



Truman VA BULLETIN

October 19, 2007



WELCOME

- Paul Branham, RN (PS)**
- Stacey Dennis, LCSW**, Social Worker (PS)
- Jack Fisher**, Biomedical Engineering Tech (FM)
- Denise Kempf, LPN (PS)**
- Shannon Miller, RN**, Infection Control Practitioner
- Debra Schwarze**, Food Service Worker (Canteen)
- Katherine Wills**, Student Nurse Technician (PS)

FAREWELL

- Betty Burris**, Patient Services Assistant
- Kristen King**, Clerk (BUS)
- Peggy McMillan, RN (PC)**
- Toiya Staten, LPN (PS)**

MORE ABOUT INTEGRATED ETHICS

As previously reported, VHA is moving toward a national, standardized, comprehensive, systematic, integrated approach to ethics in health care, which is reflected in our FY 2008 Performance Measures. Because of this movement, a new Integrated Ethics Committee, co-chaired by the Hospital Director and Chief of Staff, has been developed at Truman VA to oversee the ethics consultation service and the preventive ethics team as well as any other ad hoc workgroups convened to address specific ethical issues. Detailed information regarding the committee responsibilities and assigned membership is outlined in hospital policy – B&C 589A4-15. In addition, you may contact **Vickie Stockglausner**, Integrated Ethics Program Officer, at extension 56593, for more information.

VOLUNTARY LEAVE TRANSFER PROGRAM

Shelby Hall (PS) has been approved for the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program. Contact **Lena Warren (HR)** at extension 56497 for information.

WELCOME HOME EVENT – SATURDAY, NOV. 3

On Saturday, Nov. 3, Truman VA will conduct a Welcome Home event for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) veterans and their families from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Former Missouri Governor **Roger Wilson** will be the keynote speaker. At least 18 other agencies will participate in the event to assure that these latest combat veterans are fully aware of benefits and services available to them. A number of employees have already volunteered to help as door greeters, parking lot shuttle drivers, escorts, decorators and sitters for children. Interested employees should contact **Nathan Witt**, Chief, Voluntary Service at extension 56405.

EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION NEWS

Tickets go on sale today for the VA Employee Holiday Social, which is scheduled from 6:00 p.m. until midnight on Saturday, Dec. 8 at the Stoney Creek Inn. The cost is \$15 per ticket. Ticket sales are limited to employees plus one guest each. For more information, contact **Amy Pulliam, Kris Gaddy** or **Erica Keeler**.

SAFETY FAIR WINNERS

Thanks to everyone that participated in the annual Safety Fair on Oct. 11. The following employees are the grand prizewinners from the drawing:

- Monte Adams (PC)** – home fire extinguisher
- Deborah Adkisson (CS)** – home fire extinguisher
- George Asal (Pharmacy)** – first aid kit
- Regina Bryan (PC)** – fire escape ladder
- Mary Gaub (CS)** – home smoke detector
- Michael Perry (FM)** – home smoke detector.

Congratulations! Please contact **Matt Stewart** (extension 56306) or **Marsha Leigh** (extension 56307) to claim your prize.

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN (CFC)

If you have not already contributed to this year's Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), please take another few minutes to consider opening your heart and wallet. Right now, more than ever, your help is needed. Each day the need for services grows – people keep having health problems; kids are hungry and cold; parents lose their jobs. Each day, more people need your help in order to meet the basic needs of their families. For more information, contact your service line key person or **Paul Kurzejeski**, 2007 CFC Chair for the Columbia area, at extension 56335.





VETERANS CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL IN ST. LOUIS

More than 120 veterans from across the country, all selected winners in music, dance, drama or art contests are preparing to attend the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival in St. Louis next week, Oct. 22-28. Presented by the VA, the American Legion Auxiliary and Help Hospitalized Veterans, the Festival is the culmination of a year-long fine arts talent competition involving 3,000 participants nationwide. The Festival is open to all veterans receiving care at VA medical facilities. It is hosted this year by the St. Louis VA medical center. The Creative Arts Festival is a week of learning, exploring, fellowship and celebration of the healing power of the arts. Because the gold, silver and bronze medal winners are already selected to participate in the Festival, there is no competition at the event itself. Rather, it serves as a showcase for the top national winners. The event concludes on Sunday, Oct. 28, with a visual art exhibit and gala variety stage show at the Touhill Performing Arts Center, located on the University of Missouri-St. Louis campus at 8001 Natural Bridge Road.

Artists will exhibit their work from 12:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. The 2:00 p.m. performance will feature performers in music, drama and dance, backed by a professional orchestra. Renowned actress of Hollywood's golden era, Jane Powell, is the mistress of ceremonies for the show. For more information, log on to the Festival's Web site at www.creativeartsfestival.va.gov.

REPORT FROM VA MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

More than 700 mental health professionals, researchers, educators and clinicians met in Washington, DC earlier this year for the VHA Office of Mental Health Service's first comprehensive mental health conference. It was noted at the conference that VA is the largest provider of mental health care in the nation. VA's recent mental health enhancements include:

- Employing more than 9,000 front-line mental health professionals, a 15 percent increase over four years ago;
- Providing mental health services at each of VA's 153 medical centers and 900 outpatient clinics with every VAMC now having special capabilities for treating PTSD;
- Increasing funding for readjustment counseling for OIF/OEF veterans, including the hiring of 100 additional OIF/OEF veterans to enhance outreach to all veterans and those on active duty, in the National Guard or Reserves;
- Hiring Suicide Prevention Coordinators for each VA medical center and establishing the 24/7 Suicide Prevention Hotline Center;

- Increasing availability of "telemental health" programs, which treated about 20,000 patients last year;
- Integrating mental health services into geriatric programs;
- Adding psychologists and social workers to the staff of VA's polytrauma centers; and
- Increasing the number of Vet Centers from 209 to 232 and adding 100 new combat veterans to run outreach programs to their former comrades.

Key changes VA has recently made include a commitment to evaluate a veteran within 24 hours after the veteran has asked for or been referred for mental health or substance abuse treatment. If there is an emergency, VHA will conduct an immediate assessment and provide appropriate intervention. VHA is also working to ensure that emergency departments have mental health professionals available at all times. VA has begun implementing its five-year Mental Health Strategic Plan, which includes four primary areas: (1) expanding access and capacity to mental health care for all veterans; (2) integrating mental health and primary care; (3) transforming the system to focus on recovery and rehabilitation; and (4) implementing evidence-based care.

The conference focused on (1) increasing recovery oriented services by transforming the VA system to recovery oriented practice; (2) integrating care between mental health and primary care for better access and treatment rates; and (3) promoting a national model for suicide risk identification and prevention, which requires ready access to high quality mental health services, supplemented by programs that directly address the risk of suicide. At the conference, Dr. Michael J. Kussman, Under Secretary for Health, said, "Good mental health care can improve veterans' emotional well being and change the everyday realities of their lives. It can improve the way our patients function in society. It can improve productivity in the workplace and it can improve the way they function in their families."

NOTE OF GRATITUDE

My wife and I would like to say thank you for everyone that donated leave to me. I also would like to thank you all for your prayers and friendship that have helped me through this time of recovery. My wife and I appreciate your kindness. This has meant so much to us. I was released on Oct. 11 by my doctor with a clean bill of health. Thanks again.

Your friend and co-worker,

Richard and Thelma Berry

