



Voice Of The Northwoods



Focused on Excellence—Putting Veterans First

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Health Tip Of The Day!



MANAGE STRESS

The holidays are over, and they *may* have been a source of stress for you this year. **Pay attention to stress.** Tools are available to help you manage and reduce your stress.

Check out this [Patient Handout on Stress.](#)



New Technology for Our Dental Patients

Veterans who receive dental services at OGJVAMC will not have to put up with gooey impressions or have to wait for crowns anymore, thanks to new technology.

Through the VA's Innovation Fund Program, OGJVAMC recently received a completely integrated, state-of-the-art system that allows for computer aided digital imaging and onsite milling for crowns, bridges and other restorative work all in one appointment.

Veterans will not have to put up with gooey impressions or have to wait for crowns anymore.

Eli Heikkila, a Vietnam Army Veteran from Iron River, was one of the first VA patients to benefit from this new technology. The digital imaging of his teeth took approximately 20 minutes and then had to wait only 10 minutes while his new crown was being milled.

Typically, it takes up to two months to receive a crown or other reconstructive work using conventional methods because impressions need to be sent to an outside lab. This saves the Veteran a significant amount of time and travel cost, since they only have to come here once for the whole process.

OGJVAMC is the only VA facility that provides dental services in the Upper Peninsula and northeastern Wisconsin. As a result, Veteran patients who are eligible for VA dental benefits may have to travel up to

four hours to receive dental care.

The system used by OGJVAMC uses a full color 3D OmniCam camera to capture digitally what is in the mouth clinically and then transfer it via radio signal to the milling unit in the dental lab. It is the only system that looks at adjacent teeth and makes a tooth design that will replicate the patient's anatomy as opposed to a pre-fabricated designed.

"There are cost savings using this technology, such as costs associated with conventional impression material, lab and production time, disinfecting and setting up treatment rooms and reprocessing equipment," said Marian Johnson, Registered Dental Assistant, who successfully submitted for the innovation funding. ♦



Army Veteran Eli Heikkila of Iron River holding his new dental crown next to the milling unit that only took 10 minutes to mill it.

Check out the **WLUC TV 6** story on this by clicking [HERE.](#)

Service Spotlight: Logistics Service



Logistics Service (front l-r): Laura Lee Campos, Daniel Rovedo, Anna Vincent, Gary Weber, Patrick Skorupski, and John Grayvold. Back Row (l-r): Dale Huppert, Jim Mitchell, Todd Pierce, Matt Mainville, Daniel Klitzke, and Paul Lyman. Not Pictured: Mike Small, Trever Wittock, Shannon McKindles, Bryan Chellew, and Daniel Dahlgren.

For staff only - For Who's Who in Logistics and additional info:
<http://vaww.iron-mtn.med.va.gov/Logistics/Logistics.htm>

The mission of the Logistics Service is to provide a full range of innovative, cost effective business solutions, and responsive services (distribution/purchasing/receipt-delivery) tailored to meet the on-going and emerging needs of our customers in support of Veterans. Delivering the right items to the right persons at the right time in order to affect patient care and support activity for our veterans and beneficiaries . Services provided include:

- ◆ Acquisition for facility needs
- ◆ Contracting
- ◆ Non expendable property
- ◆ Expendable supplies
- ◆ Mailroom services
- ◆ Distribution of medical & environmental supplies.
- ◆ Shipping & Receiving
- ◆ Hazardous product recalls
- ◆ Business Procurement

Nutrition Tip Of The Month!

Healthy New Year Challenge

Resolving to lose weight each year? Try a new approach this year!



Instead of a broad weight loss goal, create two specific weekly SMART challenges you know you can achieve (***Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-based***).

The first challenge may be activity related, e.g., walking 15 minutes four days a week. The second challenge may be nutrition-related, e.g., eating 200 less calories each work day at my evening meal.

If weight loss is your goal, create SMART challenges that *increase your calorie burn and decrease your calorie intake.*

Your weekly successes will build momentum and confidence, continuing your weight loss into the New Year.

E-Donate is Here!

Easy online giving to support Veterans

While not everyone has the time to show support to Veterans by volunteering, now anyone can thank an OGJVAMC Veteran through E-Donate, VA's new, easy online donation tool found at www.ironmountain.va.gov/giving or click on the icon to the right.



