



# Just the Facts

## VA HELPS HAITI EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

VA employees are reaching out to help the Haiti earthquake victims in many ways, such as our medical center staff going to the country to provide medical care, and the AFGE-sponsored drive to collect bottled water.

The January 12 earthquake was a catastrophic magnitude 7.0 Mw earthquake. Numerous aftershocks measuring 4.5 or greater have also occurred. Between 217,000 and 230,000 people are reported dead (including 800-1000 Haitian physicians, professors, and health care personnel from the local Medical School), an estimated 300,000 injured, and an estimated 1,000,000 homeless. An estimated 250,000 residences and 30,000 commercial buildings collapsed or were severely damaged. Basic needs such as water, food, sanitation, and safety were and still are challenges. There are endemic threats of dengue fever, malaria, and AIDS and monsoon season has begun.

Massive support is underway from all over the world including the countries of: the United States (Health & Human Services, the U.S. Military forces, DEMPS, etc.), Brazil, Mexico, Canada, Russia, China, Switzerland, Israel, and others. Dr. Arindam Choudhury, Salem VAMC Staff Surgeon, was deployed through Disaster Emergency Medical Personnel System (DEMPS) to the Gheskio Clinic in Port au Prince Haiti February 3-14, 2010.

Dr. Choudhury was one of two VA surgeons and one anesthetist who were part of a larger American team under the command of Dr. Susan Briggs (Trauma—MGH). As a team they performed 37 major surgical procedures and 400 conscious sedation cases. He speaks some French, and Haitian medical students were enlisted to help interpret since the language spoken is French-Creole.



Dr. Choudhury said he was glad to help, and is “willing to go back if called.” He thanked the VA team at Salem for “holding the fort while I was gone.” The best way to help is to “donate time, effort, and money” through the various government agencies to the Haiti earthquake recovery efforts.

Also in Haiti were Former President Bill Clinton, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and actor Sean Penn. Former President Clinton is part of a foundation that supports an AIDS and TB Hospital and both he and Former President Bush worked to raise money as part of the relief effort.

**John E. Patrick**  
**Director**

*Photos by Thomas Broach, CRNA—Fresno, CA VAMC and Dr. Enrique Guttin, Surgeon & Chief of Staff—Wilmington, DE VAMC. Top photo—82nd Airborne Charlie Company 2nd Battalion with the team—Dr. Choudhury in the green scrubs. (More photos on next page.)*

## CHOUDHURY HELPS HAITI EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS (continued)

Photos by Thomas Broach, CRNA—Fresno, CA VAMC and Dr. Enrique Guttin, Surgeon & Chief of Staff—Wilmington, DE VAMC.



*Top left—Destruction from the earthquake  
Top right—Quarters for the medical team  
2nd left—Performing surgery  
2nd right—Makeshift homes  
3rd left—Former President Bill Clinton  
3rd right—Actor Sean Penn  
Bottom left—"Why we help"*

# NATIONAL SALUTE TO HOSPITALIZED VETERANS

Article and photos submitted by Ann Benois

National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans is always an exciting week!

Celebrating with us (top photo) was the newly crowned 2009 Miss Virginia, Chinah Helmandollar (right), and reigning Miss Wheelchair Virginia, Joan Manley (left).

Our special National Salute Program was held on Thursday, February 11. Entertaining during the program were members of Crossroads Station (2nd photo right). Members of this group have numerous honors and awards for banjo and mandolin performances.

Korean War Veteran, Mr. Harold Hall, presented each of the performers in this year's annual program with flowers and a small token of appreciation. He is shown here with Miss Virginia. (3rd photo right)

As their salute to hospitalized Veterans, Rolling Thunder from Lynchburg, Virginia and the ROTC Cadets from Virginia Tech held a spaghetti luncheon on Valentine's Day. (Bottom right photo)

Snow and ice did not prevent some of our creative youth volunteers from making beautiful Valentine bags for our Veterans. A sample of some of the bags are shown in the top left photo created by Ms. Ashley Woodward and a group of her friends. They were later filled to the brim with cards, letters, and notes from the community.

Girl Scout Troop 919 coordinated an event to make holiday tray mats for inpatients. They were presented to Ms. Magna Brita and Jim Filicky of Nutrition & Food Service (bottom left photo).



