

## Bay Pines VA Healthcare System's Sarasota CBOC MOVE!® Program

### Patient on the "MOVE!" loses 225 pounds!

Since its inception, the Bay Pines VA Healthcare System's MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans has had many success stories. Clearly the most dramatic has been that of Ernie Lohmann.

Ernie has struggled with his weight most of his life and has tried multiple weight loss programs with very little success.

Ernie's progress began 4 years ago when he first attended a MOVE! session. His initial motivation for attending the session came after an illness that included acute renal failure; "I thought I was going to die." He admits that his original goal was to go through the motions to qualify for bariatric surgery. Today, nothing could be further from his mind. In addition to losing 225 pounds, Ernie has been able to discontinue all three of his diabetes medications. His life has improved in many ways. He sleeps much better since his sleep apnea has all but disappeared and he is able to walk and get around much more easily. This, in turn, has improved his quality of life. He was only able to leave the house for an hour at a time, but now he can stay out all day if he chooses. "It's like a whole new life." Ernie attributes much of his success to MOVE! at the Sarasota CBOC.



He feels that the multi-disciplinary approach helped him change his lifestyle. The keys to his success have been accountability, keeping a diet log, and thinking about what he is eating. He also felt that it was important to weigh himself at each clinic visit. He continues to keep a diet log and weighs each time he has a clinic appointment.

Ernie still enjoys food, but makes smarter choices. "I still crave a pizza with everything on it," but he acknowledges he has to make wise food choices. Rather than participating in a formal exercise program, Ernie has dramatically increased his physical activity.

Mr. Ernie Lohmann has also helped other Veterans with his advice and successes. He has spoken with other MOVE! participants during group sessions, and provides firsthand insight from his weight loss experience. He says, "find what motivates you...like this class." Ernie is now a volunteer with the Sarasota MOVE! program.

Congratulations to Mr. Lohmann and the Sarasota/Bay Pines MOVE! team.