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## NEW VA SECRETARY ON THE JOB

On Jan. 20, the U.S. Senate confirmed the appointment of **Eric K. Shinseki** as the next Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Shinseki, a retired four-star general, served as the Army's Chief of Staff from 1999 to 2003. His confirmation was by unanimous consent. He was sworn in on Jan. 21.



- Born: November 28, 1942, Hawaii.
- Served two tours in Vietnam
- Two-time Purple Heart recipient
- Rose to rank of four-star general
- Army Chief of Staff 1999-2003
- Retired from Military June, 2003

**Take Note:**

- Health Benefits Open Season ends January 31.

## VA ASSISTING VETERANS WITH HARDSHIPS

For veterans struggling financially due to a job loss or decreased income, VA offers an assortment of programs that can relieve the cost of health care or provide care at no cost. Veterans whose previous income was ruled too high for VA health care may be able to enter the VA system based upon a hardship if their current year's income is projected to fall below federal income thresholds due to a job loss, separation from service or some other fi-

nancial setback. Veterans determined eligible due to hardship can avoid co-pays applied to higher-income veterans. Qualifying veterans may be eligible for enrollment and receive health care at no cost. Each VA medical center has an enrollment coordinator available to provide veterans information about these programs. At Truman VA, contact **Linda Benny** at extension 56437. Information is available at the following Web site:

<http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility>

[http://](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility)  
[www.va.](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility)  
[gov/](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility)  
[health](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility)  
[eligibility](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility)

## EMPLOYEE PATIENT SAFETY SURVEY — JAN. 12 TO FEB. 2

Your opinion counts! The VA National Center for Patient Safety (NCPS) is conducting the 2009 Employee Patient Safety Survey. The survey's primary purpose is to enhance awareness of our patient safety culture by identifying areas for improvement and developing action plans. The NCPS will share the survey results with local Patient Safety Managers and the National Partnership Council.

The survey is similar to the All Employee Survey including a small prize for completing it. All employee response will remain anonymous and all information collected will remain confidential. Employee participation is voluntary. The survey began Jan. 12 and runs through Feb. 2. It is available via telephone at 1-866-248-4022 or on the Web at the following link:

Your supervisor will provide you with instructions including your work group code. For more information, contact **Tim Anderson**, Patient Safety Manager, at extension 56596. After completing your survey, contact your service line secretary or supervisor for information about a prize. Thank you for helping to improve patient safety.

*Your supervisor will provide you with instructions including your work group code.*

<https://survey.sirota.com/VAPatientSurvey2009>

## EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARDS

Torch Award –

**Laura DeVenney, RN**  
(Primary Care)

January Employee of the Month –

**Darryl Kline**  
(Finance)

December "Star" of the Month –

**Cathy Beamer, RN**  
(Patient Services)



## BIG WHEELS FUND RAISER

Meals On Wheels is the local not-for-profit social service agency involved in a unique partnership with Truman VA. You can support this partnership by ordering a "Big Wheels" box lunch prepared by Jack's Gourmet Restaurant. Delivery will be on any of the following dates: Feb. 5, 6, 9, 10, 11,

12 or 13. You may choose either a ham and turkey with two cheeses or a veggie sandwich. Meals include fruit salad, vegetable salad and dessert for \$10. Half the cost (\$5) is tax deductible. Please call **Nate Witt** at extension 56405 by Monday, Feb. 2 to order your lunch. Proceeds raised from this

event enable Meals On Wheels to deliver thousands of meals throughout the year to Columbia's homebound senior and disabled citizens that might not otherwise receive a hot meal.

## SAFE DRIVING INITIATIVE UNDERWAY

With motor vehicle crashes being a leading cause of deaths among combat veterans during the first years after their return home, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Department of Defense (DOD) are working together to reduce these accidents. Experts in transportation safety, VA medical care and public health are identifying gaps in current knowledge and developing a strategic plan for addressing key research questions in fields ranging from epidemiology to psychology to biomechanics. Participants in the strategic planning process include scientists and policy officials from all three federal departments as well as non-governmental experts. The

resulting strategic plan will lay out research needs and identify priorities.

