



# Just the Facts

## VALENTINES FOR VETERANS CONCERT

Country music artist, Daryle Singletary, will perform at the Salem Civic Center as part of our 2013 National Salute to Veterans on Tuesday, February 12, 2013, at 7:00 pm. This concert is part of the annual weeklong National Salute to Veterans celebration, specifically connected to Valentine's Day, and is an ideal opportunity for the community to express its respect and appreciation of all Veterans who have served and protected our great Nation.

We are very excited to again host one of the national concerts in our area for Veterans residing in southwest Virginia. Last year was overwhelmingly successful with over 4,500 in attendance and we look forward to another great event this February.

The concert also pays tribute to Gold Star families who have lost a loved one in service; welcomes Veterans home to their community and families, and promotes volunteerism at VA medical centers and outpatient clinics throughout the country.



Daryle Singletary is well known as a traditional country artist. Staying true to his childhood roots in rural Georgia, Singletary's music has remained true and honest as seen in his last release, *Rockin' in the Country*. Past releases have included favorites such as *I'm Living Up to Her Low Expectations*, *Amen Kind of Love*, *I Let Her Lie*, *The Note*, *Background Noise*, and *She's a Woman*.

Tickets for the general public are available with a limit of 4 tickets per person. Tickets are required for admission and must be obtained prior to the date of the concert. Doors will open at 6:00 p.m.

This concert is complimentary as the price of the ticket has already been paid by the men and women who have served our Nation. Updates will also be posted on Facebook, Twitter and our website at [www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov). We hope to see you there!



MIGUEL LAPUZ, MD  
Director

# 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. Rural Health staff can help Veterans enroll for VA health care! Recently the Team shared information about VA health care services at: the Bedford Welcome Center; the VFW Post in Bluefield, WV; and the Smith Mountain Lake YMCA.

## Upcoming Rural Health Outreach Events:

- ◆ January 19-20—Salem Gun Show at the Salem Civic Center
- ◆ January 22—Diabetic Education Class in Cedar Bluff
- ◆ January 29—Bedford Welcome Center
- ◆ February 4—Diabetic Education Class in Staunton
- ◆ February 5—Diabetic Education Class in Bedford
- ◆ February 11—Diabetic Education Class in Martinsville
- ◆ February 12—Valentines for Veterans Concert at Salem Civic Center
- ◆ February 26—Diabetic Education Class in Cedar Bluff

More information and upcoming events open to the public are posted at [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).

*The Rural Health Team is made up of (left to right): Lorna Oldson, Brenda Hart, Jason OBryan, Jennifer Schutte, Lois Lail, Ella Robbins, Candice Whitlock, and Marian McConnell. (Photo by Marian McConnell)*



## MIRACLES NEVER CEASE

Submitted by Jay Kincanon

I went to my mailbox recently, and to my surprise didn't find it overflowing with the usual junk mail, political ads, or the seasonal catalogs. However, to my delight, I found a large orange envelope addressed from Jim Sullivan, my former advertising manager at our local Sears store. I was a young newspaper layout artist here some 39 years ago. Jim and I have stayed in touch over the years with the occasional letter and holiday greeting cards. I opened this large envelope which contained a nice warm letter and batch of old black and white photos. These photos brought back fond memories of working in Sears's advertising department.

Each year, a few weeks before Thanksgiving, our department would receive the larger-than-life, fuzzy yellow, Winnie the Pooh costume to use for store promotions and tours to the pediatric wards in our local hospitals. Jim took many photos to document these events.

On one such occasion as Winnie the Pooh, I unknowingly met Martha Smith with her infant son on the pediatric ward. All the children seemed delighted to meet their story book friend "in person" as they eagerly reached out to give Pooh a hug or a kiss. The lively tune of Pooh's music played on a cassette as Pooh visited with the children, parents, and hospital staff.

I brought these old photos to work and shared them with my co-worker and friend Annie Saunders. To both of our astonishment, Annie recognized a familiar face from the past in one of the photos. It was her sister's best friend, Martha Smith, and her infant son during one of Pooh's hospital tours on the pediatric wards. This was truly amazing and beyond our ability to fathom.

Annie and her sister presented this photo to Martha who immediately became overcome with emotions of joyful tears and appreciation. Martha had lost her son in infancy to a tragic illness, and had always wanted a picture of her son since then.

Martha wanted to meet the person who was in the Winnie the Pooh costume that brought laughter and joy to her son in the hospital. Annie invited her to come by our office so we could finally meet. We were blessed with a wonderful and emotional reunion.

I wrote to Jim and told him what had transpired after he sent me the photos. He wrote back saying, "I find it most amazing that after 39 years, that the photo ended up in the hands of the one person in the world that would appreciate it the most...the Mother of that child. How remarkable fate is to have worked in that manner so she could have that photo."

This miracle formed a close bond between us, and we will always be remembered. "His" divine timing is always right.

*Photos from Top to Bottom: Jay Kincanon in Pooh Costume in 1973; photo by Jim Sullivan. Winnie the Pooh (with Jay inside) meeting Martha Smith and her infant son on the Pediatric Ward in a local hospital; photo by Jim Sullivan. Annie Saunders (left), Martha Smith (center), and Jay Kincanon (right) - reunion after 39 years at the Salem VAMC where Annie and Jay Work; photo by Angel Osiruphu-EI.*



## FLU VACCINATIONS FOR VETERANS AND STAFF

Submitted by Lindsay Hardy, RN

VA has a long-standing commitment to providing free influenza vaccination to our staff each flu season. Vaccination remains our strongest defense against flu related illness and death. It is highly recommended every staff member who does not have a medical contraindication be vaccinated.

Veterans are offered flu shots at their scheduled appointments, or can request them through their Primary Care Team.

Vaccination, hand and respiratory hygiene, proper use of personal protective equipment, keeping our facilities clean, and staying home when sick are all parts of a comprehensive program to prevent influenza. Over the years, the Office of Public Health, through the *Infection: Don't Pass It On* campaign, has provided leadership and resources that support and promote vaccine uptake, hand hygiene, and other elements of infection prevention. These resources can be found at [www.publichealth.va.gov](http://www.publichealth.va.gov) or at [vaww.vha.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/PublicHealth/handhygiene/default.aspx](http://vaww.vha.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/PublicHealth/handhygiene/default.aspx).

Let's all move collectively to spread the word about the importance of getting vaccinated by participating in National Influenza Vaccination Week, December 2 – 8, 2012 (visit [www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw)). If you haven't already, get vaccinated!



## DD-214 DISCHARGE PAPERS NOW ONLINE

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for Veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online:

<http://www.archives.gov/Veterans/military-service-records/>

This may be particularly helpful when a Veteran needs a copy of his/her DD-214 for employment purposes. NPRC is working to make it easier for Veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files.

Military Veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents.

Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site. Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask Veterans for additional information will be minimized. The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records centers mail-room and processing time.

Please pass this information on to former military personnel you may know and their dependents.

*Please note: NPRC holds historical Military Personnel Records of nearly 100 million Veterans. The vast majority of these records are paper-based and not available on-line.*

*Also note: You can complete the request online, but you still have to print out the last screen and have the Veteran sign the request and fax it to the National Archives. This procedure has improved turnaround times, but still takes about 30 days from request to receipt.*



## JUST ONE STEP

Article and photos submitted by Pamela Moreland, RD, CDE

“Just One Step” was the theme of the Diabetes Health Fair held at Salem VAMC in November as part of National Diabetes Month. Controlling diabetes begins with just one step and the health fair provided information about all areas of diabetes management as well as diabetes prevention.

Physical activity is not only a challenging part of managing diabetes, it is an essential part of diabetes whether a person is on medicine for lowering blood sugars or not. Ward Athey is a Veteran ballroom dancer who graciously demonstrated some ballroom dancing steps that could be done alone or with a partner in the privacy of home. There are many benefits from dancing, including: decreasing blood sugars, improving cholesterol levels, strengthening the heart, strengthening the muscles and bones, improving balance and coordination, and improving mood. The biggest benefit is that it is fun for beginners as well as experienced dancers.

