

The Volunteer Promise

Voluntary Service (603/135)
VA Medical Center
800 Zorn Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky 40206

April 2007
Volume 49

National Volunteer Week April 15-21, 2007

Volunteers have always played a vital role in VA health care. Your warmth and compassion complements the modern, high-tech environment of VA medicine. You provide a valuable link to the community. And perhaps most importantly, your presence assures hospitalized veterans that their sacrifices have not been forgotten.

Our theme for 2007, "Louisville VA Volunteers – Honoring Veterans Every Day," reflects the dedication and commitment that you have shown through your countless hours of friendship and compassion to the hospitalized veterans, as well as to the veterans in the extended community. In addition to your time, you provide the financial support we need to offer them a level of personalized care that far exceeds the boundaries of clinical standards.

We are very fortunate to share a unique and rewarding partnership with each of the volunteers serving at the Louisville VA Medical Center. We applaud you for your service and we are honored to count you among our friends.



Run for the Wall 2007

Motorcycle riders making their annual trek to Washington, DC to visit the Vietnam Wall on Memorial Day will once again be revving their engines and taking a short detour to

visit the veterans at the Louisville VA Medical Center. Mark your calendars for Wednesday, May 23, and join us in welcoming this popular group of riders.

As always, we plan to offer packaged snacks and drinks for the riders as they continue on their cross-country trip. To learn more about the visit, or to offer donations of snacks, contact Voluntary Service at (502) 287-6221.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Thursday, April 26

VAVS Committee Meeting
VAMC Room D010, 3PM

Sunday, May 13

Mother's Day

Friday, May 18

Armed Forces Day

Wednesday, May 23

Run for the Wall
Motorcycle riders visit

Monday, May 28

Memorial Day Holiday
VA admin offices closed

Sunday, June 17

Father's Day

Thursday, June 14

Flag Day

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Volunteer Help Needed

Volunteers provide a unique brand of support for the Louisville VA Medical Center, assisting staff with a variety of activities that support the care and treatment of veterans. Volunteers may provide clerical support, direct or indirect patient care, mechanical support, transportation support or grounds maintenance support. Assignments are available throughout the medical center and interested individuals may contact Voluntary Service to discuss their personal interests. Some of the more critical needs at this time include:

Clerical Support Activities: Social Work Service, Geriatrics & Extended Care Service, Newburg Primary Care Clinic and the Vet Center are among the areas needing assistance. There are a variety of different assignments in this category.

Clerical Support with Computer Skills: A volunteer is needed in the medical records file room on weekdays for scanning documents and for computer data entry.

Community Volunteer Activities - Help the veterans in your own neighborhood or in one of the many nursing homes located in Kentuckiana by extending a hand in appreciation and support. The variety of opportunities available is endless. For example, visit a veteran in a nursing home, adopt a veteran in the community, develop an e-mail pen pal friendship, or help a veteran in need.

Transportation Services - Drivers and Transportation Coordinators are needed for the Volunteer Transportation Program, a special service staffed by volunteers who are dedicated to assuring that veterans have the transportation they need to come to the medical center and to community-based outpatient clinics.

Shuttle Transportation Drivers – Drivers are needed to operate the VA Medical Center's Grounds Shuttle. The drivers in this program remain on the VA property and offer transportation assistance to veterans moving to and from their automobiles and the medical center entrances.

2007 Summer Student Volunteer Program

Once again, the school year is wrapping up and students across the Louisville area are sharing a portion of their summer vacation volunteering at Louisville VA Medical Center. You will recognize the students by their royal blue polo-style uniform shirt, provided by the Disabled American Veterans Department of Kentucky, and their official volunteer name badge. This uniform should be seen as a sign of a quality VA healthcare team member. These individuals are future physicians, nurses, administrators and veterans. When you see a student dressed in this uniform, be sure to welcome him or her to the team!

