



VA MID-ATLANTIC HEALTH CARE NETWORK • VISN SIX

Vol. 4, No. 8

“Excellent Care – Earned by Veterans – Delivered Here”

Voices of VISN 6

Official news from around *your* VISN

May 31, 2014

Durham Dedicates Research Bldg. During Research Week

By Steve Wilkins
VISN 6 public affairs

About 150 spectators gathered in late May to witness the opening of a new addition to the Durham VAMC Campus. Department of Veterans Affairs Acting Under Secretary for Health Dr. Robert Jesse headlined a list of dignitaries in attendance at the medical center to cut the ribbon on the new 44,000 square foot research center May 23.

Citing Durham VA’s current \$4.3 million research budget and asso-

ciations with Duke University, UNC Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University among others, facility director DeAnne Seekins reminded everyone that “research is a key component of the Durham VAMC,” adding that “some of the greatest minds in the world come here to train and then stay to practice and conduct research.”

The new five story building, valued at \$13.8 million, will house a variety of research projects

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Linnie Skidmore
Dr. John Whited (center) is joined by VA officials and U.S. Representatives David Price and G.K. Butterfield and Senator Richard Burr to cut the ribbon on the new research center.

Gibson Named Acting Secretary Of VA

Sloan D. Gibson was nominated by President Obama to serve as the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and he was confirmed by the Senate on Feb. 11, 2014. On May 30, 2014, Mr. Gibson was appointed Acting Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Prior to joining VA, Mr. Gibson served as President and Chief Executive Officer of the United Services Organizations (USO), which has been lifting the spirits of American service members and their families for more than 73 years. During his five years at the USO, net fundraising grew 90 percent, enabling dramatic

growth in programs and facilities supporting our forward-deployed men and women, military families, as well as our wounded, ill, and injured service members, their families, and the families of the fallen.

Before joining the USO, Mr. Gibson spent more than 20 years in banking in Charlotte, NC; Atlanta, GA; Nashville, TN; and Birmingham, AL. In 2004, he retired from AmSouth Bancorporation, a New York Stock Exchange-traded corporation, where he served as vice chairman and chief financial officer. During his tenure as CFO, AmSouth was added to the S&P



Sloan D. Gibson

500. Mr. Gibson also has a long history of service and leadership with a variety of nonprofit organizations. In 2002, Mr. Gibson chaired the United Way

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From The Director

Recent events have brought issues regarding the health and well-being of America's Veterans to center stage. To my knowledge, this level of attention for Veterans is unprecedented, and I would like to use this period of heightened awareness as an opportunity to speak to you about VISN 6.

Many of you know that I grew up on military installations, here and abroad. Like many of us in VISN 6, I know first-hand about the service and sacrifices of those who wear the uniform and their families. That's why, like many of us in this VISN, I choose to be here.

My mission is to deliver quality health care to all eligible Veterans. I am deeply committed to this mission.

Our system is not perfect and I'll be the first to say that we have room to improve. But, what we also have is a history of more than 14 years, that I can speak to, that clearly demonstrates our commitment to the never-ending journey to improve what we do and how we do it.

The real driver behind the intense publicity presently focused on VA health care, is access. This is no surprise. I've written and talked about the fact that it doesn't matter how good VA health care is if one does not have access to it. As a matter of fact, I've been accused by some of being a broken record when speaking about our efforts to improve access.

We are, and have been, the fastest growing health care network in VA for more than 10 years, and we expect that trend to continue. To meet the growing demand, we in VISN 6 are, and have been, making use of every opportunity to expand our services.

A large part of access is based on geography. By that I mean providing facilities in locations where people can get to them. I take great pride in what we have accomplished with regard to the growth in the number of sites of care as well as where we have located them.

Every time we open a new site of care, we make it that much easier for Veterans to gain access to the two greatest needs: Primary Care and Mental Health



Care. Additionally, when Veterans transfer their care to a new site, we are able to manage additional patients at our parent medical centers.

With the opening of the Health Care Centers in Wilmington and Greenville, and those expected in Charlotte, Fayetteville and Kernersville by 2016, Veterans in this network will gain access to a breadth and depth of complex outpatient multi-specialty medical services and diagnostics never before experienced in our VISN.

For as long as I've been here, our planning efforts have been focused on accommodating the growing number of Veterans in our region. These new sites, some of which have been in the planning for more than seven years, will add almost 1 million additional square feet of health care space.

While the number, size, and location of sites of care plays a major role, one must also look at what services are can be made available in those locations.

