

Source

A Newsletter for the Patients, Volunteers & Staff of the VA Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and clinic

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Senator Ron Wyden Visits SORCC Veterans On July 4th Picnic And Carnival



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The VA SORCC, welcomes submission of articles of interest to our readers. The editor reserves the right to use and edit all contributed articles. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Administrative Boards, Editorial Staff, or Department of Veterans Affairs.

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A Message from the

Director

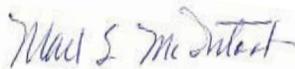
Dear Fellow Employees, Volunteers, Veterans and Friends of VASORCC:

The temperature outside is getting hotter and with that so are the demands on all of us. As we all try to balance our home lives and work lives it is important to never forget our customers. Sometimes that customer is your co-worker or your supervisor, sometimes that customer is a veteran or their family, but we must all strive to remember customer service. The demands and challenges of work and home will always be there and we very often have very little control over them. What we do have control over is how we treat each other. Therefore we should all strive to be customer service focused. As we treat those we work with and for, with respect, dignity, kindness and compassion, we can expect the same in return.

We have begun our strategic planning process for next year and will publish the FY 2009 Strategic Plan in the Source when it is complete. This process is how we focus where we are going and to try our best to plan for the future of this facility and the veterans that we serve.

So remember please keep courtesy, civility and a positive work environment in mind as you interact with veterans, their families and each other. The SORCC has always been a "Center of Excellence" and I believe good customer service is a key component.

Thank you all for serving our veterans.



Max E. McIntosh, PhD, MBA
Director



White City VA Supports Veterans Tribute Ride

On July 12 the White City Department of Veterans Affairs (VA SORCC) supported the First Annual Veterans Tribute Ride. In-Country Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club met other riders at the White City VA to ride for veterans. The actual ride began at 11 am and all any one had to do to join the ride was to bring at least one personal item for a veteran. Two wheels, three wheels and four wheels were welcomed and showed their support by displaying the flag on their bike or vehicle during the ride. If you are interested in being involved with the Veterans Tribute Ride next year, contact Paul Davidson at 541-770-7024.

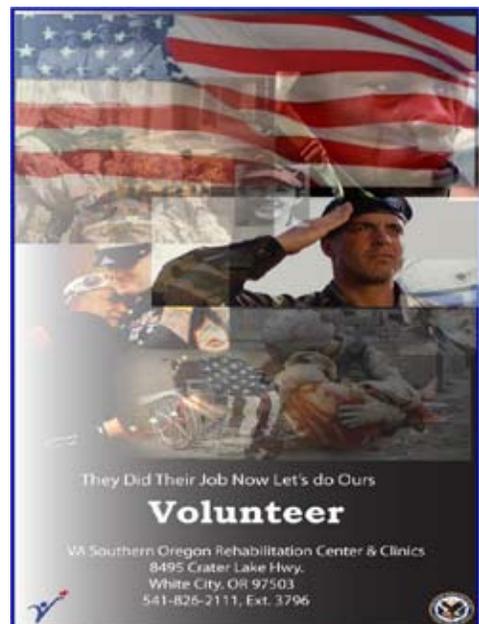


Volunteers are seldom paid; not because they are worthless, but because they are PRICELESS!

VAVS CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September '08

- 1st Labor Day - CRD Office closed
- 11th Patriot Day
- 19th National POW/MIA Recognition Ceremon
- 19th - 21st Stand Down - VA Roseburg





Annual July 4th Picnic and Carnival

A big “Thank you!” goes out to all the volunteers, service organizations, and staff that worked together to provide the patients with another successful Independence Day outing. United Voluntary Service donated canteen books and prizes in support of the UVS sponsored Golf Course competition and games.

Volunteers and staff prepared, cooked (Thanks, Officer Marvin Seifer) and served hot dogs and hamburgers with all the fixin’s (a special thanks to Virginia Martin who secured all the lettuce, tomatoes and onions needed for our shindig). Sodas, water and juices topped off the meal. Volunteers served up apple pie and dishing up the ice cream along with mouth watering watermelon.

Once again T.J & The Spurs provided a wide variety of music that had some of the folks proving they could still “cut a mean rug”.

We also received a special visit from Senator Ron Wyden who spoke with our veterans and toured our New Bed Building escorted by Dr. Max McIntosh, Director; Roy Horne, Associate Director; Karen Allen, Chief Nursing Executive; Dan Kelly, Administrative Assistant to the Director; and Anna Diehl, Public Affairs Officer.



