



# UPDATE

September/October 2014

*A bi-monthly newsletter for Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, and for those who serve Veterans. Send news items and comments to St. Cloud VA Health Care System, Attn: Public Affairs Officer, 4801 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN 56303, or via email to [Barry.Venable@va.gov](mailto:Barry.Venable@va.gov)*



## 90 Years of Veteran Service

Special Feature Accompanying  
this Issue:

*90 Years Young, Going Strong*

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**VA**  
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## Calendar of Events

Monday, September 1—The St. Cloud VAHCS will be closed to observe **Labor Day**, a Federal holiday. Urgent Care Clinic open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Tuesday, September 2 & 16, October 7 & 21 (12-2 p.m.)—**St. Cloud Area Veterans' Law Clinic**. Free legal consultation for Veterans for: Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320-253-0138 or 1-800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment. Appointments are held at the St. Cloud VA in Building 28, Room 126.

Thursday, September 4 (4-8 p.m.)—**Lac Qui Parle County Fair**, 705 Fair Street, Madison, MN. Clinic staff from the Montevideo VA CBOC will be on hand to answer questions along with the Lac Qui Parle County Veterans Service Officer.

Saturday, September 6 (9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)—**2nd Annual Veterans Rendezvous** at the St. Cloud VA Health Care campus. All Veterans, Service Members, their families and friends are invited for a day of music and fun. Connect with other Veterans and learn how the St. Cloud VA and its programs can benefit you. For more details, see [www.stcloud.va.gov/features/Veterans Ren flyer 2014.pdf](http://www.stcloud.va.gov/features/Veterans_Ren_flyer_2014.pdf).

Saturday, September 6 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**Beyond the Yellow Ribbon**, Becker City Park, 10362 Co. Rd. 23 SE, Becker, MN. A Welcome Home event for all Veterans with a focus on Korean War Vets.

Monday, September 8 & October 6 (8:10 a.m.)—Listen to the **Veterans Affairs Radio Show** on KNSI, AM 1450/FM 103.3.

Monday, September 8 (5-6 p.m.)—**St. Cloud VAHCS Town Hall Meeting**, Auditorium (Bldg. 8) on the St. Cloud VA campus and via teleconference from the Alexandria, Brainerd and Montevideo CBOCs. Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA are invited to hear from and have concerns addressed by St. Cloud VA officials. Due to limited parking, Veterans attending in St. Cloud should park in the lot to the north of Bldg. 111 and enter the Auditorium from the north entrance.

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## Calendar of Events

Tuesday, September 9 (9-10 a.m.), or Wednesday, September 17 (6-7 p.m.) or September 24 (2-3 p.m.)—**VA Caregiver Support Line**. Free education and support for Caregivers-right from your home phone! Topic for September is *Safe Haven: Building on Family Strength*. To register, call Jess Behrends, St. Cloud VA, 320-252-1670, ext. 7283.

Tuesday, September 16 (5-7 p.m.)—**Open House at American Legion Post 193** (old firehall), 12155 Hancock Street SE, Becker, MN. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on hand to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

Wednesday, September 17 & October 15 (8:10 a.m.)—Listen to the **Voices for Veterans Radio Show** on WJON AM 1240.

Friday, September 19 & October 17 (12-2 p.m.)—**Southwestern Minnesota Veterans' Law Clinic** at the Montevideo CBOC. FREE legal consultation for Veterans. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320-403-1051 to schedule an appointment.

Saturday, September 20 (11 a.m.-5 p.m.)—**Pride in the Park**, Lake George/ Eastman Park, 1101 7th Street South, St. Cloud, MN. A family event hosted by St. Cloud Pride, a Central Minnesota Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) organization. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

Tuesday, September 23 (10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.)—**Free Drop-In Legal Clinic for Veterans**, Bldg. 8 at St. Cloud VAHCS. Free legal clinic covering child support and family law, employment, benefits, expungment and debt collection. For more information, contact Sara Sommarstrom-MACV, 651-224-0292, or [ssommarstrom@mac-v.org](mailto:ssommarstrom@mac-v.org).

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## Calendar of Events

Wednesday, September 24 (8 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**Bemidji Stand Down**, National Guard Armory, 1430 23rd Street NW, Bemidji, MN. Stand Downs are collaborative events between local VAs and community agencies to help homeless Veterans access resources. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

Thursday, September 25 (8 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**Grand Rapids Stand Down**, National Guard Armory, 930 NE 1st Avenue, Grand Rapids, MN. Stand Downs are collaborative events between local VAs and community agencies to help homeless Veterans access resources. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

Friday, September 26 (11 a.m.-1 p.m.)—**Celebration of Caregivers**, Bldg. 96 at the St. Cloud VAHCS. Meet and share ideas with other Caregivers and discover VA resources to help provide the best care possible. Open to Caregivers, Veterans and the Public.

Monday, September 29 (1:30-2:30 p.m.)—**CVSO Workshop-Women Veterans' Presentation**, Holiday Inn, 75 37th Ave. South, St. Cloud, MN. St. Cloud VAHCS Women Veterans' Program Manager, Julie Roman Vera, will provide a presentation on women Veterans' health care services and answer questions about enrollment.

Tuesday, September 30 (5:30-7:30 p.m.)—**My Mall...Shop Health for Life**, Bldg. 96 at the St. Cloud VAHCS and via teleconference at the Alexandria, Brainerd and Montevideo CBOCs. *My Mall* is a virtual place and method for Women Veterans to “shop” from an ongoing series of health care education and services “stores” tailored to their own unique health care needs. *Stress and Pain Management* is the first “store” opening and will offer a variety of tools to assist women with managing stress and pain. To find out more and to register for this free event, visit [www.stcloud.va.gov](http://www.stcloud.va.gov).

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## Calendar of Events

Saturday, October 4 (9 a.m.-5 p.m.), & Sunday, October 5 (9 a.m.-3 p.m.)—**Gun Show**, National Guard Armory, 1710 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

Saturday, October 4 (10 a.m.-4 p.m.)—**Women’s Showcase**, River’s Edge Convention Center, 10 Fourth Ave. South, St. Cloud, MN. Come on out for a day filled with fun, entertainment, shopping and more! Visit the Women Veterans’ Program Manager, Julie Roman Vera, and get information about St. Cloud VA Health Care services and eligibility. For more details and to get tickets, go to [www.womensshowcase.com](http://www.womensshowcase.com).

Tuesday, October 7 (9-10 a.m.), or Wednesday, October 22 (2-3 p.m.) or October 29 (6-7 p.m.)—**VA Caregiver Support Line**. Free education and support for Caregivers-right from your home phone! Topic for October is *Vital Connections: Restoring Balance in the Most Challenging Times*. To register, call Jess Behrends, St. Cloud VA, 320-252-1670, ext. 7283.

Thursday, October 9 (8-10 a.m.)—**St. Cloud Area Human Service Council Resource Fair**, United Way of Central MN, 3001 Clearwater Road, St. Cloud, MN. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on hand to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

Saturday, October 11 (9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.)—**10th Annual Kids & Parents Expo**, River’s Edge Convention Center, 10 Fourth Ave. South, St. Cloud, MN. Adults \$5, Kids 12 and under are free. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

Tuesday, October 14 (8 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**Marshall Stand Down**, Marshall YMCA, 200 South A Street, Marshall, MN. Stand Downs are collaborative events between local VAs and community agencies to help homeless Veterans access resources. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

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## Calendar of Events

Tuesday, October 14 (10 a.m.-3 p.m.)—**Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Health Fair**, Aazhoomog Community Center, 45741 Grace Lake Road, **Sandstone**, MN. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

Wednesday, October 15 (10 a.m.-3 p.m.)—**Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Health Fair**, East Lake Community Center, 36666 State Hwy 65, **McGregor**, MN. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

Wednesday, October 15 (1:00-1:30 p.m.)—**Quarterly Memorial Service** at the St. Cloud VAHCS Chapel. Memorial service for Veterans who have recently passed away.

Thursday, October 16 (10 a.m.-3 p.m.)—**Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Health Fair**, Mille Lacs Community Center, 43500 Virgo Road, **Onamia**, MN. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.

Friday, October 17 (10 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**Kanabec/Pine Community Education Event for Seniors**, 214 Railroad Ave. NW, Mora, MN. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility and provide one of the information sessions on Caregiver Support. Vendor booths, keynote speaker and six breakout sessions are also available.

Friday, October 31 (9 a.m.-2 p.m.)—**St. Cloud Stand Down**, National Guard Armory, 1710 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud, MN. Stand Downs are collaborative events between local VAs and community agencies to help homeless Veterans access resources. Representatives from the St. Cloud VA will be on site to answer questions about health care services and eligibility.



On September 17, 1924, the dedication ceremony for the newly opened St. Cloud Veterans Hospital was held. The past 90 years have seen many changes. Initially treating Veterans from the Spanish-American War, Philippine-American War, Boxer Rebellion and World War I, we have adapted ourselves and our facilities to deliver the evolving tide of modern medicine to our Veterans.

Today is no different. We are busy arranging the organization, services and facilities to meet the needs of today's Veterans. If you walk our halls today you will meet Veterans of World War II, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War and Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.

We are proud of this organization. We help Veterans from throughout central Minnesota and across the Midwest at the Medical Center in St. Cloud and our three Community VA Clinics in Alexandria, Brainerd, and Montevideo. Among our staff are employees with over 40 years of service; many with over 30 years of service; and some of our employees are second and third generation employees.

There is, however, something which hasn't changed over the past 90 years, and that is the fact that we get to serve Veterans. Thank you.

Please enjoy this issue of Update and the accompanying supplement describing some of the 90-year history of this organization.

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## **We Want You to Stay Healthy this Flu Season!**



Flu shots are an important part of staying healthy during the flu season, and this year the St. Cloud VA Health Care System is making it easier than ever to get your flu shot. As always, flu shots are available in conjunction with other scheduled appointments at the St. Cloud VA Health Care System and at any of the Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) locations in Alexandria, Brainerd and Montevideo. This year, in addition to the annual clinics at the St. Cloud VA and the VA clinics in Alexandria, Montevideo and Brainerd, we are also offering additional mobile flu shot clinics in several counties across central Minnesota.

A special family clinic will be available for Veterans' family members, including spouses, significant others, caregivers and children ages 3 and up at the St. Cloud VA (Bldg. 96) from 9 to 11 a.m. on October 1 and 2 only. Payment (\$35) will be required or health insurance can be billed. Please bring the appropriate insurance card(s).

**The following page contains the list of flu shot clinics—print it out and paste it on your refrigerator to remind you to stay healthy this year by getting your flu shot!**

If you plan on attending one of the mobile clinics, take care of your buddy and bring along a non-enrolled Veteran with a copy of their DD214. While we can't give them a flu shot, we can determine eligibility and provide information on how to apply for VA health benefits.

Any changes to the flu vaccination clinic schedule will be announced on the flu shot information line: (320) 255-6444.

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## Flu Shot Clinics

*For Veterans receiving VA health care through the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, and registered St. Cloud VA Volunteers.*

### St. Cloud VA

*Building 96 (West side of campus)*

October 1: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

October 2: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

*Building 1 (Main Building)*

Sept. 16 thru Nov 22 on:

Tuesdays 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturdays 8 a.m. to Noon

**Special Family Clinic:** Flu shots are available for Veterans' family members, including spouses, significant others, caregivers and children aged 3 & up at the St. Cloud VA (Bldg. 96), from 9 to 11 a.m. on Oct. 1 and 2. Payment (\$35) will be required or health insurance can be billed. Please bring insurance card(s).

### Max J. Bielke CBOC

*515 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue E. - Alexandria, MN*

Oct. 9: 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Oct. 22: 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

### Brainerd CBOC

*722 NW 7<sup>th</sup> Street - Brainerd, MN*

Oct. 21: 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Oct. 24: 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Nov. 4: 1 to 3:30 p.m.

### Montevideo CBOC

*1025 North 13<sup>th</sup> Street - Montevideo, MN*

Sept. 24: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Any changes to the flu vaccination clinic schedule will be announced on a recorded message at: (320) 255-6444.**

## Mobile Flu Clinics

*For Veterans receiving VA health care and registered St. Cloud VA Volunteers.  
Please bring your VA I.D. card.*

### Sherburne County

**Zimmerman, Sept. 23, 9 to 11 a.m.**

*American Legion Post 560, 12674 Fremont Ave.*

**Elk River, Sept. 23, 1 to 3 p.m.**

*American Legion Post 112, 525 Railroad Dr.*

**Big Lake, Sept. 24, 9 to 11 a.m.**

*Big Lake Senior Center, 160 Lake St. N.*

**Becker, Sept. 24, 1 to 3 p.m.**

*American Legion Post 193, 12155 Hancock St. SE*

### Aitkin County

**Aitkin, Sept. 25, 12:30 to 4 p.m.**

*American Legion Post 86, 20 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. NE*

### McLeod County

**Hutchinson, Sept. 30, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.**

*National Guard Armory, 1200 Adams St. SE*

### Pope County

**Glenwood, Oct. 7, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

*Courthouse Community Rm., 130 E. Minnesota Ave.*

### Kandiyohi County

**Willmar, Oct. 8, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

*American Legion Post 167, 220 19<sup>th</sup> Ave SW*

### Lyon County

**Marshall, Oct. 14, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

*YMCA, 200 S. A St.*

### Stearns County

**Sauk Centre, Oct. 15, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.**

*American Legion Post 67, 128 Main St. S*

**Belgrade, Oct. 15, 1 to 3 p.m.**

*VFW Post 1825, 231 Morrison St.*

### Wadena County

**Wadena, Oct. 16, 9 a.m. to Noon**

*VFW Post 3922, 213 1st St. SE*

### Todd County

**Long Prairie, Oct. 16, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.**

*VFW Post 1140, 111 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. S*

# Flu Shots

## General Information

*This information from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is for Veterans and their families. This fact sheet answers some questions you may have about the flu shot.*



### Who should get a flu shot?

Everyone age 6 months and older is recommended to get a flu shot each year by VA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### Why should I get a flu shot?

- Getting a flu shot is the best way to slow the spread of flu from person to person.
- A flu shot can protect you and your family or friends against flu.
- Because of flu, thousands die and many more are hospitalized each year in the U.S.
- Anyone can get flu, but some people are at high risk for complications from flu:
  - people age 65 and older
  - people with health problems like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, chronic lung disease, and other chronic illnesses or conditions
  - pregnant women or people caring for an infant or a family member with health problems

### How well does the flu shot work?

Studies show that getting a flu shot can reduce illness and death from flu.

