



VA MID-ATLANTIC HEALTH CARE NETWORK • VISN SIX

Vol. 2, No. 6

“Excellent Care – Earned by Veterans – Delivered Here”

# Voices of VISN 6

Official news from around *your* VISN

March 30, 2012

## Salisbury Performs GPS-Guided Needle Tracking Biopsy

By Jeff Melvin  
VISN 6 public affairs

In another example of Veterans receiving the “Best Care Anywhere,” the Salisbury VA Imaging Service performed the first ultrasound-guided volume navigation GPS needle tracking biopsy in a VA facility in the state of North Carolina, March 14.

“We are the first site in the state of North Carolina (and among the first VA medical centers in the country) to perform a biopsy with the GPS needle tracking since completion of the testing phase,” said Dr. Corinne Deurdulian, chief of imaging services, Salisbury VAMC. “We are excited to be able to deliver this cutting-edge technology to our Veterans. The goal of this technology is to help guide the trajectory for lesions that are difficult to biopsy with conventional ultrasound.”

The radiologist said the advanced needle tracking system employs a sensor within the needle that uses GPS technology to help guide the biopsy for difficult lesions. “The needle’s real time position and trajectory are displayed in graphics and overlaid on the ultrasound images of the respective anatomy,” Dr. Deurdulian said.

The new technology is available through the GE LOGIQ® E9 Ultrasound system, of which the network purchased two last year on behalf of the Salisbury medical center.

The particular application that makes the GPS needle tracking guidance possible is called fusion imaging or volume navigation. GPS needle tracking capability along with fusion imaging allow ultrasound images to be fused with CT, MRI, and PET images to help visualize the lesion better during an ultrasound-guided bi-

opsy.

According to Dr. Deurdulian, the new procedure will be used mainly for liver and deep abdominal biopsies, which are generally harder to visualize. The technology may also be used in the operating room to help localize lesions for surgery.

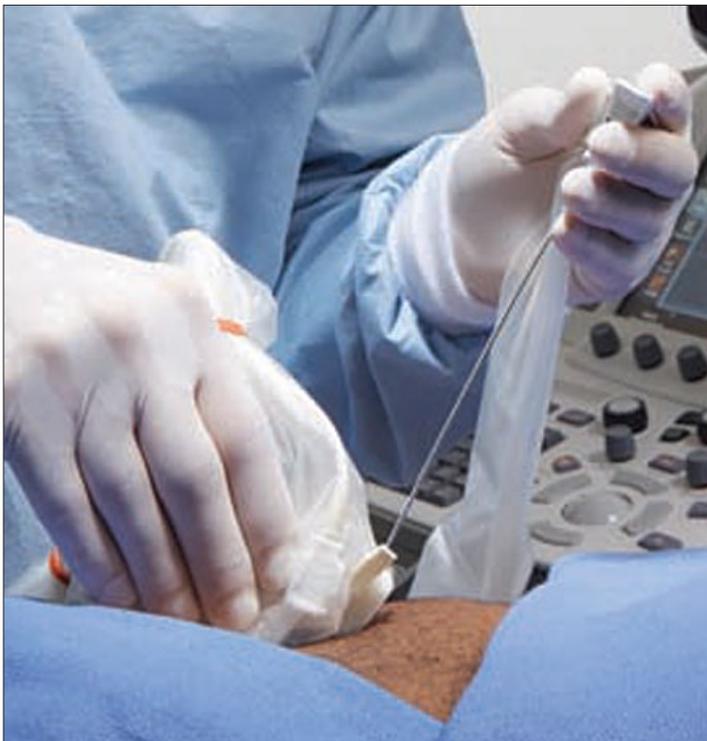
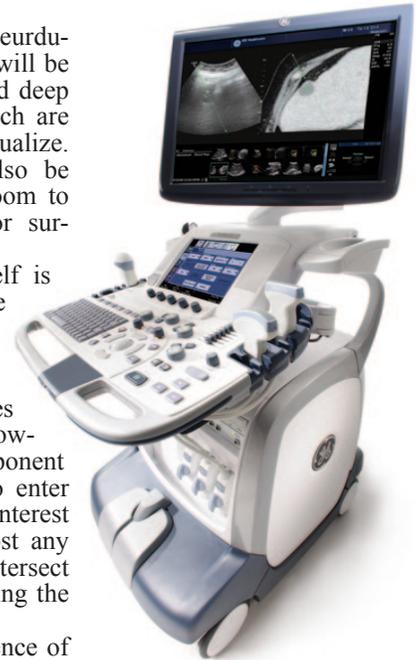
“The procedure itself is almost exactly the same as any other ultrasound-guided needle biopsy. The radiologist holds the transducer and guides the needle,” she said. “However, the new GPS component allows the radiologist to enter the organ or region of interest with the needle at almost any entry point and then intersect the targeted lesion utilizing the tracking software.

Giving further evidence of the high quality care available to Veterans through the VA, the radiologist cited two other firsts for the Salisbury VAMC, the use of Eovist and Gadavist.

“Salisbury was the first VA in the country to use Eovist, a liver-specific contrast agent used to help identify and characterize various types of liver tumors on MRI,” Deurdulian said. “Many of our protocols and methods of practice that we implemented early on in the usage of this agent have been shown to be optimal in research and medical practice. Salisbury was also the first VA in the country to use Gadavist, an MRI contrast agent currently with the highest safety profile, and now FDA approved for neurologic MR imaging.”

VISN 6 is working to purchase ultrasounds with GPS needle tracking and fusion imaging capabilities for Beckley, Durham Fayetteville, Richmond and Salem VAMCs.

(Story idea submitted by Carol Waters, Salisbury VAMC.)



### Inside in Brief

- Pg 3** VA Secretary lauds volunteers’ contributions; Civilian health care Q&A.
- Pg 4** Chef shows Veterans eating wisely can be healthy too.
- Pg 5** VA supports inaugural Vietnam Veterans gala; Korean War Vets sought.
- Pg 6** Durham clinic helps visually impaired; Jacksonville staff meets leadership.
- Pg 7** VA hosts Winter Sports Clinic; 32nd Annual Veteran Wheelchair Games.
- Pg 8** WWII female POW’s story told; Caring for those who cared.
- Pg 10** Apps would support homeless Vets; Faster claims processing.
- Pg 12** VISN 6 Sites of Care with addresses and phone numbers for each location.

## From the Director

Last month, I wrote about VA's leading role in treating psychological trauma through the auspices of our well renowned Mental Illness Research, Education and Clinical Centers.

This month I'd like to shift my focus to a different, but no less important, aspect of care that speaks equally to the heart of being a Veteran-centered health care organization.

VHA's mission, in a nutshell, is to provide excellent care to Veterans. How do we measure success? There are a number of ways but perhaps none more illustrative nor rewarding than the ever-increasing numbers of Veterans living long and productive lives.

That brings me to the subject of this month's column, the Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network (VISN 6) Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center, or GRECC, located in Durham. Let me take this opportunity to talk to you about what VISN 6 is doing to improve the care of our elderly Veterans.

