

VA Voluntary Service

NEWSLETTER

for the volunteers of the VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York

March/April/May 2002 • Volume 2, Issue 1

Volunteers Come Together to Help Renovate Home Onondaga County DAV and Syracuse VA Partner to Create a Second Transitional Home for Veterans



In November, volunteers from the Syracuse VA, and Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Chapter 8 came together to 'roll up their sleeves' and remove plaster, siding, and clean the premises on Van Duyn Street, the site of a second Syracuse-area transitional residence for veterans.

The Syracuse VA and the DAV have been partners since 1992 when they opened Detor House (named after former DAV Commander, Ray Detor) another Syracuse-area transitional residence for veterans. The program, which offers temporary housing to veterans, while helping them gain vocational and

workplace skills, as well as medical care has been quite successful.

The home, which will be known as Minichillo House (after a DAV Chapter 8 founding member) is located across the street from Detor House. The two houses are owned by Onondaga County and leased to the DAV for

\$1/year and can house up to four veterans each. Veterans will be able to live at Minichillo House for about \$160 per month. This fee includes their rent, phone service, and utilities and gives veterans an opportunity to get back on their feet.

Rep. James Walsh, R-Onondaga helped secure \$38,000 from the Department of Veterans Affairs to rehabilitate the house. DAV Chapter 8 promised \$10,000 in cash and \$10,000 worth of donated services for the project. Volunteers from the Syracuse area came together to get the project underway. Many of the volunteers included VA employees.

Alphonso Davis, graduate of the homeless program and full-time VA employee volunteered alongside Marvin Triggs, Jr., Program Coordinator, DAV Chapter 8, Syracuse VA employee, and Harold Schultz, National Service Officer, DAV.

According to Dr. Larry Lantinga, Behavioral VA Care Line, "these transitional homes demonstrate that government and private organizations can create special partnerships helping homeless veterans regain self-sufficiency and the desire to succeed in society."

To find out how you can help with the Minichillo House, contact the Syracuse VA Voluntary Services office. A special dedication for the house is planned for later in the spring.



Nobody should be homeless but certainly anybody who has served his or her country should not be homeless.

Harold Schultz, DAV



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The VAVS newsletter has been created for all volunteers and potential volunteers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York. This publication is meant to showcase the wonderful work all of our volunteers contribute to VA. Please do not hesitate to contact anyone on the Advisory or Editorial Boards with your comments, corrections or suggestions.



Visit Our Network Web Site
www.va.gov/visns/visn02

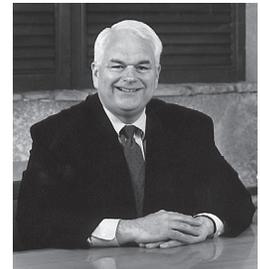
Network 2 Wins Top Award for Organizational Performance

The VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York received the 2001 Robert W. Carey Award, the most prestigious award given by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Based upon the Malcolm Baldrige national criteria, the Carey Award recognizes exceptional organizational effectiveness and performance, including significant improvements in quality and patient satisfaction.

Carey Award competitors include VA medical centers and Networks, as well as the Veterans Benefits Administration, and the National Cemetery Administration. The award is widely used as a model for running a successful organization. Winners must show they satisfied patients, enabled staff,

maintained financial success and improved their community.

This honor is a tribute to our workforce of dedicated employees and volunteers who have made this possible. Congratulations to all for your commitment to our veterans.



Sincerely,

Fred Malphurs
Network Director

Four Chaplains Brotherhood Award

In the thick darkness of a historic night during WWII, the Dorchester set sail in the icy seas off Labrador. Aboard were four U.S. Chaplains – **Rev. George Fox** (Methodist), **Rev. Clark Poling** (Dutch Reformed), **Father John Washington** (Catholic) and **Rabbi Alexander Goode** (Jewish). Each faced the supreme challenge when an enemy torpedo blasted the Dorchester on February 3, 1943 off the coast of Greenland.