### When should I get a flu shot?

- **In the fall**, as soon as flu shots are available. A flu shot will protect you the entire flu season.
- Get a flu shot every year as flu viruses can change from year to year.

### Why do I need a flu shot every year?

- Flu viruses can change over time.
- Every year, the flu shot vaccine is updated to protect against the flu viruses most likely to spread that year.

### Can I get flu from a flu shot?

**No!** Only inactive (dead) flu virus is used to make flu shot vaccine, so **you cannot get flu from a flu shot.**



### Fast Facts: What is flu?

- Flu - short for influenza - is a respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses.
- Flu spreads easily. It occurs every year, mainly during fall, winter, and spring.
- Flu is different from a cold. People with flu usually feel achy and have a fever.

## How does a flu shot protect me from flu?

- A flu shot helps your immune system build antibodies that fight flu viruses.
- Once you get a flu shot, it takes about 2 weeks for antibodies to protect you from flu.

## Can I still get flu after I get a flu shot?

### Maybe if:

- you are exposed to flu **before or right after you get a flu shot**, you could get flu before the shot takes effect
- the flu shot vaccine does not match all the flu viruses that are spreading
- flu viruses change after the flu shot is made (even so, you will still get some protection from the flu shot)
- you have an illness or weak immune system that causes your body to take longer to make antibodies
- your body fails to make antibodies after you get a flu shot



### Remember:

**You cannot get flu from a flu shot!  
Flu shots are safe and they work!**

## Is the flu shot safe?

**Yes.** Most people who get the flu shot do not have serious side effects or reactions to it.

- Some people may have redness or swelling on their arm where the shot was given.
- A very small number of people get minor body aches, a headache, or a low fever that lasts only a day or two.

## I am allergic to eggs. What should I do?

- If you have a **severe** allergy to chicken eggs, talk with your health care provider before getting the flu shot.
- Many people with egg allergies can still get a flu shot or other flu vaccine.

## What else can I do to slow the spread of flu?

- Stay home when sick.
- Clean your hands.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.

## WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

[www.publichealth.va.gov/flu](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/flu)

[www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)

[www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of Public Health (10P3)  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420  
[publichealth@va.gov](mailto:publichealth@va.gov)

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[www.publichealth.va.gov/InfectionDontPassItOn](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/InfectionDontPassItOn)



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Office of Public Health

St. Cloud VA Women Veterans' Program

## *My Mall*

*Healthy living experiences for  
Women Veterans.*

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*Shop for better health at the*

### **Stress and Pain Management Spa**

**Sept. 30, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**



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St. Cloud VAMC (Bldg.96) and the Alexandria, Brainerd  
and Montevideo VA Clinics

RSVP for this FREE event (800) 247-1739, Ext. 6353.

Learn more: [www.stcloud.va.gov](http://www.stcloud.va.gov)

## *My Mall*

*Healthy living experiences for Women Veterans.*

My Mall is a virtual place and method for Women Veterans to “shop” from an ongoing series of health care education and services “stores” tailored to their own unique health care needs. The stores in the mall are all focused on keeping Women Veterans healthy, and as we open the different stores each woman can choose if she would like to shop. This individual selection is what makes it “My Mall.” *(cont. next page)*

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*(My Mall, cont.)*

The first store opening is the Stress and Pain Management Spa, which offers a variety of tools to assist women with managing stress and pain. The Stress and Pain Management Spa will be open September 30, 2014, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Building 96 at the St. Cloud VAMC and at the Alexandria, Brainerd and Montevideo VA Clinics via teleconference.

### **What is taking place at the Spa?**

**From 5:30-6:30 p.m.** *(Please call if you want to receive the flu vaccination)*

Registration, social gathering, light refreshments, health screenings and flu vaccinations. Resources available include: Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) representative, Care Giver Support Program, Tele Health, Health Promotion Disease Prevention, Women's Health, Veterans Library, enrollment and eligibility and many more.

**From 6:30 to 7:00 p.m.**

Psychologist Alicia Lelis, Ph.D., will conduct an interactive session on simple yet effective techniques on how to manage pain and stress that can be used anywhere, at any time. Her presentation provides shoppers with a number of tools to add to their "shopping bag."

**From 7:00 to 7:30 p.m.** *(Please RVSP if planning to attend the yoga session, space limited) (25 participants for St. Cloud, 8 for Alexandria, 12 for Brainerd and 8 for Montevideo)*

Recreation Therapist Kristin Olson, CTRS, will conduct a yoga session for those who are interested in exploring the benefits of yoga for pain and stress management. Please wear comfortable clothes. For those with physical limitations chair yoga will also be offered.

Closing remarks and door prizes

Not enrolled at the VA? No problem. Bring a copy of your DD214 and the eligibility staff can assist you.