Students participating in the summer volunteer program are eligible to compete in a variety of scholarship opportunities, including the James Parke Memorial Scholarship Award that is sponsored by the National VAVS Committee, the local VAVS Committee's "Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award," and the Veterans of Foreign Wars "Voice of Democracy" essay competition.

For additional information about student volunteer opportunities, contact Rhonda Smith, Student Volunteer Coordinator, Voluntary Service at (502) 287-6221.



"Echo Taps Worldwide"

Hundreds of volunteer brass players are needed to perform the 24 notes of "Taps" on Armed Forces Day, May 19, 2007, at 11:00 a.m. local time, at national cemeteries, state veterans cemeteries and American Battle Monuments Cemeteries overseas.

"Echo Taps Worldwide," organized by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemetery Administration and Bugles Across America, will honor American veterans with a worldwide performance of "Taps." Organizers also hope the event will interest players in volunteering to perform "Taps" at the military funerals of veterans throughout the year.

Players will form a line through the cemetery and perform a cascading version of "Taps." Brass players of all ages are encouraged to perform at a cemetery of their choice. Schools and other organizations are also invited to participate as performers or supporting volunteers. More information and a sign-up sheet are available at www.echotaps.org.

Happy Birthday, Robley Rex!



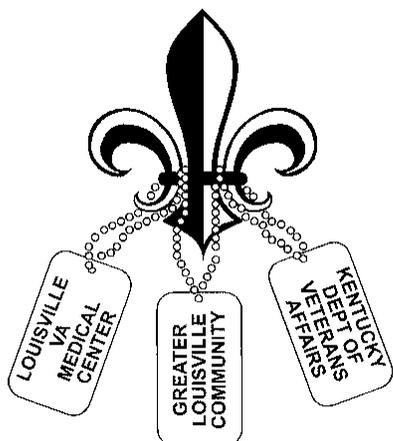
Louisville VA Medical Center volunteer, Mr. Robley Rex, will turn 106 years old on May 2, 2007. Volunteers and employees will be given the opportunity to sign giant birthday cards in the Voluntary Service office between April 16th and May 1st.

Mr. Rex attended the 2007 Volunteer Awards Program on Saturday, March 31 where he was recognized for 21 years and 14,627 hours of service to veterans in the VA Voluntary Service Program. Mr. Rex also received the prestigious "Call to Service Award" that was issued by the President of the United States.

2007 Volunteer Awards Program

The 2007 Volunteer Awards Luncheon was held on March 31, 2007, at The Olmsted with nearly 250 volunteers and guests in attendance. The ceremony recognized volunteers and their member organizations for their contribution of time, service and funding in excess of \$3 million in 2006. Volunteers who were unable to attend can check with Voluntary Service for information on their awards and/or appreciation gift.

Congratulations to Buck Schueler and Betty Feldman, our male and female VA Volunteers of the Year! Each received an engraved clock to commemorate their dedicated service.



Stand Down 2007

This year, Louisville VA Medical Center's Homeless Veterans Program Coordinator is joining forces with the Coalition for the Homeless to be a part of the community event to be held at Louisville Gardens in October 2007.

One of the many advantages to this plan will be the increase in community support. Check out upcoming editions of *The Volunteer Promise* for additional program information.

Construction Update



Construction has been completed on 5B, now known as the Medical Procedure Unit (MPU). Several medical procedures have moved to the new unit. These include: Arteriograms, Liver Biopsies, Cardiac Catheterizations, GI Procedures, Internal Cardiac Defibrillator (ICD) Placements, Myelograms, Pacemakers, Paracentesis, Stent Placements, Bronchoscopies, Thoracentesis, and Tilt Table Testing (TTT).

The patient treatment area on 3 South is now called the Hematology/Oncology (Hem/Onc) Treatment Unit. This area will have daily Hem/Onc clinics, and will accept patients for all outpatient chemotherapy, transfusions and antibiotic infusions. Additionally, the unit will continue to provide post-procedure care for computerized tomography guided liver and lung biopsies.

The Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE) lab has moved from B-636 to the 5th Floor MPU.

Construction continues on 4 North. Patients assigned to that unit are located on 3 North.

National Veterans Wheelchair Games

The National Veterans Wheelchair Games, a sporting event geared to veterans who are, or who aspire to be, wheelchair athletes. Competitors with a variety of different injuries and skill levels, from novice to master, may participate in the games.

The 2007 games will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Louisville VA Medical Center, along with the Kentuckiana Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America, will once again sponsor a team. Patient participation in the games is made possible through the generosity of volunteers and organizations who provide funding. Anyone wishing to support this year's athletes can contact Voluntary Service at (502) 287-6221 for further information.

Congratulations! Joint Commission Survey Complete

Congratulations! We completed our first unannounced Joint Commission survey. All five surveyors specifically commented on the excellent care provided to our veterans, the spirit of our staff and our positive momentum. The surveyors interviewed patients and families on the inpatients floors, in the mental health programs, the clinics and the home care program with praise to all involved staff on the excellent care and service.

Information on the medical center's Requirements for Improvement (RFI's) will be communicated after clarification with the Joint Commission's central office. Our goal is to remedy all recommendations in a very timely fashion. Your support and cooperation is appreciated.

I am proud of our staff and the care provided in service to our veteran population. Keep up the good work.

Wayne L. Pfeffer, MHSA, FACHE
Medical Center Director

Volunteer Education and Training



In order to improve the documentation and tracking of volunteer training, we will no longer include mandatory annual training topics in *The Volunteer Promise*. Instead, a separate mailing will be sent to each volunteer that includes all training topics. Volunteers will be required to review the training, sign a training verification form and return it to Voluntary Service. This will be an annual requirement for all Louisville VA volunteers, including those who volunteer in the community, and volunteers will receive service credit for completing the training.

The first annual training packets will be sent no later than June 30, 2007. Volunteers will be required to return the signed verification form by July 31, 2007. As always, your cooperation and promptness is much appreciated. Last year, Voluntary Service boasted to other departments about the prompt response from volunteers in returning the signed Statement of Commitment that we mailed. We know we can count on that kind of response again this year!

This process also allows us to use *The Volunteer Promise* for the intended purpose of news and other information.

MONETARY AND MATERIAL NEEDS FOR VETERAN PROGRAMS

Patient Comfort Items: Donations to this account will be used to support the Comfort Cart, a program in which volunteers provide personal hygiene items to hospitalized veterans. Donations for this purpose should be directed to GPF #515.

Social Work Service Emergency Fund: Donations to this account support patient emergency needs in situations not covered by medical center resources. These include certain travel expenses and clothing needs for patients upon discharge from the medical center. Donations for this purpose should be directed to GPF #502.

Television Fund: Donations are needed to support the purchase of televisions for patient bedsides. Donations for this purpose should be directed to GPF #505.

National Veterans Sporting Events: Funds are needed to support patients wishing to participate in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games and the National Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. Both programs combine the thrill of competition and therapeutic support to veterans who would otherwise not be able to compete. While the Winter Sports Clinic is routinely held in Snowmass, Colorado, the Wheelchair Games are hosted by different VA Medical Centers annually. The 2007 games will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Contributions to support local veteran participation in either of these events should be directed to GPF #508.

National Veterans Creative Arts Program: Donations to this account are used to support the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival and the local competition. Funds are used for transportation costs for patients who are invited to participate in the national festival. Funds may also be used to pay for one attendant accompanying a veteran artist invited to the out-of-state event if deemed necessary and ordered by that veteran's attending physician. Donations for this program should be directed to GPF #509.

For a complete list of General Post Funds Accounts and their definitions, refer to the *General Post Funds and Material Donations* booklet published by Voluntary Service.

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If you would like to receive your newsletter in full color via electronic mail, please drop us a line and let us know your e-mail address.

We welcome your thoughts about this newsletter and your ideas for articles. Contact Voluntary Service to share your suggestions.

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