Survivors of this attack tell us that the sole order in that ferment of struggling men came from the four chaplains who suddenly appeared on the deck and guided men to their boat stations. Encouraging and comforting their many shipmates, without hesita-

tion, the four chaplains gave up their lifejackets. Four bewildered young soldiers who were frantically searching for their lifejackets on the careening deck of the sinking vessel were saved. With arms linked in a symbolic gesture of their common bond, the four chaplains remained praying on the deck of the ship until it sank into the black waters of the ocean.

The legend of the four chaplains speaks to something deep in our hearts. Each year, an award is given to a volunteer whose service and devotion to others demonstrates the spirit of the four chaplains. Each VA site in the Network recognizes these award recipients at different times throughout the year.





Volunteers Opportunities

Albany

- ❖ Assist with special events/ programs at the Vet Express Program, Senior Center (corner of Myrtle & Delaware Avenue)
- ❖ Cemetery Information Booth at Saratoga VA National Cemetery weekdays and weekends
- ❖ Clerical assistance at Clifton Park, Glens Falls, Kingston, Malone, Plattsburgh, Fonda, Schenectady, Catskill, Elizabethtown and Troy outpatient clinics
- ❖ Drivers for the parking lot shuttle service and Volunteer Transportation Network program
- ❖ Patient companion, Hospice Unit
- ❖ Pharmacy pickup window and (refill) the pharmacy's automated dispensing machine (robot)

Bath

- ❖ Clerical
- ❖ Computer lab
- ❖ Home-based visiting program
- ❖ Home-based primary care
- ❖ Information desk
- ❖ Pet therapy
- ❖ Receptionist

Canandaigua

- ❖ Clerical assistance
- ❖ Companion therapy
- ❖ Dementia patient volunteers - includes orientation, monthly meetings, and ongoing training
- ❖ Golf course
- ❖ Patient escort/transport
- ❖ Recreational activities

Syracuse

- ❖ Clerical/general - filing, telephone calls, answering telephones, etc. at the Binghamton and Rome outpatient clinics
- ❖ Evening escorts - transporting patients, delivery of specimens, etc.
- ❖ Pharmacy - deliver prescriptions (to wards), work at window dispensing filled prescriptions, mailing prescriptions, etc.
- ❖ Rehab Unit (outpatient) - scheduling appointments, telephone calls, filing, transporting patients, etc.

Western New York

- ❖ Activity Buddy program - nursing home care unit - Batavia
- ❖ Clerical - filing, photocopying, running errands, mailing, paper shredding, etc. - both sites
- ❖ DAV/Volunteer Transportation Network - transport veterans to and from appointments - both sites
- ❖ Greeters - welcome veterans and visitors, help them get around the facility - both sites
- ❖ Guest parking lot - transport veterans and guests from cars to and from outpatient entrance - Buffalo
- ❖ Patient escort/transport service - assist patients to and from appointments, and other needs as they arise



***We are always looking for volunteers.
These are just a few of the opportunities available.***





News from...

Albany

Thanks to the generosity of many of our volunteers, we have been able to purchase new medical equipment to enhance veteran care:

- ❖ A portable ultrasound has been purchased for \$1,595 for Rehabilitative Medicine/Occupational Therapy for use with patients who have orthopedic, surgical, and other conditions of the upper extremity.
- ❖ Enough funds were donated by the veterans holiday committee to purchase a Topcon Nonmydriatic camera. The camera is used to screen for diabetic retinopathy. Images are taken at an outpatient clinic and sent to the Albany VA for interpretation and followup. This alleviates the need for patients to travel to the VA for a yearly test.



Marine Corp League's re-enactment of the flag-raising of Iwo Jima, Stratton VA Medical Center

Bath

A very special 'thank you' to all the volunteers and service organizations that took the time to sponsor an activity and/or visit a veteran during the holiday season and National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans week. The next few months will be very busy with preparations for volunteer recognition, the Memorial Day program, and our annual fundraising concert featuring Nik and the Nice Guys. More detailed information will be mailed to local volunteers. If you are interested in selling tickets for the Nik and the Nice Guys show, please contact Sue or Sis in our office. All proceeds from this event are used to support programs at the Bath VA.

