



National Salute to Veteran Patients Week Feb. 10-16

BAY PINES, Fla. – A full week of activities and special events for Veteran patients are scheduled at the [Bay Pines VA Healthcare System's \(VAHCS\)](#) primary medical center campus during the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Salute to Veteran Patients week Feb. 10-16.

The full week of events centers on VA's popular Valentines for Vets program scheduled for Feb. 14. Individuals, Veterans groups, military personnel, civic organizations, businesses, schools, local media, celebrities and sports stars traditionally deliver valentines or visit Veterans at VA medical centers, clinics, domiciliaries and community living centers (CLC) across the country.

"Each of us who are privileged to live in this nation has a special place in our hearts for Veterans. That is why we take time during the week of Valentine's Day to encourage our community to express affection and respect for those we admire," said Suzanne M. Klinker, Director, Bay Pines VAHCS.

"During the week of the National Salute, we strive to offer more than excellent health care – we offer our patients a genuine connection with family, friends and the communities they served."

Events scheduled at the Bay Pines VA include:

February 11, 2013

- 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. - The Sea Notes band will perform a variety of musical selections including Country and Western, Bluegrass, Cajun and 50's & 60's music for outpatients and Veterans located throughout the various medical center wards
- 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. - Popcorn and candy distribution for outpatients
- 1:15 - 2:00 p.m. – Saint Petersburg College Jazz Band will play for the Veterans at the CLC
- 2:45 - 3:45 p.m. - Rear Adm. John Kirby, Chief of Information, U.S. Navy, will visit Veterans in various areas of the medical center
- 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. - The Benevolent Order of the Elks will sponsor a karaoke event at the domiciliary with gifts and prizes for Veterans

February 12, 2013

- 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. - Coins, cards, candy and red, white, blue lap robes will be distributed to CLC residents and Veterans located in the various medical center wards
- Time TBD - the Veterans of Foreign Wars will sponsor a dinner for domiciliary residents, location TBD

February 13, 2013

- Time TBD - The Benevolent Order of the Elks will sponsor a bingo event with prizes at the CLC

- 8:00 a.m. – Bay Pines VAHCS VA Voluntary Service is sponsoring a coffee and donut social for outpatients
- 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. - Bob Evans Restaurant will provide Valentine cards and cookies to Veterans

February 14, 2013

- 1:00 p.m. - Ice cream social and Valentines cookie distribution for residents at the Domiciliary
- 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Creative Arts Show hosted by Bay Pines VAHCS Recreation Therapy Department in the JC Cobb room
- 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. - Allstate Insurance Company headquartered in Tampa will visit Veterans and provide gifts and thank you letters

February 15, 2013

- 11:00 a.m. – 2 p.m. - The Knights of Columbus will sponsor a picnic outside the medical center’s outpatient entrance
- 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. – Bay Pines VAHCS Voluntary Service will host DJ music outside the outpatient entrance
- 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. - Florida Lt. Governor Jennifer Carroll will visit Veterans in various areas in the medical center

While the National Salute kicks off this week, Americans have the chance to show their appreciation to Veterans all year by volunteering their time or donating to VA medical facilities throughout the year. No medical experience is necessary and volunteers are encouraged to share ideas how they would like to give back using their unique skills. To find opportunities at the Bay Pines VAHCS, please visit www.baypines.va.gov/giving or call (727) 398-6661 ext. 5594.

About the Bay Pines VA Healthcare System

The Bay Pines VAHCS is one of the nation’s leading VA healthcare systems, employing more than 3,800 medical professionals and support staff dedicated to providing the very best care to Veterans residing in southwest Florida. The Bay Pines VA is accredited by The Joint Commission and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. The healthcare system is also a three-time winner of the Robert W. Carey Circle of Excellence Award, the VA’s top honor for quality achievement.

The Bay Pines VA operates nine health care facilities to include the main medical center located in Bay Pines and outpatient clinics located in Bradenton, Cape Coral, Naples, Palm Harbor, Port Charlotte, Sarasota, St. Petersburg, and Sebring. Every year Bay Pines VAHCS treats nearly 100,000 Veterans while providing a full range of high quality medical, psychiatric, and extended care services in outpatient, inpatient, nursing home, and home care settings.

To learn more about the Bay Pines VA, please visit www.baypines.va.gov or “like” us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/VABayPines.

###