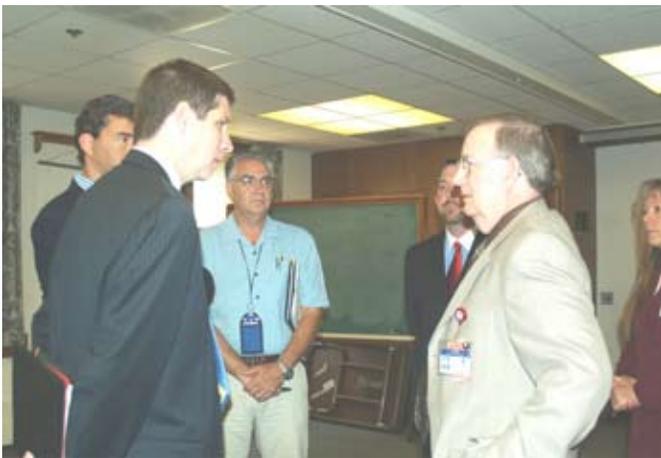
...Annual Picnic Continued





Old Glory was presented to the Southern Oregon Junior Rodeo Association compliments of the VA Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics. The SOJRA was seeking to keep an American tradition alive by “riding out with the American Flag hoisted high by a patriotic rider on a beautiful horse” along with words honoring our dedication to our Nation’s heroes. The SORCC made that wish come true. When the colors passed in review the SOJRA announcer read aloud over the intercom this verbiage which drew the admiration of the crowd: “The VA SORCC “Commitment of Care” is reflected daily by their employees and volunteers who serve our Nations heroes with dignity, respect and fairness.” GIDDYUP!

Governor’s Task Force Visits White City VA SORCC



On July 21 three members of the Governor’s Task Force on Veterans Services visited with VA SORCC Tetrad and management staff to discuss veterans’ issues, veteran agencies collaboration possibilities, and SORCC services, programs and funding. With the signing of Executive Order 08-08, Governor Ted Kulongoski formed the Task Force to compile, review and evaluate current veteran’s policies, procedures and programs. The Task Force is charged with developing recommendations for improvements to ensure that Oregon veterans have access to the services they need. Following the meeting, the members toured the SORCC and its grounds. Emphasis was placed on the possibility for EULs to expand services. The Public Affairs Officer, Chief Mental Health Services, AA to the Director and OEF/OIF Program Coordinator also attended the Task Force’s Town Hall meeting in the Medford City Council Chambers. Nearly 50 veterans participated in the evening dialogue session.

More Annual Picnic Continued...



Go Green!



Did you know that the office recycle containers at the SORCC for paper recycle can be used for many other recyclables? In addition to paper (any color) you can deposit your plastic bottles, newspapers, cans etc. All these items can be deposited in the same container for removal to recycle. Please make sure all liquids are drained. below is a list of items that can go into these containers. Recycling is good for the facility as well as our environment.



COMMINGLED RECYCLING



WHAT'S ACCEPTED HERE:

- 1. NEWSPAPER**
- 2. CORRUGATED CARDBOARD**
(please flatten)
- 3. PLASTIC BOTTLES #1-7**
(bottles have necks smaller than the base)
- 4. SCRAP PAPER** (office paper, junk mail, file folders, are some examples)
- 5. ALUMINUM**
- 6. TIN CANS**
- 7. MAGAZINES & CATALOGS**
(must be less than 1/2" thick)
- 8. PHONE BOOKS**

WHAT'S NOT:

*List is not all inclusive, just common types of contaminants.

- No GARBAGE OR FOOD**
- No PLASTIC BAGS**
- No BUBBLE WRAP OR SHRINK WRAP**
- No PAPER REAM WRAPPERS**
- No STYROFOAM**
- No BOOKS**
- No FOOD OR YOGURT TUBS OR LIDS**
- No GLASS BOTTLES & JARS** (use other recycle options)
- No PHOTOGRAPHS**
- No DRINK CARTONS OR POUCHES**
- No PAPER CUPS OR PLATES**

Due to the automated aspect of this service, everything must fall freely from the container. Please do not wedge anything large into the container that might prevent other items from emptying properly.

ROGUE DISPOSAL & RECYCLING, INC. • 779-4161

1-07

Behind the Lines

By Patient Council



This month in Behind the Lines, we would like to recognize Connie Kidd for her outstanding work in the SORCC Greenhouse.

Connie is married to Charlie Kidd who works in the Boiler Plant and is a Marine Corps veteran with two daughters and three grandchildren. She has previously worked at garden centers, nurseries, and has eight years of retail herb nursery experience. Herbs are her passion.