# HOMELESSNESS

## Highlights of the Healthcare for Homeless Veterans Program

*Submitted by Gayle Sanford*

The VA has developed a 5-year plan to end homelessness among our Nation's Veterans. New Initiatives focus on enacting new programs, expansion of current programs and preventive measures. Salem's Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Program has implemented the following programs since its inception in 2000:

- Outreach services to identify homeless Veterans in the community to provide linkage with VA healthcare services.
- Annual Stand Down outreach event providing Veterans with medical and social services. (DAV Honor Guard shown in photo above from recent Stand Down.)
- VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) provides permanent housing subsidies and case management to low-income homeless Veterans.
- Transitional Housing Grant and Per Diem Program for female Veterans.
- Transitional Housing Grant and Per Diem Program for approximately 27 male Veterans (projected for fall of 2010).
- Contract Emergency Housing Vouchers (projected for Summer of 2010).
- Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) provides VA resources to address mental health and substance abuse treatment for Veterans involved in the judicial system (projected for spring 2010).
- National Call Center for Homeless Veterans providing them with direct access to VA and community resources: 1-877-424-3838.



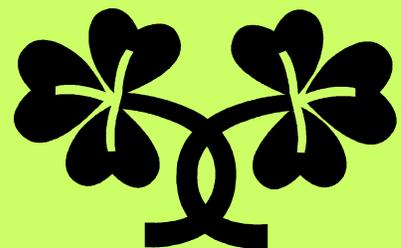
Contact Gayle Sanford, LCSW, Homeless Coordinator at (540) 982-2463, Ext. 1230 with any questions or referrals. Also see the VA's website: <http://www1.va.gov/homeless/>

### YOU'RE IN LUCK!

There are still doses of H1N1 and seasonal flu vaccines left. Get yours today! Take a few minutes to protect yourself, your family, colleagues, and community. Flu vaccines are FREE and they work!

**Employees:** Vaccines are offered Monday through Friday during Occupational Health Hours — contact Ext. 2908 with any questions.

**Veterans:** Ask your Primary Care Provider or contact us at (540) 982-2463, Ext. 4298.



## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Submitted by Julie Manico

2010 is the 30th anniversary of the National Women's History Project. President Carter issued a Presidential Proclamation declaring the week of March 8, 1980 as the first National Women's History Week. Then, in 1987, a successful lobbying effort resulted in Congress expanding the week into a month, and March is now National Women's History Month. This year's theme is "Writing Women Back into History."

In the 1980s, less than 3% of the content of teacher training textbooks mentioned the contributions of women. Women, if included, were usually just mentioned as footnotes. Today, when you conduct an internet search with the words "women's +history + month," you can find more than 40,000,000 citations. These numbers are an indication of the extensive work of numerous individuals, organizations, and institutions to write women back into history.

National Women's History Month provides an opportunity to recognize and celebrate women's historic achievements as well as an opportunity to honor women within our own community.

The Salem Federal Women's Program Committee is sponsoring 2 events: Panel Discussion entitled "A Woman's Guide to Survival During Tough Economic Times" on March 12 at 11:30 am in the Auditorium; and "A Day of Recognition" for extraordinary local women in honor of Women's History Month on March 26 at 11:30am in the Director's Conference Room, Building 74-232.

You can recognize the importance of women in history by nominating a coworker or female Veteran for this ceremony. Please submit the name of nominee, their phone/ext., your name, and a brief description of their achievements to Charlene Scott by close of business on March 16 to [Charlene.scott@va.gov](mailto:Charlene.scott@va.gov) in Outlook.



## "WHEN JANEY COMES MARCHING HOME: PORTRAITS OF WOMEN COMBAT VETERANS"

The Eleanor D. Wilson Museum at Hollins University is pleased to announce, "When Janey Comes Marching Home: Portraits of Women Combat Veterans," which opened February 11. This exhibition shows an often-unseen side of war by combining interviews and photographs to tell the stories of women in modern combat.

Additionally, writer Laura Browder, author of *Her Best Shot: Women and Guns in America*, and one of the creators of the exhibition, will give a lecture discussing her role in creating the exhibit on March 16 at 6:00 pm in the Niederer Auditorium in the Visual Arts Center.

Both events are free and open to the public.

For more information call (540) 362-6532, or visit [www.hollins.edu/museum](http://www.hollins.edu/museum).

