



Voice Of The North Woods



Focused on Excellence—Putting Veterans First

A PUBLICATION OF THE
OSCAR G. JOHNSON VA MEDICAL CENTER
August 2012

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Health Tip Of The Day!



Consider Your Tobacco Use — Kicking the habit is the single most important thing you can do to improve your health and protect the health of those around you!

For more information: visit www.ucanquit2.org, or call **1-800-QUIT-NOW**

Providing Alternative Communication Tools

In March 2012 OGJVAMC began its first specialty clinic that focused on alternative augmentative communication. Two Veterans were assessed and fitted with high-tech speech generating communication devices that allow them to verbally communicate clearly to others despite their inability to speak. "These devices not only allow individuals to communicate face-to-face with family, caregivers and others," said Jim Zeigler, Chief of Rehabilitation Services, "They can feature technologies enabling the Veteran to answer the phone; access the internet; and turn on and off lights, televisions, and computers." Veteran Carl Uhlbeck has Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, which is one of the neurological conditions or diseases that impair communication

and swallowing abilities. "These diseases progress in a rapid fashion or have a sudden onset, such as stroke or traumatic brain injury, which drastically changes a person's ability to speak," said Zeigler. The VA speech-pathology and prosthetics programs work in unison to assess, provide and maintain computerized high-tech devices that are designed to capitalize upon each Veteran's individual ability level and to plan for the future disease progression. *Continued on page 2*



Veteran Sandra Borden learning how to use her new speech generating communication device

Local Veteran's Wish Fulfilled

June 23rd saw a wish turn into reality for Veteran Ken Salli, a VA hospice patient at OGJVAMC's Community Living Center (CLC). Ken, 85, served in the U.S. Navy from 1945 to 1946. Thanks to OGJVAMC staff and Butterfly Wish Program, Ken and his family were treated to a day at the Island Resort & Casino. They received complimentary meals and were transported by limousine; a first time experience for them. "This program and what it stands for means everything, a difference in my



From left to right: Laura Baumler, Tammy Ciochetto, Mike Ciochetto Jr., Ken Salli, Mike Ciochetto, Barbara Ciochetto and Lisa Salli

life — a big difference" said Salli. "I love the way the staff organized everything, and actually made it possible." While no one in the family hit the jack pot, Ken was all smiles throughout his special day. Special thanks go to the Island Resort & Casino and the following medical center staff: Sara Thoune, RN (CLC), who discovered and made the wish known; Dawn Wahlstrom (NESS), who thoughtfully involved limo transportation; Laura Baumler (Fee), who graciously volunteered her time and limo; Greg Weiss (VS) for coordinating with the casino; and Selena Okler, RN (CLC) for managing the details and escorting the family. ♦

Patient Carnival

OGJVAMC hosted its annual Patient Carnival on July 12th for VA patients and their families. It was a great day for a carnival complete with great weather, carnival games, prizes, music and food. “The VAVS Patient Carnival has been a tradition at this facility for over half a century,” said Janet Bauer-Green, Recreation Therapist at OGJVAMC. “It brings volunteers from many different service organizations together to provide a fun and entertaining afternoon for our veterans, their loved ones and friends.” A big thank you goes to the many OGJVAMC

volunteers and the following service organizations: the Military Order of the Purple Hearts, Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Polish Legion of American Veterans (PLAV) and PLAV Auxiliary, Marine Corp League, American Legion and Auxiliary of Wisconsin and Michigan, Military Order of Cooties, Sons of the American Legion, and Knights of Columbus. ♦



Jim Rice, Medical Center Director, Greeting Veteran Hank Hendrickson at the patient carnival.



A CLC resident enjoys one of the games. Volunteers made sure each VA patient fully enjoyed the carnival.

Service Spotlight: Prosthetics and Sensory Aids Service

“Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service is about maximizing Veteran independence,” says the Service Chief, Kit Nelson. Prosthetics is located on the west wing of the 5th floor. For more information see <http://www.prosthetics.va.gov/>.

- Responsible for all home medical equipment & surgical implants.
- Serves physically, sight, hearing & cognitively impaired Veterans.
- Works with Veterans to make vehicles handicap accessible.
- Manages the Home Improvement & Structural Aid (HISA) program, which helps make medical adaptations to homes.
- Nationally, the overall Prosthetics and Sensory Aids budget was over \$2 billion.



From left to right; Kit Nelson, Aretina Rittenhouse, Paul Arndt, Shelley Pizzi and Kara Millan. Not pictured is Carol Hoynacke

Providing Alternative communication Tools to Veterans *Continued . . .*

Devices that feature the use of touch initially are appropriate. However, as the individual’s muscular strength and coordination are reduced, technological innovations, such as head mouse and eye gaze are applied to trigger a human-sounding voice by running a mouse over a picture, word or phrase on the device. Methods such as eye blinking or holding a cursor for a prescribed duration over a chosen message icon add to the flexibility. During his appointment, Uhlbeck was fitted with a communications device that uses a head mouse placed on his forehead and directed by moving his head. Veteran Sandra Borden contracted viral Encephalitis while in the Navy, which severely impacted her ability to speak. When asked how communicating would be easier now, she replied through her new device, “You can put in routine phrases and only need to press once.” “Pre-stored phrases and messages are particularly good for phone conversations” said Zeigler. The devices Borden and Uhlbeck are using also have a core vocabulary already preprogrammed with word predictor capability. “We are working on getting the word out to Veterans of these advances in technology, so that their quality of life will improve,” said Zeigler. ♦



Veteran Carl Uhlbeck is being fitted with a head mouse for his new speech generating communication device

Home Grown Makeover!