In the 1970s, VHA began planning to meet the challenges the aging World War II Veteran population would present. The field of geriatric medicine was rather small, so the GRECCs were developed to help grow the field and develop the infrastructure necessary to handle the complexities such a large influx of elderly patients would present.

Currently there are 20 Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Centers within VA. These GRECCs compete for research grants to conduct basic laboratory research on the origins of aging and the diseases commonly associated with it as well as research how care is delivered to elders and the effects of rehabilitation.

The VISN 6 GRECC has been serving elderly Veterans in North Carolina, most of Virginia, and parts of West Virginia since 1984. More than 30 professionals – nurses, social workers, physicians, pharmacists, exercise physiologists, and PhD scientists – dedicate themselves to the GRECC mission of improving the care of older Veterans through integrated research, education and clinical activity.

The VISN 6 GRECC's organizational structure includes three major components: research, clinical care and education. GRECC's current research interests include: immune system and inflammation changes and aging; diagnosing and managing bone fractures; infectious diseases; cancer; delivering and transitioning to long term care; delivering and transitioning to end of life care; spirituality at end of life; drug related problems and medications in older Veterans; wellness, exercise, mobility, and progressive loss of physical and mental capacity (Alzheimer's disease) as we age.

The clinical activities are closely integrated with the 120-bed Extended Care and Rehabilitation Center and the eight-bed Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) program. GEM is an

**Continued on Pg 3**



**James Coty**

### **Hampton's Homelessness Efforts Honored**

Hampton VA Medical Center's Dr. Priscilla Hankins accepts the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs HUD-VASH Award from Peter Dougherty, associate executive director of the VA's Homeless Veterans Initiative Office, March 26. The award honors the Hampton VAMC's HUD-VASH (Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs' Supported Housing) team's efforts to eliminate homelessness among Veterans. Especially noteworthy was the 11-member HUD-VASH team's placement of more than 300 homeless Veterans in permanent housing. Dr. Hankins is Hampton VAMC's chief of mental health and behavioral sciences.

### **Salem's Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator Recognized**

Licensed clinical social worker Kristin Pugh, Salem VAMC's Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator, was selected as one of Virginia Lawyers Media's "Influential Women of Virginia" of 2012. This awards program, now in its fourth year, recognizes the outstanding efforts of women in the commonwealth in all fields, including law, business, health care, education and the arts. The honors



are given to individuals who are making notable contributions to their chosen professions, their communities and society at large.

The honorees will be celebrated at a gala luncheon on May 10 at the Richmond Marriott in downtown Richmond. The "Influential Woman of the Year" for 2012, to be voted on by the 2012 honorees themselves, will be announced at this luncheon. Each honoree also will be profiled in a special publication that will be distributed at the event and inserted into Virginia Lawyers Weekly in early May.

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



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**Questions or comments about the newsletter, e-mail Bruce. Sprecher@va.gov or call 919-956-5541.**

## GRECC continued from Pg 2

evaluation for elderly Veterans patients performed by a VA team in an inpatient or outpatient setting. The VA team develops a plan of care that may include treatment, therapy, social services and health maintenance programs like GRECC's Gerofit, an exercise and mobility program for older adults that reduces injuries, and keeps them active longer.

Other clinical activities include a geriatric consultation service, an outpatient GEM program, a primary care geriatric clinic and a gero-oncology clinic. Clinical innovations focus on implementing and exploring new ideas in clinical care for older Veterans and their caregivers.

The education component bridges the gap between research and clinical care, translating best practices and research concepts into educational materials and ensures that the knowledge is shared with all health care personnel, patients and families through a variety of accessible means such as conferences, teleconferences, print materials, web-based education and workshops.

Geriatrics education and training includes medicine, nursing, physician assistants and others. GRECC staff attend geriatric rounds and patient evaluation conferences in VA and the Duke Geriatric Evaluation and Treatment Clinic. The GRECC hosts a Geriatric Medicine and Dentistry Fellowship Program and training programs in geriatric pharmacy, social work, psychology, nursing, audiology and speech pathology.

All of these activities are enhanced by productive collaborations with researchers and services locally, at all VISN 6 medical centers, other GRECCs, our University affiliate, Duke University Medical Center, and other academic centers around the country. Let me take a moment to recount some of the Durham GRECC's recent accomplishments.

In fiscal year 2011 staff from the VISN 6 GRECC implemented a Transitional Care Partners Program to improve hospital to home transitions for patients, a Caring for Older Adults and Caregivers at Home integrated in-home dementia program, an osteoporosis e-consult service, a bone mineral density clinic and a shingles vaccine clinic.

Equally noteworthy, VISN 6 GRECC investigators published 61 peer-reviewed papers and expended nearly \$3.96 million in research awards.

GRECC's director, Dr. Kenneth Schmader, is a lead investigator in a landmark shingles prevention study. This study showed that the zoster vaccine reduced the incidence of herpes zoster (shingles) and post herpetic neuralgia, which led to FDA licensure of the zoster vaccine and the addition of the zoster vaccine to the routine adult immunization schedule recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, CDC.

About half of the shingles cases in the U.S. occur in those aged 50 years or older. On the basis of this study, the VA approved the vaccine for use in all eligible Veterans.

Successes such as those of the VISN 6 GRECC coupled with successful treatment of Veterans suffering from Alzheimer's or dementia and VA's highly touted geriatrics primary care are but a few examples of our commitment to providing our elderly Veterans the excellent care they so richly deserve.

So, why this primer on the GRECCs?

The answer is simple. According to U.S. Census Bureau data, of the nearly 22 million Veterans in the U.S. in 2010, roughly nine million were 65 and older. At the other end of the age spectrum, 1.7 million were younger than 35. I just want to restate emphatically VISN 6's commitment to address the needs of all our Veterans. While last month's column dealt primarily with returning OIF/OEF/OND Veterans, I want to send a clear message to our elderly Veterans: You are not forgotten.

To learn more information about provision of care to the aging and the elderly, please go to [www.durham.va.gov/services/GRECC.asp](http://www.durham.va.gov/services/GRECC.asp).

Sincerely, Dan Hoffmann



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON

March 15, 2012

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK  
APRIL 15-21, 2012

During National Volunteer Week, April 15-21, let us all celebrate a very American tradition. Volunteering is at the heart of the American experience. Since our earliest days, Americans have reached out to help and support one another—stranger helping stranger, neighbor aiding neighbor, community assisting community. Volunteering is a National civic tradition.

During this special week, I join my 316,000 VA colleagues across the country in acknowledging and, indeed, honoring the contributions of our Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) volunteers. By giving of their time and their talent, they add an incalculable, dimension to VA's caregiving.

Eighty-seven thousand strong, VA volunteers are passionate about serving Veterans and their families. Collectively, they donated 12,366,753 hours on behalf of America's Veterans last year alone. Thanks to them, and their sponsoring organizations, an estimated \$90 million in monetary gifts and donations were contributed to VA for a total in-kind value of \$354.6 million in volunteer giving.