## Coaching Into Care Program Helps Veterans Get Needed Care

### Overview



*Coaching Into Care* provides a “coaching” service for family and friends of Veterans who see that their Veteran needs help. Coaching involves helping the caller figure out how to motivate their Veteran to seek services. The service is free and provided by licensed clinical social workers and psychologists. The goal of the service is to help the Veteran and family members find the appropriate services in their community.

*Coaching Into Care* takes your privacy, and that of your Veteran, very seriously. We keep all calls confidential, except for cases in which we act to protect the lives of you, your Veteran, or others.

### When to Call



#### **Learn how to enroll for VA care**

If you do not know how a Veteran can get enrolled in VA care, call *Coaching Into Care*. Our telephone responders understand the procedures, what documents your Veteran needs and what to do with them, as well as other VA resources that might be of help. *(cont. next page)*

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*(Coaching into Care, cont.)*

### **Learn to talk with your Veteran about getting help**

Having important conversations can be difficult. If you are worried about your Veteran and don't seem to be able to find the right words to tell them, you can call and talk to our team. We can help you come up with ideas about what to do and say to help your Veteran take the next step. (see ***What to Expect***)

### **What to do if your Veteran is enrolled in care but no longer attends appointments**

People drop out of treatment for all kinds of reasons. Sometimes family members are not aware of the treatment that their Veteran attends, often because it is not openly discussed. If you are a close family member who wants to learn how to be more helpful in your Veteran's care, call *Coaching Into Care*. These can be difficult conversations, and our coaches can work with you every step of the way in order to help you open up lines of communication.

### **What to do if there is a crisis or you are worried someone is in danger**

The Veteran's Crisis Line can be reached at 800-273-8255, press 1. You can even text them at 838255, or chat online at <http://veteranscrisisline.net/> for help.

You can also call 911 to reach your local emergency services, or go directly to your nearest emergency room (ER).

### **What to do if your Veteran is already in VA medical or mental health care, you provide care for him or her, but you need some help**

The Caregiver Support Line (1-855-260-3274) can help you connect with services for caregivers of our nation's Veterans. You can also look up your local Caregiver Support Contact at [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov).

### **What if you aren't sure if these services are for you?**

[Take this quiz](#) or [meet some of our callers](#).

*(cont. next page)*

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(Coaching into Care, cont.)

## What to Expect



When you call *Coaching Into Care*, you will talk with a member of our team who specializes in helping callers get information about how to help their Veterans and how to navigate the VA system. We can help you get information about mental illness, services available at the VA, and tips on how to begin the conversation with your Veteran. Call times vary, but generally take 10 to 30 minutes, depending on the issue and may extend for several calls with the same coach.

We are careful to keep your information confidential, except in cases where someone's life is in danger or a child, elderly, or disabled person is being abused. In those cases, we will only release the information that is necessary to protect the lives and wellbeing of those involved.

For more information, go to [www.mirecc.va.gov/coaching/index.asp](http://www.mirecc.va.gov/coaching/index.asp).

**Veterans  
Town Hall  
Meeting** 

**Sept. 8, 2014  
5 p.m.**

**Bldg. 8 (Auditorium)**

**and via teleconference from  
Max J. Beilke CBOC (Alexandria)  
Brainerd CBOC  
Montevideo CBOC**



*Integrity Commitment Advocacy Respect Excellence*



# Winter Driving Tip

## Stay Home (and Stay Healthy!)

We have an option that allows you to stay home and visit with your provider/care team, eliminating the need to travel to the VA for an appointment, and avoiding cancellations caused by poor weather.

**WHAT IS IT?** Clinical Video (CVT) to Home is a care delivery method that uses a live video connection with a member of your care team or specialist. You are able to stay in your own home and still get the medical care you need.

### **BENEFITS:**

- Saves you time and travel
- Less money spent on gas
- No traffic
- Stay in privacy and warmth of own home
- No Co-Pay

### **To Be Eligible to use CVT to Home you must have:**

- Computer with speakers
- Broadband internet
- Webcam

**Not all services are available via CVT to Home so please check with your care team. Services currently available include:**

- Mental Health follow up and therapy
- Primary RN follow up
- Nutrition
- HBPC Social Work and Nutrition