The availability of providers is an issue that extends beyond this network, this state, and this nation. The need for more health care providers grows in parallel with our aging population, and we are pursuing ways to extend the productivity of all our providers. We have committed to system redesign principles which allow all of our employees to work to the highest level of their skill sets, and incorporated the latest technology improvements to do the same.

One of the ways we are achieving higher productivity and patient satisfaction is through the use of telemedicine in outpatient clinics. Tele-medicine is creating access unimaginable a decade ago. The growth in application of new technology with regard to specialty consults, pre-operative and post-operative exams is becoming routine, and we will continue to leverage new technology in every way possible.

As I stated earlier, our system is not perfect; however, as the son of a soldier, and the father of one, you can rest assured that I am committed to this mission. And, I'm not alone. All of my medical center directors are equally committed to improving access for our Veterans.

As a team, and as a network, we will continue to use every tool available to provide Veterans the right service at the right time and the right place.

Sincerely,

Dan Hoffmann

Voices of VISN 6 is published monthly by VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network.



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A Message From The Acting Secretary

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has come a long way under the leadership of Secretary Eric K. Shinseki. Today and for decades to come, Veterans will benefit from the transformation begun in the past five years, driven by Secretary Shinseki's unyielding devotion to Veterans and unflagging commitment to bringing VA into the 21st century.

In my time here at VA, I have come to understand and appreciate the dedication of VA employees and the genuine passion our people show, each and every day, for serving Veterans and their families. Wherever I go, I meet men and women who care deeply about our mission, who work enthusiastically to do the right thing for Veterans, and who strive with integrity to accomplish every task. I believe that to be true still today, and I am grateful to all of you for your professionalism and perseverance in this effort. I will depend on you and your admirable work ethic as we move forward.

Notwithstanding the vast body of great work we do for Veterans daily, there remains much more to be done. In some areas and specific instances, we have fallen far short of what Veterans have earned and deserve, and what the American people and their representatives rightly expect. Veterans' trust—the very foundation of our work—has been compromised. And so we will earn that trust back, one

Veteran at a time, one American at a time.

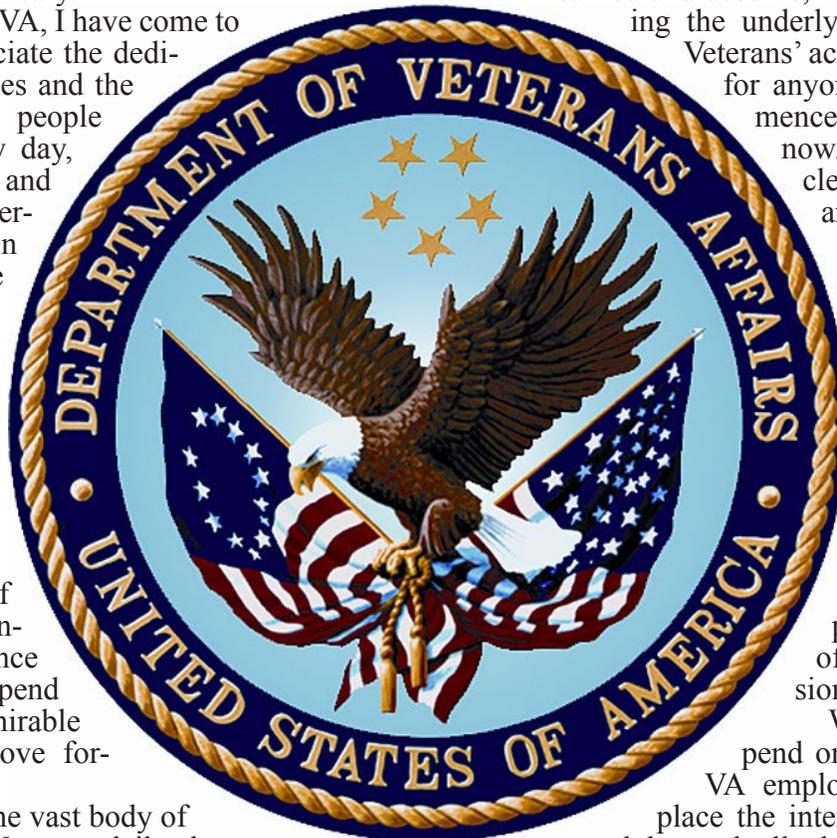
To begin, we will sharply focus our care, our services, and our resources on Veterans and operate at all times with unimpeachable integrity. To that end, VA will move out immediately to get all Veterans off of waiting lists and into clinics for the care they have earned and deserve, while simultaneously fixing the underlying issues that impede Veterans' access. We are not waiting for anyone or anything to commence that work—we begin now. The President has made clear that his expectations are the same.