Canandaigua

- ❖ Volunteer, **Helen Gladwin** turned 99 years old. A party was held for her in building 7 where she still volunteers two days/week.
- ❖ A Pearl Harbor Day ceremony was held in December in conjunction with the DAV holiday party for patients. Four Pearl Harbor survivors were recognized and presented with a commemorative coin.
- ❖ Our mitten tree was a success again this year. One volunteer made 80 pair! Victor Brownie Troop #356 helped us decorate the mitten tree and visited with patients. Thank you Brownies!
- ❖ The holiday programs were a success thanks in part to the 75 volunteers who helped with gift-wrap and the 125 that helped with gift distribution. Seven hundred fifty veterans received gifts including: shirt, hat, slipper socks, and comfort kit. Inpatients also received \$10.
- ❖ The annual Elks lap robe distribution was held on December 9.





News from...

Western New York

Healing through Music Program

The Planetree committee has begun a new program called "Healing through Music." The goal of this Planetree initiative is to host an hour of entertainment in a common area of the medical center for all to enjoy.

Voluntary Service and Recreation Therapy have helped by providing contacts and refreshments.

Thomas Bligh (Batavia) and **John Quagliana** (Buffalo) have been instrumental in setting up activities for November, December, and January.

Batavia attendees heard performances by choirs from Notre Dame High School (Batavia) and Holy Family Parochial School (Leroy). Buffalo hosted the Serendipity Handbell Ensemble and a cellist and pianist from Amherst High School.

BOCES Initiative - Work in Progress

Voluntary Service has been busy with a new program called 'Connections.' This Erie County Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) course, under the direction of **Mary Wrzesinski** (BOCES) and **Patricia Widzinski** (VA) provide students with an educational outlet to explore many clinical areas.

'Connections' provide 12th graders of academic excellence, an opportunity to learn more about careers in VA healthcare. Students work in rotations with preceptors through many direct patient care and ancillary work areas. Students are also placed in volunteer assignments so they can gain valuable volunteer experience. This program provides students with a national perspective, as well as demonstrating the value of local volunteers.

President Calls for Volunteers Taken from President George W. Bush's State of the Union Address

"None of us would ever wish the evil that was done on September the 11th. Yet after America was attacked, it was as if our entire country looked into a mirror and saw our better selves. We were reminded that we are citizens, with obligations to each other, to our country, and to history. We began to think less of the goods we can accumulate, and more about the good we can do.

For too long our culture has said, "If it feels good, do it." Now America is embracing a new ethic and a new creed: "Let's roll." In the sacrifice of soldiers, the fierce brotherhood of firefighters, and the bravery and generosity of ordinary citizens, we have glimpsed what a new culture of responsibility could look like. We want to be a nation that serves goals larger than self. We've been offered a unique opportunity, and we must not let this moment pass.

My call tonight is for every American to commit at least two years — 4,000 hours over the rest of your lifetime — to the service of your neighbors and your nation. Many are already serving, and I thank you. If you aren't sure how to help, I've got a good place to start. To sustain and extend the best that has emerged in America, I invite you to join the new USA Freedom Corps. The Freedom Corps will focus on three areas of need: responding in case of crisis at home; rebuilding our communities; and extending American compassion throughout the world.

One purpose of the USA Freedom Corps will be homeland security. America needs retired doctors and nurses who can be mobilized in major emergencies; volunteers to help police and fire departments; transportation and utility workers well-trained in spotting danger.

