



Rose Osborne (left), Patient Care Services, her husband, Frank, and their granddaughter, Kacy Johnson, prepare snacks and sparkling cider in champagne glasses for Veterans at the VA Medical Center here. For 20 consecutive years, Mrs. Osborne and her family have volunteered at the hospital providing snacks to patients and staff on New Year's Eve. (Photo by Mike Molina)

VA MISSION:
Honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.



Check us out on facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/VAMontana>

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PLAN TO ATTEND:

**Ending Homelessness Among Veterans Forum
Feb. 16, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the Civic Center**

Service Pins

January/February

10 Years

Terrie Casey, HR
Linda Lecoure, PCS
Jackie Lamphier, Amb Care
Codi Sprenson, Pharmacy
Toni Bolles, NAO
Jacque Caldwell, HR
James Meyer, Amb Care
Guy Parker, MAS
Rebecca Bauer, PCS

15 Years

Eloine Houssel, Vet Svc Ctr
Andy Horton, PCS
Dean Werner, Amb Care

20 Years

Lee Anne Johnson, Psych
Kathryn Poelman, N&FS
James Marlen, Medical
Doug Enghusen, IRM

25 Years

Mike Harris, Facility Mngmt
Ken Fenstermacher, Prosthetics
Denise Tarr, Amb Care
Jeanette Inman, PCS

30 Years

Charity Aguirre, Pharmacy
Clare Kearns, Social Work

Coming and Goings

November/December

WELCOME...	FAREWELL...
Ambulatory Care	
Jessica Johnson Jennifer Marshall Dallas Scott	Vicki Bellew
Chief of Staff	
Danielle McCarthy	
Dental	
Norma Moreno	
Facilities	
John Heller	Nathan Warner
Network Authorization Office	
	Amy Hinken
Office of the Director	
Jeffrey Heider Mike Molina	
Pathology & Lab	
Christopher Rojo Tracy Mergenthaler Michelle Roof	
Patient Business Office	
Todd Kurkoski	Kimberly McKenzie

WELCOME...	FAREWELL...
Patient Care Services	
Marie Haywood Glenda Resch Kellie Wier Patricia Matthews Deanna Bockness Jessica Dickson Erin Minnerath Tina O'Quinn Amanda Greathouse	Virginia Hebard John Browning Sherrie Vanorman
Pharmacy	
Kaylee Kleinsasser Julie Morrison	Ben Hunn Timothy Walker Leslie Reinier
Physical Therapy	
Daniel Rodriguez	
Police & Security	
Brandon McElderry	
Prosthetics	
Douglas Grant	
Radiology	
Craig Marquis	
Surgical Service	
Christine Bradbury	Laurie Scott
Voc Rehab & Counseling	
Randal Beyer	

Family Happenings

Contact Desirae Opdahl x7966



The granddaughter of **Marilyn (Billings VA)** and Johnny Lingle, Alaina Joan Rekdal, will be graduating May 22 from Shepherd High School in Shepherd, Montana. Alaina is interested in a career in cosmetology. Her parents are Lisa and Shane Rekdal of Shepherd and she has a younger brother, Seth.

Cathy Kaiser (NAO) welcomed her first grandchild on January 19th. Evan Kasier weighed 7 pounds, 13 ounces
Congratulations!



Victory Gardens for Veterans

Healthy eating and gardens go together almost like deer and gardens do. Two dietitians at Fort Harrison would like to get gardens started at the VA Hospital at Fort Harrison. We are in the “dream” phase at this time but would like to get into the actual planning stages. If you would like to be involved in this Dream, Plan and Plant project, please contact Kathy Rucker at 447-7370, or Wendy Brooke at 447-7365.



Wear Red Day to Support Women’s Heart Health



National Wear Red Day is Feb. 4, 2011

Many people are not aware that heart disease is the **number one killer of women**. One woman dies almost every minute from heart disease, but education and life style changes can make a difference!

Wear Red Day was developed to raise awareness of cardiovascular disease and stroke in women. It is easy to become involved and help make a difference...so wear **RED** on Feb. 4 and show your support!