The large majority of VA employees expect accountability. Together, we will address instances of willful misconduct and breaches of integrity. They will not be tolerated, and I will use all authority afforded me to remove those who choose to put personal gain ahead of Veterans and professional responsibilities.

We will continue to depend on the faithful service of VA employees and leaders who place the interests of Veterans above and beyond all else; who serve Veterans with dignity, compassion, and dedication; and who live by VA's core values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence.

Thank you for your dedication to Veterans and our mission to serve them.

Sloan D. Gibson



Acting Secretary continued from Pg 1

campaign in Central Alabama, which raised more than \$30 million.

Mr. Gibson is the son of an Army Air Corpsman who served as a B-17 tail-gunner during World War II, later earning his commission in the U.S. Air Force. He is also the grandson of a World War I Army Infantryman who was wounded while serving in the 3rd Infantry Division at the Second Battle of the Marne.

A 1975 graduate of the United States Military Acad-

emy at West Point, Mr. Gibson earned both Airborne and Ranger qualifications and served as an infantry officer in the U.S. Army. He earned a Masters in Economics from the University of Missouri in Kansas City and a Masters in Public Administration from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Acting Secretary Gibson and his wife, Margaret, have been married nearly 32 years. They have two grown daughters, Celia and Laura.

VISN Recognizes Four For Nursing Excellence

Each year the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Awards for Excellence give network directors an opportunity to distinguish several individuals who have demonstrated superior qualities in their performance over the prior year.

Earlier this month Network Director Dan Hoffmann recognized four individuals for superlative performance at their respective facilities.

Mary Dameron, Nichole Hylton, Susan Mitchell and Wallace Satchell were announced May 8 as recipients of the 2014 Secretary's Award for Excellence in Nursing in VISN 6.

The honors reflected work in four categories: registered nurse in an expanded role, registered nurse (staff RN), licensed practical nurse and nursing assistant.

For consideration, LPNs should have demonstrated effectiveness in improving and delivering care, worked with an RN and health care team in the provision of outstanding care, improved their job-related skills through a personal development plan and been recognized by their co-workers for their excellent provision of care.

Registered nurses were judged with standards emphasizing nursing expertise, maintenance of a personal development plan, effective collaboration with peers and others, use of evidence-based practices in health care, displayed adherence to a strong sense

of integrity and the nursing code of ethics, developed and implemented strategies to improve organizational performance and utilization of resources, and promoted the image of nursing in the community.

Satchell is an LPN recognized for helping

to improve delivery of care to Veterans in Neurology, Polytrauma and Primary Care in Richmond's Hunter Holmes McGuire VAMC.

Hylton was selected for her advocacy for Veterans and ideas to improve Restorative and Safe Patient Handling Programs at Beckley VAMC.

Both recipients in the RN categories hail from Richmond.

Susan Mitchell has been recognized for her work in the Gastroenterology Unit, where she shared her expertise in the facility and the community and demonstrated commitment to enhance and improve health care delivery to Veterans.

Mary Dameron's work with the Service member Transitional Advanced Rehabilitation (STAR) Program, her leadership of the STAR interdisciplinary team and her work to foster a safe and therapeutic environment for service dogs elevated her performance above those of her peers throughout the VISN this year.



Beckley VAMC public affairs
(L to R) Restorative Nurse and Safe Patient Handling Coordinator Diana Smith, Beckley Nurse Nichole Hylton and Associate Director of Patient Care Services Lynn Legg.



Richmond VAMC public affairs
(L to R) Richmond Director John A. Brandecker, Richmond Nurse Mary Dameron, VISN Patient Safety Officer Mary Tatum, and Associate Director of Patient Care Services Rita Duval.



Richmond VAMC public affairs
(L to R) Richmond Director John A. Brandecker, Nurse Wallace Satchell, VISN Patient Safety Officer Mary Tatum, and Associate Director of Patient Care Services Rita Duval.



Richmond VAMC public affairs
(L to R) Richmond Nurse Susan Mitchell and Associate Director David Budinger.

VA Employee Honored At Goodwill Event

By Michael Maddox
Salisbury VAMC public affairs

They say virtue is its own reward, but it can still feel good to have your work recognized. That's what Goodwill Industries recently did for Prince Moses, a peer support specialist with Social Work Service at the Salisbury VAMC, during an event May 16 in Charlotte.

Moses was presented with the 2014 Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont GoodWork! Award for his work with Goodwill Industries. The GoodWork! Award is presented to individuals who have excelled in employment and leadership since receiving support at Goodwill.

Before starting work with VA, Moses received employment services through Goodwill and has continued to pay the help he received forward to others.

