Welcome to Update!

This issue is the first in what we hope to be a long and continuing conversation with Veterans served by the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, and with those who serve them. To sign up for automatic delivery to your email inbox, please visit our website at www.stcloud.va.gov. On the right hand side of the home page, approximately one-third of the way down the page, is a box titled “Email Updates.” Enter your email address and follow the prompts to sign up for this newsletter and the feature stories we publish on the web page. Want another way to keep up to date with events and happenings involving the Veterans community? “Like” us on Facebook at facebook.com/stcloudvahcs.

We want your feedback, including suggestions for content and comments for improvement. Please send those items 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

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Health Care System Updates

**Building 1 to Building 3 Corridor Closed:** The construction associated with expanding the Dental Clinic in Building 3 is underway. The north to south connecting corridor between Building 3 and the main east to west corridor in Building 1 is closed for construction. We anticipate this corridor will be closed into the fall of 2012. The front entrance to Building 3 will remain open for access to the Dental Clinic and to the 2nd floor. The main connecting corridor running east and west will remain open for use in accessing the remainder of the facility, but it can no longer be used to access Building 3.

**Cheryl L. Thieschafer has been selected as the Associate Director, Health Systems Administrator, St. Cloud VA Health Care System.** As the Associate Director, Health Systems Administrator, Thieschafer is responsible for overseeing administrative, fiscal, and logistical systems for the St. Cloud VA Health Care System, which is comprised of the 388 bed VA Medical Center in St. Cloud and outpatient clinics in Brainerd, Montevideo, and Alexandria. Prior to her selection as Associate Director, Thieschafer served as the Management and Program Analyst at the St. Cloud VA. Thieschafer began her VA service as a Clinical Dietitian in 2000, following twelve years of service in the U.S. Army. A central Minnesota native, Thieschafer graduated from Long Prairie High School in 1983, and received a Bachelor of Science in Food and Nutrition from North Dakota State University in 1987, and a Masters of Health Administration from Baylor University in 1997.

**Patty A. Meyer is the new Supervisor of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program and Occupational Therapy Clinic** at the St. Cloud VA Health Care System. In this new role, Meyer previously served as a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist at the St. Cloud VA, and was the mentor/trainee for Supported Employment services for the VA Midwest Health Care Network.

**QUOTATION OF THE MONTH:**
"Outside of a dog, a book is man’s best friend. Inside of a dog, it’s too dark to read." - Groucho Marx
Health Care System Updates, cont.

Building 49, Community Living Center Renovation to Get Underway: Building 49 is getting a much-needed overhaul! Scheduled to occur over approximately the next two years, the Building 49 remodeling project will modernize the living environment, and result in more private rooms with private bathrooms for Veterans!

Within the next few weeks several things will be occurring that are part of this significant construction and renovation project. Building 48, 1st Floor has been converted to a CLC environment, and by early April should be ready to receive approximately 24 residents. Those residents will come from Building 49. The majority of the staff from Building 49-1 will also move to Building 48. One half of Building 49 will then be “split off” to undergo renovation. The units in Building 49-1 and Building 49-2 will continue to operate, but from the east half of the building only. Additionally, those units in Building 49 will be significantly smaller than usual. The majority of the current Building 49-2 staff will be running Building 49-1 and Building 49-2. When the Building 49 west side renovation is complete the Building 49 residents will be moved from the east side to the west side and the east side will then undergo renovation.

Additionally, the EC&R Administrative Staff no longer occupy the northwest corner of B50-2, and have moved to Building 48-2. The offices the staff occupied are being renovated and will actually increase the size of Building 50-2 by 10 beds.

Jessica M. Behrends, MSSW, LICSW, is the new Caregiver Support Coordinator at the St. Cloud VA Health Care System. The Program for Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers provides additional support to eligible post-9/11 Veterans who elect to receive their care in a home setting from a primary Family Caregiver. Jess can be reached at (320) 252-1670 ext. 7283, or via email at jessica.behrends@va.gov.

The Automated Phone Service System is up and running, and can assist you in managing appointments and ordering prescription refills 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A full description of available services and instructions are on page 24 of this issue.
New Health Benefits
Handbook Personalized for Each Veteran

It’s all about you, isn’t it?

Well, actually, yes it is.

Veterans enrolled in the health care system of the Department of Veterans Affairs have begun to receive personalized handbooks that explain their health care benefits and contain other useful information.

The new handbook, called the Veterans Health Benefits Handbook, provides a personalized listing of health benefits based on each Veteran’s specific eligibility. It also has contact information for your local VA medical facilities, appointment scheduling information and guidelines for communicating with your clinical team. If it’s applicable, information about co-pays is in there, too.

Distribution of the handbooks began in February, with all 8.5 million Veterans enrolled in VA’s health care system scheduled to receive their handbooks by May 2013. You will also receive updates to your handbook to reflect changes to your benefits or eligibility.

The Handbook is intended to be personalized for each individual Veteran, and one of the ways that is accomplished is by inserting the name of the VA facility where Veterans are enrolled for Primary Care into the handbook. