



"Excellent Care – Earned by Veterans – Delivered Here"

Voices of VISN 6

Official news from around *your* VISN

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October 31, 2016

VA Clinics In North Carolina Weather Hurricane Matthew

North Carolina was spared by Hurricane Matthew's winds, but the storm still managed to deliver a hefty punch through a barrage of torrential rain and flooding. Among the hardest hit areas were Robeson, Edgecombe and Pitt Counties, where VISN 6 operates community based outpatient clinics. Clinics were closed for up to 10 days due to floodwaters, but reopened once waters receded and made it possible to reach them safely again.

Several areas in the state were left without

power and experienced excessive flooding, as rivers crested and levees were breached. Governor Pat McCrory declared the state a disaster area, with water destroying homes and making roads impassable. Many residents found themselves stranded or in shelters and unable to reach their clinics and health care centers.

VISN 6 staff took it on the road, moving in quickly to help Veterans and civilians. While working to access damage and reopen

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Kevin Amick

Severe flooding hit major portions of North Carolina after Hurricane Matthew. This 10-foot fence and the surrounding area near Greenville, N.C., were submerged in floodwaters for weeks after the storm.

Fayetteville Saves Day With Water Buffalo

By Steve Wilkins
VISN 6 Public Affairs

Reacting to an emergency environmental condition before, during and in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew, the Fayetteville VAMC implemented contingency operations, including placement of an alternative water resource to continue health care service to Veterans receiving dialysis treatment throughout the storm event.

The hurricane passed through the Fayetteville, N.C., region Oct. 8-10, unloading up to 18-20 inches of water on the military-connected community. The rainfall continued to cause after-effects



Jeff Melvin

In the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew, the Fayetteville VAMC provided an alternative water resource to continue health care service to Veterans.

in the form of rising water in surrounding lakes, rivers and reservoirs.

Flooding, which be-

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From The Director

These past few weeks have been extremely busy for our VISN staff, as they answered the call to care for North Carolina Veterans in the midst of Hurricane Matthew, which drenched southeastern North Carolina with torrential rain Oct. 8-10, followed by record-high flooding.

In spite of the storm's many challenges, I am proud to say that VA remained steadfast in its mission throughout the weather event. Whether it was our medical facility staffs securing safe water and electricity, or our ability to stand up two off-site mobile medical units for eight days, we ensured uninterrupted access to health care and services for Veterans and civilians in their greatest time of need. Maxton resident Ramoan Hammond, an Army Veteran who served in the 197th Infantry, 1st Logistical Command, in Vietnam, had been without power for days when he showed up at the Fayetteville VAMC's Laurinburg mobile site after hearing about it on the radio. Ramoan shared his personal story of enduring the flood while VA staff assisted him in replenishing his medication that had been compromised due to the storm. But he also shared his stories of random acts of kindness, of a community coming together, and of being thankful to the VA for being on the ground and "having his back."

VA personnel from across the country drove into the flood-damaged areas to supplement our staff and began arriving Oct. 13 to assist Fayetteville and Durham VA Medical Centers at the Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) sites. Joining our efforts were dedicated VA employees from Virginia, Georgia, Maryland, West Virginia, North Carolina, Ohio, Delaware, and as far away as Florida, California and Illinois. Working as one team, they supported VA's mission of caring for the Veterans of North Carolina and serving civilians through VA's fourth mission of humanitarian assistance.

The MMU sites, consisting of converted tractor trailers and large utility buses, carried pharmaceuticals (see Page 3), medical equipment, and provided medical, mental health, counseling, medication and hot food services to anyone needing assistance. The first to open its doors was Laurinburg, N.C., for Veterans needing assistance in



the Hoke, Robeson and Scotland County region, due to impassable roads leading to the Robeson County Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC). The second was in Tarboro, N.C., for Veterans in Edgecomb, Martin, Wilson, Greene and Pitt counties who were patients at the Greenville Health Care Center (HCC).

Through it all, our community partners eagerly stepped forward to assist with unwavering commitment. Three Wal-Mart Stores offered large portions of their parking lots to set up the MMUs; Fort Bragg's Womack Army Medical Center offered space and assistance; state and local officials and local Veteran Services Organizations like the American Legion helped spread the word about VA being on the ground, just to name a few. The American Red Cross, who operated in makeshift shelters, was also vital to establishing emergency shelters through which VISN 6 staff were able to treat both Veterans and other civilians in need. Whatever it took, the community engagement and managing the crisis was a team effort in every sense of the word.