Refills Without the Wait

Refill VA Medications Online with My Health eVet

Why wait in line or on the phone when you can go online to refill your VA-issued prescriptions? Veterans can refill VA prescriptions online at www.myhealth.va.gov. They can also access personal health information after registering as a My Health eVet user. In addition to refilling VA prescriptions online, Veterans with My Health eVet accounts can access trusted information and education resources. Since the online pharmacy refill service is only available to VA patients who have registered with My Health eVet, it is important to register today at your local VA facility. Registration is easy. Simply follow these steps:

- ★ Type www.myhealth.va.gov in the address bar on your web browser, and then press Enter. This takes you to VA's My Health eVet website
- ★ On the right-hand side, click the "Register Today" button. Complete the registration page and review and accept the Terms & Conditions and the Privacy Policy for using the My Health eVet website
- ★ Log into your My Health eVet account and begin to create your Personal Health Record
- ★ Begin using My Health eVet for online prescription refills
- ★ Bookmark www.myhealth.va.gov as a favorite



What is My Health eVet?

My Health eVet is VA's award-winning online Personal Health Record. It offers Veterans anywhere, anytime Internet access to VA health care. Launched nationwide in 2003, My Health eVet is the gateway to web-based tools that empower Veterans to become better partners in their health care. With My Health eVet, America's Veterans and their caregivers access trusted, secure, and informed health and benefits information, at their convenience.

How do I access My Health eVet?

Log-on to: www.myhealth.va.gov

Get an Upgrade with IPA

To get the most out of the My Health eVet Personal Health Record, Veterans should get an upgraded account, known as In-Person Authentication (IPA).

Upgraded accounts, or IPA, allow Veterans to see the names of VA prescriptions online when refilling, not just the numbers, receive important Wellness Reminders, and use other features as they become available.

Benefits of Online Prescription Refill:

Through the Refill Prescriptions Option, Veterans can:

- ★ Refill VA prescriptions online without the wait
- ★ View active VA prescriptions
- ★ Select an active prescription to be refilled
- ★ Have the refills delivered to the home
- ★ Check the status of a refill order anytime from anywhere

Through the Prescriptions History option, Veterans can:

- ★ View and track VA prescription history
- ★ Print a copy of VA prescription history
- ★ Review and print specific information about a single prescription from the "View Details" option

Note:

Prescription refills ordered through My Health eVet are delivered by the Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy typically within 5 to 10 business days.



VA's Award-Winning Personal Health Record
**Celebrating 5 Years of Online
Access to VA Health Care!**



What's Happening Around the State



Do you have pictures from an event at your CBOC?
We want to see them!



Contact any member of the Connections committee.

Great Falls CBOC had a great potluck on Dec. 17. It really brought the entire GFCBOC together to enjoy the holiday and camaraderie.



Dr. Lynn Johnson



Dr. Nesbo, Terri Mills, TCT (Tele health Clinical Technician), Dr. Johnson



Terry Nichols, LVN (Licensed Vocational Nurse)... the first original employee in Great Falls!



Dr. Cheek, Krystal Richards RN, Dr. Nesbo, Dr. Gold and Dr. Buck



Dr. Gold

PATIENT SAFETY GOALS NEW 2011 UPDATE: (changes in red)

By Robin Korogi, Director, VA Montana Health Care System

#1: Improve the accuracy of patient identification.

1. Use at least 2 identifiers when providing care, treatment, and services.
2. Conduct a verification process before starting procedures.
3. Eliminating transfusion errors.

#2: Improve the effectiveness of communication among caregivers.

1. Reading back verbal orders.
2. Creating a list of abbreviations not to use.
3. Report critical test results in a timely manner.
4. Managing hand-off communication



#3: Improve the safety of using medications.

1. Managing look-alike/sound-alike medications
2. Labeling medications
3. Reducing harm from anticoagulation therapy.

A written policy addressing baseline and ongoing lab tests required for anticoagulants. (No longer heparin and low molecular weight therapy)



#7: Reduce the risk of health care associated infections.

1. Meeting hand-hygiene guidelines
2. Sentinel events resulting from infections.
3. Preventing multi-drug resistant organism infections.
4. Preventing central-line associated blood stream infections.

Use an antiseptic for skin preparations during central line venous catheter insertion that is cited in scientific literature or endorsed by professional organizations.

5. Preventing surgical site infections.

Administer antimicrobial agents for prophylaxis for a particular procedure or disease according to methods cited in scientific literature or endorsed by professional organizations. (no longer 1 hr before, dc within 48 hr after surgery.)

When hair removal is necessary a method that is cited in scientific literature or endorsed by professional organizations. (no longer clippers or depilatories)

#8: Accurately and completely reconcile medications across the continuum of care.