The Greenhouse had two plants in it when she arrived. Connie brought in around three hundred of her own plants to start with. The Greenhouse has grown much beyond the plants she finds at local garden centers. Often, she rescues dying plants that no longer will sell.

Connie works with the inpatient garden club on Mondays. She comes into the Greenhouse everyday, but stays longer hours on the weekends in order to be more available to the veterans when they have free hours to come in.

The Greenhouse is a therapeutic service. Connie believes nurturing a plant is good for people. “It gets their minds off their troubles and gives them something beautiful to look at and care for”, she says.

What Connie likes best about being at the SORCC is the curiosity and willingness to learn by the inpatients. She enjoys giving of herself. By volunteering her time to the SORCC, she can see a need is being filled and that feels good. At the end of her day, she knows that it was time well spent and that she has dedicated herself to a worthwhile cause.

Currently, Connie is working on an outdoor garden near the Greenhouse, that is open for all to enjoy. The gate is always unlocked and she hopes everyone will take a few minutes to come see what she is creating. It is a very peaceful place to relax and enjoy the greenery. In the future, she hopes to create a permanent planting that can be enjoyed year around.

The Greenhouse beauty is for patients, employees and volunteers, alike. Stop in for a visit, anytime! Questions are always welcome. There are always plants Connie is giving away. Come on in and visit the Greenhouse; there is something for everyone.

The patients here at the SORCC thank Connie Kidd for this wonderful service she provides them.

Rebekah Chadwick Thanks Women Veterans In A Special Way



Rebekah Chadwick, Rose Team Nurse for the Well Women’s Clinic and committee member for the Women Veterans Celebration, wanted to do something special for the women veterans. Therefore, she designed the logo for the invitations for the Women’s Celebration on September 12th, 2008. This gave Rebekah the idea for a banner. “During the making of this banner I would get goose bumps on my arms just thinking of all the women veterans, the pride, the patriotism, and the service they have done for this country, and though I am an Army Veteran myself I feel that so many others have made greater sacrifices than I have”, said Rebekah. After the Women’s Celebration Rebekah is donating the banner to the VA SORCC Well Women’s Clinic so each and everyone can enjoy it.

Thanks, Rebekah! You make a difference!

Calling All Women Veterans



WOMEN VETERAN'S ANNUAL TEA

HOSTED BY THE VA Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center & Clinics
White City, Oregon

PRIDE, PATRIOTISM & SERVICE

VA SOUTHERN OREGON REHABILITATION CENTER & CLINICS

Date: September 12, 2008
Time: 10:00 am—1:00 pm
Where: 8495 Crater Lake Highway
White City, OR
Building 220—Station Theater

For more information contact: Destiny McLaughlin
541 826-2111 ext. 3547



Attention Employees: Court's In Session

The following is a reminder that all jury duty fees are due the government, and please do not waive the fee with the courts. If you serve on a Federal Court, you will receive a notice stating you are a federal employee and will not receive payment for jury duty. If you receive one of these letters bring in a copy of it to your timekeeper.

PROCESS OF JURY DUTY:

1. When you receive notice that you have been selected to report to jury duty: Bring in a copy of the notice as soon as possible to your supervisor or timekeeper.

2. When you report for Jury Duty: You must bring in a slip stating that you reported to Jury duty from the Jury Duty Clerk. If you are involved in a trial that goes past 5 p.m. you may ask the Court Clerk for a slip, also. Please turn this slip into your timekeeper. Please keep your supervisor informed of jury duty.

3. MP-4, Part II, Chapter 6, Section D, 6D.01 Jury Service: As stated Employees of the VA, except those holding "when actually employed," or intermittent appointments, called upon for jury service will be granted leave of absence for such purpose without a charge to their leave accounts, and carried on the records as "Court Leave (Jury)." An employee will be required to furnish evidence of jury service and the compensation received, and turn in to the agent cashier any fees received, except for jury service rendered during a period when he/she was in a nonpay status, or during a holiday on which he/she was excused from duty. If an employee refuses the amount payable by a State or Local court for jury service, there will be recovered from the employee, either by cash collection or salary deduction, the amount due the Government for the period he/she was absent from his/her official duties; however, the amount recovered will not exceed the salary otherwise payable to the employee for the period of his/her absence on account of jury service.

A. On the first day of Jury Duty you will be asked

to fill out a Juror Questionnaire. Part B: Request/Waiver for payment of Juror Fees and Per Diem; Questions 1 (b), (c) and (d) are very important to answer correctly.