As the VISN Network Director, I know that being prepared for whatever life may bring us plays a vital role in our success of meeting the mission in times of crisis. Throughout the year, our staff members and emergency management teams train and participate in a variety of exercises to ensure we are prepared for emergencies like Hurricane Matthew and can maintain VA operations. In fact, I encourage you to read about the proactive approach Fayetteville's staff took in effectively maintaining Dialysis Clinic operations with the help of a Water Buffalo (see Page 1).

In closing, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all of our VA staff and community partners for their selfless and tireless efforts. You continue to make a difference in the lives of our Veterans each day, but who can say it better than our Veterans themselves:

"I think the VA's awesome. You all are doing wonderful things for not just Veterans, but for everybody," said Army Veteran Dennis Lyons, who stopped by Durham VAMC's Tarboro mobile site for an emergency medication refill for his wife under the humanitarian assistance.

"On a scale of 1-10, I give the VA a 9!" said Army Veteran Ramoan Hammond, who visited Fayetteville VAMC's Laurinburg mobile site and shared stories of the community's kindness and how everyone was lending a helping hand ~ including the VA.

Thank you for your service and the opportunity to serve you.

Sincerely,
Dan Hoffmann

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



Questions or comments about the newsletter, e-mail stephen.wilkins2@va.gov or call 919-956-5541.

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VA Responds To Hurricane Matthew

Mobile Medical Units from Chicago, Richmond, Va., Tampa, Fla., Wilmington, Del., Clarksburg, W.Va., and a Vet Center from Greenville, N.C., came together to support efforts providing Veterans in flood damaged counties surrounding Tarboro, N.C.



Steve Wilkins

The Veterans Canteen Service also contributed a mobile unit in Tarboro, as well as Laurinburg, N.C., to help provide meals and essential personal care items to those in need.



Steve Wilkins

Motor Vehicle Operator Anthony Jimenez works to check an IT hub in a mobile clinic with IT Support Brian Simmons from the Durham VAMC. Jimenez drove from the James A. Haley VAMC in Tampa to Tarboro, N.C.



Steve Wilkins

Fayetteville VA Nurse Jessica Simmons watches as Veteran William Locklear is advised on his medications by Pharmacy Chief Consultant Jennifer Zacher.



Steve Wilkins

Vet Center Counselors from Greensboro, N.C., talk with a Veteran during his visit to the mobile medical unit stationed at the Laurinburg, N.C., Walmart Oct. 14.



Steve Wilkins

Outside a mobile medical unit from Tampa's James Haley VAMC, Vet Center Counselor Timothy Ligon, from Baltimore, Md., talks to Marine Corps Veteran Leroy Barnes of Rocky Mount, N.C., during his visit to the VA Mobile Medical Unit in Tarboro, N.C.



Steve Wilkins

VISN 6 Chief Pharmacist Steve Coombs talks to Tarboro Army Veteran Dennis Lyons to get him set up with emergency medications following Hurricane Matthew.



Steve Wilkins

Mike Burzic, Richard Vetali and Jamie Brown prepare for disbursement operations in a mobile pharmacy unit. Hines VAMC sent a pharmacy mobile unit from Chicago.

Charles George VAMC Honors Namesake In Ceremony

On Sept. 24, Charles George VAMC hosted an unveiling ceremony for a statue of the facility's namesake, Private First Class Charles George, a native of Western North Carolina and member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. George was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1954 for conspicuous gallantry and outstanding courage above and beyond the call of duty during the Korean War.

"What a privilege it is to honor a true hero in such a memorable way," said Medical Center Director Cynthia Breyfogle. "The legacy of Charles George was and still is an inspiration and influence beyond his community. His courage and example join those of other brave men and women, past and present, who have answered the call when their country needed them."

The ceremony was the culmination of months of hard work and dedication. The statue was sculpted by Navy Veteran James Spratt and was his final work. Funds were raised with the help of members of the Charles George Memorial Fund Project Committee, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and the community.