"I was in there shopping one day after I moved to Concord, and I wasn't working at the time. My wife noticed they have a job resource center and said I should check it out," he said.

Working with the job resource center to find work also provided Moses with the opportunity to help others.

"While I was going to Goodwill for help, I was also volunteering and helping because I couldn't just sit there. I learned to embrace other people while sharing resources," said Moses. "If they were a Veteran, I could share things like what was given to me – I didn't keep it to myself. I could relate and meet them where they were in life. I could tell them, 'There's still something you can do. Don't get down, let's look at this resource or check out this one.' Sometimes it was just doing common



*Michael Maddox
Employee and Veteran Prince
Moses.*

Continued on Pg 7

Research continued from Pg 1

that address health related issues that could affect Veterans, including PTSD, alcoholism, spinal cord injury oncology, neurosciences, and infectious disease. The focus of the center's medical research program has always been on medical issues that affect Veterans, although applications of the results can have significant impact on the nation at large.

Addressing the audience, Dr. Jesse stated, "VA's research program has been called the "crown jewel" of the Department, and I believe that description is accurate. After all, it was VA researchers who conducted the studies that helped bring about advancements like the pacemaker, CT Scan and nicotine patch."

Dr. Timothy Hammond from VA's Office of Research was instrumental in the design and development of the research center in his capacity as Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Development while assigned at Durham.

While Dr. Jesse announced that, "This building will house top investigators who will do groundbreaking research," the researchers at Durham have already led VA with contributions to the advancement of health care. Among the 483 active research projects currently underway in Durham, Dr. Brice Weinberg won the 2011 William S. Middleton Award for outstanding achievement in biomedical or behavioral research; Dr. Hayden Bosworth received the Under Secretary for Health

Award for outstanding achievement in Health Service Research and Durham has been home to a Lead Laboratory for the International Space Station Pathfinder Program, working on vaccinations for Salmonella and MRSA. The program, is currently conducting an experiment in space. Another example of the work being done in Durham is Dr. Chistine Marx's study of neurosteroids in treating blast-related traumatic brain injury and PTSD.

The opening occurred during national VA Research Week, a time the VA celebrates the vast contributions of research to the care VA provides Veterans. Claiming that the new building is another example of VA's dedication to the best quality care for Veterans, Seekins added, "Research week is a time to pay tribute to the amazing contributions our researchers make each and every day so that our Veterans, indeed our world population can live better, longer, healthier lives."

Tours of the facility were offered to guests following the ceremony, so that visitors could witness the future developments Veterans may benefit from. In that regard, Dr. Jesse declared, "In the future, our program will continue to be a 21st century model for how American medicine can be transformed through scientific inquiry and innovative thought that lead to evidence-based treatments to improve the health and well-being of our nation's citizens."

Southeast Valor Games Hit Triangle May 20-22

By Steve Wilkins
VISN 6 public affairs

For the second year in a row, disabled Veterans competed in a regional Olympic-style adaptive sports event, based in the Raleigh/Durham, N.C. area.

Nearly 100 Veterans competed at the Valor Games Southeast in Durham, N.C. May 20-22. To get more Veterans involved in local adaptive sporting events, VA's National Veterans Sports Programs & Special Events Office and U.S. Paralympics assemble competitors from around the U.S. to participate in a four-part series called the Valor Games. The Southeast regional in the Raleigh/Durham area is the first of the four events this year.

All wounded, ill and injured Veterans and active-duty service members are eligible to compete in the Games. According to officials, "disability does not define who you are." They maintain that physical activity is the key to recovery and long-term health, and re-integration of troops' reintegration into their home communities.

Over three days, competitors participated in official Paralympic sports, including air rifle, boccia, and volleyball, Archery, power lifting, indoor rowing and table tennis, cycling and shot put at UNC's Dean Smith Center, Duke University's Cameron Indoor Stadium and the N. C. State Fairgrounds.

According to the VA Adaptive Sports web site, disabled Veterans of all ages and abilities report better health, new friendships and a better quality of life when participating in adaptive sports.

The VA National Veterans Sports Programs & Special Events Office strives to motivate, encourage and sustain participation in adaptive sports among disabled



Veterans and members of the Armed Forces through partnerships with VA clinical personnel as well as national and community-based adaptive sports programs.

Among more than 300 local volunteers, several Durham VAMC staff volunteered and supported the Games. But, instead of the traditional VA model, which relies heavily on VA employees to provide support, community organizers are used in presenting this event.

