

St. Cloud VA

UPDATE

November 2018



A monthly newsletter for Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, and for those who serve them. 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.

Veterans Town Hall Meeting in St. Cloud on Nov. 5

Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System are invited to participate in a town hall meeting on November 5, at 5 p.m., in the Auditorium (Bldg. 8), St. Cloud VA Medical Center, 4801 Veterans Drive, in St. Cloud.

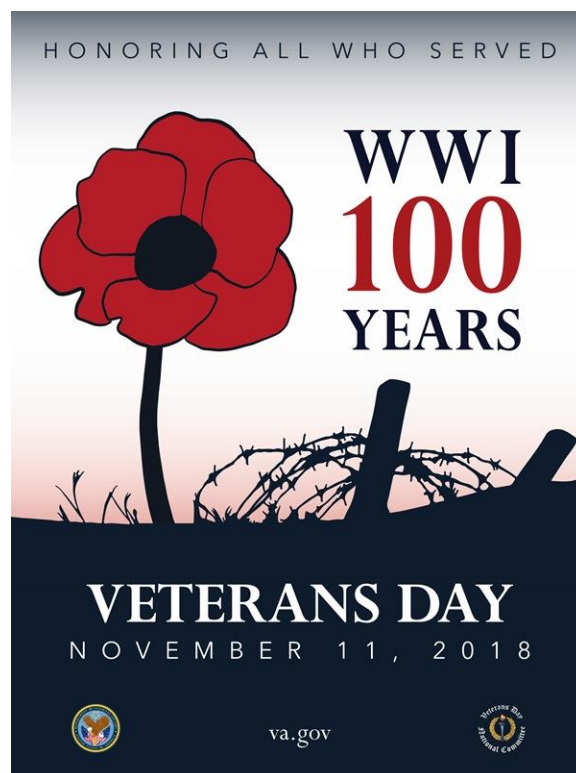
The town hall meeting is a public forum focusing on improving VA health care services and programs.

Robert P. McDivitt, newly-appointed Director of the VA Midwest Health Care System (VISN 23) is scheduled to attend the town hall meeting.

“This is a great chance for area Veterans to discuss what is going well and what can be improved,” said Stephen Black, Director of the St. Cloud VA Health Care System.

Beginning at 4 p.m., Stearns County Veteran Service Officer Cory Vaske and VA staff members will be available to discuss enrollment in VA health care and provide information on the full range of Veterans benefit programs.

“I invite Veterans who are not aware or who have questions about benefits available to them to come out and learn about what they earned because of their military service,” Black said.



St. Cloud Veterans Day Parade moves downtown

The St. Cloud MetroVets, the City of St. Cloud, the VA Medical Center, and several of your fellow residents extend an invitation to all central Minnesota Veterans to attend the 2018 Veterans Day Parade in St. Cloud.



Now in its TWELVTH year, the free parade, social, and concert feature hundreds of participants and observers and we would love to have you participate!

Date: Sunday, Nov. 11, 2018

Parade Time: 1 p.m. through downtown St. Cloud

****NEW!**** **Parade location:** The parade will start on at the St. Cloud Public Library and travel to River's Edge Convention Center for the social. The distance is .6 miles.

Parade Social: After the parade, there will be a "Thank You" Open House for participants and parade attendees alike at the River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud. Please plan to attend!

Veteran's Day Concert: St. Cloud State University will host a concert at 4 p.m. inside Ritsche Auditorium. The SCSU Wind Ensemble and Men's Choir will perform music of our military's past and present, award-winning music written for film, and a special tribute to our nation's Veterans.

Veterans Day Commemoration at St. Cloud VA on Nov. 12

On Monday, Nov. 12, the St. Cloud Metropolitan Veterans Council is sponsoring a Veterans Day program at 1:30 p.m. in Building 8 (Auditorium) at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center, 4801 Veterans Drive, in St. Cloud. A reception follows. Veterans, their families and members of the public are invited to attend.

Parking is available to the north and east of Building 8.

Recovery Night in St. Cloud

Recovery Night is scheduled for Nov. 8, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., at Bldg. 8 (Auditorium), St. Cloud VA Medical Center, located at 4801 Veterans Drive, in St. Cloud.

Recovery Night features a resource fair as well as several Veterans sharing their stories of hope, success, resilience and recovery.