**\*If interested speak to a member of your care team for a welcome packet\***

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# **St. Cloud VA**

**Health Care System**

*is pleased to announce that the*

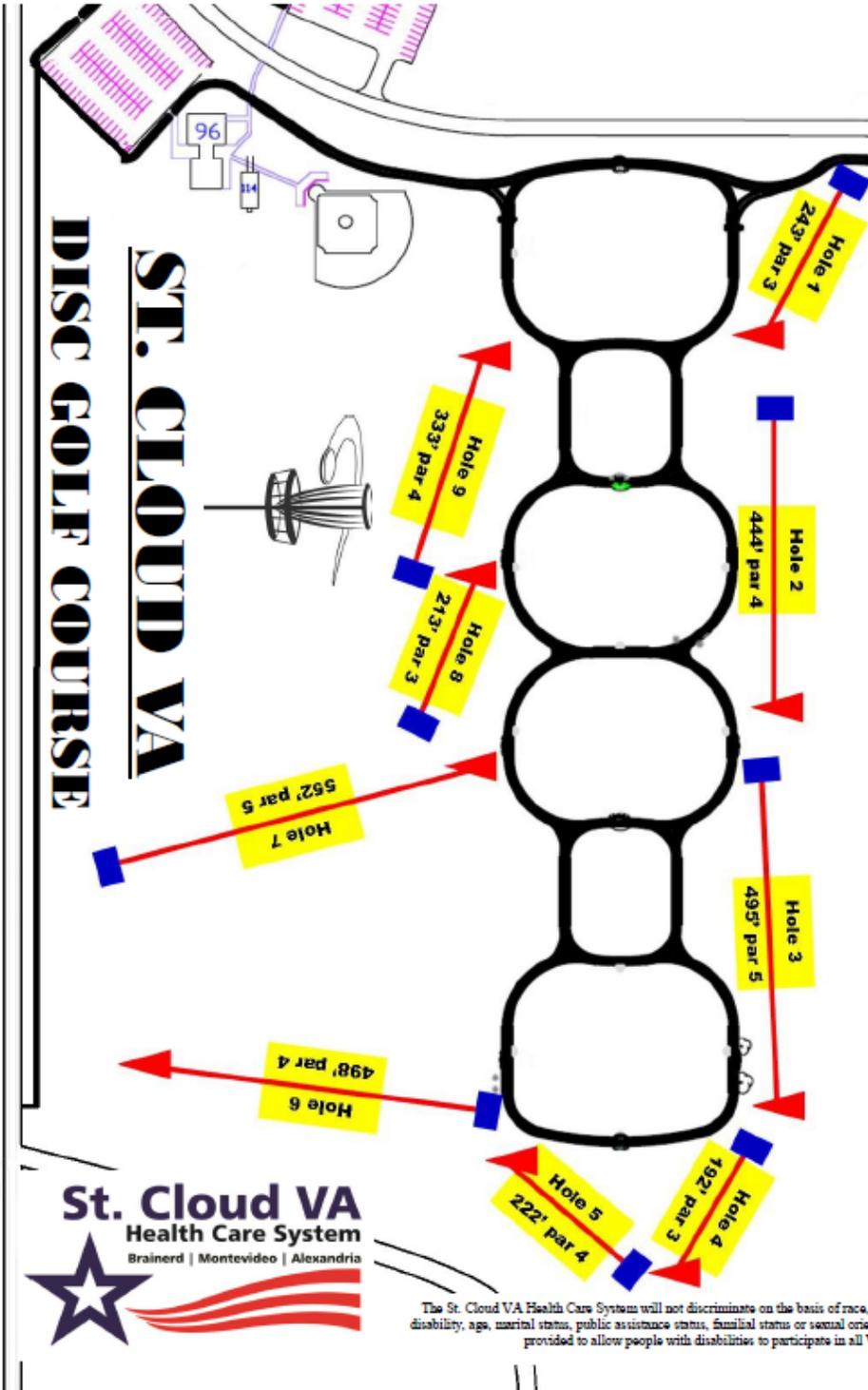
***Disc Golf Course***  
***will be available for play***  
**September 1<sup>st</sup> 2014**

*The Disc Golf Course is open to all Veterans receiving services at the St. Cloud VA.  
Daylight hours only.*

**HOLE 1 243' PAR 3** —  
**HOLE 2 444' PAR 4** —  
**HOLE 3 495' PAR 5** —

**HOLE 4 192' PAR 3** —  
**HOLE 5 222' PAR 4** —  
**HOLE 6 498' PAR 4** —

**HOLE 7 552' PAR 5** —  
**HOLE 8 213' PAR 3** —  
**HOLE 9 333' PAR 4** —



**DISC GOLF RULES**

**GENERAL**  
 Disc Golf is played like ball golf using a flying disc. One point is counted each time the disc is thrown and when a penalty is incurred. The object is to acquire the lowest score.

**PAR**

**TEE THROWS**  
 Tee throws must be completed within or behind the designated throw area. Do not throw until the players in front of you are out of range.

**LIE**  
 The spot where the previous throw has landed, mark with a mini disc or turn over the thrown disc, directly towards the hole.

**THROWING ORDER**  
 After teeing off, the player whose disc is farthest from the hole always throws first. The player with the least amount of throws on the previous hole is the first to tee off on the next hole.

**FAIRWAY THROWS**  
 Fairway throws must be made with the foot closest to the hole on the lie. The other foot may be no closer to the hole than the lie. A run-up and normal follow-through, after release, is allowed.

**COMPLETION OF THE HOLE**  
 A disc that comes to rest in the Disc Pole Hole basket or chains constituted successful completion of that hole.

**UN-PLAYABLE LIE**  
 Any disc that comes to rest above the ground (in a tree, for instance) is considered an un-playable lie. Your next shot must be thrown from the spot directly underneath the un-playable lie. If necessary, relocate your throw to avoid damage to the vegetation, but no closer to the hole.