*Image: Sascha Pflaeging, Staff Sergeant Connica McFadden, US Army, 2008.*



## CLINICAL RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

If you would like to know your body composition, hormone levels, and bone health, this clinical research study might be right for you. The Endocrine Section at Salem VAMC is investigating the effect of age and body composition (namely muscle and fat) on body production of growth hormone and testosterone in male subjects of different ages and body weights.

### To participate, you must:

- ✓ Be a healthy male between 18-80 years old
- ✓ Not take any long-term medication
- ✓ Be free of any acute or chronic medical or psychiatric disorder
- ✓ Willing to devote 2.5 days (7 hours) within a 4 week period

### Your Benefits:

- ✓ Complete routine laboratory testing
- ✓ Body composition assessment by state-of-the-art methods
- ✓ Non-invasive cardiovascular assessment
- ✓ \$250.00 for study participation



For more information, call the Salem VAMC Endocrine Research office at 540-982-2463, Ext. 1534 or e-mail: [Barbara.Dunn2@va.gov](mailto:Barbara.Dunn2@va.gov)

## MELTING POT CORNER—HISTORY OF ST. PATRICK'S DAY

*Submitted by Evelyn Sayers*

St. Patrick's Day is the Roman Catholic feast day that honors St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, and one of Christianity's most widely known figures. He was born in Wales, about 387 AD and at the age of 16, he was taken prisoner by a group of Irish raiders who transported him to Ireland. After six years in captivity, he escaped to Britain where he began religious training for more than 15 years. After his ordination as a priest, he was sent to Ireland to convert Irish to Christianity. Patrick was successful at winning converts, as he traveled throughout Ireland establishing monasteries, schools and churches. He died on March 17 in 461 AD. That day has been commemorated as St. Patrick's Day and has been observed in Ireland for thousands of years by dancing, celebrating, and feasting on the traditional meal of Irish bacon and cabbage. Today, it is celebrated by people of all backgrounds all over the world holding parades, wearing green, using the three-leafed clover "shamrocks," and eating corned beef and cabbage — corned beef being substituted for bacon for economic reasons long ago.

Significantly, the St. Patrick's Day parade began not in Ireland but in America. The parade consisted of Irish soldiers serving in the English Army and took place in New York City on March 17, 1762. Since then, Irish patriotism in America flourished with the establishment of several Irish Aid societies holding annual parades on St. Patrick's Day. The New York celebration, however, is the oldest and the largest St. Patrick's Day Parade in the world.



## UNION STEWARD: BEVERLY BRATTON

Hello, I'm Beverly Bratton.

I was born in Roanoke, Virginia, and raised in West Philadelphia, PA. I am a graduate of William Fleming High School and attended secretarial and computer classes at Opportunity Industrialization Center (OIC), the National Business College, and Virginia Western Community College.

I began my federal career at Salem VAMC in July 1987. I was assigned to the Alzheimer's Unit as a Nursing Assistant, and later was transferred to Acute Psychiatry in Mental Health. I have also worked in Medical Administration Service as a Clerk in the Emergency Department.

Approximately 15 years ago, I was approached by Ms. Alma Lee, who now holds the position of President of the National VA Council, and was asked to become a steward. I enjoy working as a steward and later was elected to the office of Vice President of General Schedule. I have held this position for the last three terms. Working in the Union office is very challenging; I have to keep up with the old and the new so that I can provide informed decisions to our members.

I represent AFGE on many committees, including Federal Women's Fair Practice, Federal Women's Program, Partnership, EEO, ADR Mediator, Work Life Improvement Team, Employees Association, and I am also a CREW facilitator.

In my spare time, I love being with my family, especially my children and my grandchildren. I enjoy singing and sing for my church choir and at various community choir functions. I was privileged to help start a choir here at Salem VAMC — Voices of Unity — and am still active in it today.



## TELEPHONE PILOT

*Submitted by Sarah Brooks*

Salem VAMC is participating in a national Systems Redesign Telephone Collaborative to improve the service we provide Veterans over the telephone. The goal is to make it easier to contact your primary care clinic and to speak to a staff member you know each time you call.

This pilot will use the direct dial numbers for **Primary Care Group Practice 1**, which includes Teams C, E, G, and K. at Ext. 5057. The direct dial phone number is **(540) 855-5057**. If you are seen by the providers in Group Practice 1 you will now dial them directly instead of calling the main hospital telephone menu and going through the automated system.