Veterans, family members, VA staff and community members and organizations with an interest in VA mental health recovery and programs or who want to support someone in their recovery are invited to attend.

For Veterans, recovery is about staying in control of their life despite experiencing a mental health problem, and emphasizes that people with mental illness can gain or regain the capacity to live a meaningful and self-determined life, and thrive in their communities.

In support of rehabilitation and recovery of every Veteran with a mental illness, VA has identified recovery as a guiding principle for its entire mental health service delivery system. Recovery is a journey that involves developing hope, self-direction, empowerment, respect and peer support.

Great American Smokeout

Mark your calendar ... the Great American Smokeout is Nov. 15. If you've thought about quitting smoking but haven't picked a date yet, or if you've tried before and are ready to commit to making the change for good, now's the time to start living a better life!



This November, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) will launch the **Better Starts Today** campaign to encourage Veterans to think about how their lives will improve after they quit smoking. Use the hashtag #BetterStartsToday on social media and share the first step you're taking to quit smoking or what you're most looking forward to doing when you finally quit for good.

Having trouble getting started? Check out the VA [website](#) and resources below:

- **Local VA health care providers:** Set up an appointment with your primary care

or mental health provider. They can help you determine the right combination of counseling and medication to meet your needs. You can also call your local VA Medical Center (VAMC) to learn about the different tobacco cessation programs available.

- **Quit VET:** Speak with a tobacco cessation counselor and make a quit plan by calling 1-855-QUIT-VET (1-855-784-8838). Quit line counselors are available between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday.
- **SmokefreeVET:** This text messaging service provides daily encouragement for those quitting smoking. Text "VET" to 47848 or visit smokefree.gov/VET to start receiving supportive messages today.
- **Stay Quit Coach:** This mobile app helps Veterans quit smoking, with tools and information specifically addressing the needs of Veterans with PTSD. It's available for free to download from the App Store and Android Apps. Learn more: <https://mobile.va.gov/app/stay-quit-coach>

Like most things in life, quitting smoking happens one day at time. Make Nov.15 the first day of a better life.

St. Cloud Veterans Job Fair

Twenty area businesses seeking to fill job openings with Veterans will attend the Veterans job fair on Thursday, November 15, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the St. Cloud VA auditorium (Bldg. 8), 4801 Veterans Drive, in St. Cloud.

The job fair is open to all Veterans. No preregistration is required.

The job fair is hosted by the St. Cloud Area Veteran Employment Connection Group.

PACT Team 1 moving to new location

PACT Team is moving to a new location. Starting Nov. 19, PACT Team 1 appointments will be conducted in Building T-101. This is a temporary building located north (behind) of Bldg. 48 and will be used while Bldg. 29 is being renovated. The intent is to stabilize the PACT team in the temporary building until Bldg. 29 is fully remodeled, which is estimated to take 2-3 years.

Maps and letters are being mailed to all affected Veterans. Additionally, VA Volunteers can assist you in getting to Bldg. T-101.

PACT 1 Veterans should plan to continue to enter the medical center via the main entrance in Bldg. 1. This is the most convenient entrance to access other services (Imaging, Lab, EKG, etc.) and is also the main hub for obtaining assistance from VA volunteers and escorts. Please exit the central corridor on the west side of Bldg. 48 and follow the sidewalk to Bldg. T-101, which has a fully handicapped accessible ramp. There is a covered portico with indoor seating area at the Bldg. 48 north entrance that can be used as a drop-off point, although there are no volunteer services available in this area.

A limited number of parking spots are available near Bldg. T-101 for Veterans who

do not require other services in the medical center.

If you have additional questions or concerns please call 1 (800) 247-1739 or 1 (320) 252-1670.

Moving Care Closer to Patients

For many Veterans, especially those who live in rural areas, getting to appointments with their VA providers can be challenging. That's why more Veterans are choosing to receive care from the comfort of their own homes through technologies like VA Video Connect. This application allows Veterans to skip the trip to a facility by connecting with their providers over live video from their personal computer, tablet, or mobile phone.

Since VA Video Connect was released last year, more than 100,000 video visits have been completed using the application. It can be used on almost any computer, tablet, or mobile phone with a reliable internet connection, web camera, and microphone. And it uses encryption to ensure patient privacy in each session.