The E-Donate option allows donors to select from a number of uses that they would like to see their donation go to, such as: Butterfly Wish Program, books, coffee program, emergency social work fund, holiday programs, Homeless Veterans Program, hospice care, patient education, recreational activities, special events, spiritual care, and Women Veterans Program.

Additionally, the VA's administrative costs are appropriated through Congress, so donors can be sure 100 percent of their donations go to the funds that are used for the Veteran patients they are choosing to support. ◆

Who We Serve

Our Veterans and their stories

“My First Day in the Field” by HM3 John Armitage, Jr., USMC

After arriving in Viet Nam, I spent my first couple days in DaNang. I then rode on the back of a truck in a caravan to Dong Ha. This area would be our rear. After a couple more days there, I had most of my gear so they flew me out to the field, which was on the DMZ (demilitarized zone). I got there late in the afternoon and was shown around. Then I started working on my foxhole. Just before dark a mortar landed in the foxhole with our head corpsman. Things quieted down after a while, and I went to sleep.

About 10:00 a.m. the next morning, a patrol came running in with wounded. We had a doctor in the field because we had the whole battalion out there. I was assisting the doctor with a guy in really bad shape. They called in a medevac (medical evacuation) chopper, and by the time it arrived the guy had died twice. As the chopper was landing, we got hit with small arms fire from three sides on the LZ (landing zone). We loaded the wounded into the chopper. When the chopper got up about 20 feet, I saw a Viet Cong shoot a RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) into the chopper. The pilot was thrown forward, and all the glass shattered. The chopper landed ten feet away from me, and a few of the wounded told me the chopper was going to explode and we were going to die.

Just then an officer standing in the middle of the

LZ with bullets flying all around him screamed — “Corpsman Up!” I ran to the burning chopper and started pulling people off. As I lay there tending to the wounded, the bushes above my head were moving from all the fire we were taking. We were overrun twice that afternoon and beat the enemy back twice. The firefight lasted all day, and because it was monsoon season, I packed the wounded into a big bomb crater and tended to them all night long.

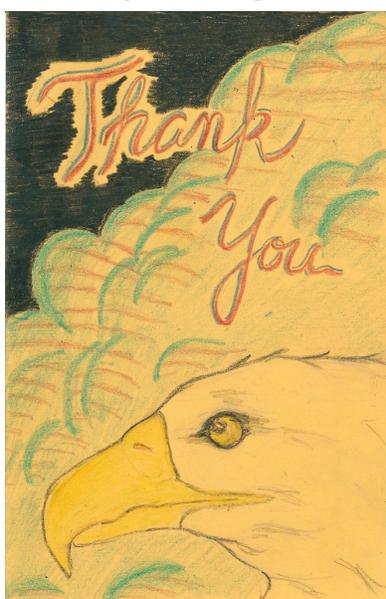
I was shaking so badly the next morning, the guys had to hold a cup of coffee up to my lips. Now this was my first full day in the field, and at that time I didn't know that it would be one of my worst. I thought that this is how it is out here all the time. Thank God I was wrong.

Editor's note: John Armitage now volunteers at OGJVAMC, greeting and directing people at the Outpatient Entrance. He is often seen pushing a Veteran in a wheel chair to his or her clinic. ♦



Vietnam Veteran (and OGJVAMC volunteer) John Armitage.

One of many holiday cards to OGJVAMC inpatients*



Dear Service Member,
To me, I don't think we, as a nation, could ever thank you enough. Your sacrifices and loyalty to our nation are remarkable. In my eyes you're a TRUE HERO that deserves happiness and success. You are the real symbol of American pride and patriotism. The eagle is strong and wise, but compared to you and all service members it doesn't even come close to what you are in my mind. You're someone everyone should look up to, admire, and thank.
[Redacted]
Rapid River High School

*** For easier reading, put your cursor over the card and the text will pop up.**

OGJVAMC's Journey Toward Patient-Centered Care

OGJVAMC, and the Veterans Health Administration as a whole, is embarking on a journey to providing *personalized, proactive, patient-centered care*, which is critically important as OGJVAMC strives to be a leader in rural health care and provider of choice for Veterans in the U.P. and northern Wisconsin.

So what is *Patient-centered Care*? Built on VA's core values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence (I CARE), Patient Center Care combines the clinical *practice* of medicine and personalized, proactive prevention efforts in a team environment AND positive *experiences* for Veteran patients (and families), including healing environments and relationships.