VA deeply appreciates and values the generosity of both time and resources volunteers so generously provide. Their work—marked by great commitment and even greater compassion—touches and better the lives of thousands of Veterans each and every day. On their behalf, I convey to each volunteer, my personal *Thank You*, and the highest regard and respect of a grateful Department of Veterans Affairs.

Eric K. Shinseki

## We know you're out there...

By Cheryl Keen, RN, MSN  
VISN 6 patient transfer manager

As a Veteran, have you ever wondered what would happen if you were sick and had to go to the closest hospital for care instead of coming to the VA? You may wonder, "How am I going to get to the VA?; Will the VA get my records? or Will the VA pay for my inpatient care?" Well, here are answers to those questions.

First, if you are seriously ill and believe that your condition is an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest hospital immediately! Your health and well-being are the No. 1 priority. Next, if you have an emergency, present to a community hospital, and are admitted, it is VERY IMPORTANT that you tell the hospital that you are a Veteran. The community hospitals call and notify VA when a Veteran is admitted.

Once we know you are receiving care at another facility, our nurses will contact the facility and speak to your care team. We will ask you if you prefer to be transferred to our VA medical center, or if you prefer to remain in the community hospital and use your private insurance or Medicare. Once we receive

your signed preference form stating you want to transfer to the VA medical center, we request your medical records. Our physicians review the information to determine if we can provide the services that you need. If our facilities offer the care you require, we arrange for your transfer (usually via ambulance) to a VA facility.

If you prefer to remain in the community facility and use your own insurance, your VA Health Record will be updated with the clinical information from the hospital where you were admitted. Our nurses request the information and place it in your medical record, so when you return to VA we have all the updated data.

Finally, the payment for inpatient care at non-VA facilities is guided by the Code of Federal Regulations. If we transfer a Veteran to a non-VA facility, then he/she becomes a station referral and VA pays the expenses. If you present on your own, then determination for payment is based on several factors such as your service connection and the Millennium Bill requirements.

As always, it is our pleasure to serve America's Veterans with pride.

# Chef Shows Veterans Eating Wisely Can Be Tasty Too

Story by Jennifer Askey  
Hampton VAMC public affairs

More than 30 Veterans slowly made their way to their cafeteria seats March 21, jokingly sharing with each other their doubts that the “Get Your Plate In Shape” class they were about to sit through could prove that healthy food could be turned into something delicious.

Veterans joked about salt levels and the proper method for frying chicken as Chef Eric Samuelson quietly readied his station for



*Jennifer Askey*

*Chef Eric Samuelson dresses spinach and strawberry salads with freshly made balsamic vinegar and olive oil during Hampton's “Get Your Plate In Shape” class, part of Hampton VAMC's National Nutrition Month activities.*

the “Eat Wisely” demonstration. Looking up from time to time, he smiled at the participants as they shared their healthy eating stories of cardboard-like or tasteless meals.

The event, sponsored by Nutrition and Food Services and Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, was part of the Hampton VAMC's National Nutrition Month recognition. The chef was determined to change attitudes. Samuelson, VISN 6 food service director, is also a world-class chef. He wasted no time in laying doubts to rest as he kicked off the class and started cooking up a storm before the Veterans and their families.

“Changing the way you cook the things you’ve grown to love into a way that makes them healthy for you, doesn’t mean giving up flavor or texture,” Samuelson told the crowd as he reduced the balsamic and olive oil mixture to drizzle on the spinach salad with strawberries and roasted chick peas.

The first course was a hit as Veterans picked up their forks and dug in. Mumbled praises from the crowd made the chef smile as he explained the salad elements and their nutrition values.

“This is that vinegar?” one Veterans burst out in complete disbelief as he munched away at the greens, fruit and vegetable combination the chef presented. Those around him reluctantly agreed that the combination was appealing, tasty and good for them.

“It’s important that people have an opportunity to learn how to eat correctly,” said Sandy May, VISN 6 food and nutrition services chief. “Today, these Veterans and their family members will leave here with healthy cooking ideas and the realization that it’s not difficult or too time consuming to fix healthy meals. Ultimately, it’s about awareness they can use to improve their quality of life.”

As the second course of herb crusted cod with quinoa pilaf moved into the dessert course of aromatic poached pears, the Veterans’ grumblings of disbelief became praise and understanding that they could eat well and enjoy every minute of it. With discussions on how much vegetable, fruit and whole grain to eat daily to replacing salt in a diet, Chef Samuelson turned the participants into “Eat Wisely” believers and did it by demonstrating that eating right doesn’t mean sacrificing the joy of enjoying their meals.

“Knowing just a little bit more about how to apply traditionally unhealthy cooking techniques in a similar yet healthy fashion is the key,” the chef explained. “For instance, searing fish in just a little bit of olive oil translates into much more texture and flavor than a deep-fried fish like we have here today – an herb crusted loin of cod. Simplicity in your ingredients, freshness, and some knowledge in healthy cooking techniques goes a very long way to healthy, flavorful and satisfying food.”

## Fayetteville’s Health Care For Homeless Veterans Earns Accreditation

By Robin DeMark  
Fayetteville VAMC public affairs

Fayetteville VAMC's Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program has earned a three-year accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. CARF International is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services.

“The emphasis on quality as a top priority for the Fayetteville VA Medical Center was clearly evident to the CARF survey team during their visit here in February,” said Betty Goolsby, Fayetteville VA Medical Center Director. “The three-year accreditation is the highest level of accreditation awarded to a program. I congratulate all of our staff in providing quality medical and mental health care services for our Veterans.”

As a step toward accreditation, a provider invites CARF to send a team of surveyors to visit its site and evaluate its services for quality. The surveyors consult with leadership and staff members, and interview people who use the provider's services. Based on the surveyors' review, the provider may be awarded accreditation

for a term of one or three years.

During the three-day site evaluation Feb. 6-8, the survey team found 97 percent conformance in meeting the CARF standards. Noted to be particularly strong were the Outreach, Continuity of Care, Strategic Planning, Accessibility and Risk Management within the homeless program and Health and Safety, Information Measurement and Performance Improvement within the VA Medical Center facility.

Additionally, two other programs, Integrative Health Coach Training with Duke Health System Integrative Medicine and Housing First Model in the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program, received noteworthy mention from the reviewers. The HUD-VASH program combines Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance for homeless Veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs. VA provides these services for participating Veterans at VA medical centers and community-based outpatient clinics. The Integrative Health Coach Training focuses on helping veterans to gain control of their lives and develop positive approaches to health and living.



## VA Supports Inaugural Vietnam Veteran Welcome Home

Veterans, service members and their families along with the general public, don't forget the inaugural "Vietnam Veterans Homecoming Celebration" is set for Saturday, March 31 at the Charlotte Motor Speedway. Gates open at 9 a.m.; opening ceremonies begin at 11 a.m.

Sponsored by USO - North Carolina, the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters and the Charlotte Motor Speedway, the event aims to provide overdue recognition to Vietnam Veterans and is designed to thank and honor Vietnam-era Veterans for their service through live entertainment, displays, demonstrations and military salutes. More than 50,000 people are projected to attend the event.

