



The Volunteer Promise

Volume 62

January 2010

Mark Your Calendars!

Thursday, January 28

VAVS Committee Mtg
Conference Rm D010
VA Medical Center

Tuesday, February 2
Groundhog Day

February 8-14
National Salute to Veterans

Monday, February 15
Presidents Day
Federal Offices Closed

Saturday, April 3
Volunteer Awards Program

Homeless Veterans Christmas Project

We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all staff, volunteers and community partners for their tremendous support of this year's "Homeless Veteran Christmas Tree". Through your collaborative efforts, we were able to:

- Provide a full set of clothing, including a winter coat, to 116 homeless Veterans
- Provide Christmas to 12 HUD/VASH families, to include toys and bicycles for 20 children
- Provide Christmas for 5 OEF/OIF families, including 20 children
- Provide Christmas stockings for Veterans enrolled in Mental Health Intensive Case Management (MHICM) and Community Residential Care (CRC) programs
- Provide multiple Kroger gift-cards to OEF/OIF families for Christmas dinner
- Maintain an inventory of clothing and coats for additional homeless Veterans throughout the year.

In all, the above equates to more than \$22,000.00 in gifts and \$1,700.00 in cash donations. In a year of financial challenges for many, the Louisville VAMC has once again demonstrated the true spirit of Christmas. Thank you for your generosity toward Veterans in need.

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National Salute to Veteran Patients

- The purpose of the National Salute to Veteran Patients (formerly known as National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans) Program is to:
- pay tribute and express appreciation to veterans;
 - increase community awareness of the role of the VA medical center; and

- encourage citizens to visit hospitalized veterans and to become involved as volunteers.

The week of Valentine's Day is set aside for groups and individuals to express their gratitude and concern for Veteran patients. The 2010 salute will be held the week of February 8 – 14.

If you wish to schedule a visit for your group or if you have questions, you may contact Voluntary Service at (502) 287-6221.

It is our hope that these expressions of gratitude and concern will continue throughout the year and not just during special observance periods.



64th VAVS National Advisory Committee Meeting



The 2010 Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) National Advisory Committee (NAC) meeting will be held April 7-9, 2010, at the Hyatt Regency Cincinnati, 151 West Fifth Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. The NAC advises the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (through the Under Secretary for Health) on the coordination and promotion of volunteer activities within VA health care facilities, and on other matters relating to volunteerism.

NAC members and other interested parties are invited to attend at their personal or their organization's expense. For registration forms and hotel information, you may call the Voluntary Service office at Louisville VA Medical Center.

National Rehab Special Events

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) sponsors several national rehabilitation special events for our nation's Veterans each year. All of the annual national programs promote the healing of both body and spirit as they motivate eligible Veterans to reach their full potential, improve their independence, achieve a healthier lifestyle and enjoy a higher quality of life overall.

Each program enhances the physical, social and emotional well-being of the Veterans who participate. Each event improves the awareness of the therapeutic value of recreation, sports or creative arts therapy in the lives of our nation's Veterans.

Louisville VA Medical Center participates in multiple events, sending eligible Veterans to participate in the following events:

National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic
March 28 - April 2, 2010
Snowmass Village in Aspen, Colorado

National Veterans Wheelchair Games
July 4 - July 9, 2010
Denver, Colorado

National Veterans Creative Arts Festival
October 18 - 25, 2010
LaCrosse, Wisconsin



The local Veterans Creative Arts Competition will be held in March. Local winners will be entered into the national competition. National winners are invited to attend the National Creative Arts Festival. For additional information on the local competition, please contact Tim Neidiffer at (502) 287-5190.

While veterans' meals and lodging expenses are paid by the national organization upon their arrival at the event site, local medical centers are tasked with providing the transportation funds to get them there. Donations to support transportation costs for local veterans should be directed to GPF 508 (Wheelchair Games, Winter Sports Clinic) or GPF 509 (Creative Arts Festival).

2010 Volunteer Awards Program

Save the Date!

On Saturday, April 3, 2010, the Louisville VA Medical Center will celebrate the achievements of our volunteers at the 64th Annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony. This year the ceremony will once again be held at The Olmsted in Louisville.