Our efforts to expand telehealth are a big reason why VA has the most accessible health care system in the country. In fiscal year 2018, more than 780,000 Veterans used VA telehealth services at our facilities, representing more than 2.29 million episodes of care. About 45 percent of those Veterans lived in rural areas, where they may otherwise have had limited access to VA health care. We now offer telehealth services at 900 sites of care in more than 50 clinical specialties.

We expect the number of Veterans receiving care through telehealth services to grow exponentially as we expand access through their personal devices. VA Video Connect can be used to address almost any health issue that does not require the Veteran to be seen by a provider in person. Veterans and their providers jointly decide when it is clinically appropriate to schedule a video visit. This has proven to be an effective tool for delivering care to Veterans remotely after natural disasters like hurricanes.

VA Video Connect and other telehealth services support our goal of moving care closer to our patients, delivering care in the home or wherever it is most convenient for the Veteran. You can learn more about VA Video Connect by visiting the [VA App Store](#).

VCS shopping available online Nov. 13!

[ShopVCS.com](#), an online shopping benefit to Veterans is launching November 13, 2018!



Veterans enrolled in VA Healthcare may shop online at [ShopVCS.com](#). This new exclusive shopping experience offers deals on over 100,000 products from hundreds of top brands with the ability to easily and securely shop from any device. The new site will feature an expanded catalog of products ranging from: sportswear, jewelry,

health and beauty, home goods, electronics, outdoor gear, travel options, event tickets, and much more.

Proceeds will directly support Veteran programs and services such as: National Rehabilitation Adaptive Sports Games, Vets Crisis Suicide Prevention, Fisher House, Women Veterans Programs, Disaster Relief, Homeless Veterans, and much more.

To be the first to know when the site launches, Veterans can sign up at [ShopVCS.com](#). Once on the site, simply click “**Notify Me**” and you will be notified directly about the launch.

Like your Primary Care provider?

Nominate your VA Primary Care Provider for the **top award** in family medicine in Minnesota at [mafp.org/nominate!](#)

The Minnesota Academy of Family Physicians (MAFP) is seeking nominations for the 2019 **Minnesota Family Physician of the Year** from the public (patients), clinic administrators, MAFP members and family medicine colleagues. Minnesota Family Physician of the Year recognizes a family physician member who represents the highest ideals of the specialty of family medicine, including caring, comprehensive medical service and community involvement.

Nominations can be submitted by the public (patients), clinic administrators, MAFP members or nonmember family medicine colleagues. Finalists are selected by a panel of the past six recipients of the award; the recipient is selected from among the finalists by the MAFP Board of Directors.

Bldg. 29 entrance to close

Starting at 8 a.m. on Monday, November 5, 2018, the front (south) entrance of Building 29 will be closed for approximately 3 months. During the time the front entrance is closed, Veterans and visitors and staff will need to use the corridor system to enter and exit this building.

The interior stairwells and elevators will remain in service to allow access to the first floor.

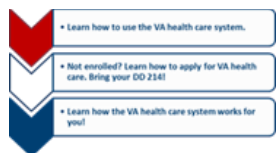
Please excuse any inconvenience this may cause as we improve the facilities we provide for the Veterans that we serve.

Road construction completed

Thanks to everyone who endured the period when the roadway in front of Bldgs. 1, 2, 28 and 111 were under construction. The construction is complete and the road reopens on Friday, Nov. 2.

Coffee Talks

VA health care enrollment provides a lifetime of valuable benefits to Veterans and their families. Recently transitioned service members, Veterans new to the VA health care system, and enrolled Veterans can learn how to use the VA system most effectively by attending a patient orientation class at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center.



The patient orientation class focuses on VA eligibility and the nuts and bolts of accessing and using VA systems of care, and answering Veteran questions.

Titled “Coffee Talks” because of their informal format, upcoming patient orientation sessions are scheduled for Nov. 9, and Dec. 14 from 2 to 3:30 p.m., in Bldg. 4, Room 114, at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center. Participants may also dial-in via telephone at (800) 767-1750, participant code 11242#.

Attendees for these courses should enter the Medical Center via Building 1 (Main Entrance). Advance registration is not required.

Health Care Enrollment Fairs for West Central Minnesota Veterans

Military service is valuable to the nation, and in return VA health care enrollment provides a lifetime of valuable benefits to eligible Veterans and their families.