"James Spratt asked me to share these words with you," said Warren Dupree, Memorial Fund Committee Member. "He wanted to thank the namesake of this true hero, and for the wonderful treatment he had re-



Scott Pittillo

Patrick Lambert, family member Kevin George, Warren Dupree (behind statue), Patty Buchanan, and Cynthia Breyfogle unveil the statue of Charles George at the Sept. 24 unveiling event.

ceived while he was here (at Charles George VAMC.) He wanted to give back and this was his way of giving back to the Veterans of the United States armed forces."

Continued on Pg 6

Stackhouse Named Salem VAMC Director

The Department of Veterans Affairs is pleased to announce the appointment of Rebecca Stackhouse as the new director of the Salem VAMC. Stackhouse will oversee delivery of health care to more than 38,000 Veterans in the Salem VAMC, a complexity level 1-C facility serving Veterans in southwestern Virginia.

The VA Medical Center is located in Salem, Va., with community based outpatient clinics (CBOC) in Lynchburg, Wytheville, Staunton, Danville and Tazewell. The medical center has a budget in excess of \$267 million.

"Ms. Stackhouse has excelled in all that VA has asked and I'm confident she will continue to achieve outstanding results," said VISN 6 Director Daniel F. Hoffmann. "I'm very glad that we could keep her in VISN 6 where she can apply her experience to Veterans under our network's umbrella of care."

Stackhouse had held progressive leadership positions in VA, including her last assignment as interim director of the Salem VAMC, where she has been Associate Director since 2012, following a two-year appointment as Associate Director of the William Jennings Bryan Dorn VAMC in Columbia, S.C., and earlier positions in Lebanon, Pa., Memphis, Tenn. and Palo Alto, Calif.

Stackhouse holds a master's degree in Health Administration and bachelor's degree in Recreation Therapy from Central Michigan University. She is a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, and a graduate of the Veterans Health Administration's Executive Career Field Development Program and Network Executive Health Care Leadership Institute.



Rebecca Stackhouse

The medical center has been caring for Veterans for more than 75 years. President Franklin Roosevelt presided over the opening ceremony on Oct. 19, 1934.

Since 1934, Salem VAMC has been improving the health of the men and women who have so proudly served our nation.

Services are available through the system to more than 112,500 Veterans living in a 26-county area of southwestern Virginia.

Richmond VAMC Offers Extensive Telehealth Programs

The Richmond VAMC's Telehealth Program is part of one of the largest and oldest Telehealth networks in the country. VA has built a network connecting over 1,700 hospitals and outpatient clinics and has completed over 2 million Telehealth encounters this year.

Four modalities currently utilized in the VA system are Clinical Video Telehealth (CVT), Store & Forward (SFT), Home Telehealth (HT) and SCAN-ECHO (SE). Each of the medical centers in VISN 6 offer a variety of clinical applications applying these modalities. With Clinical Video Telehealth (CVT), a provider or group of providers sees and treats an individual or group of patients using telecommunications technology that includes two-way video. During the past year, providers from the Richmond VAMC treated patients in 24 states from Arizona to Maine and South Dakota to Florida as well as in Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico. Richmond providers delivering the care through CVT include those specializing in the treatment of Parkinson's disease, epilepsy, spinal cord injury, physical medicine and rehabilitation, diabetes, cholesterol disorders, mental health, hepatitis C, liver transplantation, and cancers receiving treatment by radiation therapy. Richmond VAMC also performs clinical research through CVT, and some patients can be seen and treated in their own homes.



Mary Beatty-Brooks

Providers discuss tremors caused by Parkinson's Disease during a telehealth session at Richmond VAMC.

Also mentioned above is Home Telehealth. In the Home Telehealth program, Care Managers assist patients in the management of their chronic health conditions by utilizing in-home technology to prevent hospi-

[Continued on Pg 11](#)

Durham VA, Partners Eliminate Chronic Vet Homelessness

By Sharonda Pearson
Durham VAMC Public Affairs

Following a two-year effort led by City of Durham Mayor William V. "Bill" Bell to help disabled Veterans who have been homeless for a year or more, Durham has been recognized by the federal government for effectively ending chronic Veteran homelessness.

The official announcement was made during the unveiling of the second phase of an apartment complex for homeless Veterans living with disabilities. CASA's Denson Apartments for Veterans will provide permanent, affordable housing for 12 formerly homeless Veterans living with disabilities. The first phase included 11 units and was dedicated in November 2014.