Local adaptive sporting event organizer Bridge II Sports coordinated the development and staffing. Valor Games Southeast director Ashley Thomas is also founder and Executive director of Bridge II Sports. She says the aim of her organization is to foster greater opportunities and options throughout North Carolina's Triangle area in adaptive sports.

She is convinced that "sports revitalize self-esteem, allow [people] to manage ... when [the] world is otherwise full of daily turmoil," concluding, "It builds mental tenacity that can help push [individuals] through the daily challenges of a broken body."

For more information, visit the VA Adaptive Sports web site at www.va.gov/adaptivesports/ or locally, check Bridge II Sports site at www.valorgamesoutheast.com.



‘Run For The Wall’ Visits Asheville

About 400 motorcycle riders taking part in the 26th annual “Run for the Wall” arrived at the Asheville VAMC on May 20. The riders spent time socializing with patients and residents of the Community Living Center.

Run For The Wall (RFTW) was started in 1989 by Vietnam Veterans James Gregory and Bill Evans. They traveled across the heartland of America on motorcycles, talking to radio, TV, and newspapers about America’s service men and women still unaccounted for from all wars. RFTW continues to keep the spotlight on this issue with the ride across the country each May.

This year’s Run began May 14 in Los Angeles, and ended at the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, D.C., May 23.

For more information about the Run for the Wall, go to their web site at www.rftw.org/.



Moses continued from Pg 5

things we take for granted.”

“Goodwill was a powerful influence on me as far as counseling, consulting and encouraging me by meeting me where I was at the time,” he added.

Moses now uses the skills he learned working with Goodwill to help other Veterans, and one of his focus areas is the homeless Veteran population. Viola White-Douglas, Moses’ supervisor in the homeless program, said that experience has made Moses successful at what he does with VA.

“He’s very transparent, so if there is an issue that a Veteran is struggling with, he tries to engage them to make sure they stay on track. He’s a team player. He’s an awesome, conscientious worker. He comes from a sincere place,” she said. “He meets Veterans right where they are at the beginning, where a lot of times social work may not be able to make that same connec-

tion. As a peer, he can say, ‘I know what you’re talking about – I’m a Veteran too.’”

Moses, who is a combat Veteran from Persian Gulf War, said being a Veteran and giving back to other Veterans by trying to encourage them gives him a good feeling.

“I’m glad I served, and that I’m able to give back,” he said.

Moses said he has never helped others for any reason other than it was the right thing to do.

“Seeing my life progress, and the positive changes I’ve gone through, sometimes when I look back at where I was compared to where I am, I’m still just so overwhelmed, but at the same time, I’m humble,” he said. “I’m humble and thankful for the VA, for what brought me here to the VA – now all I can do is smile and say, ‘Look at me now.’”

Asheville VAMC Voted SRNA 2014 Clinic Site Of The Year



Scott Pittillo

Student Registered Nurse Anesthetists Alex Kolasz (left) and Adam Smith (right) listen as Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist Susan Bazemore explains the equipment.

Educational partnerships are an important part of providing patients with the best possible care and providing the trained medical professionals of the future. One such partnership at the Asheville VAMC is with the Duke University School of Nurse Anesthesia. Asheville has been a clinical training site for the Duke University school of Anesthesia since 2002. Currently a Master's program, it will be converting to a Doctorate Program this fall. Student Registered Nurse Anesthetists (SRNA) spend a four week rotation at the medical center where staff Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists provide clinical education.

Every year SRNA rotating between sites have the opportunity to choose the site that they feel provided the best educational and professional experience. The class of 2014 voted Asheville the "clinical site of the year" for the third year in a row. Students say that the mentorship provided at CGVAMC will be a positive influence that they will carry with them for the rest of their careers.



Courtesy Photo



Courtesy Photo

Work Progresses on Fayetteville and Kernersville Health Care Centers

June 6 Is 70th Anniversary Of D-Day Invasion

Seventy years ago on June 6, 1944, over 160,000 Allied troops from various countries landed along the 50-mile stretch of the Beach in Normandy, France to fight Nazi Germany.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower called the operation a crusade in which “we will accept nothing less than full victory.”

Over 5,000 ships and 13,000 aircraft supported the D-Day invasion, and by the end of the day on June 6, the Allies gained secure, strategic positioning in Normandy.

Although over 9,000 Allied soldiers were killed

or wounded, more than 100,000 soldiers were able to make the march across Europe to defeat Hitler.

D-Day was the turning point in the then five-year long global conflict to restore peace and liberate millions. The war officially ended in Europe on May 7, 1945 when Germany surrendered at a red school house in Reims, Germany.

Today there are over 1.2 million World War II Veterans living in the United States.

VA remembers the sacrifices of the brave Veterans who stormed the beaches of Normandy on that historic day – June 6.