VA health care features no enrollment fees, monthly premiums, coinsurance fees or deductibles, and low or no medication co-pays with a \$700 yearly cap on prescription medications. VA health care benefits are also flexible in they can be co-managed with health insurance plans and Veterans can seek treatment at over 1,000 sites of care across the nation.

Do you know of a Veteran still wondering what benefits they may be eligible to receive?

Veterans across west central Minnesota are invited to take advantage of one of several convenient opportunities to apply for or learn more about VA health care benefits.

Hosted by County Veteran Service Officers and the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, these Health Care Enrollment Fairs provide direct information and personal assistance to Veterans in applying for VA health care benefits. Fairs are scheduled at the following locations:

- Madison Public Library, 401 6th Avenue, Madison, on Nov. 1, from 4 to 7 p.m.
- Montevideo National Guard Armory, 711 S 17th Street, Montevideo, on Nov. 17, from Noon to 3 p.m.
- Benson VFW Post 1403, 1135 Pacific Avenue, Benson, on Nov. 27, from 3 to 6 p.m.
- Ortonville Public Library, 421 2nd Street NW, Ortonville, on Dec. 4, from 4 to 7 p.m.
- Redwood Falls Public Library, 509 S Lincoln Street, Redwood Falls, on Dec. 6, from 4 to 7 p.m.
- Olivia Public Library, 405 S 10th Street, Olivia, on Dec. 13, from 4 to 7 p.m.

The fairs are walk-in events and an appointment is not required. For most Veterans entry into the VA health care system begins with a simple application and submission of a copy of the Veteran's DD 214 and 2017 annual household income. Please bring these items to the enrollment fairs.

For those who want to learn more before applying, each fair features a short presentation from VA health care eligibility specialists that starts one hour after each fair begins. Attendance at the presentation is optional.

Veterans who applied for benefits earlier in life and were deemed not eligible may now be eligible due to changes in the benefits program or changing personal situation, and are encouraged to reapply.

Mission Act Summary & Overview

Summary

- The VA MISSION Act of 2018 will transform elements of VA's health care system, fulfilling the nation's commitment to help Veterans live a healthy and fulfilling life. It was signed into law on June 6, 2018. Among other changes to VA programs, the Act will transform elements of VA's health care system, fulfill the commitment to provide Veterans with more choice in their health care providers, and prevent a funding shortfall in the current Veterans Choice Program.

- Our transformed health care system will ensure easy and reliable access to care when they need it; provide exceptional care to Veterans anytime, anywhere; and, serve as a trusted, caring partner, helping Veterans and their families be healthy and well.

- Veterans need a trusted, caring partner who will provide the highest quality care, easy access, convenience, and support. We have not always earned that trust. The MISSION Act defines the changes we need to make to regain trust, to become the caring partner all Veterans deserve, and to provide exceptional care. Such care should be available anytime and anywhere, for the health and well-being of our Nation's Veterans.

- VHA has the most accessible health care system in the Nation because of what our employees do. We can take heart in the fact that certain Veterans—women and post-9/11combat Veterans, for example—are choosing VA health care in numbers greater than ever before.

Asset and Infrastructure

- The needs of Veterans have changed immensely over the last two decades. Our infrastructure—our buildings, equipment, communication systems—needs to be modernized to meet those changing needs. VHA will be participating in a thorough review of our infrastructure to ensure we have modern hospitals, clinics, and services so Veterans can receive exceptional care anytime, anywhere.

- Timeline: A thorough VA asset and infrastructure review will take several years.
 - VHA is establishing a triage process to identify and address the most urgent infrastructure needs quickly, including underserved areas.

- Title II of the VA MISSION Act establishes a nine-member Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) Commission appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. The President is required to transmit the nominations to the Senate no later than May 31, 2021.

- In selecting individuals for nominations for appointments to the Commission, the President must consult with the Speaker of the House of Representatives; the majority leader of the Senate; the minority leader of the House of Representatives, and the minority leader of the Senate. Further, the President must also consult with

congressionally chartered, membership based veterans service organizations (VSO) concerning the appointment of at least three of the nine members.

- The Commission is responsible for conducting public hearings on the VA Secretary’s recommendations regarding the modernization or realignment of VHA facilities. Each meeting of the Commission must be open to the public and all the proceedings, information, and deliberations of the Commission must be made available for review by the public.

- The Commission – not later than January 31, 2023 – is required to transmit to the President a report containing the Commission’s findings and conclusions based on a review and analysis of the recommendations made by the Secretary, together with the Commission’s recommendations, for modernizations and realignments of facilities of the Veterans Health Administration.

- The AIR Commission has not been established. The President is required to transmit the nominations of the Commission members to the Senate no later than May 31, 2021. The Commission can meet only during calendar years 2022 and 2023 and must terminate all Commission activities by December 31, 2023.

Caregiver Support Program (CSP)

- Implementation of the MISSION Act will enable us to deliver high quality care by expanding eligibility for caregiver support to eligible Veterans of all eras of service. The current program has been a tremendous success for post-9/11 Veterans and their

caregivers. Caregivers and Veterans can learn more about available support by visiting www.caregiver.va.gov or by calling the Caregiver Support Line toll-free at 1-855-260-3274.

- Timeline:

Expansion will occur in two phases, starting with eligible Veterans who incurred or aggravated a serious injury in the line of duty on or before May 7, 1975, with further expansion beginning two years after that.

Community Care (CC)

- The VA MISSION Act of 2018 consolidates VA's community care programs into a new Veterans Community Care Program that will help to ensure Veterans choose VA by getting them the right care at the right time from the right provider.

- Over the next year, VA will need to develop regulations to implement the new law, while also developing policies, training staff, and awarding contracts to furnish care. Veterans and their families, community providers, and VA staff can expect ongoing improvements and regular engagement as VA creates this new Community Care Program.

- Veterans need access to the best care, when and where they need it. VA has been providing care to Veterans through community providers for decades, but the programs have grown in number and complexity over the years, making the programs complicated to access and administer. The MISSION Act will consolidate VA's community care programs, making community care work better for Veterans and their families, community providers, and VA staff.

- Timeline: Regulations, system changes, and new processes for the new community care program are in development.

The new program is anticipated to be in place by June 2019.

In the meantime, the MISSION Act appropriated \$5.2 billion for the continuation of the Veterans Choice Program, ensuring Veterans continue to receive care.

- The new Veterans Community Care Program will be a major advancement that will consolidate VA's community care programs and strengthen VA by merging the Department's tangled web of competing and confusing community care programs, including the Choice Program, into one system that is easier to navigate for Veterans. This single Program will also greatly reduce the complexity associated with administration of these benefits, making for more efficient use of VA's resources.

- To implement this new Program, VA will need to develop regulations. The Act provides VA one year to develop these regulations and to prepare to implement this new authority. This time is critical to ensuring that the transition to the new program is as seamless as possible.

- The Act appropriates \$5.2 billion in mandatory funding for the Veterans Choice Program to continue to provide care to Veterans until the new, consolidated Veterans Community Care Program is operational—approximately one year after the enactment of this Act.

- Going forward, Veterans and their families can expect continued improvements to be made in how Veterans navigate and receive community care.

Information Sharing

- For the purpose of providing health-care or other health-care related functions, the Act allows VA to share patient information with non-VA health care providers. It also allows for disclosing this information for purposes of recovering or collecting reasonable charges for care furnished to, or paid on behalf of, a Veteran in connection with a nonservice-connected disability.

- The Act improves information sharing with community providers. Information about patient HIV status, sickle cell status, and/or alcohol or substance use treatment status is releasable, consistent with the Privacy Rule promulgated under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). For Veterans not wishing to share this information, VA will provide instructions on how to "opt-out."

- Information may be disclosed to non-VA entities, including non-VA health care providers, for the purpose of providing health care or treatment to patients without a signed, written authorization from the patient.

- VA must receive a written request for information prior to release, if the patient, non-VA health care provider, or some other person or entity, pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 5702, but authorization from the patient is not required. VA is required to account for disclosures.

- VA Form 10-5345 Request for and Authorization to Release Health Information has been revised to advise the Veteran that their protected diagnosis such as Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Sickle Cell Anemia and HIV conditions will be released for treatment purposes unless they tell VHA otherwise. There is a box on the form where they can notate this request. The form gives the Veteran the opportunity to restrict what is released for treatment purposes under this specific authorization.