**COURSE COURTESY**  
 Please pick up trash and help new players play by the rules. You are the one that makes the game work. By your example, Disc Golf could change your life and theirs too. Remember the most important rule: The one who had the most fun wins! Tee off & fly freely.

The St. Cloud VA Health Care System will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, disability, age, marital status, public assistance status, familial status or sexual orientation. Upon request, accommodations will be provided to allow people with disabilities to participate in all VA programs and activities.

# Study: 9 in 10 users happy with PTSD Coach smartphone app

It's been downloaded more than 150,000 times by people in more than 80 countries. It's received high ratings from both iPhone and Android users. It's even won two big awards.

But the PTSD Coach smartphone app had never been formally studied in a sample of Veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder—until recently.

A team with VA's National Center for PTSD (NCPTSD) conducted a survey and focus groups with 45 users, all in residential treatment for PTSD. The findings appeared in [Military Medicine](#) earlier this year. The researchers say the study is preliminary, and should be followed up with further research, with more Veterans.



## 'Participants were very satisfied'

Overall, "participants were very satisfied with PTSD Coach and perceived it as being moderately to very helpful with their PTSD symptoms," wrote the study authors. They found that almost 90 percent of the Veterans were "moderately to extremely satisfied."

Lead researcher Dr. Eric Kuhn points out that the app was initially designed with input from nearly 80 Veterans with PTSD. They talked about what they wanted to see in the product.

"One of the things they said they wanted was tools they could use whenever or wherever they were experiencing symptoms—like standing in line at a store," says Kuhn, with NCPTSD's Dissemination and Training Division in Menlo Park, Calif. *(cont. next page)*

"Manage Symptoms" is one of four main features in the app. Users can rate the distress they are feeling at the moment, and choose from a number of quick evidence-based coping tools, some derived from cognitive behavioral therapy. They include, for example, breathing and progressive muscle relaxation exercises, or suggestions for stress-busters such as taking a walk. The other main sections offer users options to learn more about PTSD; assess and track their own symptoms; and find support, in the form of emergency and crisis numbers or personal contacts.

### **Veterans liked the app regardless of their age**

The 45 men and women who took part in the study ranged in age. Some used the app on their own phones, while others borrowed an iPod Touch as part of the study. Kuhn says these factors confirm that the app is a potentially valuable tool not only for younger Veterans, but also for Vietnam-era or older Veterans who may be less well-versed in the world of smartphones and apps.

The study didn't include a formal clinical assessment of the Veterans' PTSD symptoms, so Kuhn and colleagues can't say whether the app actually reduces symptoms over time. They recommend further research to look specifically at that question.

#### **In their own words...**

Below is a sampling of what Veterans in the PTSD Coach study had to say about the app.

*"I used it at night when I had nightmares. The relaxation exercise was really helpful."*

*"I liked the relaxation stuff. I liked it because I didn't have to go see a psychiatrist. It was very helpful because it was like a self-help thing. I didn't have to wait until the 15<sup>th</sup> to see my psychiatrist."*

A few Veterans commented on things they didn't like about the app, and offered suggestions:

*"With my chronic pain, I can't take a walk or dance [options offered as pleasant events], so I got frustrated. It would be great if you could put in your physical problems."*

*"It is frustrating when you have to look for the tool that you want, especially when you need it."*

Overall, most said they would recommend it to others:

*"I called my friend who has PTSD and told him to download it."*

To download the app or learn more about it, visit the NCPTSD [website](#).

## *One small act can make a difference*

Throughout the history of our great nation, Veterans have made the commitment to protect our country, serving and sacrificing for what matters most. Whether they just came home or completed their service many years ago, their experiences and sacrifices have an impact on their lives. And what you and others say or do matters: Sometimes, one person taking one small step can help a Veteran reach out for support.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs encourages groups and individuals nationwide to help spread the word about the [Veterans Crisis Line](#), a free, confidential resource that Veterans and their families and friends can access any day, anytime.

If a Veteran you know shows [signs of crisis](#), such as hopelessness, anxiety, or withdrawal, call on the trained professionals at the [Veterans Crisis Line](#). Call **1-800-273-8255** and **Press 1**, chat online at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat](#), or **text to 838255** for free, confidential support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

There are many simple actions we can take to help Veterans access the care they deserve and have earned. Visit the [Veterans Crisis Line online](#) to learn how you can help.

Just one small act can make the difference. Spread the word about the Veterans Crisis Line. It matters.