"We are proud to be a part of the collaboration to end chronic Veteran homelessness in Durham," said Durham VA Health Care System Director DeAnne Seekins. "Our nation's Veterans fought for our security, our families, and our way of life. The last place they should be living is on the street. We will not stop until every Veteran has a place to call home."

In June 2014, the Obama Administration issued the Mayor's Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness, which set an ambitious goal of ending Veteran home-



Sharonda Pearson

Durham VAHCS Director DeAnne Seekins comments during the opening of apartments for homeless Veterans in Durham, N.C.

lessness. Mayor Bell was among hundreds of mayors nationwide who signed the challenge.

"Well, the president and first lady made a challenge, and we accepted the challenge. It was a coord-

[Continued on Pg 11](#)

Community Gathers For Galanti Arboretum Dedication

By Patrick Gordon
Richmond VAMC Public Affairs

The Phyllis E. Galanti Arboretum was officially dedicated on Sept. 16, at the Richmond VAMC during a ceremony which included many local leaders and community partners. Galanti, who passed away in 2014, was the wife of Vietnam Veteran Paul Galanti.

Paul Galanti was held captive as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam from 1966 to 1973, and during this time Phyllis grew to be known as an advocate for POW rights. Her role went from housewife to POW/MIA crusader. Through her Write Hanoi project, she garnered more than 750,000 hand-written letters from Richmond and throughout Virginia, then she personally delivered them to the North Vietnamese Embassy in Sweden.

Rep. Dave Brat (R – VA, 7th District), who sponsored the bill in congress to name the arboretum, celebrated the arboretum dedication and spoke about his friends Paul and Phyllis.

“Today is all about Phyllis, a true hero,” Brat said. “I’m so pleased that we’re here today to honor Phyllis Galanti, who came to be known as ‘Fearless Phyllis’ for her tireless advocacy for the rights of U.S. prisoners of war. Phyllis fought courageously for these people for years on end. That’s what this is about, honoring someone who thought of others and made a difference.”

Brat went on to note how Phyllis spent decades tirelessly working for U.S. prisoners and hostages and gave hundreds of presentations to leaders in the United States, including then President Nixon, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and Mills E. Godwin, past governor of Virginia.

Through her efforts, and other like-minded citizens, Phyllis helped to secure the return of more than 600 soldiers, and worked to ensure that POWs were treated in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

Namesake continued from Pg 4

The statue is one of two made. The other will be placed in Cherokee facing the statue at the Charles George VAMC and will be dedicated in a ceremony on Nov. 15.

The event featured dancing by the Warriors of the Anikituhwa, singing by the New Kituwah Academy and Miss Cherokee Taran Swimmer, remarks by tribal leaders and elders, and traditional Cherokee blessings.

“My hope today is that we all take these values that Charles and James possessed and we honor them and these values that they clearly stood for by working together for a better world,” said Patrick Lambert, Principal Chief of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.



Mary Betty-Brooks
Rep. Dave Brat (R – VA, 7th District) stands with Paul Galanti at the dedication for the Phyllis E. Galanti Arboretum, Sept. 16 at the McGuire VAMC.

During the ceremony, Paul praised the Richmond VAMC, calling it “the best facility in the entire United States for Veterans.” He added, “Phyllis would absolutely be ecstatic if she were here for this.”

Over the past year, the arboretum has been developed through a partnership between Richmond VAMC, Green Infrastructure Center (GIC) and several volunteer agencies. GIC, based out of Charlottesville, Va., provided many of the new trees added to the space. In the future, organizers plan to preserve and maintain the arboretum through donations of labor and money.

Some other agencies credited with helping make the arboretum a reality are: Virginia Department of Forestry, Altria Group, Dominion Virginia Power, American Red Cross and others. Information about the trees located within the arboretum can be found at www.plantsmap.com/organizations/24785.



Fayetteville VA Missing Man Table To Remain On Display



Brad Garner

Retired Sgt. Maj. Jacob Roth, Commander of the Greater Fayetteville Chapter 1 of the American Ex-Prisoners of War, addresses the audience during a POW/MIA memorial ceremony at the Fayetteville VAMC. Roth was a prisoner of war for 37 months and 4 days during the Korean War. After he was freed, he continued his service and served two tours of duty in Vietnam.