It is the VA treating the whole health of a Veteran—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual— and taking into account self care, professional care, and community relationships. It is often illustrated as a circle with the Veteran patient at the center followed by self care, professional care and then community.

Recently the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation (OPCC&CT) came to OGJVAMC to provide information sessions to leader-



455 OGJVAMC and CBOC employees (nearly 70 percent) attended one of many sessions held by OPCC&CT staff on VHA Patient Centered Care model.

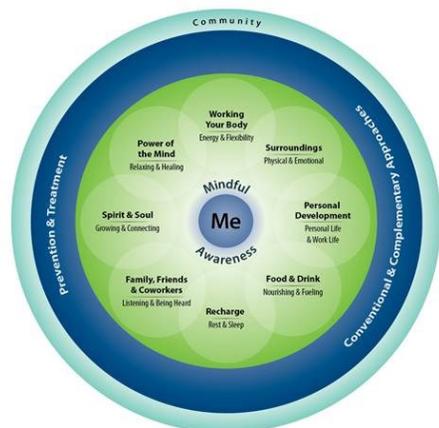
It is the VA treating the whole health of a Veteran.

ship and employees on the VHA model of Patient-centered Care and to see patient-centered care examples OGJVAMC is already employing.

OGJVAMC has already initiated some programs to improve the experience for the Veteran, such as the Butterfly Wish Program, Veterans Transportation Service, parking lot shuttle, flower and vegetable gardens for inpatients in the Community Living Center, and a new Computrition menu system with improved functionality, flexibility and more options, to name just a few.

Over the next six to eight months OGJVAMC will be partnering with OPCC&CT to fully implement the Patient-centered Care model as well as local initiatives that are focused on both the *practice* and *experience* of Veterans.

Veterans committed their lives, health, and well-being to mission success in defense of our country. Our goal is to design a system where we partner with our Veterans to be mission ready for their lives, optimizing their health in service of what matters to them. ♦



VA Whole Healthcare

OGJVAMC Delivers Holiday Cheer & Gifts to Six Families

Seventeenth Year of Adopt-a-Family Program

On Friday, December 20, OGJVAMC employees delivered holiday cheer and gifts to six families in the local community.

The medical center has sponsored the holiday season Adopt-a-Family program since 1996, providing gifts to over 110 families through the generous donations of VA employees, volunteers and others.

“Christmas is meant to be a time for joy, but for many lower income families it becomes heart-wrenching as they find it impossible to purchase anything extra like gifts for their kids,” said Ellen Thom, OGJVAMC’s Adopt-a-Family coordinator.

The program is coordinated by the medical center’s Equal Employment Opportunity Committee and provides gifts for local families who are experiencing hardships due to illness, financial struggles and other unforeseen circumstances. Christmas trees were decorated with Christmas gift tags listing items for families in need and displayed throughout the medical center for employees, volunteers and others to choose from.

“For the past 17 years our employees, volunteers, and patients at the medical center have come together

to provide toys, clothing, and gift cards for the purchase of Christmas dinner, which makes the holidays brighter for the families they adopt,” said Thom. ♦



Some of the members of the Adopt-a-Family committee with gifts donated for six families in the community. From left to right: Carol Hinds, Marcia Crosson, Bonnie Moore, MaryKay Campbell, Gabe Mapps, Dave Adami, and Ellen Thom. Not pictured: Deb Uren, Angela Finley, Katie Uren, Alex Barker, Karla LaDuron, Laura Skrumbellos, Mike Seda, and Lillian Gerhart.

New VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP)

The VA already provides comprehensive dental care to Veterans who meet certain stringent eligibility standards, however, this benefit is not available to the majority of enrolled Veterans. As a result, VA is now offering dental insurance at reduced premiums for any Veteran enrolled in VA health care as well as beneficiaries of VA’s Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA).

The VA has contracted with private insurers Delta Dental and MetLife to administer the **VA Dental Insurance Program (VADIP)**. Both insurance companies offer standard, enhanced and comprehensive plans. Please note that this is not a VA Dental Service program, does not cover dependents other than CHAMPVA beneficiaries, and that Veterans need to find a dentist who accepts the insurance.

More information on VADIP and a direct link to each insurance company’s VADIP webpage is available at www.va.gov/healthbenefits/VADIP.



Caught on Camera



Volunteers helping with the annual inpatient Gift Shop on December 3 (l-r): **Jan Hafeman, Shirley Cuyler**, unidentified volunteer from Menominee, **Mary Labunski, Gladys Szitta, Barb Larson, Sue Verville, Darcy Walstrom, Donna Lewis, Muriel Beaulier**, and unidentified volunteer from Menominee. Not pictured: **Cora Gavigan and Joan Krukowski**.