Our country also needs citizens working to rebuild our communities. We need mentors to love children, especially children whose parents are in prison. And we need more talented teachers in troubled schools. USA Freedom Corps will expand and improve the good

(see Volunteers page 8)





Wish Lists

Albany

- ❖ Meals for patients at the Community Day Treatment Program
- ❖ Renovations to the Hoptel Unit
- ❖ Support for the homeless veterans program and food pantry
- ❖ Toiletries and clothing (male and female)
- ❖ Items unique for women (personal care items and funding for the Women Veterans Health Fair)
- ❖ Phone cards
- ❖ Pool table
- ❖ Refrigerator
- ❖ Rototiller
- ❖ Sponsored luncheons, pizza parties, trips
- ❖ Stove
- ❖ Tickets for bowling and sporting events
- ❖ Washing machine and dryer

Bath

- ❖ Bowling program sponsors
- ❖ Donations to support Jump Start
- ❖ Jeans
- ❖ Personal care items
- ❖ Relaxation tapes
- ❖ Sponsors for weekday trips

Canandaigua

- ❖ Aquarium (50-gallon)
- ❖ Coffee (decaf)
- ❖ Disposable plates, bowls, cups, napkins and dinnerware
- ❖ Funding for general purpose account for veteran's needs
- ❖ Funding for recreation services
- ❖ Personal care items (shampoo, shaving cream, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, lotion, new socks, underwear, etc.)
- ❖ American Flag (20' x 38')
- ❖ Coffee service (\$40/year)
- ❖ Comfort items
- ❖ Funding for National Rehabilitative Games
- ❖ Funding - Quality of Life Fund
- ❖ Personal care items (toothpaste, shaving cream, razors, etc)
- ❖ Satellite TV Program (1 year/ \$5,000)
- ❖ Telephones
- ❖ Televisions
- ❖ TV/VCR with cart
- ❖ VCR
- ❖ Wheelchairs
- ❖ Wheelchair cup holders
- ❖ White t-shirts - various sizes

Western New York (Batavia and Buffalo)

- ❖ Fish tank maintenance
- ❖ Funding for coffee cart program
- ❖ Funding for emergency travel
- ❖ Funding for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder residential rehabilitation program
- ❖ Newspaper subscriptions
- ❖ Pill organizers
- ❖ Snacks for diabetes group meetings
- ❖ Treadmill(s)
- ❖ Sponsorship of Day of Honor Ceremony (recognition of World War II minority veterans) - May 11

If you would like to make a donation/sponsor an event, please contact voluntary service for more information.



Prior to purchasing items or donating large items, please contact voluntary service to make arrangements.





Calendar of Events

April 7-12 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, Snowmass, CO
 April 21-27 National Volunteer Week
 April 22 National Volunteer Appreciation Day
 May 15-19 National VAVS Conference, Portland, OR

Albany

April
 21 **Volunteer Recognition** 1:00 p.m.
 Italian American Community Center,
 Washington Avenue Extension
 23 **Volunteer Week Social** 10:00 a.m.
 Auditorium
 23 **VAVS Committee Meeting** 1:00 p.m.
 Auditorium

May
 4 **Armed Forces Military Ball** 7:00 p.m.
 Polish Community Center,
 Washington Avenue Extension
*\$25 per person, RSVP by April 26.
 Proceeds go to VetCare for support of
 Fisher House*

Bath

March
Women's Heritage Month
 Weekly activities/programs
 Hospital Lobby, Bldg. 76

April
 4 **VAVS Committee Meeting** 1:30 p.m.
 Leisure Room, Bldg. 92
 7 **Masonic Youth Talent Show** 1:00 p.m.
 Leisure Room, Bldg. 92
 16-20 **Consumer Awareness Week** –
 Displays/refreshments
 Hospital Lobby, Bldg. 76
 27 **Volunteer Recognition** Noon
 Tally-Ho Restaurant, Kanona, NY

May
Asian/Pacific Heritage Month
 Weekly activities/programs
 Hospital Lobby, Bldg. 76