Besides physical activity, other factors involved with diabetes management are: nutrition, stress and illness, medication, tobacco use, taking care of skin and feet, checking blood sugars at home, as well as adequate sleep. Representatives from podiatry, physical therapy, smoking cessation, stress management and pain management, eye clinic, cardiology clinic, MOVE weight management, telehealth, nutrition, MAGIC clinic, and diabetes education and management team provided very informative displays. Dietetic interns from Virginia Tech, Christine Steffen and Sarah Marshall provided an informational display: “Simple Steps to a Healthy Plate” and provided samples of mini high fiber muffins. A very grateful thanks to all who participated and provided their expertise to a successful health fair!

For more information about diabetes, visit the web site: [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) or call 1-800-DIABETES.



From top to bottom: Pam Athey (Veteran's wife), Bonnie Harbourt, and Tammy Morton (dietitians) and Ward Athey (Veteran ballroom dancer). Dianna Jones, RN, and Veteran James Crabb. Dietetic Interns: Christine Steffen and Sarah Marshall.

## 27TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA

*Submitted by Beth Woodward, Photos by Ryan Pleasants*

The Music Therapy section recently presented the 27th Annual Holiday Extravaganza held on December 19, 2012 in the Auditorium. The program was a musical and artistic collaboration of Veterans, patients, volunteers, and staff in celebration of the holiday season. This event supported various artistic endeavors of thirty-seven Veterans, along with approximately 39 employees and 10 volunteers. The Master of Ceremonies, Isaiah Bowie, presented an array of prizes and kept the audience entertained. Approximately 300 Veterans, employees, volunteers, family, and community members attended. Our special guest, Santa (AKA Bob Doyle), interacted with those present and provided much holiday joy. Refreshments were provided by Voluntary Service. A special thank you is extended to the Salem VAMC Federal Credit Union, and the Salem VAMC Canteen Service, for their contributions and continued support!



## PRIMARY CARE—MENTAL HEALTH INTEGRATION

*Submitted by Sarah Hartley, Ph.D*

Patients often first express mental health needs in Primary Care and other medical environments. Placing mental health staff in medical environments, termed Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PCMHI), is a key to effective outreach and ensuring Veterans with mental health needs receive screening, treatment and rapid access to care. Once a mental health diagnosis is made, regular mental health treatment is also important. In 2012, VISN 6 expanded PCMHI resources and staff to create two PCMHI Care Management Hubs. These hubs serve as call centers from which mental health staff provides regular follow-up phone calls to Veterans newly diagnosed with mental illnesses. Such calls greatly increase the likelihood that a patient will complete a course of mental



health treatment and reduce the likelihood of side-effects, negative outcomes and suicide risk. Providing some visits by telephone also helps reduce travel and time, burdens faced by Veterans seeking Mental Health treatment.

VAMC Salem's PCMHI Hub serves Veterans enrolled in Primary Care at both VAMC Salem and VAMC Beckley. In addition to the Care Management Hub, Salem VAMC also has mental health social workers and psychologists located in the Primary Care clinics to provide same-day care to Veterans with Primary Care appointments. In the picture are the clinical staff who work with the PCMHI team.

Front: Cassie Crouch, Sarah Lucas Hartley, PhD, Melisa Schneider, PsyD. Back: Mike Cooper, MD, Jennifer Caldwell, PhD, Pat Lockett, LPN, Margaret Soper, LPN, Karen Lamagdeleine, LCSW, and Paula Blake, LPN. Photo by Marian McConnell

## COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN

*Submitted by Dixie Hogan*

Thanks to everyone who donated to the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) this year. Our goal was to raise \$67,000. Together we contributed \$71,000 to various charities through CFC. Thanks for helping those in need with your generosity.



## BE SAFE

Article and photo submitted by Dr. Shannon Cohen

The Health Promotion Disease Prevention program led a discussion of the healthy living message “Be Safe” on December 6, 2012 from 12:30-1:30 p.m. Veterans, employees, visitors, and volunteers received information about numerous safety topics including the need for recommended immunizations, falls prevention, and avoiding motor vehicle crashes.

Regina Cooper, RN, MSN is pictured with Rosie West from EKG at the event . We wish Regina a very happy retirement!



## MEMORIAL FOR AN HONORED GRANDFATHER

Submitted by Laura Coffman Cox

Snow drifts lazily down as rifles crack,  
Echoing their sharp reports in the  
Supernatural stillness, muffled and amplified  
by the cocooning effect of the finely falling snow.  
We all twitch once to the first short, trying to imagine  
the pain and suffering endured by such brave men  
In such a horrible war and even more horrible, brutal  
confinement by fellow humans.

The trumpeter cries out taps in answer,  
pleading with God to remember this soldier's  
Sacrifice and life, answering the gun salute  
With a dignity befitting the angels and soothing  
our jangled nerves.

As the flag is folded and snapped into its  
precise triangle by the practiced hands of the Guardsmen,  
We are reminded of the detailed precision  
of my grandfather's life—the exacting way of his manners.  
The never ending quest for the perfect bowling score,  
The economical explanation of how to snap barbed wire holders  
To a fence post without losing fingernails or knuckles, the  
Fastidious way he dressed that made him our own personal Mr. Rogers.

Memories surround us and drift down from heaven with each  
Falling snowflake, each memory as individual as each flake,  
Covering the immediate world with a blanket of snow.  
Coats and uniforms, leather and wool, black and dress forest green  
Catch the icy prisms, glinting and sparkling in the milky white  
Blanket of snow drifting around us, reminding us that briefly,  
We were touched by Heaven on Earth as God claimed an angel  
Back home.



In Memory of Cyril L. Kauffman  
3/16/18-1/30/10



## FACILITY ENHANCEMENTS/CONSTRUCTION NEWS

Submitted by Wayne Johnson, FMS

The Building 8 Addition is almost under roof, and work is continuing at a fast pace. Much of the floor slab and primary wall framing is in place. The contractor has placed more than 300 cubic yards of concrete in the new water tower foundation (that's over a million pounds), allowing construction of the concrete stem to begin.

Contractors should begin to mobilize in February for construction of a two-story Dining Room addition atop Building 2A.

Additional building or building system projects which will continue during the January/February timeframe include:

- Renovation of Building 7, 2nd Floor for MHSL: Existing contract should be completed after change agreements are in place.
- New Education Center in Building 75: Construction work should be essentially completed in January followed by installation of furnishings and audio/visual equipment.
- Replace HVAC System in Building 74: Design of the new HVAC system will continue.
- Emergency Department Addition/Renovation: Design procurement will continue.
- Installation of a New Nurse Call System: Design procurement will continue.
- Replace Building 75 Roof: Construction procurement will continue.

Several other energy, site-wide utility, life safety, or security projects will continue to progress during January/February including:

- Energy Conservation Measures: High-speed rollup door installation for corridor drive-through locations is complete for the West Building Loop and should be completed for the East Loop; Overhead light replacement for several buildings should initiate; Final items will be completed for the new water heaters in Buildings 2, 8, and 143 which are now operational.
- Upgrades to Emergency Electrical System: Replacement of several Automatic Transfer Switches for emergency electrical power will continue.
- Replacement of Primary Electrical Feeders: Construction procurement will continue.
- Upgrade Underground Water Distribution System: Construction mobilization will begin.
- Upgrade and Modernize Utility Plant: Design effort will continue.
- Site-Wide Security Fencing: Correction of deficiency items should begin.
- Install Storm-Water Overflow for East Courtyard: Construction procurement will continue.
- Correct Life Safety Deficiencies: Replacement and upgrade of fire doors, fire dampers, and exit lights will continue. Construction of new emergency stairways at Building 75 will also continue.
- Correct Electrical Panel Deficiencies: Design procurement will continue.

Several other construction contracts are in progress along with multiple projects by in-house labor. Please use caution around any construction activity and observe construction signage and barriers.

If you observe any safety concerns, please report them immediately to Safety (Ext. 2292) or FMS (Ext. 2700).



Aerial view of Building 8 Addition—Photo by Ricky May, SkyShots Helicopters. Used with permission by Hanke Constructors.

## ? ASK ETHEL?

The Integrated Ethics Committee poses a question each month in **Just the Facts**. Questions and answers will address resources available to employees and other ethical issues in the workplace. Customer centered agencies, like Salem VAMC in which improved customer service is important to the overall mission of quality healthcare, tend to offer various opportunities for all employees which promote career and self growth. 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).



**November's Question:** What is the role of Ethics Consultation?

### Response:

Like the Preventive Ethic functions, Ethics Consultation serves to address ethics quality gaps that permeate every system. The National Center for Ethics in Healthcare, NCEHC as seen on page 13 of the Ethics Consultation Primer, the image of an iceberg is much like our VAMC system.

*“Ethics quality is the product of the interplay of factors at three levels: decisions and actions, systems and processes, and environment and culture. The image of an iceberg helps to illustrate the concept of ethics quality in health care:*

- *At the surface of the “ethics iceberg” lie easily observable decisions and actions, and the events that follow from them, in the everyday practices of a health care organization and its staff.*
- *Beneath that, however, organizational systems and processes drive decision making. Not immediately visible in themselves, these organizational factors become apparent when we look for them—for example, when we examine patterns and trends requests for ethics consultation.*
- *Deeper still lie the organization’s ethical environment and culture, which powerfully, but nearly imperceptibly shape its ethical practices overall. This deepest level of organizational values, understandings, assumptions, habits, and unspoken messages—what people in the organization know but rarely make explicit—is critically important since it is the foundation for everything else. Yet because it’s only revealed through deliberate and careful exploration, it is often overlooked.*



*Together, these three levels—decisions and actions, systems and processes, and environment and culture—define the ethics quality of a health care organization.”*

When employees seek to improve their day to day operations, continually drilling down for a root cause, systems can change resulting in a healthier organization. Ethics Consultation Service offers the Veterans we serve an opportunity for advocacy and improved patient care. Any employee is welcome to make an ethics referral by contacting one of fifteen Ethics Consultants by paging #4220 Monday through Friday from 8:00a-4:00p. Nights weekends and holidays an ethics consultant may be reached by calling the Administrative Officer of the Day, AOD at 2172. If you have a non-patient related ethics question you may contact Salem’s Compliance and Business Integrity Officer, CBI, Mr. David Hoover at extension 1036.

**March's Question:** Does attending a professionally sponsored dinner meeting conflict with any VAMC policies?

## JOIN THE CREW

Submitted by Marsha Garrison, Photos by Rod Hiduskey

CREW (Civility, Respect, and Engagement in the Workplace) continues to be active at Salem VAMC! Presently, CREW facilitators are leading groups in the Prosthetics and Nutrition and Food Services (N&FS).

Cecelia Perkins, N&FS Secretary, has done an excellent job of making a bulletin board to remind employees of the CREW goals (see picture this issue). N&FS has been focusing on communication skills as well as conflict resolution. Other areas, as shown on the bulletin board, are being mindful of your co-workers' likes and dislikes and considering those when you make decisions as a group. Also, the quote "change your thoughts and change your world" gives us some food for thought when we are considering how to make things better in our work groups. For instance, if you always exhibit a negative attitude, it can rub off on everyone else! So try going for a more positive attitude because that is much more pleasant to "catch!"

If you would like to know more about CREW and perhaps have CREW come to your area, please contact one of the CREW Coordinators: Marsha Garrison, ext. 1509, or Gail Langabeer, ext. 2453



## EMPLOYEE AWARDS—TOWN HALL MEETING

January 17, 2013

- ★ **IOW/IOW** (Improving Our Work Is Our Work) - Christie Barnett, Barbara Bowers, Mary Beth Capuno, and Rose West shared the outcomes of their project to reduce an 8-week backlog in Stress Testing; now there is zero (0) backlog.
- ★ **Primary Care  $\Leftrightarrow$  Specialty Care Performance Improvement**—Dr. Joe Gieck shared improvements made such as reducing the Pre-Op process from 2-3 hours to 30 minutes; reducing paperwork by \$60K/year; providing some sleep monitoring for Veterans in-home; improving Specialty Care PACT; and improving collaboration between Pharmacy and Logistics.

### ★ Service Pin Awards

#### 25 Years

Derrick Allen—Fee Services\* - *top left*  
Monica Buckner—N&FS\* - *2nd down, left*  
Karen Buzzo—OIT\* - *3rd down, left*  
William Gervais—MHSL\* - *bottom left*



#### 30 Years

Audery Anderson—Nursing  
Virginia Benson—Fee Services  
Charles Cox, Jr.—Nursing  
Pamela Grogan—Nursing\* - *top right*  
Vivian Gross—Operating Room  
Clayton Helms—FMS\* - *2nd down, right*  
Lisa Mason-Word—N&FS\* - *3rd down, right*  
Patricia Muller—Nursing  
Patricia Roberts—Medical  
Janie Taylor—Nursing  
Cathy Williams—PALMS



#### 35 Years

Eddie Burnett—HR\* - *bottom right*

[Continued on next page...]

★ **GEM “Going the Extra Mile” Awards:**

Charles McNear  
Kara Kielmeyer  
Kenneth Jones  
Ed MacCready  
Darren Epperly  
James Cooke  
Susan Williams  
Thomasine Brown  
Susan Duma  
Patricia Muller  
Adam Damewood  
Claytor Willoughby  
Alvin Board  
Helena Phillips  
Mary Calhoun  
Dana Garman  
Jody Duke  
Monica Wilson  
Frank Wilkins  
Jessica Waymack  
Jennifer Strickland  
Andres Marte-Grau

Mary Ann Workman  
Joseph Abate  
Angel Osiruphu  
Gerald Killian  
Warren Spencer, Jr.  
James Kelly  
Patricia Palmer  
Robin Kidd  
Roshan Bhowansingh  
Julia Ewen  
Aubrey Barnette  
Damon Shelton  
Sandra Albery  
Tammie Rudder  
Linda Meadows  
Joseph Ozment  
Sarah Bryant  
Ashley Robinson  
Stacy Lam  
Charles Matthews  
Gary Harpold  
Suzanne Hanna

Mary Tinsley  
Tina Moran  
Elizabeth Gum  
Joe Davis  
Warren C. Spencer III  
Tammy Cox  
Tracye J. Smith  
Benjamin Sackett  
Francisco Estrada  
James Markey  
Shenandoah Clay  
Donna Parker  
Thomas Salter  
Julie Martin  
Rebecca Ferguson  
Kiley Case  
James Kincanon  
Jean Harris  
Brian Edwards  
Michelle Oneil  
Rajani Chilakapati  
Sandra Cothran



Some of the recipients of the GEM Awards. Congratulations!  
*Photos by Marian McConnell*



## COMPLIMENTS CORNER

- ☺ “I just wanted to acknowledge how kind the **x-ray techs** and **radiologist** were to me... They explained everything to me beforehand which diminished my anxiety regarding the esophageal swallow.”
- ☺ “**Surgical/SCI Clinic**: From the receptionist to the nurses—these people are totally professional, the very best! There were no delays in the clinic. **Becky** and **Brandy** are the best nurses you could hope for without a doubt. I always feel safe under their care and leave feeling better than when I came in. **Sandra Vaughan, Becky,** and **Brandy** have saved my leg and saved my life!”
- ☺ “**Chronic Pain Group**: Love the group. Was seeing Pain Clinic every 4-6 months. I asked to come to the Chronic Group and being seen every week got the pain under control finally. Keep it up!”
- ☺ “**Chronic Pain Group**: I feel everyone is doing a great job. Everyone is exceptional.”
- ☺ “We wish to thank everyone for the exceptional care. **Ward 4J** staff were very kind at all times and very professional. Special thanks to **Linda Thompson, RN;** and **Gale Taylor, LPN.**”
- ☺ “I would like to say thank you to the VA and **Dr. Thaler** and the staff in **Clinic 3** for being wonderful. They have treated me so great during the loss of my Mom.

Dr. Thaler and his whole staff are the best in my opinion. I have never been treated with so much compassion and love.”