## VA RECRUITING FOR 2010 NATIONAL VETERANS SUMMER SPORTS CLINIC

"Setting Your Course for the Future" is the theme for the 3rd National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic to be held in beautiful San Diego from September 18 – 25, 2010. We're seeking Veterans who have not previously participated in the clinic to participate in this rehabilitative event. Help us get the word out to potential Veterans and volunteers. Applications for Veteran participants and volunteers will be available upon request starting March 1 from Tristan Heaton. For more information about the Summer Sports Clinic, please see the Web site at [http://vaww.sandiego.va.gov/home/ssc\\_home.asp](http://vaww.sandiego.va.gov/home/ssc_home.asp), email [Tristan.heaton2@va.gov](mailto:Tristan.heaton2@va.gov) or call 858-642-6426.



# FREE VALET PARKING FOR VETERANS WITH APPOINTMENTS



## BLACK HISTORY CELEBRATION

*Submitted by Vic Boddie*

On February 19, the EEO/Diversity Committee sponsored the annual Black History Month Program. The 2010 national theme was, "The History of Black Economic Empowerment." Ms. Maxine Joiner-Wright was the Mistress of Ceremonies. The program featured opening remarks by the Director John E. Patrick, who engaged the audience in a game of VA trivia and awarded the winners with Canteen gift certificates. Presentation of the flag was done by the Patrick Henry High School ROTC. Story-telling was shared by Ms. Roma Willis-Turner. Musical selections were performed by Clifford Williams, Reverend Charlene Scott, and Reverend Dr. Isaac L. Scott. A poem was read by Ms. Michelle Pettis-Tibbs. Special thanks to the VA Canteen Service, VA Federal Credit Union, and Voluntary Service for making this program a success.

*Top photo 1—Rev. Charlene Scott and Rev. Dr. Isaac L. Scott; Top photo 2—Ms. Roma Willis-Turner; Top photo 3—Patrick Henry High ROTC*

*Bottom photo 1—Director John Patrick; Bottom photo 2—Ms. Roma Willis-Turner; Bottom photo 3—Winners of VA Black History trivia contest*

*Photos by Marian McConnell*



## CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

*Submitted by Wayne Johnson*

During March and April, we anticipate a marked increase in exterior construction activity as the weather improves. Interior construction will also increase as new projects initiate and others become fully active.

Projects underway or imminent include:

- East Loop chilled water line replacement. Largely curtailed by weather, should fully resume during this timeframe.
- Elevator renovation work in Buildings 4, 12, and 74. Other Buildings eventually affected include 7, 9, 75, and 77.
- Completion of construction for Relocation of Cardiac Rehabilitation into 1C-129.
- Replacement of the Fire Alarm System in Building 143.
- Addition to Building 2A for a second MRI.
- Initiation of construction of a new Mental Health Building near Building 9.
- Construction of a contractor staging area near parking lot T.
- Steam system repairs in the West Loop affecting exterior areas of the West Loop and corridors of Buildings 74, 75, and 76.
- Initiation of construction for Building 75 Education Center.

Several other projects are in the process of procurement and should begin within the next few months including:

- Renovation of Building 76, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, for relocation of Medical Research.
- Replacement of HVAC systems in Buildings 11 and 12.
- Project for relocation of the vehicle fueling station and associated spill containment.
- Correction of floor deficiencies in the auditorium, in Building 143 basement corridors, and in Building 4 basement corridors.
- Renovation of the Canteen dining areas.

Several other projects, both large and small, are not mentioned due to their limited scope or contract delay issues. FMS will notify affected areas as construction for these projects becomes imminent.

Once again, your patience is appreciated as we work to improve our facilities to provide the best care possible for our Veterans. As always, when in the vicinity of any construction project, please pay close attention to all warning signage and adhere to access restriction measures. Please immediately report any unsafe conditions or situations to Safety (Ext. 2292) or FMS (Ext. 2700).



## PREVENTING THEFTS FROM AUTOS

*Submitted by Dale Hendley, VISN 6 Lead Police Chief*

Criminals often roam parking lots and streets looking to steal items from vehicles. They utilize the "smash and grab" technique; smashing a window and grabbing the items of value from the car. This process takes no more than a matter of seconds. What even makes it easier for them is when people leave their vehicles unsecured, such as with their doors unlocked or windows rolled down. When possible, take your valuables with you. Laptop computers, purses, briefcases, cell phones, iPods', and other small electronics are easy and popular targets for thieves. If you must leave valuables in your car, secure them out of sight in a locked compartment or trunk. If you have any questions, please contact your VA Police at ext. 2225.