- Patients have the right to request a restriction concerning the disclosure of their health information for treatment as well as certain other purposes. The patient should contact his or her local privacy officer (PO) at the facility where they are receiving care and fill out a restriction request. The PO will acknowledge their request and notify the Veteran in writing. If VHA agrees with the request, it will comply with the restriction until the Veteran revokes the request in writing or VHA provides the patient with written notice that it is terminating the restriction.

Recruit and Retain

- As the largest health care system in the United States, recruiting and retaining providers has always been a challenge. To ensure easy and reliable access to care, we need to have enough providers—doctors, nurses, clinicians, specialists and technicians. Through implementation of the MISSION Act, we will be better equipped to recruit and retain the best medical providers through new scholarship programs, education debt reduction, and bonuses for recruitment, relocation, and retention. We are also starting a pilot scholarship program for Veterans to get

medical training in return for serving in a VA hospital or clinic for four years. Who better to understand and treat Veterans than Veterans themselves?

- Timeline: Recruitment and retention programs will be initiated over the course of 2019 and into 2020.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Health Care Enrollment Fair

Thursday, Nov. 1 4-7 p.m.

Madison Public Library

401 6th Avenue, Madison MN

Military service is valuable to the nation, and in return VA health care enrollment can provide a lifetime of valuable benefits to eligible Veterans and their families.

Veterans living near Madison are invited to take advantage of this opportunity to apply for or learn more about VA health care benefits.

Introduction to Whole Health

Friday, Nov. 2 Noon-2 p.m.

St. Cloud VA, Bldg. 28, Rm. 67

The St. Cloud VA is beginning an innovative approach to improving health and treating chronic pain by offering alternative and complementary therapies as part of a new Whole Health program. The concept of Whole Health is to teach Veterans that they have the power to take charge of their life and involves the teaching and learning of different ways of dealing with pain and stress management that ultimately improves health and wellness.

Veterans Affairs Radio Show

Monday, Nov. 5 8:10 -8:30 a.m.

KSNI AM 1450/FM 103.3

Veterans Town Hall Meeting in St. Cloud

Monday, Nov. 5 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

St. Cloud VA, Auditorium (Bldg. 8)

Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System are invited to participate in a town hall meeting. The town hall meeting is a public forum focusing on improving VA health care services and programs.

Veterans Law Clinic (by appointment only)

Tuesday, Nov. 6 Noon-2 p.m.

St. Cloud VA, Bldg. 28, Room 34

Free legal consultation for Veterans for Social Security law, housing, consumer, child support, family law, employment and expungement. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320-253-0138 or 1-800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment.

Mental Health Recovery Outreach Group

Wednesday, Nov. 7 5-6 p.m.

Good Earth Co-Op

2010 Veterans Drive, St. Cloud

This informal group meeting provides an opportunity for Veterans to hear stories of hope and inspiration from fellow Veterans about their mental health recovery. VA staff will be present to answer questions and provide information about the comprehensive mental health treatment programs at the St. Cloud VA. Open to Veterans and family members.

Recovery Night

Thursday, Nov. 8 6 to 7:30 p.m.

St. Cloud VA, Bldg. 8 (Auditorium)

Recovery Night features a resource fair as well as several Veterans sharing their stories of hope, success, resilience and recovery.

Coffee Talk

Friday, Nov. 9 2-3:30 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Bldg. 4, Rm. 114
Learn how to most effectively use VA systems of care. If you can't come in person, dial-in via telephone at: 800-767-1750, participant code 11242#. All Veterans are welcome.

Outpatient Clinics Closed for Federal Holiday

Monday, Nov. 12
Outpatient clinics and administrative offices, including VA Clinics in Brainerd, Montevideo and Alexandria will be closed. Urgent Care at the St. Cloud VA will be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Vietnam Veteran Recognition Ceremony

Monday, Nov. 12 10:25-11:30 a.m.
Rocori High School gymnasium
534 5th St. N., Cold Spring MN
The purpose of the ceremony is to publicly thank and honor Vietnam Veterans and their families. All Veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time during the Vietnam War period, from Nov. 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of duty location, are invited to participate. No distinction is made between Veterans who served in-country, in-theater, or who were stationed elsewhere during the Vietnam War period.

Veterans Day Commemoration Ceremony

Monday, Nov. 12 1:30-2:30 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Auditorium (Bldg. 8)
The St. Cloud Metropolitan Veterans Council is sponsoring a Veterans Day program at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center. A reception follows. Veterans, their families and members of the public are invited to attend.