27 **Memorial Day Events** 1:30 p.m.
 Medical Center Grounds
*Military tactical displays and marching
 bands. Band to perform after parade.*
 27 **Chicken Bar-B-Que** 5:00 p.m.
 Medical Center Grounds
*Sponsored by the Sons of American
 Legion 173*

Canandaigua

April
 11 **Pie, Plant & Ice Cream Sale** 9:30 a.m.
 Auditorium, Bldg. 5
*Donation of pies, plants, and 'rummage
 sale' items needed. Additional information
 will be mailed to local volunteers.*
 25 **Volunteer Recognition** 11:30 a.m.
 Burgundy Basin Inn
*Volunteers with 2,500 hours are eligible for
 an award and a complimentary ticket.
 Tickets are \$12.50 each and on sale March
 14 – April 19. Additional information will
 be mailed to local volunteers.*

May
 8 **Volunteer Orientation** 2:30 p.m.
 Auditorium, Bldg. 5

Syracuse

March
 10 **Colonial Brass Quintet** 2:00 p.m.
 Auditorium
*Air Force Band of Liberty from Hanscom
 AFB Massachusetts.*



April
 16 **Days of Remembrance** 11:30 a.m.
 Auditorium
NYC documentary producer, Eileen Douglas
 28 **Volunteer Recognition** 1:00 p.m.
 New York State Fairgrounds, Empire Room

May
 13 **VAVS Committee Meeting** 1:30 p.m.
 Auditorium

Western New York

March
 20 **VAVS Committee Meeting** 1:30 p.m.
 Buffalo, Room 301
 21 **Veterans Service Officer Mtg.** 10:00 a.m.
 Batavia, Room 327E

April
 9 **Former POW Recognition Day** 10:00 a.m.
 Buffalo, Room 1109C
 12 **Defensive Driver Course** 8:00 a.m.
 Buffalo, Room 301
 21-27 **National Volunteer Week**
 Daily activities - Buffalo & Batavia
 23 **Volunteer Recognition (Batavia)** 6:00 p.m.
 Batavia Holiday Inn

May
 8 **VAVS Committee Meeting** 1:30 p.m.
 Batavia, Auditorium
 11 **Day of Honor** 11:00 a.m.
 Hearthstone Manor, Depew
*Recognition luncheon of WWII minority
 veterans.*
 15 **Volunteer Recognition (Buff) Noon**
 Hearthstone Manor, Depew
 27 **Memorial Day Observance** 8:30 a.m.
 Batavia, Flag Pole
 30 **Memorial Day Observance** 2:00 p.m.
 Buffalo, Room 30





Veterans History Project Preserving Stories of Service for Future Generations

We have much to learn from those who served our nation. A national collection of personal histories on audio and video tape, as well as letters, diaries, maps, photographs and home movies will be of value to historians, educators, students, authors, filmmakers, and family members.

The mission of the Veterans History project at the Library of Congress is to collect the memories, accounts, and documents of war veterans from World War I, World War II and the Korean, Vietnam and Persian Gulf Wars, and to preserve these stories of experience and service for future generations.

This project includes all veterans - men and women - who served in the war and in support of combat and operations, in all ranks of all branches of service, the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. We also include the Merchant Marine, those involved in home front activities and citizens who support the armed services. The first priority is to focus on the most senior veterans and those who served in support of them, especially those from World Wars I and II and the Korean War.

Anyone with information that may be of interest to this project should contact his/her local Voluntary Service office for more information.

Volunteers (continued from page 5)

efforts of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps to recruit more than 200,000 new volunteers.

And America needs citizens to extend the compassion of our country to every part of the world. So we will renew the promise of the Peace Corps, double its volunteers over the next five years — and ask it to join a new effort to encourage development and education and opportunity in the Islamic world.

This time of adversity offers a unique moment of opportunity — a moment we must seize to change our culture. Through the gathering momentum of millions of acts of service and decency and kindness, I know we can overcome evil with greater good. And we have a great opportunity during this time of war to lead the world toward the values that will bring lasting peace.”



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Penalty for private use
\$300

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