## National VA Research Week

Submitted by Dora Szilagyi

Salem VAMC Research and Development Department is preparing a special celebration for VA Research Week this year. The theme for the 2010 National VA Research Week for April 26-30 is "VA Research: 85 Years of Discovery, Innovation, and Advancements for Veterans (1925-2010)."

VA research significantly advances the diagnosis and treatment of disease and disability and plays a vital role in the delivery of high quality care for the nation's Veterans. This year, VHA is showcasing examples where research has been put into practice to advance Veterans' care throughout history, as the history of VA research is impressive and the future is bright. We want to salute all the Veterans who have selflessly volunteered to participate in research at the VA.

To commemorate this event we are looking back to the historical milestones in VA Research in a brief summary:



### 2000s

- Showed the effectiveness of a new vaccine for shingles.
- Identified a protein derivative that disrupts memory in an animal model of Alzheimer's disease and offers promise for developing early-detection tests or new drugs.
- Announced major funding initiatives for research on neurotrauma, chronic pain, and other health problems prevalent in combat-wounded Veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq.
- Launched a multisite trial to test robotic therapy for stroke rehabilitation.
- Demonstrated that a behavioral therapy called prolonged exposure is effective for treatment of PTSD.
- Developed high-performance prosthetic devices, such as a bionic ankle that helps propel users forward.
- Showed that implantable cardiac defibrillators decrease the risk of death in those with advanced chronic heart failure.

### 1990s

- Found that the insulin pump is more effective than multiple daily injections.
- Identified genes for schizophrenia, dementia, laryngeal cancer, Werner's syndrome, and Alzheimer's disease.
- Developed an electrical stimulation system that helps patients move paralyzed limbs.
- Nobel Prize in Medicine awarded to former VA researcher Ferid Murad, MD, PhD.

### 1980s

- Developed the nicotine patch and other therapies to support smoking cessation.
- Developed a computer-controlled ventilator system that improved patient outcomes.
- Developed the Seattle Foot, a prosthesis that allows amputees to run and jump.

### 1970s

- Identified best treatments for colon cancer, stable angina, high blood pressure, and other conditions.
- Nobel Prizes in Medicine to VA researchers Andrew Schally, PhD, and Rosalyn Yalow, PhD.

### 1960s

- Performed the first successful liver transplant and developed anti-rejection techniques.
- Pioneered concepts leading to the development of the CAT (CT) scan.

### 1950s

- Contributed to the development and early use of the implantable cardiac pacemaker.
- Linked smoking with cancer of the respiratory tract and lung.

### 1940s

- Developed and tested effective therapies for tuberculosis.
- Developed the first rehabilitation program for blind persons and standards for better-fitting, lighter artificial limbs.
- Established a research lab at the Northport (N.Y.) VA Medical Center to conduct clinical and biomedical research in neuropsychiatric disorders; contribute to the nationwide standardization of diagnostic and treatment methods.

### 1930s

- Published data comparing outcomes at VA clinics with those at other hospitals. Of the patients discharged from VA clinics, 82 percent were considered to be cured or improved.
- Also, established the Tumor Research Laboratory at the Hines (Ill.) VA—the first research lab to receive funds from VA Central Office specifically for research.
- Published a series of articles in the NEJM about heart disease among Veterans.

### 1920s

- Conducted the first hospital-based medical studies to be formally considered part of VA's newly established research program. Began publishing the U.S. Veterans' Bureau Medical Bulletin, designed, in part, to "promote research along practical lines."
- Reported findings from early VA studies looking at treatments for malaria, the long-term health effects of chemical warfare, and hospitalization and mortality among Veterans with psychiatric illness.

For local events, celebrations, and details please read the April 2010 issue of *Just the Facts*.

## ASK ETHEL!

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 the following month's issue of *Just the Facts*. Employees are encouraged to submit questions to Ethics at (122). Please include your name and extension if you want a personal response (all submissions are confidential).



**This Month's Ethics Question:** You are a VA employee and have become attached to a patient and family members. You have been invited to a celebration of the patient's recovery outside of the VA. Does this cross boundaries for you to attend the celebration?