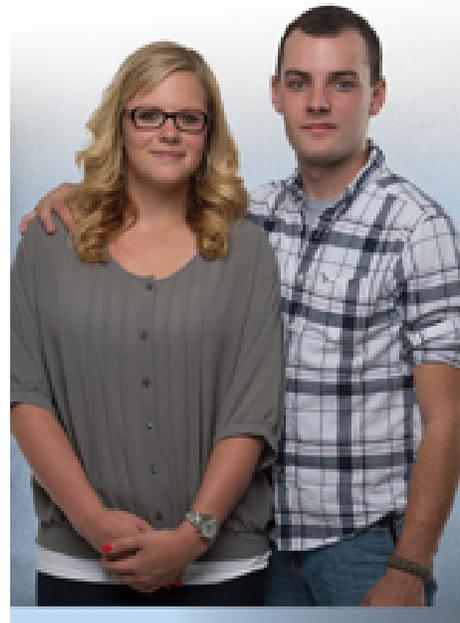
U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

**SEPTEMBER IS SUICIDE  
PREVENTION MONTH**

**1**

**SMALL  
ACT**

**shows you care.**



 **Veterans  
Crisis Line**  
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**



Dear Central Minnesota Veterans organization,

The St. Cloud MetroVets, Times Media, VA Medical Center, City of St. Cloud and several of your fellow residents extend a warm and heartfelt invitation to your group to be among those who march in the 2014 Veterans Day Parade in St. Cloud. Now in its eighth year, the parade and social feature hundreds of participants and observers. We are inviting Veterans groups from across Central Minnesota and groups who want to create a parade entry paying tribute to and honoring all Veterans. We also will have vehicles available to carry Veterans who are unable to march but would still wish to participate in the parade.

Here are the details of the 2014 Veterans Day Parade:

Date: Sunday, Nov. 9, 2014

"Muster Time:" 11:30 a.m., west side of VA Medical Center.

Parade Time: 1 p.m.

Parade location: The parade will start on the west side of the VA Medical Center Campus and proceed east across 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue and conclude on the north side of Apollo High School. The distance is about a half-mile. Portable bathrooms are at the muster area and along the route. (Please be aware that federal VA policies ban distribution of any materials or candy to observers on VA grounds during the parade.)

Post-parade social: Immediately after the parade there will be a "Thank You" Open House in the Apollo Commons, *at which the public can thank Veterans in person*. Light snacks will be provided. It will end by about 3 p.m.

Information needed from your organization:

Please complete and return the information on the attached form by Oct. 17 so we can make final arrangements for the parade. Once we hear from your organization, we will be in touch with your contact person. Again, please return the enclosed form by Oct. 17. Questions can be directed to Parade Coordinator Kelli Olson at 255-8767 .

Randy Krebs	Patricia Aljets	Veronica Fernlund	Dave Kleis	Kelli Olson
St. Cloud Times	VA Medical Center	St. Cloud MetroVets	City of St. Cloud	Parade Coordinator





**2014 ALL-AREA VETERANS PARADE**

Parade registration form

1 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 9, 2014

Yes, we will march in the parade.

(Lineup at 11:30 a.m., Nov. 9, at VA campus. More details to follow)

Organization name/ mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Our main contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people who will march: \_\_\_ 1-10 \_\_\_ 11-20 \_\_\_ 21-30 \_\_\_ 31-50  
\_\_\_ 50-100 \_\_\_ More than 100

Number of Veterans who need a ride in parade vehicles: \_\_\_\_\_ \*

(\* Please note, transporting wheelchairs/scooters require tie-downs so please estimate how many Veterans will require tie-downs. \_\_\_\_\_)

(Also, while organizers will do their best, they cannot guarantee these parade participants will be able to accompany their respective units.)

We will provide our colors: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Return completed form by Oct. 17 to:**

Veterans Day Parade Registration  
c/o St. Cloud Times  
PO Box 768  
St. Cloud MN 56302-0768

**Times MEDIA**  
Central Minnesota's Information Center  
A GANNETT COMPANY

**Questions? Call parade coordinator Kelli Olson at 255-8767**

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# *A Recipe for Health*

## **EASY BLACK BEAN BURRITOS**

### *Ingredients*

½ tsp. dried minced onion  
1 tsp. minced garlic  
1 (15-oz.) can black beans,  
drained and rinsed  
1 tsp. ground coriander

½ c. low fat sour cream  
½ c. salsa  
8 flour or whole wheat tortillas  
1 c. grated Monterey Jack cheese

### *Directions*

In large saucepan, combine onion, garlic, beans, coriander, sour cream and salsa. Cook over medium heat, mashing beans with back of spoon, about 5 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Layer tortillas between paper towels and heat on high in microwave 30 seconds. Divide bean mixture among tortilla, sprinkle with cheese, roll up and serve. Serves 4.

### *Nutritional Information*

478 calories, 17.3g fat, 21.4 protein, 611mg sodium, 60g carbohydrates.



*Take care of your buddy!*

Help a fellow Veteran enroll  
for VA healthcare.  
Contact your County Veteran  
Service Officer, call the St.  
Cloud VA at 320-255-6340,  
or apply online at  
[www.1010ez.med.va.gov](http://www.1010ez.med.va.gov)

[www.facebook.com/StCloudVAHCS](http://www.facebook.com/StCloudVAHCS)



*Connect with us on Facebook!*