Please remember that the program will include credit for all hours worked/recorded through December 2009.

Your invitation is coming in the mail in mid February. That invitation will include a card telling the volunteer the award to be presented. If you do not receive a card, or if you have questions about the award level, don't wait, contact Voluntary Service to discuss your questions. If there is an error, we would like to correct it before the program is published!

Be sure to make your reservations, mark your calendar and plan to attend!

Only those volunteers who make their reservations in advance will be guaranteed admission, lunch, or entry in the door prize



Karaoke Idol Contest Results

in \$13,000 Donation



The third annual Southern Indiana Karaoke Idol for Veterans Contest was a huge success! The combined efforts of the New Albany Elks Lodge #270, Hobart Beach VFW Post 1693, Floyd County VFW Post 3281, Knights of Columbus of New Albany, and Bonnie Sloan American Legion Post 28, have resulted in a donation of \$13,000.00 to Louisville VA Medical Center, bringing the three year total to \$31,000.00.

This is an outstanding example of what can be accomplished when organizations come together to benefit Veterans! Through the collaborative efforts of these organizations, the donation to Louisville VA Medical Center will impact the following programs:

- Televisions will be provided for individual patient rooms in the Ambulatory Surgery Unit.
- Stand Down for the Homeless - Hygiene Kits will be provided to every Veteran attending the 2010 event.
- Welcome Home (OEF/OIF Veterans) - The contribution to this program will go a long way in ensuring a successful event for returning combat Veterans in 2010.
- HUD/VASH - The donation toward this program will provide supplies and other items needed by Veterans transitioning from homeless shelters into permanent housing.
- Social Work Emergency Fund - This program provides clothing and transportation to eligible Veterans being discharged from the Emergency Department or an inpatient unit.
- Snacks - The contribution will provide snacks for Veterans admitted to the Mental Health unit.
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WOW! On behalf of the patients and staff at Louisville VA Medical Center, we offer our heartfelt appreciation to everyone involved.



New Year's Resolutions from My Health eVet

#1: Improve Yourself: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers Veterans, active duty Service members, their dependents and caregivers the gift of My Health eVet, www.myhealth.va.gov, VA's award-winning online Personal Health Record. Access is easy and convenient anywhere the Internet is available. With My Health eVet, users access trusted and secure VA health information to better manage their health care and facts about other VA benefits and services. My Health eVet helps Veterans partner with their health care teams and provides them opportunities and tools to make informed decisions. Simply follow the directions to [register today](#).

#2: Improve Your Access: If you are already a My Health eVet

user and a VA patient, get an upgraded account! An upgraded account allows Veterans enrolled at a VA health care facility access to advanced features of My Health eVet and links their Personal Health Record with information from their VA electronic health record. To access advanced features, Veterans must complete a one-time process called [In-Person Authentication](#) or "IPA." This includes making a visit to their VA facility to verify their identity in person. After completing the IPA, VA patients can use My Health eVet to:

- Refill VA prescriptions by name, not just by the prescription number
- Access a blended view of their VA and non-VA medications

- Receive VA Wellness Reminders
- Access new features as they become available

#3: Improve Your Online Activity with VA: Expected in 2010, VA patients that have completed the IPA process will view their VA appointments, VA lab test results, and VA list of allergies. They also may communicate electronically with their health care teams through "Secure Messaging" as this feature becomes available at their VA facility. So [register today on My Health eVet](#), complete [In-Person Authentication](#), and make your 2010 a healthy, happy and active year with your VA. After all, it's quick, easy and it's for you!

Carroll County Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC)

The Carroll County Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) is located at 1911 Highway 227 in Carrollton, Kentucky. The CBOC provides the following services:

Primary Care, Mental Health, Telehealth, Dietitian, Pharmacist (PharmD), Coumadin Clinic, Social Worker, Lab/Phlebotomy, Nurse Clinic (for B/P √, injection, diabetes education, etc).

The clinic primarily serves eligible Veterans in the following counties: Jefferson, IN; Switzerland, IN; Carroll, KY; Gallatin, KY; Henry, KY; Oldham, KY; Owen, KY; and Trimble, KY. The clinic currently serves only a small percentage of the Veterans eligible for care there. They do have room for additional patients. Patients wishing to transfer their primary care to the Carroll County CBOC may contact their current primary care clinic or the Carroll County CBOC at 502-287-6060.