Photos L-R: Holiday season at OGJVAMC; Cookie Social for all employees & volunteers in the Director's Office; **Andrea Collins** (Nurse Executive) and **Jim Rice** (Director) serving punch at the all employee Holiday Luncheon.



Photos L-R: **Jan Irish, Tania Fuller-Hautamaki, Linda Anderson, Carrie Champion and Patty Leatherman** at the Holiday Luncheon; **Paul Seim, Joe Hord, Dave Lukowski, Karen Derwinski and Andrea Collins** serving employees at the annual OGJVAMC Holiday Luncheon; **Mr. Dale LaPalme** (r) presenting **Mr. Rice** with Christmas trees for the facility donated by the Iron Mountain Chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart.



Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service in the holiday spirit. Front row (l-r): **Tammy VanPembrook, Cirie Tinti, Jim Zeigler, Bessie King-Brightman, Krista Frick, and Tricia Cayemberg**. Back Row (l-r): **Cheryl Doolittle, Bill Johnson, Mark Balcer, Josh Early, Eli Collins, Shannon Powell, Kelly Derwinski, and Audra Hawkins**. Not Pictured: **Sue Kube**.



Marcia Crosson and Larry Clemens (NVCC) talking about the VA's Non-VA Care Coordination on WJNR Radio.

Kudos!

Employees of the Month

October



Dawn Rompalski, Patient Administrative Service. As AOD she is lauded for showing compassion and care to an agitated and potentially violent patient, ensuring the Veteran received the proper care needed. Dawn has been employed at OGVAMC since 2007.

November



Josh Early, Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service. Josh voluntarily took the lead in successfully establishing the new Physical Therapy Satellite Clinic in the Community Living Center and voluntarily transitioned from outpatient care to primary lead for inpatient Physical Therapy. Josh has been employed at OGVAMC since 1994.

Service Pins



Employees presented with Service pins are (left to right): **Lisa Sutherland, CPhT** (Pharmacy, 10 years) and **Jeanne Johnson, RN** (Nursing & Patient Care, 15 years).

Welcome To OGVAMC!

Canteen	Monica Hill
Brenda Larch	Forrest McOmber
Engineering	Jeremy Wilson
Curt Slinger	Nutrition & Environmental Support
Nursing & Patient Care	Jamie Mattson
Natalie Gendron	Surgery
Patient Admin Service	Celeste Dault
Penny Dobber	

Farewell Wishes! (*retired)

Behavioral Health	Debra McClain
Doreen Bender-Krachey	Jennifer Savard
Finance	Patient Admin Service
Pat Lidwin* (28 years)	Nada Surface* (24 years)
Imaging	Primary Care
Michelle Weinfurter* (31 years)	Craig Holmes
Nursing & Patient Care	
Ginger Cudnohufsky	

Upcoming Events & Observances

January :

- * Glaucoma Awareness Month
- * Thyroid Awareness Month

* Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

- 1 New Year's Day (Clinics Closed)**
Emancipation Proclamation (1863)
- 15 Pentagon Completed (1943)**
- 16 Gulf War Begins (1991)**
- 19-25 National Certified Nurse Anesthetists Week**
Healthy Weight Week
- 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Clinics Closed)**
- 27 Liberation of Auschwitz (1945)**
Vietnam Peace Agreement Signed (1973)
- 30 Tet Offensive Begins (1968)**
- 31 Chinese New Year**

HAPPY NEW YEAR

February

- * African-American History Month
- * Cancer Prevention Month

* American Heart Month

* AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month

- 1 National Freedom Day (1865)**
- 1-7 Women's Heart Week**
- 2 Groundhog Day**
- 4 USO Founded (1941)**
- 7 National Wear Red Day**
- 9-15 National Salute to Veteran Patients Week**
- 12 President Lincoln's Birthday (1809)**
- 13 First Medal of Honor Awarded (1861)**
Marine Corps Women's Reserve Created (1943)
- 14 Valentine's Day**
- 16-22 National Engineers Week**
- 17 Presidents Day (Clinics Closed)**
- 22 President Washington's Birthday (1732)**
- 23 Iwo Jima Day Anniversary (1945)**
- 36 Kuwait Liberation Day (1991)**

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



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

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