## IE MINUTE

Submitted by Leslie Hindle

**IntegratedEthics (IE)** is a national education and organizational change initiative that provides comprehensive approach to ethics in health care. IntegratedEthics is designed to improve ethics quality across VHA. VA patients and staff face difficult and potential life-altering decisions every day. In the day-to-day business of health care, uncertainty or conflicts about values—that is, ethical concerns—inevitably arise. Responding effectively to ethical concerns is essential for both individuals and organizations. Effective ethics programs must do three things well: respond to ethics concerns on a case-by-case basis, address ethics issues on a systems level, and foster an environment and culture that is conducive to ethical practice.

**How can IE help you?** The IE program is designed to be an effective mechanism for responding to ethical concerns--to help staff members, patients, and families when ethical issues arise in making decisions related to medical care or business issues. The IE program achieves these goals through three core functions:

- The **Ethics Consultation Team** is available for referral of the types of issues mentioned above. Anyone can make an IEthics Referral by contacting the IEthics Consultation Coordinator or the IE Program Officer.
- The **Preventive Ethics Team** proactively identifies and addresses concerns about ethics quality at the organizational level.
- **Ethical Leadership** plays a critical role in creating, sustaining, and changing organizational culture.

**Why does VA need IntegratedEthics?** VA needs to ensure that ethics is valued just as much as other organizational priorities. When ethics quality in an organization is high, the organization benefits in many ways: through increased employee morale, higher patient satisfaction, greater productivity and efficiency, and ethics consultation can even help reduce length of stay and costs among high risk patients.

This facility also has an IE Program Officer who is responsible for the day-to-day operations and an IE Council which coordinates ethics related activities. For ethics referrals or questions, you may call the IEthics Extension at 4220. If you are an employee, you may enter an IEthics Referral in writing in the VISTA system, e-mail G.Ethics or by contacting the IEthics Consultation Coordinators or the IE Program Officer.

### **Your Local IntegratedEthics (IE) Team:**

- IEthics Consultation Coordinators: Rasheeda King, MSW and Chaplain Harold Bryant
- Preventive Ethics Coordinator: Pamela Bernardo, RN
- IE Program Officer: Leslie Hindle, MSW, LCSW

*We would like to express sincere gratitude to Dr. Thomas Martin who has generously given his time and leadership in implementing the Integrated Ethics Program at Salem over the last three years. Our thanks and appreciation also to Dr. Gary Collin for spearheading the Preventive Ethics division of Integrated Ethics.*

*Integrated Ethics would like to introduce you to the "IE Minute," and "Ask Ethel." Each month the Integrated Ethics Program, Preventive Ethics Division will publish educational facts about ethical issues, dilemmas, and concerns that we hope you will find useful.*

## COMPLIMENTS CORNER

Submitted by Robin Haas

- ☺ “**Sheree Riddleburger** is very nice.”
- ☺ “The hospital staff and nurses did a great job during my stay on **4J**.”
- ☺ “**Tracy Stroupe** does an extraordinary job and especially went above and beyond in helping this Veteran try to find his gloves in the clinic.”
- ☺ To the **Dialysis Unit**: “The best things in the world aren’t things...they’re people like you. You have been kind and we thank you so much.”
- ☺ **Margaret Mulcahy, SW, 2-3**: “Thank you for your help, understanding, and care.”
- ☺ **Christie Beck**: “Above and beyond for helping a Veteran with grooming his hair. He has never received such kindness in any medical facility. The whole staff have been more than gracious.”
- ☺ “Thanks to **Margaret Mulcahy** for your patience, concern, and goodwill.”
- ☺ **Francisco Estrada**: “Above and beyond in assisting Michelle Nicholson and doctor with emergently transporting a Veteran to MICU.”
- ☺ **Mia Anglin**: “Thanks and sincere appreciation for superb and close attention to Veteran during recent visit. Thank you for the expedient handling of reports and prescriptions.”
- ☺ **Dr. Harris** and **Robin Gibson**: “Appreciation for dental care. Thank you to **Robin** who called his home to check on him after a tooth extraction.”
- ☺ **Le’Shawn Reynolds, RN** and the **4H** team from Radford Nursing student: “Thank you for your time and patience throughout my practicum at the VA. This unit helped me to feel like part of the team. The respect shown for colleagues and the sense of care for your patients is the reason I had a rewarding and memorable experience.”
- ☺ **Dental: Kathy** and **Sharon**...”Great service... thank you.”
- ☺ **Todd Whitely**: “Super job – showed initiative, hard work and is an asset to FMS.”
- ☺ “Hospital staff at **Registration** and the **Triage nurse** are polite, courteous and professional. I have visited 7 different VA hospitals before and this one is exceptional.”
- ☺ **2-2: Vickie Musgrove**: “Vickie was so helpful. The best personality.”
- ☺ **Mobile Patrol** : “Excellent customer service, helpful and polite. Thank you.”
- ☺ **Cheryl Peevey**: “Thanks for all the care I received while in the hospital. I give you three stars.”
- ☺ “I have seen positive and great changes in the VA since I was here a year ago. I like my doctor and