June 14 Is Flag Day

On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress approved the design of a national flag. It was resolved that “the Flag of the thirteen United States shall be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation.”

Since 1916, when President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation establishing June 14 as national Flag Day, Americans have commemorated the adoption of the Stars and Stripes. Congressional legislation designating that date as national Flag Day was signed into law by President Harry Truman in 1949; the legislation also called upon the president to issue a Flag Day proclamation every year.

According to legend, in 1776 George Washington commissioned Philadelphia seamstress Betsy Ross to create a flag for the new nation. Scholars debate this legend, but agree that Ross most likely knew Washington and sewed flags.

To date, there have been 27 official versions of the flag, but the arrangement of the stars varied according to the flag-makers’ preferences until 1912 when President Taft standardized the then-new flag’s forty-eight stars into six rows of eight.



Library of Congress

From a painting by Percy Moran, “The Birth of Old Glory,” June 14, 1777.

The forty-nine star flag (1959-60), as well as the fifty-star flag, also have standardized star patterns. The current version of the flag dates to July 4, 1960, after Hawaii became the fiftieth state on Aug. 21, 1959.

**Happy 239th Birthday U.S. Army
Founded June 14, 1775**





Courtesy of FDR Library

President Roosevelt signs the GI Bill into law.

GI Bill Turns 70

Seventy years ago, on June 22, 1944, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Public Law 78-346, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, to provide sweeping new benefits to World War II Veterans. The law has been commonly referred to as the "G.I. Bill" since then.

The G.I. Bill is most remembered for providing unprecedented educational benefits, but it did much more:

- It elevated the VA to a war essential agency, second only to the War and Navy Departments (at the time), giving it elevated priority in funding.
- It provided \$500,000,000 for additional Veterans hospitals
- It authorized interchange of staff and facilities between VA and the military services to facilitate adjudication and dissemination of all Veterans benefits
- It authorized educational benefits to honorably discharged Veterans (not just the disabled) who served after Sept. 16, 1940 (World War II Veterans); this included attending college, refresher courses, retraining, etc., at approved institutions for up to 4 years
- It provided loans for Veterans to purchase homes, new construction, farms and farm equipment, and business property
- It provided job counseling and employment services for World War II Veterans.

Before the 1944 G.I. Bill became law, training and educational opportunities were limited to disabled military Veterans who were injured during their service.

Beginning at the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (VHA origins), established in 1865, disabled Veterans were trained in new occupations as their

interests and abilities allowed.

Veterans were taught trades such as telegraphy, plastering, or gardening as residents at the National Homes.

There were no education opportunities or benefits for them outside of the National Home.

Congress authorized funds for farming or manufacturing operations at the National Homes as both a means to supply necessary food, supplies, and services to the Homes and as occupational endeavors for its residents.

By 1875, Veterans at the National Homes were engaged in cigar-making, knitting socks, printing and bookbinding, shoe-making, wagon-making, iron work, plumbing, building steam engines, tin-smithing, tailoring, bread baking, breeding and raising livestock, cabinetry, and much more.

They often sold items to the public in the Home's commissary and were paid for

their labors.

In 1918, the Federal Board of Vocational Education established a rehabilitation division for disabled World War I Veterans.

The Board worked with states, local business, and vocational schools to provide Veterans with training for new occupations such as farming or teaching.

By 1922, over 156,000 disabled World War Veterans had entered 445 trades or professions. VA's 1945 annual report showed that during the G.I. Bill's first year:

- VA received 83,016 applications for education benefits: of those, 75,272 were eligible, 35,044 entered courses, and 22,335 were in training
- VA received 15,455 applications for home loan guarantees: 12,228 loans were made in the amount of \$19,644,824.90 for 11,220 home loans, 270 farm loans, and 738 business loans.

By 1951, some 8,170,000 Veterans had attended over 1,700 schools and colleges at a cost to the Government of \$14,000,000,000. 3,430,000 were able to finish high school; 2,350,000 went to college; 1,630,000 received on-the-job training, and 760,000 obtained on-the-farm training.

In 1944, educators were skeptical about the bill, but by 1951, they had nothing but praise for the bill's success in educating millions of Veterans who could not have afforded to on their own.

The G.I. Bill was authorized and implemented under General Frank T. Hines' administration at VA. Since 1944, educational benefits of some form have been provided to military Veterans of every war America has participated in.

Donation Gives VA New Yellowstone National Cemetery

VA received a donation of property in Yellowstone County for the new Yellowstone National Cemetery, Montana, which was dedicated in a Memorial Day Ceremony on May 26.