The safe-driving initiative strives to increase awareness of motor vehicle crashes among veterans and the importance of safe driving, seatbelt and helmet usage and other measures. To reach out to veterans and their families, VA is creating a national educational program. It will also include outreach to mobilize national veteran service organizations, state highway safety officials and the private sector. The targeted audience will include the following: employers; automobile, motorcycle and sports vehicle dealers and manufacturers; the motor vehicle insurance industry; and driving and motorcycle racing enthusiasts' organi-

zations. NASCAR legend and safe driving advocate, **Richard Petty**, will be an active partner in the initiative.

Motor vehicle accidents remain a major concern in the military and among veterans as the greatest cause of accidental fatalities. Several studies have reported an increase in post-deployment deaths among military personnel that served in a combat zone compared to their non-deployed counterparts.

*“The safe-driving initiative strives to increase awareness of motor vehicle crashes among veterans and the importance of safe driving, seatbelt and helmet usage ...”*

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## VISN 15 DIVERSITY MESSAGE

As health care practitioners, having studied basic life sciences, or just as citizens concerned with the state of the earth's environment, many VA employees might be familiar with the term biological diversity or bio-diversity. Bio-diversity is the mainstay of an ecological system. A diverse population of fauna and flora provides much of what is nec-

essary to sustain a human population. Diverse ecosystems are stronger and more productive, because they can withstand higher levels of stress and are better able to adapt to changing conditions. Many consider the measure of bio-diversity to be a direct indicator of the health of an ecosystem.

Likewise, the level of

workforce diversity within an organization can be an indicator of the overall health of that organization. An organization that embraces and encourages diversity is better equipped to deal with the challenges of change. Through a diverse workforce, an organization has, at its disposal, a resource poised for adaptability.

Department of Veterans  
Affairs

Harry S. Truman Memorial Veterans' Hospital  
800 Hospital Drive  
Columbia, Missouri 65201

Phone: 573-814-6000



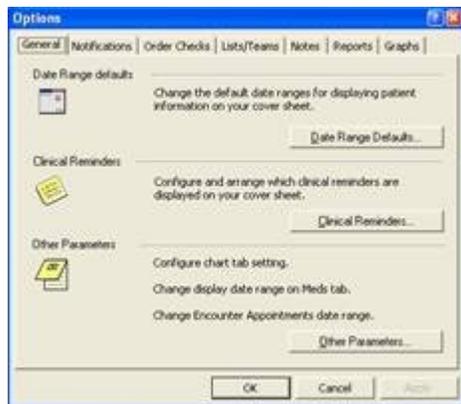
ENJOY YOUR  
FREEDOM?

THANK A  
VETERAN!

## OI&T CORNER

- Have you tried to open VISTA Imaging from the Start bar and gotten this message - Browsing imvgwp10. Exe? Call extension 56500 and we will fix you up!
- Want to customize your CPRS? From the CPRS task bar, choose **Tools**, then **Options** from the drop down list....and you will get the following screen:

Take a look at the things you can change!



**Example:** Notes tab – you can remove or add document note titles

**Example:** General tab – Other parameters if you want CPRS to open on another TAB

Call CPRS Support Staff for assistance: Mark Kruse (extension 56504/pager 5537), Denise Schehl-Geiger (extension 56503/pager 5770) or Sarah Fehling (extension 56507/pager 5767).

- Microsoft Application Classes Have Resumed – If interested, please call extension 56500 to sign up!

Friday Feb 13 1 pm – Mail Merge (Letters/Labels)  
2 pm – Basic Outlook

Friday Feb 20 1 pm - Converting VISTA Data Extract to Word or Excel  
2 pm – Basic Power Point

## ODDS & ENDS

### National “Wear Red” Day

The American Heart Association has identified Feb 6 as “GO RED DAY.” Employees are asked to wear red to show their concern about Heart Disease on this day. There will be a table set up in the lobby with information regarding heart disease and stroke

risk factors, how to live healthier lives and how to live longer and stronger. For more information, you can visit Americanheart.org or call 1-888-MY HEART.



### Thank You

Over the past few weeks, I have had to deal with several major health issues. I cannot begin to express how appreciative I am for the thoughts, prayers, visits, flowers and gifts from my fellow employees. You are the greatest! Thank you!

Joann Piland