patients...her kind attentions to my father’s needs is much appreciated.”
- ☺ “Thanks to the **X-Ray** department — **Amber** and **Kayla** were so nice to me and really know their work.”
- ☺ “**Dr. Thaler** did a great job for one of our OEF/OIF Veterans... he was late for a C&P appointment due to being sick. He also worked with the Veteran and his team to get his care coordinated.”
- ☺ “**Cardiac Rehab** program is great; staff is great for personality and training. Special thanks to **Jane Tabb, Chris Schroeder, and Lois Ashby**.”
- ☺ “**PT 2** and **OT Therapists** are tops! They make therapy enjoyable and do a wonderful job.”
- ☺ “I had given up on hearing or being heard after years of going from one hearing center to another. I finally wound up at the VA in the hands of a happy little ‘angel of mercy,’ named **Amy Edwards**. Amy was so upbeat in her work that no one could possibly feel [defective] in her professional care. She not only ‘knows her staff’ but brings a lot of sunshine into times that can become rather drab with age and the lack of communication abilities.”
- ☺ “**Dr. Karen Wilson** is super. Please clone her!”
- ☺ “I recently had surgery at Salem VAMC. Every aspect of my care was outstanding. **Barbara Phifer, RN**, in pre-admission provided me with a comprehensive orientation of what to expect and how to prepare for my surgical experience. **Mary Otey, LPN, Day Hospital**, did an outstanding job preparing me for surgery. She noticed my blood pressure was high and attributed it to anxiety, but cautioned me to have my blood pressure monitored following surgery. The surgical and recovery teams were outstanding. They were very knowledgeable, which inspired my confidence in their ability to complete my surgery without error. Every team member (**Dr. White, Karen Hitesman, Judy Turner, Jennifer McDown, Michelle Whitaker, Shelly Ivey**) provided information and insight pertaining to their area of my surgical procedure. I was most impressed with the fact that every team member made sure I was the right patient for the right procedure. Thanks!”
- ☺ “To the nurses on **4H** who sang, ‘You are my sunshine,’ I will never forget you. God bless you. These nurses — **Rebecca Atkins** and **Melinda Blankenship** — frequently can be heard singing this song to patients who are sad or down.”
- ☺ “I am returning your national survey, but want you to know that my husband was treated with all respect and caring the two weeks he was at the VA. The **doctors, nurses, and staff** did all they could do to see that my husband and family were taken care of. I will always be grateful for the love and kindness they showed during this time. I thank God for the VA.”
- ☺ “Thanks to **Diane Godman** for the great service since I have been in her care. She is one of the best **Primary Care** providers in the VA. Always pleasant and has the Veteran’s best interest at heart. She keeps up on all her patients and makes each visit a joy.”
- ☺ “**Jena Willis** is outstanding in bringing my sugar under control. She is great to work with and keeps my best interests at heart.”
- ☺ “**Carol Copen, Clinic 1**, has always been truly personable and caring to me and my wife. She goes above and beyond to help us.”
- ☺ “Thank you to **Dr. Suzanne Hanna** for all the attention she provides the Veterans. I will continue to drive to see Dr. Hanna, as I am treated so well at Salem.”
- ☺ “My medical treatment by **Terri Alderson** has always been excellent. Thanks also to her Clerk, **Samantha**. Sam is always smiling and professionally taking care of business. Good job, Samantha!”



## REPORTING SAFETY & QUALITY ISSUES

Submitted by Carol Carlson

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)

## JUST THE FACTS

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

If you have ideas for improving *Just the Facts* articles (250 words or less), photos, or suggestions, please contact Marian McConnell at (540) 982-2463, Ext. 1400; or email [marian.mcconnell@va.gov](mailto:marian.mcconnell@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

*(Also see events online on the Salem homepage, and in the Weekly Bulletin)*

Oct 18— Nov 24	Walk-In Flu Clinic from 9a-3p in Building 12, first floor
Nov 2	Election Day—Remember to Vote!
Nov 3	Homemade for Health—Health Fair from 9a-2p in the Auditorium
Nov 6	Veterans Day Parade—downtown Roanoke at 11a
Nov 7	Daylight Savings Time ends (“Fall back” 1 hour)
Nov 7-13	Health Information & Technology Week Allied Health Professions Week National Radiologic Technology Week
Nov 9	2nd Annual Caregiver Health Awareness Day, “Caring for the Caregiver,” from 9a-1p in the Auditorium
Nov 10	Stand Down for Homeless Veterans from 8a-3p at the Salem Civic Center
Nov 11	Veterans Day—Holiday
Nov 14	World Diabetes Day
Nov 15	America Recycles Day
Nov 18	35th Annual Great American Smokeout from 9a-3p in the Main Lobby
Nov 21-27	Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease Awareness Week
Nov 25	Thanksgiving Day—Holiday
Nov 28— Dec 4	National Influenza Vaccination Week
Nov 30	Computer Security Day