VA assets and representatives specializing in health care, benefits and more will be on-site to underscore the Department's commitment to

educating Veterans about the benefits and services they have earned. VA representatives and displays will be in the Speedway infield and in the Sprint Cup Garage. Veterans can expect to engage VA representatives at tents and mobile vehicles to enroll in VA or collect information on a myriad of VA programs.

Anyone who served can apply for VA benefits and all Vietnam combat Veterans are automatically qualified for VA health care. Veterans are encouraged to bring copies of their DD-214 to apply for benefits on the spot. The DD-214 does not need to be registered or notarized/certified.

For more information visit: [www.charlottemotorspeedway.com/WelcomeHome](http://www.charlottemotorspeedway.com/WelcomeHome), or visit us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/VetsHomecoming2012](http://www.facebook.com/VetsHomecoming2012) and Twitter <http://twitter.com/VetsWelcomeHome>.

## State Helps Recognize Korean War Veterans

RALEIGH – N.C. Division of Veterans Affairs is leading a statewide effort to recognize North Carolina service members and their families as the 62nd anniversary of the start of the Korean War nears.

The effort is in conjunction with Department of Defense 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee "The Year of the Korean War Veteran" activities, which begin June 25.

"More than 177,000 North Carolina citizens served in Korea between June 27, 1950, and Jan. 31, 1955," said Gov. Bev Perdue. "We believe that more than 72,000 of these veterans are still living in North Carolina today, and many more have descendants who make their home here. I ask that everyone pitch in to help us provide formal appreciation of their service and sacrifice."

According to NCDVA Assistant Secretary Tim Wiperman, a link to a form to assist Korean War Veterans (or their family members in their stead) acquire a Certificate of Appreciation signed by U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta has been placed on the Division website at [www.doa.state.nc.us/vets/KoreanWarForm.aspx](http://www.doa.state.nc.us/vets/KoreanWarForm.aspx). "This may be one of our last chances to recognize the contributions of those who began the successful struggle to stem the tide of communism," Wiperman said.

No documentation is nec-

essary and the form can be filled out and submitted online by the Veteran, family member or a friend. Requests for certificates may also be downloaded and mailed to: Korean War Veterans Certificate, N.C. Division of Veterans Affairs, 1315 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, N.C. 27699-1315.

According to NCDVA, North Carolina recorded 968 deaths in service during the conflict, of which 784 were battle deaths. An additional 2,272 service members were wounded; 109 were taken as prisoners of war, and 204 were designated as missing in action.

Veterans living in other states should contact their state Veterans Affairs Office or visit the Korean War Commemoration Committee web site at <http://koreanwar.defense.gov> for further assistance.

In addition to the Certificate of Appreciation, the U.S. Department of Defense encourages any Korean War Veteran who would like to share his or her story with the Korean War Commemoration Committee's oral history project to call 703-545-0522 or visit the committee's web site.



# WELCOME HOME

**WHAT**  
A Welcome Home to  
Vietnam Veterans  
that many never received

**WHEN**  
9:00AM - 4:30PM Saturday, March 31, 2012

**WHERE**  
Charlotte Motor Speedway






[www.CharlotteMotorSpeedway.com/WelcomeHome](http://www.CharlotteMotorSpeedway.com/WelcomeHome)

Veteran Service Organizations will be on-site to assist veterans. Please bring your DD Form 214 so they can help, if needed.



Army Reserve Historical Painting

# Durham Clinic Helps Visually Impaired Function

By Steve Wilkins  
VISN 6 public affairs

The VA Blind Rehabilitation Outpatient Clinic, now open at 8081 ARCO Corporate Drive in Brier Creek, offers visually impaired Veterans services to “uniquely enhance” their personal independence and quality of life.

“You can’t imagine how exciting this is for us,” said Philip Pugh, a Durham visual impairment services team coordinator. According to Pugh, the difference in services

provided visually impaired Veterans at the BROC versus anywhere else in the country is that in other locations, Veterans need to make more than one stop to receive the wealth of services provided at the Durham facility, available under one roof.

The facility provides Veterans comprehensive services in case management, education and life skills. It also matches visually impaired Veterans with other similarly affected Veteran mentors through the Blind Veterans of America

organization, a partner in the venture with Durham.

In addition to getting help navigating their cases through the VA system, Veterans learn how to manage in the kitchen, learn to operate computers, and learn to read, or write checks. These skills are included among a long list of possible real-world scenarios the clinic helps to prepare Veterans for, Pugh said.

The state-of-the-art clinic features Telehealth capability, a visual skills room, computer training room, an electronic aid room, and specialty equipment space.

A critical aspect to Veterans’ transition to living with visual impairment is that they do not have to do it alone. With the BVA partnership, which puts newly impaired Veterans together with more experienced visually impaired Veterans, on a long-term basis, they establish relationships that can help them discover ways to overcome challenges more easily.

Veterans learn on state-of-the-art equipment that is intuitive, talks and helps to make their transition as easy as possible. This is important, Pugh said, because reading Braille, a language format used to help the blind read, is becoming rare.

But, “there’s no phonics

with the new technology,” said John Lee, an instructor at the clinic. Lee is there to help Veterans learn the essence of operating computers and communication. He is blind, but navigates the world as easily as a person of sight navigates.

“You still have to write,” Lee asserted. He said that the new technology doesn’t help Veterans learn to spell, but Braille is effective with teaching phonics and other basics of communication.

“When I get a message from some people, it is just gibberish to me, because, although it says what they thought they were saying, the misspelling makes it impossible to read,” Lee said. He works with Veterans to help them get their thoughts across to others.

From its beginnings in a small room in the Durham VAMC, the Blind Rehabilitation Outpatient Clinic has grown over several years. Previously, the nearest facility providing much of the same training was in Georgia. Now, they can get those services in the new 3,700-square-foot facility. The facility is run by a four-person staff and is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

To learn more, visit [www.durham.va.gov/visitors/BlindRehabClinicBrierCreek.asp](http://www.durham.va.gov/visitors/BlindRehabClinicBrierCreek.asp).



Steve Wilkins

Durham blind rehabilitation clinic instructors John Lee, bottom, and Phillip Pugh, center, offer some guidance to Preston Page, a visually impaired Veteran learning to function without sight.

## Jacksonville CBOC Staff Meet With VISN Leaders

By Robin DeMark,  
Fayetteville VA Medical Center public affairs

Employees from the Jacksonville CBOC hosted an informal town hall meeting with leadership from the VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network and the Fayetteville VAMC to share topics of interest and gain insight into the future direction of health care for Veterans, March 6.

Betty Goolsby, director of the Fayetteville VAMC, opened the meeting by expressing her appreciation to the Jacksonville staff for their hard work and finding better ways to improve health care for Veterans. Also in attendance was Network Director Daniel Hoffmann.

Hoffmann welcomed feedback from staff and asked why they thought their clinic was so successful.

Nurse Manager Clell Penny, who has worked at the Jacksonville CBOC for nine years, attributed their success to a caring staff and support from leadership. She said the “Ask the Director” email program, regular on-site visits and teleconferences with the Fayetteville director are making a difference. “We get timely feedback and we all focus on the same goals to form a solid PACT for our Veterans,” said Penny. “Our patient satisfaction scores have

increased because our staff is cross-trained and survey feedback identifies areas for improvement.”

Registered nurse Jane McCoy talked about how technology helps her patients. “Many of our Veterans prefer using email to reach their healthcare team.

This provides personalized service and unlimited access to our team when they need to reach us,” said McCoy.

Hoffmann complimented the staff for a noteworthy achievement, reducing delays to complete medical exams for disability claims and praised them for surpassing the national average of 27 days to complete Compensation and Pension exams. “You are trend setters at VA for completing C&P exams in less than 18 days,” Hoffmann said.

As the meeting progressed, the subject of potential growth in the local area turned attention to facility improvements and equipment needs. Staff shared their wish list with leadership, requesting telephone head sets, laptops and mobile computer workstations. Hoffmann assured employees that many of these upgrades will happen during the transition to the new facility that will double square footage. Additionally, infrastructure at the new facility will provide staff and Veterans web-based access to secure messaging, MyHealthyVet and cloud computing.

## VA Hosts Winter Sports Clinic

WASHINGTON – Nearly 400 disabled Veterans from across the country, including those from Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation New Dawn attended the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass Village, Colo., near Aspen, March 25 – 30.

“This clinic demonstrates VA’s commitment to provide innovative rehabilitation for the men and women disabled during service to our Nation,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “The training and instruction these Veterans receive will allow them to take their rehabilitation home, outside of the medical facilities and into their daily lives.”

The event, now in its 26th year, is open to all military Veterans with spinal cord injuries or disease, visual impairments, certain neurological conditions, orthopedic amputations or other disabilities, who receive care at any Department of Veterans Affairs health care facility.



*Courtesy Photo*

*A Winter Sports Clinic athlete on a monoski skis down hill with the help of a guide.*

Co-sponsored by VA and the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), the clinic is hosted each year by the Grand Junction VA Medical Center in Colorado and VA’s Rocky Mountain Network.

During the six-day program, Veterans learn adaptive Alpine and Nordic skiing and are introduced to a variety of other adaptive activities and sports, such as rock climbing, scuba diving, trap-shooting



*Courtesy Photo*

*Winter Sports Clinic athlete athletes play hockey with the help of assistive technology.*

and sled hockey.

In addition to learning valuable skills at the clinic, Veteran athletes can set their sights higher and become eligible to compete in some of the nation’s premiere athletic events. Since 2005, VA’s Winter Sports Clinics have provided participants to American paralympic teams engaged in national and international competition.

To train these Veteran athletes and meet their unique needs, an estimated 200 certified ski instructors for the disabled and several current and former members of the U.S. Disabled Ski Team will serve as instructors.

This clinic applies the rehabilitative care Veterans receive daily at VA medical centers across the country, and through sports and recreation therapy, many can greatly improve the quality of their lives.

VA continues to be a recognized leader in rehabilitation, with recreational therapy programs at each of its 152 hospitals that allow disabled Veterans to challenge themselves both physically and emotionally. DAV, which has co-sponsored the event since 1991, is a nonprofit, congressionally chartered Veterans service organization, with a membership of more than one million wartime disabled Veterans.

## Local Athletes To Vie In 32nd Veterans Wheelchair Games

Several athletes from VA medical centers in Beckley, W.Va., Asheville, Durham, Fayetteville and Salisbury, N.C., and Hampton, Richmond and Salem, Va. are looking forward to the 32nd Annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games for a couple of reasons. They enjoy the thrill of competition and they are anxious to defend their home turf.

Just 74 Veterans competed at the first National Veterans Wheelchair Games in 1981 at the Richmond VAMC. This summer, a team from this region could be almost that large, as McGuire VAMC again hosts the Games June 25 through June 30.

Presented by VA and the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Games offer athletic competition in 17 sports for almost 600 athletes annually. In 2011 athletes traveled from 45 states, Puerto Rico and Great Britain to attend the event.

Any honorably discharged Veterans who use a

wheelchair to compete in sports and are eligible for VA healthcare can compete in the Games.

Using several venues throughout the city, the Games will require close to 2,000 hotel rooms, the cooperation of the Richmond Community and hundreds of volunteers to ensure its success. The events are open to the public and admission is free. Organizers estimate the Wheelchair Games will generate approximately \$3 million in revenue for the Richmond area.

For more information, go to [www.va.gov/opa/speceven/wcg/index.asp](http://www.va.gov/opa/speceven/wcg/index.asp) or call Alison Faulk, 32nd National Veterans Wheelchair Games Local Chairperson at 804-675-5208. E-mail her at [alison.faulk@va.gov](mailto:alison.faulk@va.gov).

For volunteer information, call McGuire Veterans Medical Center at 804-675-5135 or email Janet Langhorne at [janet.langhorne@va.gov](mailto:janet.langhorne@va.gov).



*Debbie Voloski*

*Army Veteran Stephen Hudson earned recognition as 2012 Charleston (W. Va.) Parks and Recreation Wheelchair Basketball League “Rookie of the Year.”*



**Debbie Voloski**

*Rebecca Park dons a vintage women's Army uniform to portray Col. Ruby Bradley as part of the West Virginia Humanities Council's "History Alive" program.*

## World War II POW's Story Told During Women's History Month

By Debbie Voloski  
Beckley VAMC public affairs

In honor of Women's History Month, Beckley VAMC featured the portrayal of the most highly-decorated woman in U.S. Military history, Col. Ruby Bradley, by Rebecca Park of West Virginia Humanities Council.

Bradley, a Spenser, W. Va., native taught four years in one-room schools before becoming a nurse in 1933. She entered the Army Nurse Corps as a surgical nurse in 1934. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, Colonel Bradley was 34 and serving as an Army nurse at Camp John Hay in the Philippines. She was captured by the Japanese just three weeks following the attack. She was moved to a Japanese internment camp in Manila in 1943 and it was there that she and several other imprisoned nurses earned the title 'Angels in Fatigues' from fellow captives.

While a prisoner of war, Bradley stole food to feed starving children and prisoners, often going hungry herself. The weight she shed made room in her uniform for smuggling medical supplies that she used to assist in over 230 operations and deliver 13 babies.

After three years, Bradley then weighing only 80 pounds,

was liberated Feb. 3, 1945, when U.S. troops stormed the gates of the camp. Her liberators arrived wearing new WWII helmets. She could not readily identify them as friends until she saw the stars and stripes on the tanks and heard a greeting of "Hello folks" in a recognizable 'Yankee' drawl.

Bradley recuperated at home in West Virginia, but returned to the battlefield to serve in the Korean War five years later. Again, she put others first and refused to leave until she had loaded the sick and wounded onto planes when their hospital was surrounded by 100,000 Chinese soldiers. During the final evacuation of the wounded she jumped aboard a plane just before the last ambulance exploded.