In conjunction with POW MIA Recognition Day activities across the country, the Fayetteville VA Medical Center unveiled a “Missing Man Remembrance Table” that will remain on permanent display in the Main Campus’ front lobby entrance at 2300 Ramsey Street.



A ceremony marking the occasion took place on POW MIA Recognition Day Sept. 16, featuring patriotic music, guest remarks from Greater Fayetteville-Chapter No. 1 – American Ex-Prisoners of War Commander, retired Sgt. Maj. Jacob Roth, and a moment of silence to pay tribute to POW MIAs. The public ceremony was followed by a reception.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day events honor our missing service members and their families, and highlight our government’s commitment to account for them. Across the country, local POW/MIA ceremonies are encouraged throughout POW/MIA Recognition Week, culminating with countless events and the national ceremony in Washington, D.C., on Recognition Day.

Marine Corps Veteran Sees New Side Of Medical Care

By Paul V. Brown Jr.
Durham VAMC

James Madsen is 70 years old and has wonderful vision today. Except for reading, he doesn’t need to wear glasses at all. It hasn’t always been that way. From the time he was 14 until this summer, nearsightedness forced Madsen to wear eyeglasses. That includes the three years he spent in the U.S. Marine Corps in the late 1960s. Earlier this year, his eyesight became so blurry he sought out surgery.

Madsen gets much of his health care at the Durham VAMC. Recently, the medical center’s Eye Clinic changed its procedures to allow Veterans to make direct appointments for routine eye and hearing needs. The change from the previous process, where patients had to go through their primary care providers for approval to see a vision specialist, helped expedite his ability to get an eye appointment with his doctor.

Direct scheduling for select clinics is part of a VA-wide initiative to remove unnecessary obstacles to care. The change improves Veterans’ access to care by eliminating the need for a referral from a specialist for routine appointments. It also frees up primary care appointments for Veterans who need more than a referral.



File Photo

A Veteran undergoes a tele-retinopathy examination. The process for these eye exams has been simplified after several VA facilities, including Durham VAMC, adopted direct scheduling for Optometry.

“I called from home and told them about the blurry vision,” Madsen said. “They called me and made the appointment over the phone.”

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Hampton VAMC Walkers Take e-PACE Gold

The Hampton VAMC won first place in the National e-PACE Challenge for 2016! The e-PACE Challenge (employee – Physical Activity and Conscious Eating) is an eight-week friendly competition designed to encourage VA employees to increase their fitness activities and eat more healthy foods. Teams of VA employees from 24 facilities across the country competed to see who could do the most physical activity and healthy eating during the Challenge period.

Points and goals for the Challenge were recorded on the President's Challenge website and standings were determined each week. Over 700 employees from California to New York to Arkansas participated in the first annual e-PACE Challenge. The Challenge helped VA employees build friendships, comradery and support while having a lot of fun.

The Hampton VA's "Bay Walkers" team was made up of 45 dedicated employees who walked, bicycled, yard worked and ran for a minimum of 30 minutes a day, five days a week for eight weeks. To learn more about how they stayed active at work, visit the Wellness Works! webpage on VA Pulse at www.vapulse.net/groups/wellness-works-hampton-vamc.



Kenita Gordon

Some of Hampton's e-PACE Challenge Winners are pictured here - back row (L to R) : Karen Coccio; George Clarke; Nancy Rodriguez; Robert Clayborn; Charissa Simmons; Carrie Clements; Adam Thode. Front row (L to R): Mary Petty; Danielle Burton; Sharon Roberts; Wendolyn Scott; Cynthia McZeal; Elizabeth Halverston; Jennifer Daly; Mary Truss.

VA Clinics continued from Pg 1

clinics in these areas, Durham and Fayetteville VAMC teams established two Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) sites. Based in Laurinburg and Tarboro, N.C., the units brought medical assistance, food, counseling and pharmacy services to Veterans in those areas who were left without access to community based VA clinics. In addition, Durham and Fayetteville VAMC social workers visited shelters to ensure Veterans were getting the care they needed, when and wherever they needed it.