Summer and spring has brought a fresh look to the Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center! Because individual employees, departments and others have participated in the adopt-a-garden contest, the VA has received its very own home grown makeover! Look for July 6th postings and check out photos of the gardens at www.facebook.com/vaironmountain



Celebrating Women

Gloria Boyce (right) served in the Navy from 1944 to 1946 and has been a member of the Iron Mountain/Kingsford Women's Club since 1956. The Women's Club has been a force in the Iron Mountain community helping men, women and children for 100 years. Gloria will be at OGJVAMC's Canteen at 11:00 a.m. on August 27th to discuss the Women's Club. During August we are honoring the accomplishments of women. With Gloria is Carrie Champion, LPN, from the Women's Wellness Clinic.

National Happenings

Attracting more than **500** athletes each year, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games coordinated by the VA is the largest annual sporting event worldwide. With **18** categories, these games bring great opportunity to improve physical & mental health of disabled veterans. The Games are set to appear next in Tampa, Florida July 13th –18th of 2013!

Check out this year's event at www.va.gov/opa/speceven/wcg/index.asp !



Nutrition Tip Of The Day!



Did you know that in June 2011 "My Plate" replaced the "Food Pyramid" as the depiction of a healthful diet. The simpler image of a plate divided into the basic food groups with the largest sections of the plate being vegetables and grains. For more tips on My Plate visit:

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet1ChooseMyPlate.pdf>

Joke Of The Day - Eager To Impress The Boss Different August Observances

A young executive was leaving the office late one evening when he found the CEO standing in front of a shredder with a piece of paper in his hand.

"Listen," said the CEO "this is a very sensitive and important document here, and my secretary has gone for the night. "Can you make this thing work?"

"Certainly," said the young executive. He turned the machine on, inserted the paper, and pressed the start button.

"Excellent, excellent!" said the CEO as his paper disappeared inside the machine. "I just need one copy."

"Use of this content has been permitted"

- National Golf Month
- National Panini Month
- National Orange & Papaya Month
- National Celery, Fennel & Cactus Month
- To See More Unheard of Holidays Visit

<http://www.brownielocks.com/august.html>

Tongue Twister of the day!

"Green Greek Grapes" (Say **10** times Fast!)

Employee Spotlight!

Welcome To OGVAMC!

Medical Imaging

Ashley Lundin

M.D., Medicine

Lawrence Friedman

Mental Health

Doreen Bender-Krachey

Fernando Chavarria

Joseph Conerty

Lynda Wargolet

Nutrition & Environmental

Support

Keith Mitchem

James Stewart

Pharmacy

JoAnne Spence

Nursing & Pt Care

Joe Arms

Marilou Cazzola

Lorraine Karvonen

Alyssa Pontti

Bruce Romick

Roxanne Strauss

Marlene Wickman

PAS

Susan Arndt

Richard Page

Primary Care

Brendon Ewers

Anne Marie Frankini

Debra Rhoades

Service Pins (June-Aug)

10 Year

Bridget Jacko - Pharmacy Service

Terry LaDuraon - Patient Administrative Service

Richard Ledgend - Nursing, ICU

Barry O'Brien - Sterile Processing Service

Todd Silverstein - Behavioral Health Service

20 Year

James Husing - Human Resources

Christopher Neveu - Nursing, CLC

Pauline Wille - Surgical Service

25 Year

Deborah Ford - Nutrition & Environmental Support

Susan Gray - Nursing, Primary Care

Laurie Shinnaberry - Nursing, Primary Care

Paul Seim - Nursing

30 Year

Edward Lehto - Nutrition & Environmental Support

Marchell Merkel - Nursing, Oncology

35 Year

Elizabeth Adams - Nursing, Optometry

Winnie Jo Fornetti - Patient Administrative Service

Farewell Wishes! (*retired)

Engineering

Joyce Giuliani* (37 years)

Mental Health

Diane Johnson

Sonya Majewski

M.D., Primary Care

Melanie Purres

Nursing & Patient Care

Ann Clish* (20 years)

Sandra Danielson

Brent Nicholson

Judy Sexton* (29 years)

P Joseph Sobel* (26 years)

Nutrition & Environmental

Support

Anthony Amicangelo* (33 years)

Brian Bonggi* (34 years)

OI&T

Joseph Lerschen* (39 years)

Patient Admin Svc

Kelly DeGrand

Rebecca Shimanek

In Memoriam

Dr. Lee Potter

1951-2012

Rhineland VA Clinic

<http://www.rhineland>

[dailynews.com/main.asp?](http://www.rhineland.com/dailynews.com/main.asp?)

[SectionID=3&Subsection](http://www.rhineland.com/dailynews.com/main.asp?SectionID=3&Subsection)

[ID=28&ArticleID=52853](http://www.rhineland.com/dailynews.com/main.asp?SectionID=3&SubsectionID=28&ArticleID=52853)

Upcoming Events & Observances

August:

National Immunization Awareness

4 Coast Guard Day (1790)

26 Women's Equality Day

27 Women's Club Discussion

September:

National Preparedness

Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery

National Hispanic Heritage

National Suicide Prevention Week (9-15)

3 Labor Day (Clinics Closed)

5 Employee Picnic & Team/FWP Awards

16 American Legion Chartered (1919)

17 VFW Auxiliary Established (1914)

18 USAF Established (1947)

21 POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony

25 DAV Established (1920)

29 VFW Day (1899)



Visit us online at www.ironmountain.va.gov and follow us on:



Comments? [Email bradley.nelson@va.gov](mailto:bradley.nelson@va.gov)