In addition to assistance in recruiting new patients, the Carroll County CBOC is also in need of material donations. One item of need is a picnic table that will be placed outdoors where many Veterans wait for their transportation. The clinic is also in need of donated snacks for patients who may have fasted for labs.

“Helping Hands” Needed

In collaboration with Nursing Service and Nutrition and Food Service, Voluntary Service has created a new volunteer assignment which we are calling the Helping Hands volunteer. The new assignment combines two previously defined volunteer assignments. Individuals assigned as Helping Hands volunteers will be assisting hospitalized Veterans. The volunteer will report to a designated nurse manager/supervisor to be assigned to a specific patient. The patient may be one who needs a sitter to help prevent falls or someone who needs assistance at mealtime. Helping Hands volunteers will receive formal training conducted by Nursing Service staff.

This assignment is available weekdays, evenings and weekends. For additional information, call Voluntary Service at (502) 287-6898.

Volunteers Transporting Veterans



Know anyone who recently retired or has plans to retire soon? That is the time when many people are looking for opportunities to give back. This is also the ideal group to recruit for the Volunteer Transportation Network!

The need for qualified volunteer drivers is increasing with the expansion of the transportation

program. The Transportation Network's DAV Hospital Service Coordinator reported that she is currently declining an average of five or more Veteran transportation requests per day. We currently need volunteer drivers for the grounds, for local transportation, and throughout the extended community. Drivers should be available to drive one or more full

days per week and must have current driver's license and proof of insurance. Prior to receiving a driving assignment, volunteer applicants must have a TB skin test and must pass a physical examination. These are provided free of charge by the VA.

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: Medical Service, Radiology Service, Business Office, Newburg Primary Care Clinic, the Homeless Veterans Program, and the Vet Center are among the areas needing assistance. There are a variety of assignments in this category.

Clerical Support with Computer Skills: Volunteers (18 years or older) with computer skills are needed in multiple administrative areas. Additional details are available in the Voluntary Service office.

Telephone Skills Needed – An assignment is available to support the clinics in making appointment reminder calls to patients. This could be an evening or Saturday assignment. The Patient Advocate for Inpatients is also seeking volunteers to make follow-up telephone calls to Veterans following an inpatient stay. Training and materials will be provided.

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.

Evening/Weekend Assignments: A new assignment is available on the inpatient units sitting with patients who may be at risk for falls or assisting patients at meal times. This assignment is called “Helping Hands” and is also available weekdays. In addition, some of the telephone assignments may take place evenings or weekends. Volunteers who work in the Emergency Department may also work evenings and/or weekends.

**MONETARY AND MATERIAL NEEDS
FOR VETERAN PROGRAMS**

Television Fund: Donations are needed to purchase televisions for ASU. Five televisions are needed at a cost of approximately \$970 each. Funds should be directed to GPF #505.

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.

OEF/OIF Veterans Fund: Funds donated to GPF 511 (OIF/OEF Heroes to Hometowns) will be used to help meet the immediate needs of Veterans who recently served in Iraq or Afghanistan. Material donations needed include diapers, especially larger sizes, and gift cards for groceries and gas. Funds Donated to GPF 532 (OIF/OEF Welcome Home) will be used to support our annual Welcome Home event, which honors returning combat Veterans.

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.

Stand Down for the Homeless: Funds are needed to support Stand Down 2010. Proceeds will be used to purchase clothing and personal items for homeless Veterans who need our support. Donations to this program should be directed to General Post Fund (GPF) 525.

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. Under some circumstances, funds may also be used to pay for one attendant accompanying a Veteran artist. Donations for this program should be directed to GPF #509. (See Article on Page 2)

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. Contributions to support local Veteran participation in either of these events should be directed to GPF #508. (See Article on Page 2)

Program Adoptions: Several programs are in need of adoption to provide health snacks on a routine basis. To find out more about program adoptions, contact Voluntary Service.

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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You may also view our newsletter on line at <http://www.louisville.va.gov/>. Scroll down and click on "Volunteer or Give," then click on Volunteer Promise Newsletter.

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

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