1. Comparing current and newly ordered medications.
2. Communicating medications to the next provider.
3. Providing a reconciled medication list to the patient.
4. Settings in which medications are minimally used.

#9: Reduce the risk of patient harm resulting from falls.

1. Implementing a fall reduction program

#10: Reduce the risk of influenza and pneumococcal disease in institutional older adults.

1. Using influenza vaccine protocols.
2. Using pneumococcus vaccine protocols.
3. Identifying and managing influenza.

Continued on next page

PATIENT SAFETY GOALS NEW 2011 UPDATE Cont.

#11: Reduce the risk of surgical fires.

1. Preventing surgical fires.

#13: Encourage patient's active involvement in their own care as a patient safety strategy.

1. Patient and family reporting of safety concerns.

#14: Prevent health care associated pressure ulcers.

1. Assessing resident risk for pressure ulcers.

#15: Identifies safety risk inherent in its patients population.

1. Identifying individuals at risk for suicide.
2. Identifying risks associated with oxygen.

#16: Improve recognitions and response to changes in a patient's condition.

1. Requesting assistance for a patient with a worsening condition.

Universal Protocol:

1. Conducting a pre-procedure verification process.
2. Marking the procedure site.
3. Performing a time-out.



DO YOU KNOW YOUR PURPOSE?

By Robin Korogi

You Know Your Job Function...

How About Your Purpose?

*Everyone knows their job function. But how about the purpose of your job? Function is **what** you do. Purpose is **why** you do it.*

Job purpose is a "higher calling" than job function, and is most important to your customers. It's your personal mission statement.

To create your job purpose, take three steps:

1. State **what** you do.
2. State **who** you serve or support.
3. State the **benefits** you create for those customers.

Here's an example: "The purpose of my being a nurse is to help patients enjoy greater peace of mind and support their recovery."

Source: Integrity Healthcare Services' The Customer for Healthcare Program

Purpose statements give meaning and energy to your job. Your customers will benefit as well. Take time to write your own purpose statement using the example above as a model, then share it with others.

A Note From Your Credit Union!



MontantFreeFile.org Your Free Tax Filing Resource

Keep more of what you earn – visit www.MontanaFreeFile.org and find out if you qualify for free tax preparation or free electronic filing services. MontanaFreeFile is a “one-stop” website to help you determine which option is best based on your age, location, and financial status.

Most communities in Montana, both small and large, have free tax sites where people who make less than \$49,000 can get their taxes filed for free. A complete list of these communities can be found on www.MontanaFreeFile.org

There are many free tax filing options available with varying eligibility requirements. The website includes Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites, AARP Tax-Aide Foundation sites, the do-it-yourself tax preparation and e-filing service at www.icanefile.org, and information on Montana Department of Revenue services. Find out which option is best for you!

Elkhorn Federal Credit Union is hosting a free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site in the office at 2037 North Last Chance Gulch; on March 10, 2011 from 1pm to 5pm and on March 17, 2011 from 1pm to 5pm. You could have your refund in as little as eight days without any tax preparation or filing fees. Keep more of what you earn – Call 406-449-8690 to set up your appointment or visit MontanFreeFile.org for qualifications and other free tax preparation options.

VA Employee Wellness



Wellness is Now

By Helen Williams



Looking for a challenge to help you get active or to lose weight? Check out this website for Shape up Montana: www.shapeupmontana.org

It is a three month program much like the VA fitness challenge. Its goal is to help reduce the percentage of obesity in Montana. There are two programs that people can choose from - weight loss or activity.

Billings has several teams put together already....so get together with other staff in your area and form a team! If you are looking to add yourself to a team please contact Ada Fuller via email.



The following components of PACT are related to access to care:

The 1st component of PACT is a partnership with Veterans and their health care teams.

- * TEACH for success training for staff
- * Motivational Interviewing training for staff

The 2nd component of PACT is enhanced access to care

- * Non-face-to-face tasks
- * Secure Messaging

The 3rd component of PACT is more coordinated care among all team members.

- * Collaboration
- * Communication
- * Comprehensive

The 4th component of PACT is the concept of team-based care.



Honoring Our Veterans!



Name: Roger Trumper

Roger is a fifth generation Veteran at the VA Montana Health Care System. He spent 20 years in the Air Force and was a military policeman. He is also the father of an Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Veteran.