VA's National Cemetery Administration began burial operations at Yellowstone National Cemetery on May 26. Effective May 26, Veterans and family members who wish to schedule an interment or inurnment at the cemetery should call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 800-535-1117. VA will manage committal services for burials that were previously scheduled by the City of Laurel, Mont.

The property, formerly known as "Yellowstone County Veterans Cemetery," is 10.64 acres and located at 55 Buffalo Trail Road, City of Laurel, Mont. The property was donated by Yellowstone County on May 23.

This new national cemetery is part of VA's Rural Initiative and will serve an estimated Veteran population of 17,567 within a 75-mile radius of their homes. There are three VA-funded state Veterans cemeteries in Montana located in Helena, Miles City, and Missoula. There is one non-VA funded state cemetery in Columbia Falls, Mont.

VA's Rural Initiative is aimed at providing burial access for Veterans not currently served by a burial option at either a VA-funded State cemetery or national cemetery. Other burial grounds are planned to serve

Veterans in North Dakota, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Utah, Maine, Idaho and Nevada.

Veterans with a qualifying discharge, their spouses and eligible dependent children may be buried in a VA national cemetery. Also eligible are military personnel who die on active duty, their spouses and eligible dependents.

Burial benefits are available for all eligible Veterans, regardless of whether they are buried in a national cemetery or a private cemetery, include a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and a government headstone or marker.

In the midst of the largest expansion since the Civil War, VA operates 131 national cemeteries, and 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites in 40 states and Puerto Rico. Yellowstone National Cemetery is the first of eight new national Veterans burial grounds authorized by Congress.

More than four million Americans, including Veterans of every war and conflict, are buried in VA's national cemeteries.

Information on VA burial benefits can be obtained from national cemetery offices, from the Internet at www.cem.va.gov or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at 800-827-1000.

To make burial arrangements at any VA national cemetery at the time of need, call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 800-535-1117.

New Veterans Health Identification Cards Being Issued

In May, VA began mailing new Veteran Health Identification Cards (VHIC) to enrolled Veterans who were previously issued the old Veterans Identification Cards (VIC).

The VHIC is for identification and check-in at VA appointments. It cannot be used as a credit card or an insurance card, and it does not authorize or pay for care at non-VA facilities.

The new VHIC provides increased security for Veterans personal information and displays the emblem of the Veteran's latest branch of service on the card. Several special awards will also be listed.

Newly enrolled Veterans and enrolled Veterans who were not previously issued the old VIC but requested an identification card will be issued a VHIC at their assigned medical center.

Veterans who were issued a VIC do not need to return to their VA medical center to have a photo taken for the VHIC. Enrolled Veterans who do not have the VIC can contact their local VA medical center Enrollment Coordinator to arrange to have their picture taken for the new VHIC, or they may request a new VHIC at



their next VA health care appointment.

To ensure their identity, Veterans must provide either one form of primary identification or two forms of secondary identification.

The VHIC will be mailed to all valid mailing addresses, including P.O. boxes. Veterans who are already enrolled should ensure the address on file is correct.

Veterans are encouraged to safeguard their old VIC, just like they would a credit card, to prevent unauthorized access to their identity information. Once the new VHIC is received, Veterans should destroy their old VIC by cutting it up or shredding it.

For more information on the VHIC, please visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vhic/index.asp.

VISN 6 Sites Of Care & VA Vet Centers

MEDICAL CENTERS

Asheville VAMC
1100 Tunnel Road
Asheville, NC 28805
828-298-7911, 800-932-6408
www.asheville.va.gov/

Beckley VAMC
200 Veterans Avenue
Beckley, WV 25801
304-255-2121, 877-902-5142
www.beckley.va.gov/

Durham VAMC
508 Fulton St.
Durham, NC 27705
919-286-0411, 888-878-6890
www.durham.va.gov/

Fayetteville VAMC
2300 Ramsey St.
Fayetteville, NC 28301
910-488-2120, 800-771-6106
www.fayettevillenc.va.gov

Hampton VAMC
100 Emancipation Dr.
Hampton, VA 23667
757-722-9961, 866-544-9961
www.hampton.va.gov/

Richmond VAMC
1201 Broad Rock Blvd.
Richmond, VA 23249
804-675-5000, 800-784-8381
www.richmond.va.gov/

Salem VAMC
1970 Roanoke Blvd.
Salem, VA 24153
540-982-2463, 888-982-2463
www.salem.va.gov/

Salisbury VAMC
1601 Brenner Ave.
Salisbury, NC 28144
704-638-9000, 800-469-8262
www.salisbury.va.gov/