"Some of our Veterans have suffered significant losses so we wanted to provide some measure of comfort by making some of the services they're accustomed to accessible as soon as possible," said Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby, adding that the Fayetteville VAMC operated shuttle service to the MMUs for Veterans housed in shelters.

Durham VAMC Associate Director Steve Black applauded everyone's efforts as their employees worked to

reopen the Greenville HCC and began seeing patients.

"Our single greatest asset and resource is our people. This was evident in our response to the hurricane relief efforts," he said. "We had people from across our organization react to the needs of Veterans and non-Veterans alike, in a way that was inspirational. We couldn't be more proud of our staff."

"Many thanks to the VA staff from around the country who teamed up with our VISN 6 employees to care for area Veterans and residents in need," said VISN 6 Director Dan Hoffmann. "We also want to thank our community partners; especially the management and staff of the Wal-Mart stores, who graciously offered their parking lots as a location for the mobile sites of care and made our staff, Veterans and civilians, feel welcome during this difficult time."

All health care centers and community based outpatient clinics are now fully operational.

Water Buffalo continued from Pg 1

gan Oct. 9, immediately compromised the municipal water supply, affecting water drinkability in area. VA staff worked hard to mitigate the situation, using thousands of gallons of bottled water in the Fayetteville VAMC and its subordinate Health Care Center.

The situation significantly affected operations at

the Fayetteville VA Dialysis Clinic, which depends on continuous supplies of clean water. Logistics, contracting and engineering staff arranged for a mobile water tanker to keep the operation running for Veterans and

[Continued on Pg 11](#)

Fayetteville VAMC Holds Seasonal Flu Kickoff Events

Veterans enrolled for VA health care began getting their flu shots through Fayetteville VAMC during a special flu kickoff event Sept. 28 & 29. The facility also sponsors shots during walk in flu clinics and by request during primary care appointments. Receiving an annual vaccination is widely recognized as the best method for preventing disease and death related to influenza.

Kickoff events were held in Fayetteville at the main campus on Ramsey Street and the VA Health Care Center (HCC) on both days. All Fayetteville VA community based outpatient clinics also held kickoff events Sept. 28 & 29.

Veterans can now receive the vaccine at their assigned primary care location Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 4 p.m. The vaccine was available at the main campus during kickoff only. Flu shots will be available at VA medical centers throughout the VISN during the fall and some winter months. Veterans should check with their home facility for immunization schedules and availability.

To receive their immunization, Veterans must show a VA Identification Card. Veterans can check with their primary care teams to verify the most current information as dates, times and availability, which are subject to change.

To learn more about the flu, check out the CD publication “Key Facts about Seasonal Flu Vaccine” at www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm.

Also, please note Veterans who are currently enrolled in VA care may walk into any Walgreens to receive a vaccination at no cost through the VA Retail Immunization Care Coordination Program. After presenting a Veterans Identification Card and a photo ID,



Jeff Melvin

Veteran Daniel Mitchell receives a flu inoculation from Fayetteville VAMC Nurse Gidget Wilson during the medical center’s kickoff event Sept. 28 and 29.

a Walgreens pharmacist administers the vaccine and transmits that information securely to VA, where it becomes part of the patient’s electronic medical record. This program is especially beneficial to enrolled Veterans who live in rural areas. This flu season, the partnership between VA and Walgreens continues through March 31, 2017.

Durham continued from Pg 7

Doctors first brought him into the clinic to determine if new glasses would fix the problem. They didn’t.

After considering all options, Madsen and his health care team decided he would have surgery to remove cataracts from both eyes.

Ophthalmologists removed cataracts from Madsen’s right eye in June. “Everything was brighter and clearer, and in the other eye everything had a brown tint to it,” he said.

After he recovered for about five weeks, they performed surgery on his left eye.

“I’m extremely pleased with it,” he said recently. “I thought it was quite easy. I was anxious and wanted to get it going, so I didn’t want to wait. All things considered, it wasn’t a long wait at all.”

Madsen says the quality healthcare he receives isn’t the only reason he opts to get much of his care at the

VA. For Madsen, like most Veterans, Durham VAMC is a special place where he can experience camaraderie with fellow Veterans. Occasionally when he’s in a clinic reception area on the Durham campus, crowned with his Marine Corps cap, someone will say, “Semper fi.”