Question 1: (a) Are you employed? Yes

(b) Will your employer continue to pay your salary/wages while serving as a juror or potential juror? **Please mark yes.**

(c) Does your employment agreement require that you turn your juror fees over to your employer? **Please mark yes.**

(d) I wish to waive receipt of jury fee. Yes/No If you waive the amount payable by a state or local court for jury service, payment will be recovered from the employee, either by cash collection or salary deduction in the amount due the Government for the period he/she was absent from his/her official duties; however, the amount recovered will not exceed the salary otherwise payable to the employee for the period of his/her absence on account of jury service.

B. Remember that each court's questionnaire may be a little different from the above questions. If you have a question on how to answer them, be sure to ask the Jury Duty Clerk at the time you are filling out the form. You are responsible for the jury fees whether you receive them from the courts or have to take them out of your pocket.

C. The only court you will not receive payment from is Federal Court, but you will receive a letter from them stating you will not receive payment because you are a federal employee. Please bring a copy of that letter to your timekeeper.

4. When your jury duty is finished your timekeeper will do a Bill of Collection. You will have 30 days from the time you receive the notice of payment due to pay the Agent Cashier. The Agent Cashier will not cash the check from the courts; you either need to pay by cash or personnel check. The Agent Cashier will give you a receipt for your payment.

Congratulations To Ervina Lewman, RN, Finalist For The Northwest

NurseWeek 2008 Hands and Heart Award!!

Demonstrated expert nursing practice:

Ervina is respected and appreciated by her patients and peers for her knowledge and skills including interpersonal, calming skills. She has worked for the VA for over 33 years. Ervina continues undaunted her patient care duties to insure her patient's needs are met. Her patients often stop to discuss life issues and decisions they are having difficulty resolving. She respectfully listens and assists them. Ervina is a great clinical resource and "wisdom" resource for her patients and peers. Her calm, soft spoken, confident manner is an asset to not only Ambulatory Care, but to the entire facility.



Established and maintained a personal development plan to support professional career development with demonstrated innovative outcomes in nursing practice:

Ervina started her nursing career at the VA as a Certified Nursing Assistant. She took advantage of "upward mobility" and educational assistance to obtain her LPN and then RN degrees. While in nursing school, she worked in the Infirmary until she graduated with her RN degree then she transferred to Ambulatory Care where she is respected as a nursing resource person.

Collaborated effectively with other health care colleagues:

Ervina has been involved in many committees and system restructures which have improved care across varying disciplines including medicine, mental health, and laboratory.

She is currently active on a Triage/Walk-in redesign workgroup for our Ambulatory Care. This redesign workgroup includes members of Pharmacy, Medicine, Mental Health and Nursing. She represents nursing on this committee and is a strong advocate with other departments to streamline the access process and for all departments and personnel to work collaboratively as a patient care team for the benefit of the patient.

Demonstrated the effective use of evidence-based practice to enhance or improve health care outcomes:

Ervina has improved health outcomes in the following areas by using evidenced based practices and educating other staff in these practices:

- Customer Service
She has provided our patients with information and written information that can direct and guide them through our VA system. This has improved customer service satisfaction.
- Decreasing blood pressure measurements:
She has implemented the use of relaxation techniques, breathing, soft music and stress reduction techniques to bring blood pressures into lower ranges.
- Advocate for Patient responsibility and involvement in care.
Thru patient education, she provides the tools that a patient needs to improve their health; this includes diet, exercise, management of blood pressures, blood sugars as well as lipids.

Demonstrated integrity and adherence to the nursing profession's code of ethics:

Ervina recognizes and embraces the diversity of our patient population and honors each patient. She is truly selfless with her kindness and compassion allowing for patient input and participation in the care. She never turns a veteran away. No matter how large or small their need is, she is there to help them with a smile and with the dignity and respect they so deserve. Her care and respect she freely renders to both patients and staff.

Continued on page 13



Developed and implemented strategies to improve organizational performance related to resource utilization:

At Ervina's request and in collaboration with Medicine Service, she developed a plan for open clinic time for her team in order to be able to see patients more quickly if they had medical needs which needed a provider appointment within that week. This has allowed for her and the Medicine provider to cover their patient's needs more efficiently and creating a need for overtime hours.

Ervina willingly assists other staff to complete their assignments on time. She has volunteered to work shifts in the Infirmary (outside her regular Ambulatory Care section) so that other nurses can have time off for Holidays. She remembers what it was like to work weekends, nights, and holidays.