OUTPATIENT CLINICS

Albemarle CBOC
1845 W City Drive
Elizabeth City, NC 27909
252-331-2191

Brunswick Outreach Clinic
20 Medical Campus Drive
Supply, NC 28462
910-754-6141

Charlotte CBOC
8601 University East Drive
Charlotte, NC 28213
704-597-3500

Charlottesville CBOC
650 Peter Jefferson Pkwy
Charlottesville, VA 22911
434-293-3890

Danville CBOC
705 Piney Forest Rd.
Danville, VA 24540
434-710-4210

Emporia CBOC
1746 East Atlantic Street
Emporia, VA 23847
434-348-1500

Franklin CBOC
647 Wayah St.
Franklin, NC 28734-3390
828-369-1781

Fredricksburg CBOC
130 Executive Center Pkwy
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
540-370-4468

Goldsboro CBOC
2610 Hospital Road
Goldsboro, NC 27909
919-731-9766

Greenbrier County CBOC
804 Industrial Park Rd.
Maxwelton, WV 24957
304-497-3900

Greenville HCC
401 Moye Blvd.
Greenville, NC 27834
252-830-2149

Hamlet CBOC
100 Jefferson Street
Hamlet, NC 28345
910-582-3536

Hickory CBOC
2440 Century Place, SE
Hickory, NC 28602
828-431-5600

Hillandale Rd. Annex
1824 Hillandale Road
Durham, North Carolina 27705
919-383-6107

Jacksonville CBOC
241 Freedom Way, Suite 1
Midway Park, NC 28544
910-353-6406

Lynchburg CBOC
1600 Lakeside Drive
Lynchburg, VA 24501
434-316-5000

Morehead City CBOC
5420 U.S. 70
Morehead City, NC 28557
252-240-2349

Raleigh CBOC
3305 Sungate Blvd.
Raleigh, NC 27610
919-212-0129

Raleigh II Annex
3040 Hammond Business Place
Raleigh, NC 27603
919-899-6259

Robeson County CBOC
139 Three Hunts Drive
Pembroke, NC 28372
910-521-8452

Rutherford County CBOC
374 Charlotte Rd.
Rutherfordton, NC 28139
828-288-2780

Staunton CBOC
102 Business Way
Staunton, VA 24401
540-886-5777

Tazewell CBOC
123 Ben Bolt Ave.
Tazewell, VA 24651
276-988-2526

Village Green Annex
1991 Fordham Drive
Fayetteville, NC 28304
910-488-2120 ext. 4020,

Virginia Beach CBOC
244 Clearfield Avenue
Virginia Beach, VA
757-722-9961, ext. 1900

Wilmington HCC
1705 Gardner Rd.
Wilmington, NC 28405
910-343-5300

Winston-Salem CBOC
190 Kimel Park Drive
Winston-Salem, NC 27103
336-768-3296

Winston-Salem Annex
2101 Peters Creek Parkway
Winston-Salem, NC 27127
336-761-5300

Wytheville CBOC
165 Peppers Ferry Rd.
Wytheville, VA 24382-2363
276-223-5400

DIALYSIS CENTERS

VA Dialysis and Blind Rehabilitation Clinics at Brier Creek
8081 Arco Corporate Drive
Raleigh, NC 27617
919-286-5220

VA Dialysis Clinic Fayetteville
2301 Robeson Street, Ste. 101
Fayetteville, NC 28305
910-483-9727

VET CENTERS

Beckley Vet Center
1000 Johnstown Road
Beckley, WV 25801
304-252-8220

Charlotte Vet Center
2114 Ben Craig Dr.
Charlotte, NC 28262
704-549-8025

Fayetteville Vet Center
4140 Ramsey St.
Fayetteville, NC 28311
910-488-6252

Greensboro Vet Center
2009 S. Elm-Eugene St.
Greensboro, NC 27406
336-333-5366

Greenville Vet Center
1021 W.H. Smith Blvd.
Greenville, NC 27834
252-355-7920

Jacksonville, N.C. Vet Center
110-A Branchwood Drive
Jacksonville, NC 28546
910-577-1100

Norfolk Vet Center
1711 Church Street
Norfolk, VA 23504
757-623-7584

Princeton Vet Center
905 Mercer Street
Princeton, WV 24740
304-425-5653

Raleigh Vet Center
1649 Old Louisburg Rd.
Raleigh, NC 27604
919-856-4616

Roanoke Vet Center
350 Albemarle Ave., SW
Roanoke, VA 24016
540-342-9726

Virginia Beach Vet Center
324 Southport Circle, Suite 102
Virginia Beach, VA, 23452
757-248-3665