Health Care Enrollment Fair

Saturday, Nov. 17 Noon-3 p.m.
Montevideo National Guard Armory
711 S 17th Street, Montevideo MN
Military service is valuable to the nation, and in return VA health care enrollment can provide a lifetime of valuable benefits to eligible Veterans and their families. Veterans living near Montevideo are invited to take advantage of this opportunity to apply for or learn more about VA health care benefits.

Introduction to Whole Health

Monday, Nov. 19 10 a.m.-Noon
St. Cloud VA, Bldg. 4, Room 114
The St. Cloud VA is beginning a new approach to improving health and treating chronic pain by offering alternative and complementary therapies as part of a new Whole Health program.

Veterans Law Clinic (by appointment only)

Tuesday, Nov. 20 Noon-2 p.m.
St. Cloud VA, Bldg. 28, Room 34
Free legal consultation for Veterans for Social Security law, housing, consumer, child support, family law, employment and expungement. No criminal law issues will be discussed. Please call 320-253-0138 or 1-800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment.

Voices for Veterans Radio Show

Wednesday, Nov. 21 8:10-8:30 a.m.
WJON AM 1240

Outpatient Clinics Closed for Federal Holiday

Thursday, Nov. 22
Outpatient clinics and administrative offices, including VA Clinics in Brainerd, Montevideo and Alexandria will be closed.

Urgent Care at the St. Cloud VA will be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Health Care Enrollment Fair

Tuesday, Nov. 27

Benson VFW Post 1403

1135 Pacific Avenue, Benson MN

Military service is valuable to the nation, and in return VA health care enrollment can provide a lifetime of valuable benefits to eligible Veterans and their families.

Veterans living near Benson are invited to take advantage of this opportunity to apply

for or learn more about VA health care benefits.

Effective Communication for Caregivers

Thursday, Nov. 29 2:30-4 p.m.

St. Cloud VA, Bldg. 48, Rm. 204

Caregivers of Veterans are invited to attend a workshop designed to improve Caregiver communication skills with care partners, loved ones, service providers, and medical professionals. Space is limited! Registration required. Contact: Jess Behrends, Caregiver Support Coordinator (320) 252-1670 ext 7283 or Jessica.behrends@va.gov

For a complete Calendar of Events, go to <https://www.stcloud.va.gov/calendar.asp>

DID YOU KNOW:

- *It is against the law to sing out of tune in North Carolina.*
- *The least-liked vegetable of all time is the turnip.*
- *Barbers are not allowed to eat onions between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. in Waterloo, Nebraska.*
- *France's King Louis XIV bathed only once a year.*

QUOTATION OF THE DAY:

"I've had a perfectly wonderful evening. But this wasn't it." — Groucho Marx

Quick Reference Phone List

Main St. Cloud VA HCS Phone Number	320-252-1670 or 800-247-1739
TDD User	320-255-6450
Max J. Beilke VA Clinic, Alexandria	320-759-2640
Brainerd VA Clinic	218-855-1115
Montevideo VA Clinic	320-269-2222
Veterans Crisis Line	800-273-8255 Press 1
Homeless Veteran Hotline	877- 424-3838

Billing:

- VA Care 866-347-2352
- Care in the Community (non-VA care) 877-881-7618

Chaplain Service	Ext. 6386
Community Care Referrals	Ext. 6401
Discrimination Complaints	Ext. 6304
Eligibility	Ext. 6340
Nutrition Clinic	Ext. 6376
Transition & Care Management Program	Ext. 6453
Patient Advocate	Ext. 6353
Pharmacy Refill Line	855-560-1724
Privacy Officer	Ext. 6408
Public Affairs Office	Ext. 6353
Release of Information (Medical Records)	Ext. 6336
Transportation	Ext. 7622
TRICARE	844-866-9378
Voluntary Service	Ext. 6365
VA Police	Ext. 6355

Stay in Touch

Visit our Website: www.stcloud.va.gov

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/StCloudVAHCS

Sign up for our automated email service. Visit the St. Cloud VA Website at: <http://www.stcloud.va.gov> and on the right-hand side of the page is a request to sign up for email updates. Enter your email address and you are automatically signed up to receive email updates from our web page. There are also options presented to sign up for updates from other government sites.