- ☺ “**Robin** and the other **Dental** personnel have been nothing but nice to me. Robin is good about explaining everything to us Veterans in detail so we understand. She is super.”
- ☺ “Thanks for being so good to me. The world would be a better place if more people like you (**PCT C**) were in it.”
- ☺ “**Lab** employee **Carmela Keeling** was wonderful!”
- ☺ “To **PA Holmgren** in **Primary Care**: Thank you for your thoroughness and concern in regard to this stage of our lives. Your ability to bring to us resources that will give us a better quality of life is very much appreciated. The difficult Holiday timing has highlighted the importance of keeping one’s self firmly responsible for one’s life circumstances...”
- ☺ “To **Mike Nichols, PA, Urology**; from Dr. Dunne: I would like to commend Mr. Nichols for the exceptional way he performs his duties in the Urology Department. He is always available and willing to help us when we have challenging urologic problems. He provides excellent customer service both to his patients and to us as referring providers. Recently he saw one of our mutual patients who was having severe pain that I felt was likely related to bone mets. Mike agreed to see him immediately and we collaborated successfully to get him started on treatment for his cancer, as well as pain management through my clinic. When our clinic followed up with the patient the next day, he emphasized how much he appreciated Mike’s explanation of his problem and his treatment options. Mike’s availability and willingness to help really fits in with the whole PACT concept of patient [centered] care. We sincerely appreciate his energy and dedication.”

## REPORTING SAFETY & QUALITY ISSUES

Submitted by Quality Management

Anyone may report safety and quality of care issues to the Joint Commission (TJC); and any criminal activity, waste, abuse, mismanagement, as well as safety issues may be reported to the Office of Inspector General (OIG).

(Concerns can be reported without fear of retaliation or disciplinary action against a reporting employee.)



The Joint Commission (TJC):

Office of Quality Monitoring, The Joint Commission  
One Renaissance Blvd.

Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Phone: 1-800-994-6610

Fax: 1-630-792-5636

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

OIG:

VA OIG Hotline

PO Box 50410

Washington, DC 20091-0410

Phone: 1-800-488-8244

Fax: 1-202-565-7936

Email: [vaoighotline@va.gov](mailto:vaoighotline@va.gov)

Be sure to check out our website

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

For events, articles, photos, this newsletter, and more! You can also "like" us on Facebook and connect with us on Twitter

## 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 home-page.

*Disclaimer: We reserve the right to edit/condense articles and information as appropriate. We will make every attempt to notify the author(s) first.*

Posted online under "Resources" at:

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



## EVENTS CALENDAR 2013

Also see [www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov) Events Calendar and Employees can view Intranet Events Calendar

Jan 17	Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Service—1:00p in the Chapel
Jan 20-26	CRNA Week (Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists)
Jan 21	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
Jan 22	Be Involved With Your Health Care—10-11a in the Main Lobby Building 143
Feb 4-10	PACU Week (Post Anesthesia Care Unit)
Feb 5-7	Employee Federal Benefits—Supplemental Insurance—7:30a-4:30p in the Main Lobby
Feb 7	Be Tobacco Free—12:30-1:30p in the Main Lobby
Feb 12	Valentines for Veterans Concert from 7-9p at the Salem Civic Center (see page 1)
Feb 13	Ash Wednesday Service at 12p in the Chapel
Feb 18	Presidents' Day Holiday
Feb 20	Save Academy Workshop for Employees from 12-1p in the Auditorium
Feb 22	Black History Program—2-3p in the Auditorium
Mar 8	Breakfast with the Director for Night Shift Employees—4-5p in Shell Space, Building 143, Room 1C129
Mar 20	Save Academy Workshop for Employees from 12-1p in the Auditorium
April 4	DMV2GO from 9a-3p in Parking Lot S
Apr 17	Save Academy Workshop for Employees from 12-1p in the Auditorium
Apr 18	Town Hall Meeting for Employees from 11:30-12:30p in the Auditorium
May 10	Breakfast with the Director for Night Shift Employees—4-5p in Shell Space, Building 143, Room 1C129
May 15	Save Academy Workshop for Employees from 12-1p in the Auditorium
May 15	2013 VA2K from 12-1p around the perimeter of the VAMC; start at Building 5