After three decades of military service, Colonel Bradley retired from the Army in 1963. She earned 30 medals during her military service, including two Legion of Merit medals, two Bronze stars, two Presidential Emblems, the World War II Victory Medal, and the United Nations Service Medal. She was also awarded the highest Red Cross honor, the Florence Nightingale Medal. She was the third woman in Army history to be promoted to colonel. Colonel Bradley, at age 94, was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery in July 2002.



**James Coty**

*Hampton VAMC Veteran Elma Bustle shares time with her daughter, Aurey Kirk, far right, and Director DeAnne Seekins.*

## Caring For Those Who Cared

By James Coty  
Hampton VAMC public affairs

World War II marked a turning point in women's history as large numbers of women entered the workforce. During the conflict, the need for nurses solidified the critical status of the nursing profession and nurses were given officers' commissions, retirement privileges, dependents' allowances and equal pay.

Elma Bustle served during World War II as a Navy nurse. A woman with a huge heart who enjoyed caring for people is the way Aurey Kirk describes her 90-year-old mother.

Bustle was stationed at Portsmouth Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, Va., while on active duty. There, her daughter explained, the mission of caring for others became a lifelong theme. After leaving military service, Bustle settled with her family on a ranch in a small mining community in Butte, Mont. In 2006, she returned to Chesapeake, Va., where she now resides with her daughter.

"My mother cared for me while I was growing up and now the situation has changed – I have to take care of her," said Kirk, whose mother receives her medical care at the Hampton VAMC. "My mother could sense people who were suffer-

ing, especially during the war. Caring for people was a big part of her life. That spirit carried on throughout her life."

According to the WWII U.S. Medical Research Centre website, the tremendous manpower requirements faced by the U.S. Government during WW II created numerous social and economic opportunities for American women.

Women served in many Armed Forces positions with approximately 140,000 women in the Army, 100,000 in the Navy, 23,000 in the Marines, 13,000 in the Coast Guard, and 1,000 in the Air Force.

"I took my mother to the WWII memorial in Washington, D.C., a few years ago," said Kirk. "I could really tell that it meant so much to her."

The World War II Memorial honors the 16 million military personnel who served in the military. The monument honors the more than 400,000 who died, and all who supported the war effort.

"My mother can best be described as a strong, independent woman who always knew what she wanted," Kirk said, adding that one of the hardest things for her mother to cope with as she gets older is losing her independence. "She loved the Navy and, most importantly, helping people."

# Creative Arts Festival Set For October In Boston

By VISN 6 public affairs

More than 3,000 Veterans across the country have begun entering local competitions for the 2012 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, scheduled for Oct. 8-14 in Boston. Those Veterans hope to be like Adrienne Van Dooren whose winning entry in the fine arts painting category of Asheville VAMC's local festival has earned her a trip to the national competition.

Van Dooren, an Army Veteran who lives in Asheville, had two entries that caught the judges' eyes: "Cows in a Field," which placed first; and "Local Waterfalls" which placed second. Randall Morrison placed third with his drawing, "Colored Pen."

Van Dooren describes herself as "multifaceted, creative and eclectic." The former Army intelligence officer said she balances three careers: fine art, author/freelance writer, and co trainer/facilitator. While in the military, she served in a variety of challenging positions: terrorism analyst, Secretary of



Defense Fellow, military police detachment commander, White House aide as well as ROTC instructor. Upon retirement, she decided to combine her passion for teaching and her longtime love of art. She has completed almost 800 hours of specialty training in faux finishing and decorative painting.

The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival competition, which is sponsored by the VA, the American Legion Auxiliary, and Help Hospitalized Veterans, includes 53 categories in the visual arts division including oil painting and leatherworking.

In addition, there are 120 categories in the performing arts comprise all aspects of music, dance, drama, and creative writing.

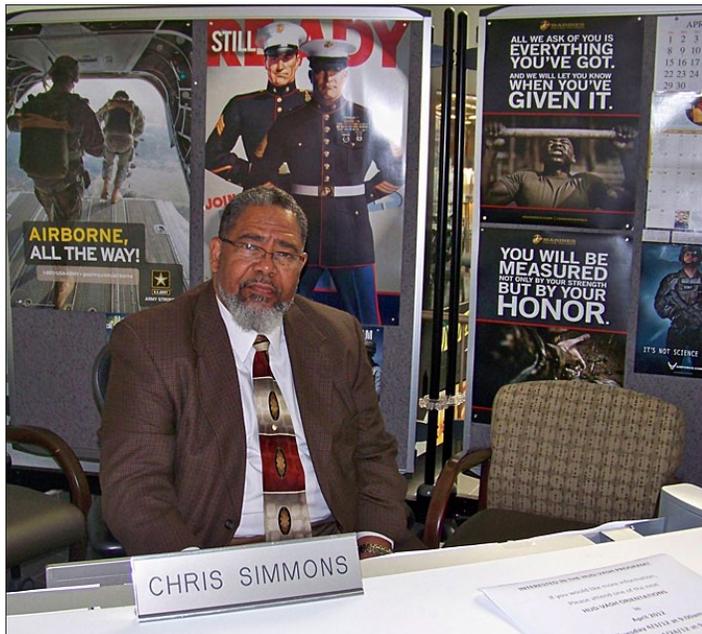
"The Department of Veterans Affairs is committed to providing therapeutic solutions that go beyond traditional physical medicine," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival provides an artistic avenue for the physical, mental and emotional healing of our Nation's heroes."



*Dennis Mehring*  
"Cows in a Field," by Adrienne Van Dooren earned first place in the fine arts category at the Asheville VAMC Creative Arts competition.

The competition is open to Veterans enrolled at a VA medical center, outpatient clinic, or who reside in a state Veterans home. An eligible Veteran may compete at only one VA facility per year. Veterans may submit an entry in creative writing, dance, drama or music categories with a Veteran or group from another VA facility, but still must officially enter through their home VA facility.

This year, the VA Boston Healthcare System hosts the event which will feature an art exhibit of all the first-place art entries from the national competition on display at the Quincy Marriott Hotel on Tuesday, Oct. 9. The program will culminate on Sunday afternoon, Oct. 14, with a gala stage show performance at the Cutler Majestic Theatre in downtown Boston.



*Marian McConnell*  
Chris Simmons, a Virginia Employment Commission representative, is available in the Salem VAMC main lobby to talk to Veterans about employment opportunities.

## Salem VAMC To Hold Veterans Only Regional Job Fair

By Marian McConnell  
Salem VAMC public affairs

The Salem VAMC, Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia Wounded Warrior Program, Roanoke VA Regional Office, and community service providers are partnering to sponsor a Veterans only job fair April 25. The event will be held in the Salem VAMC Auditorium from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

About 40 employers and service providers will be available to discuss job opportunities and offer assistance to Veterans in completing the application process. Staff will be on hand to assist with application submissions, resume preparation, and tips and tools to help Veterans get hired. Veterans' benefits and resources information will be available.

In related employment news, a Virginia Employment Commission representative staffs a resource booth in the Salem VAMC main lobby Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Stop by and let Chris Simmons show you how to register online with the Virginia Workforce Network to receive notices about employment opportunities.