When asked to describe his decade-long healthcare at the Durham VAMC, Madsen, a father of three with one serving as a sergeant major in the U.S. Army, describes his care with a word not often used for healthcare: enjoyable.

“I had been going to another doctor here where I live, but I was disenchanted with him,” he said. “When I started [in Durham], I was going to the VA two or three times a week. After a while, it cut down to about once a month. That whole initial process of checking me out and making sure my medications were right, I thought that it was very professional and enjoyable.”

McGuire Nurses Present At Parkinson's Disease Conference

Two of McGuire VAMC nurses from the Parkinson's Disease Research Education and Clinical Center (PADRECC) recently presented a poster titled "Staying Connected to Veterans with Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS)." The poster was on display the National VA Parkinson's Disease Consortium Conference on Sept. 19, followed by the 4th World Parkinson Congress (WPC) from Sept. 20-23 in Portland, Ore.

Miriam Hirsch, MS, RN, CCRC, PADRECC Deep Brain Stimulation Nurse Coordinator, and Lynn Klanchar, RN, MS, PADRECC Associate Director of Education developed the poster to demonstrate a systematic approach to case management for DBS surgical patients at Richmond/Southeast PADRECC that improves follow up care.

The poster expanded on these objectives: Maximize the potential of DBS; Minimize adverse events; Educate patients and caregivers in self-care; and Improve two-way communication.

The poster was displayed throughout the WPC and was recognized as a leading abstract by the WPC Program Committee. It was one of the top 25 percent se-



*Mary Beatty-Brooks
Lynn Klanchar (left), Miriam Hirsch (right) with poster presentation at Parkinsons National Conference.*

lected for a Poster Tour. The tour allowed the nurses to speak to a small organized group, led by a guide, and explain in more detail about the work described on the poster. These forums helped disseminate the work being done by Richmond PADRECC at McGuire VAMC.

Director Installed In VBA Winston-Salem Regional Office

By VISN 6 Public Affairs

Acting Principle Deputy Under Secretary James Manker, with VISN 6 Deputy Director Joseph Edger and other VA officials gathered with local community and state leaders for the installation of Mark Bilosz to the director post at the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Winston-Salem Regional Office Oct. 6.

Regional Office Assistant Director Lee Ann Skeens moderated the ceremony, which officially acknowledged a transfer in leadership from Cheryl Rawls to Bilosz, who reported to the post July 10.

He will be responsible for administration of non-medical benefits and services to North Carolina Veterans and their families, and benefits Delivery at Discharge and Quick Start claims processing for the eastern half of the United States.

Bilosz began his VA career in Connecticut in 1987. He has held a variety of positions in VBA since then, most recently serving as Director of the Salt Lake City/Fort Harrison/Anchorage Regional Office and Acting Director of VBA Compensation Service. He holds a Master of Arts degree in Organization and Management from Central Connecticut College.

The VBA provides a variety of benefits and services to service members, Veterans, and their families.

The VBA has been undergoing a major transforma-



*Courtesy W-S Regional Office
New VBA Winston-Salem Regional Director Mark Bilosz (left) receives an installation certificate from Acting Principle Deputy Under Secretary James Manker.*

tion that is people-centric, results-oriented, and a forward-looking integration of solutions that will ensure total lifelong engagement with service members, Veterans, and their families.

The Winston-Salem Regional Office is located at 251 N. Main St. Winston-Salem, N.C. To learn more visit <http://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/media-publications.asp>.

Telehealth continued from Pg 5

talizations and Emergency Department visits. Patients answer questions about their health or enter important data like blood sugars or vital signs into the systems in their homes. This information is communicated to a database that is reviewed by a patient's RN Care Manager. The Care Manager contacts the patient if the transmitted information suggests that the patient may be developing a problem. This system has been used to assist patients in the management of heart failure, diabetes, high blood pressure, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, depression, PTSD, hepatitis C, and weight management. Over the past five years, Richmond VAMC has completed more than 37,000 Home Telehealth encounters.

Store and Forward Telehealth (SFT) interprets clinical data like pictures of eyes or skin, or procedures such as sleep studies for clinical staff geographically separated from the patient to make decisions at a later time. It has increased the ability of specialists to assess patients and arrange treatment in their own locale or bring them to the appropriate specialist for treatment.