everyone is so kind, friendly and caring.”

- ☺ “**Dr. Mavi** is a very good doctor.”
- ☺ **Cardiology**: “Everything was done beyond excellence. Thanks to **Tracy Westburg, Michelle Duncan, Molly Camper** and **Cheryl Peevey**.”
- ☺ “Thanks to **Leshawn Reynolds, Miranda Loughborough, Jean Rusechman, Oleg Roussanov, MD, Fregenet Alemu, MD** and **Denvar Pritchard**. I was never treated as well anywhere.”
- ☺ **Tammy Richardson, Dr. Harpold** and the **Physical Therapy Department**: “Received great care. I can’t thank you enough for what you all have done for me.”
- ☺ **Jackie Pitts**: “Thanks for your professionalism and kindness on a very busy day in the ER,” from Dr. Marte-Grau and the ER staff.
- ☺ **2-2 Nursing staff**: “Thank you to for all the good care given to our loved one.”
- ☺ **Dr. Greg Jamison** and **HBPC** staff: “Thank you for providing continual support to my father. Thank you for your kind, professional help.”
- ☺ **Carol Via, Nancy Reed, HBPC**: “Thank you so much for the care you provided. You are wonderful, kind and thoughtful.”
- ☺ **Home Based Primary Care**: “Thank you for giving my husband the best of care, and I appreciate it so much. Every one of you was special to him. You are doing a wonderful service to the Veterans.”
- ☺ **Home Based Primary Care**: “Thank you so much for giving my husband some stability for several months. We were so grateful for your weekly visits. I am grateful for your wonderful team, enabling me to keep him home longer.”
- ☺ **Dr. Blake Lipscomb, 2-2**: “Thank you for your excellent care for our loved one while he was an inpatient.”
- ☺ **Debra Burgess** and **Dr. Harris**: “Appreciative of all the assistance from Debra Burgess for all the years of assistance to me and my husband, and to Dr. Harris who approved me to get my dental care locally.”
- ☺ **Guy Reed**: “Was proactive in noticing all the appointments that were scheduled and saved the family a lot of time and trouble. His compassion and professionalism, as well as his concern and friendliness deserves special recognition.”

**EXCELLENT SERVICE**  
Earned by Veterans. Delivered Here.  
VA Medical Center - Salem

## 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. An Editorial Board works on each issue to keep it informative, interesting, and relevant.

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.*



## EVENTS CALENDAR

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

Mar 7-13	Patient Safety Awareness Week
Mar 8	International Working Women's Day
Mar 10	Registered Dietitian Day
Mar 11	World Kidney Day
Mar 12	Women's Guide to Survival in Tough Economic Times—workshop from 11:30a-1p in the Auditorium
Mar 14	Daylight Savings Time Begins (Spring Forward)
Mar 14-20	National Poison Prevention Week National Pulmonary Rehabilitation Week
Mar 20	Spring Begins
Mar 23	Diabetes Alert Day
Mar 24	World Tuberculosis Day
Mar 26	Federal Women's Program Day of Recognition from 1:30-3p in 74-232 Legal Assistants Day
Mar 28— Apr 2	National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass, CO
Mar 30	Doctors Day
April	Alcohol Awareness Month Cancer Control Month National Donate Life Month Physical Wellness Month National Occupational Therapy Month Injury Prevention Month National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month Counseling Awareness Month
Apr 1-7	Medication Safety Week Testicular Cancer Awareness Week
Apr 5-11	National Public Health Week
Apr 8	National Alcohol Screening Day