Watch for more information at [www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov), or go to Salem's Facebook page [www.facebook.com/SalemVAMC](http://www.facebook.com/SalemVAMC).

For more information about the job fair, call 888-982-2463, ext. 2520 or 540-204-9747.

# Apps Would Provide Mobile Access To Homeless Veterans

WASHINGTON – VA launched a new contest today to help the people who help the homeless. It challenges the developer community to create easy, mobile access to resources that the homeless need, when they need it and where they can get it.

“This contest taps the talent and compassion of the Nation’s developer community,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “We are asking them to make a free, easy-to-use Web and smartphone app that provides current information about housing, health clinics and food banks.”

Project REACH (Real-time Electronic Access for Caregivers and the Homeless) was announced in collaboration with the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, and the Jon Bon Jovi Soul Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people facing economic challenges.

“Last year’s 12 percent drop in Veteran homelessness shows the results of President Obama’s and the administration’s commitment to ending Veterans homelessness,” said Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan. “I want to thank Jon Bon Jovi for being a part of that effort and for using competition and innovation to advance the cause of ending homelessness.”

One out of every six men and women in homeless shelters are Veterans, and Veterans are 50 percent more likely to fall into homelessness compared to other Americans. The administration has adopted a formal “no wrong door” philosophy that means all Veterans seeking to prevent or escape homelessness must have easy access to help.

“At the Soul Kitchen we’ve seen the need for a simple, user-friendly, comprehensive application that connects those in need to resources in their community. As we sought out a solution to resolve the disconnect, we found the VA, HUD and HHS to be of like mind. Together we can provide the information about existing services – now we need the bright minds in the developer commu-

nity to create a platform to tie it all together,” said Jon Bon Jovi, musician, Chairman of the JBJ Soul Foundation and White House Council for Community Solutions Member.

The ultimate goal of the contest is to create a national platform that enables health clinics, food kitchens, housing services and shelters to update availability of key services automatically on the Internet. The winning app will collect, map, and electronically distribute that information for communities across the nation.

Five finalists will pilot their mobile applications at JBJ Soul Kitchen, where diners can cover the cost of their meals either through donation or volunteer service.

The contest will be conducted in two phases. Finalists will be judged primarily on their ability to dynamically update information about housing and shelter near JBJ Soul Kitchen. Basic performance criteria is described in [www.challenge.gov](http://www.challenge.gov).

Additionally, competitors must also be able to display information about local VA services, employment support, crisis hotlines and local legal assistance resources. The first five entries to meet those requirements will receive a \$10,000 cash prize and the opportunity to test their app at the JBJ Soul Kitchen. The winner will receive a \$25,000 prize.

“Putting this information in the hands of those who can help will make a tremendous difference in the life of a homeless Veteran or anyone who experiences homelessness,” said Jonah Czerwinski, director of the VA Innovation Initiative.

“Secretary Shinseki is very clear,” added Pete Dougherty, acting executive director of VA’s Homeless Veteran Initiative. “Our mission is to end Veteran and chronic homelessness. Innovations that get information about services right to the point of contact in real – or near real – time using smartphones and Internet technology are going to have a big impact. They are going to help us defeat Veteran homelessness by 2015.”

# VA Expands Medical Forms Program For Faster Claims Processing

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs announced today the release of 68 new forms that will help speed the processing of Veterans’ disability compensation and pension claims.

“VA employees will be able to more quickly process disability claims, since disability benefits questionnaires capture important medical information needed to accurately evaluate Veterans’ claims,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Disability benefits questionnaires are just one of many changes VA is implementing to address the backlog of claims.”

The new forms bring to 71 the number of documents, called disability benefits questionnaires (DBQs), that guide physicians’ reports of medical findings, ensuring VA has exactly the medical information needed to make a prompt decision.

When needed to decide a disability claim for compensation or pension benefits, VA provides Veterans with free medical examinations to gather the necessary medical evidence.

Veterans who choose to have their private physicians complete the medical examination can now give their physicians the same form a VA provider would use. It is very important that phy-

sicians provide complete responses to all questions on the DBQs. VA cannot pay for a private physician to complete DBQs or for any costs associated with examination or testing.

“By ensuring relevant medical information can be found on one form, we will cut processing time while improving quality,” added Under Secretary for Benefits Allison A. Hickey.

DBQ’s can be found at <http://benefits.va.gov/disabilityexams>. The newly released DBQs follow the initial release of three DBQs for Agent Orange-related conditions.

Veterans may file a claim online through the eBenefits web portal at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov). DoD and VA jointly developed the eBenefits portal as a single secure point of access for online benefit information and tools to perform multiple self-service functions such as checking the status of their claim.

Servicemembers may enroll in eBenefits using their Common Access Card at any time during their military service, or before they leave during their Transition Assistance Program briefings. Veterans may also enroll in eBenefits and obtain a Premium account in-person or online depending on their status.

## Network Seeks Health Care Providers

The VA Mid-Atlantic Health Care Network is looking for highly qualified health care providers. If you or someone you know is looking for a challenging and rewarding opportunity, please contact Harold “Keith” Liles Jr., Mid-Atlantic Region’s National Healthcare Recruitment Consultant, for additional information. Liles can be reached via email at [Harold.Liles@va.gov](mailto:Harold.Liles@va.gov) or by phone at 919-688-7613.

## Current Vacancies

Gastroenterology - Salem, Beckley, Salisbury  
Dermatology - Salem  
Psychiatry - Fayetteville, Salisbury  
Endocrinology - Salem  
Urologist - Salem, Hampton, Salisbury  
Chief of Staff - Richmond  
Intensivist - Richmond  
PA (cardiothoracic) - Richmond  
Primary Care - Elizabeth City

## Veterans Can Get Tobacco Cessation Support Via The Web

DoD and VA are collaborating to provide VA Veterans enrolled for care in the VA health care system with comprehensive tobacco cessation support via the web. Through the [ucanquit2](http://ucanquit2.org) website, Veterans can access proven quit techniques and tools to help them quit and stay tobacco-free.

At [www.ucanquit2.org/thinkingaboutquitting/veterans/default.aspx](http://www.ucanquit2.org/thinkingaboutquitting/veterans/default.aspx), Veterans can:

- **Chat live with a tobacco quit coach.** Quit coaches are available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day to answer your questions about quitting smoking and chewing tobacco and ways to stay quit. Please indicate that you are a Veteran enrolled in the VA health care system.
- Talk to your VA health care provider about how to quit smoking, including getting medication to improve your chances of quitting and a referral to a VA smoking cessation clinic. Visit the **Locate Support** section to find the nearest VA health care facility.
- **Enroll in Train2Quit**, a confidential, interactive system that can double your chances of successfully quitting. Train2Quit offers self-assessment questionnaires, a custom quit plan with a calendar to track progress, and tips on how to beat cravings, overcome weight gain, and cope with the effects of nicotine withdrawal.

• **Get the answers to frequently asked questions** about how to get help to quit tobacco, what it means to be a Veteran enrolled for care in the VA health care system, and much more!

• **Get support for staying tobacco-free**, connect with others who are quitting, and receive tobacco-related news. Find more “ucanquit2” material on Facebook and Twitter.