Promoted the image of nursing and the nursing profession within the community:

Ervina is always willing to precept and mentor new nurses, somehow managing to keep up with her patient schedule while educating them to VA nursing and Ambulatory Care processes. She is frequently seen with one or more high school students and nursing students under her wing extolling the virtues of the nursing profession and providing them with pertinent and practical hands-on education. She provides students with information about the VA including benefits and services available and provides them with a supportive contact person, herself, to do problem solving.

West Nile Fever in Oregon

The first human cases of West Nile fever in Oregon this year have been reported in Malheur County. State health officials say the appearance of the cases should be a reminder to avoid mosquito bites - particularly with outside activities during the coming Labor Day weekend. Malheur County health officials say three people were reported during the last week of July to be infected. All are recovering. Malheur County is a well-known hot-spot for West Nile activity. Emilio DeBess, an epidemiologist with the Oregon Department of Human Services State Public Health Division, said the cases should alert Oregonians to the need for precautions against the virus, which is transmitted to humans by mosquitoes. Most infections are mild with fever and flu-like symptoms but severe infections may cause inflammation of the brain and, rarely, death. DeBess said health officials encourage people who have West Nile symptoms to see their doctors for testing and follow-up care. In 2007 Oregon recorded 27 human cases of West Nile virus, with two cases acquired by Oregonians who became infected in other states. Most of the human cases in 2007 occurred in eastern Oregon, with 12 cases originating in Malheur County. West Nile virus is transmitted to people by mosquitoes. Birds are the principal carriers of the virus. Infected birds are bitten by mosquitoes, which pick up the virus and carry it to people. WNV Prevention Advice Use insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon, eucalyptus, or IR3535. Avoid being outdoors when mosquitoes are most active. Wear long sleeve shirts, long pants, and a hat to reduce bites. Check screen doors and windows for openings that might allow mosquitoes indoors. Decrease standing water to the greatest extent possible, particularly around the home.



OIG-CAP Inspection

Laurie Petersen RN, BSN, MM
Quality Management

In June, SORCC had three Master prepared nurses from Kansas City who set forth for our customary Office of Inspector General (OIG) CAP survey and spent four days at our facility. They combed through documentations and conducted numerous planned and unplanned interviews with employees and the veterans we serve. The inspectors pointed out that SORCC demonstrates “Excellence” in Environment of Care, Patient Safety Program, and our Provision of Care Documentation. These inspectors presented wealth of knowledge and were very consultative in their approach. It was obvious their intentions were to help SORCC continue to be a successful healthcare organization to our veterans.

Along with the three inspectors, a fourth visitor from the OIG conducted three in-services for our staff regarding fraud and integrity. Among the topics addressed: diversion of drugs, misuse of government issued credit cards, ethical issues surrounding gifts from outside vendors and inappropriate patient/staff relationships. The OIG-CAP inspectors were very pleased to see the high attendance we had for these presentations. If you missed the presentation, you still have the opportunity to review the material. A copy of the video is located at the SORCC Library.

What Are The Benefits of Having An Integrated Ethics Program At The VA SORCC?

- ⇒ Improved Employee Moral
- ⇒ Increased Patient Satisfaction
- ⇒ Decreased Legal Liability
- ⇒ Decreased Ethics Violations
- ⇒ Improved Accreditation Reviews
- ⇒ Improved Productivity and Efficiency
- ⇒ Decreased Resource Utilization

Welcome, Wolfgang Agotta! Our New Patient Advocate

Wolfgang has been a member of the VA SORCC family for five years. He has 18 years of VA service in the mental health and social services field, and was Patient Advocate for Mental Health patients in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. His personal pursuits/hobbies include: Mixed Martial Arts Fighting, Tournament Fencing, Motorcycling and English Soccer (Manchester United is #1!). Wolfgang's career goals include:

- To become a VISN benchmark for Patient Advocacy Excellence.
- PA's office to work with Outcomes per Patient Satisfaction and to have an increasing role in building customer service satisfaction.
- Examination of the service recovery process; increase rapport with veterans, staff and service chiefs.
- Conflict resolution education and building relationships with the PA sector across the nation for resource acquisition (VA and Private)

Wolfgang Agotta Patient Advocate

Can help you with: Compliments, complaints or unmet needs. If you have SORCC policies and procedures questions not answered elsewhere, come see me I have an open door policy. My hours are:

6:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Monday—Thursday
Building 202, Room 103
Ext. 3657