Homelessness continued from Pg 5

minated effort that made this happen, and we're much better off for it," Bell told the gathering. "Durham has reached a milestone where we have transformed our homeless housing system into one where brave men and women who have served our country will be rapidly rehoused should they ever face homelessness. I am grateful for the efforts of the Durham Homeless Services Advisory Committee and for the federal resources Durham received to allow us to achieve this milestone."

During her remarks, Seekins thanked Mayor Bell, the Office of Supportive Housing, the Durham Homeless Service Advisory Committee, the Durham Housing Authority and other community partners for their role

Water Buffalo continued from Pg 8

mitigate a potentially dire situation which could have compromised the organization's ability to care for Veterans severely at risk due to renal failure. The water flowed from the tanker through a portable filtration system, into the clinic where Veterans receive care at the dialysis stations.

Getting the truck and apparatus in place enabled the clinic to offer treatment to Veterans without skipping a beat and operations continued running smoothly, with VA staff completing 29 dialysis treatments Oct. 9 out of the 30 scheduled.

"Leadership at the VA Medical Center initiated creative techniques to circumvent issues challenging the

SFT has become utilized by more sleep and dermatology physicians, representing a significant portion of that care. Over 20 percent of the Richmond VAMC's dermatology encounters are now completed virtually.

Telecommunications technologies enable SCAN-ECHO to unite many healthcare providers across a wide area to provide specialist level care for geographically challenged patients. Participating providers meet for virtual sessions on a bi-weekly to monthly basis to discuss VA Patients' clinical care with their local providers.

The specialists mentor and train them to locally care for certain diseases and conditions traditionally managed by specialists, without the need for referral. Attendees from all 50 states, Puerto Rico and Guam have completed over 118,000 contact hours for continuing education in the last five years.

Telehealth has become an increasingly important method to provide access to healthcare throughout the Veterans Health Administration, VISN 6 and at the Richmond VAMC. VA leadership expects continued robust growth in Telehealth over the next several years.

in meeting the needs of homeless Veterans.

"The partners worked tirelessly to create a highly developed and coordinated system to rapidly meet the needs of Veterans who are at risk of becoming homeless or experiencing homelessness," Seekins said. "Since signing the challenge, the team housed 383 formerly homeless Veterans, used 441 HUD-VASH vouchers to permanently house Veterans, and facilitated 434 Veterans currently being signed in an active lease. These figures represent actual Veterans who are now off the streets and living in housing. This is impressive work and demonstrates the commitment of all members in the collaboration to meet the important goal of housing Durham's homeless Veterans."

provision of health care to area Veterans," said Joe Jenkins, VISN 6 emergency manager.

Jenkins explained that during the weather event, flooding closed about 100 roads in the area and dams had been in danger of breaching, worsening conditions for the already weather-ravaged region.

"Through the ingenuity of staff and their dedication to our Veterans, care was provided under the most difficult of circumstances," said Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby, who praised her staff and others who worked diligently and compassionately to ensure care. "This truly is an example of taking care of those who have already taken care of us."

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/

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

Charlotte HCC
3506 W. Tyvola Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28208
704-329-1300

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

Chesapeake CBOC
1987 S. Military Highway
Chesapeake, Va 23320
757-722-9961

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

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

Fayetteville HCC
7300 So. Raeford Rd
Fayetteville NC 28304
910-488-2120
800-771-6106

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

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

Fredericksburg at Southpoint CBOC
10401 Spotsylvania Ave, Ste 300
Fredericksburg, VA 22408
540-370-4468

Goldsboro CBOC
2610 Hospital Road
Goldsboro, NC 27909
919-731-4809

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
4006 Henderson Drive
Jacksonville, NC 28546
910-353-6406

Kernersville HCC
1695 Kernersville Medical Pkwy
Kernersville, NC 27284
336-515-5000

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 Road
Rutherfordton, NC 28139
828-288-2780

Sanford CBOC
3112 Tramway Road
Sanford, NC 27332
919-775-6160

Staunton CBOC
102 Lacy B. King 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

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

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

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

Fayetteville Vet Center
2301 Robeson Street
Fayetteville, NC 28305
910-488-6252

Greensboro Vet Center
3515 W Market Street, Suite 120
Greensboro, NC 27403
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

Raleigh Vet Center
8851 Ellstree Lane
Raleigh, NC 27617
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