To learn more about enrolling for VA health care benefits, visit: [www4.va.gov/healtheligibility/eligibility/enrollment.asp](http://www4.va.gov/healtheligibility/eligibility/enrollment.asp).

To learn more about health benefits for all enrolled Veterans visit: [www4.va.gov/healtheligibility/coveredservices/StandardBenefits.asp](http://www4.va.gov/healtheligibility/coveredservices/StandardBenefits.asp).

## VA Offers Training For Rural Clergy

Members of the clergy in rural areas can sign up for free, one-day workshops offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs to educate community leaders about the concerns of Veterans and the services offered by VA in their communities.

“VA has always recognized that faith is an important healing resource for many Veterans,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “These new workshops will provide training that will help community clergy in supporting Veterans in rural areas.”

It is estimated that one-fourth of people who seek help for mental health problems go to members of the clergy. “In addition to providing good spiritual care, we hope clergy will recognize the presence and severity of mental health problems, and know when and how to collaborate with health care professionals,” said Chaplain Jeni Cook, associate director of VA’s National Chaplain Center

in Hampton, Va.

Workshops will run through June in rural parts of Virginia, North Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. Community clergy and Veterans Service Organization representatives are invited to attend.

Participants learn about VA benefits and services and about how to contact local VA facilities to request information or assistance for Veterans.

Workshop topics will include post-deployment readjustment challenges, the spiritual and psychological effects of war trauma on survivors, and the important role of community in helping to reduce mental health stigma and support Veterans and their families.

Seating for the workshops is limited and pre-registration is required. For more information about dates and locations, visit [www.ruralhealth.va.gov/rural-clergytraining](http://www.ruralhealth.va.gov/rural-clergytraining) or contact Jim Goalder at 800-872-9975 or at [jim.goalder@gmail.com](mailto:jim.goalder@gmail.com).

## Survey Measures Use Of VA Services

The VHA’s Office of the Assistant Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Policy and Planning is conducting the 2012 edition of the national VHA Survey of Enrollees. The survey is to provide critical and essential information on Veteran utilization of health services. This information supports annual VHA projections of enrollment, utilization, and expenditures, as well as into a variety of high level VHA budget and policy related analyses.

Approximately 2,000 enrolled Veterans in each Veterans Integrated Service Network will be surveyed. In total, the survey will collect information on a random sample of 42,000 Veterans enrolled in the VA system, who choose to participate in an approximately 15-30 min-

ute telephone call. For the first time, some Veterans in the sample may also complete a survey by mail or web.

Full initiation of the survey began the week of March 26 and will continue for 12 weeks.

Selected Veterans will receive a letter that provides information about the survey and the contractor conducting the survey on behalf of VA.

VA officials said Veterans’ participation in this survey will help ensure that VA provides the best care possible for its enrollees, where it is needed, and when it is needed.

Previous survey reports are available on the VHA’s Office of the ADUSH for Policy and Planning internet Web site at: [www.va.gov/healthpolicyplanning/reports1.asp](http://www.va.gov/healthpolicyplanning/reports1.asp).

## Election Hatch Act Reminder

Election season is in full swing. Federal employees are subject to the Hatch Act, which puts limits on the partisan political activity. Violations of the Hatch Act may result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal.

Here is a list of some Do’s and Don’ts under the Hatch Act. You may:

- Register and vote as you choose;
- Serve as an election clerk, judge or similar officer at polling places;
- Contribute money to a political party, candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political organization;
- Be a member, or serve as an officer, of a political party or political group;
- Be a candidate in a nonpartisan election;
- Listen to radio programs or watch TV programs discussing partisan politics or candidates for partisan political office, or read a book about politics or political candidates while in the federal workplace, if permitted;
- Actively participate in partisan political campaigns and activities, as long as you are not:

on duty, in a federal workplace, using government resources, or a career member of the Senior Executive Service.

You may not:

- Take action for or against any political party or candidate for partisan political office, such as scheduling activities as a partisan political volunteer while at work, or in a government building, or using government resources (including VA e-mail);
- Solicit, accept, or receive political contributions (a narrow exception applies to members of a federal labor or employee organization);
- Use your official title, or trade on your VA position, while participating in a political activity;
- Ask a subordinate employee to volunteer for a political party or partisan candidate;
- Solicit or discourage the political activity of any individual who has business before VA;
- Be a candidate for partisan political office.

VA employees should direct any questions about the Hatch Act to their compliance officers or visit the U.S. Office of Special Counsel website at [www.osc.gov](http://www.osc.gov).



# VISN 6 Sites of Care

**Albemarle POC**  
1845 W City Drive  
Elizabeth City, NC  
252-331-2191

**Asheville VAMC**  
1100 Tunnel Road  
Asheville, NC 28805  
828-298-7911, 800-932-6408  
[www.asheville.va.gov/](http://www.asheville.va.gov/)

**Beckley VAMC**  
200 Veterans Avenue  
Beckley, WV 25801  
304-255-2121, 877-902-5142  
[www.beckley.va.gov/](http://www.beckley.va.gov/)

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

**Brunswick Outreach Clinic**  
20 Medical Campus Drive  
Supply, NC 28462  
910-754-8574

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

**Charlotte CBOC**  
8601 University East Drive  
Charlotte, NC 28213

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

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

**Durham VAMC**  
508 Fulton St.  
Durham, NC 27705  
919-286-0411, 888-878-6890  
[www.durham.va.gov/](http://www.durham.va.gov/)

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

**Fayetteville VAMC**  
2300 Ramsey St.  
Fayetteville, NC 28301  
910-488-2120, 800-771-6106  
[www.fayettevillenc.va.gov](http://www.fayettevillenc.va.gov)

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

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

**Fredricksburg CBOC**  
1965 Jefferson Davis Highway  
Fredericksburg, VA 22401  
540-370-4468

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

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

**Greenville CBOC**  
800 Moye Blvd.  
Greenville, NC 27858  
252-830-2149

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

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

**Hampton VAMC**  
100 Emancipation Dr.  
Hampton, VA 23667  
757-722-9961, 888-869-9060  
[www.hampton.va.gov/](http://www.hampton.va.gov/)

**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  
Midway Park, NC 28544  
910-353-6406, 910-353-6406

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

**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

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

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

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

**Richmond VAMC**  
1201 Broad Rock Blvd.  
Richmond, VA 23249  
804-675-5000, 800-784-8381  
[www.richmond.va.gov/](http://www.richmond.va.gov/)

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

**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

**Salem VAMC**  
1970 Roanoke Blvd.  
Salem, VA 24153  
540-982-2463, 888-982-2463  
[www.salem.va.gov/](http://www.salem.va.gov/)

**Salisbury VAMC**  
1601 Brenner Ave.  
Salisbury, NC 28144  
704-638-9000, 800-469-8262  
[www.salisbury.va.gov/](http://www.salisbury.va.gov/)

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

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

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

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

**Wilmington CBOC**  
736 Medical Center Drive  
Wilmington, NC 28401  
910-763-5979

**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