Hobbies: Hunting (talking about the one that got away!) and spending time with his granddaughter.

National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans (Feb. 13-19)

Every day, nearly 98,000 Veterans are treated in Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers, outpatient clinics, domiciliaries, and nursing homes. And every year, during Valentine's Week, a call goes out to the public to visit and honor these hospitalized Veterans during National Salute Week. This year, the event runs from Feb. 13 - 19.

Contact Voluntary Services at 447-7345 to discover the wonderful things you, your group or organization can do to salute America's Heroes.

Pet of the Month

Her name is Gata and my husband (Brian) and I first got her in 2002 out of a Wal-Mart parking lot in San Diego. The lady kept saying Gata so we figured that was her name. Come to find out Gata means female cat in Spanish. We still kept the name. She is 8 years old and still thinks she is a baby. She lets the kids dress her up in doll clothes and tolerates the hands-on attention from my daughter and son and is very friendly to everyone. If you walk into the house she will be right there at the door to greet you along with the kids. Gata belongs to Annette (File Room) and Brian Heinrich.



What is Locks of Love?

By Mary Smith

Locks of Love is a public non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children in the United States and Canada under age 21 suffering from long-term medical hair loss from any diagnosis. The group meets a unique need for children by using donated hair to create the highest quality hair prosthetics. Most of the children helped by Locks of Love have lost their hair due to a medical condition called alopecia areata, which has no known cause or cure. The prostheses they provide help to restore their self-esteem and the children's confidence, enabling them to face the world and their peers.

Have you ever thought about giving of yourself in a way that does not take a great deal of time or money? I first heard of Locks of Love years ago. My first donation of hair was 17 inches. Many years later, I have just given my fourteenth 10-inch donation. Almost all of the hair dressers in Helena will cut your hair and send the donation in to Locks of Love. The minimum requirement for a donation is 10 inches of hair from the back of the neck. Yes, I have put most folks here at the VA in shock with my short hair. Here I am before and after:

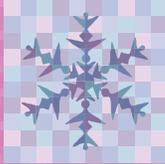


What a difference we can all make in our own special way!

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<p>1</p>  <p><i>National Freedom Day (1865)</i></p>	<p>2</p>  <p><i>Groundhog Day</i></p>	<p>3</p> <p><i>Four Chaplains Memorial Day (1943)</i></p>	<p>4</p> <p><i>National Wear Red Day</i> <i>USO Founded (1941)</i></p>	<p>5</p>
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
National Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week (Feb 1-7)						
Burn Awareness Week (Feb 6-12)						
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
<i>First Medal of Honor Awarded (1861)</i>	 <p><i>Valentine's Day</i> <i>National Donor Day</i></p>	 <p><i>Susan B. Anthony Day</i></p>	<i>African American History Presentation</i>	National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans (Feb. 13-19)		
				National Cardiac Rehabilitation Week (Feb 13-19)		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	 <p><i>President's Day</i> <i>Washington's Birthday (1732)</i></p>		<p><i>Iwo Jima Day Anniv. (1945)</i> <i>Desert Storm Ground War Begins (1991)</i></p>	National Eating Disorders Awareness Week (Feb 20-26)		<i>Kuwait Liberation Day (1991)</i>
27	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>National Senior Independence Month</i> • <i>American Heart Month</i> • <i>National Cancer Prevention Month</i> • <i>National African-American History Month</i> • <i>AMD/Low Vision Awareness Month</i> • <i>Wise Health Consumer Month</i> • <i>National Children's Dental Health Month</i> • <i>Youth Leadership Month</i> 				
						



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's History Month • Save Your Vision Month • National Nutrition Month • American Red Cross Month • National Kidney Month 		1 Peace Corps Founded (1961)	2	3 National Anthem Day (1931)	4	5
6	7 Army Distinguished Service Medal Authorized (1918)	8 International Working Woman's Day	9	10 World Kidney Day	11	12
13 Day Light Saving Time	14	15 VA Cabinet Status (1989)	16 Freedom of Information Day	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19 Operation Iraqi Freedom Begins (2003)
20 Spring Begins	21	22 Diabetes Alert Day	23	24 World Tuberculosis Day	25	26
27	28	29	30 Doctor's Day	31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Eye Donor Month • Ethics Awareness Month • National Colorectal Awareness Month • Brain Injury Awareness Month 	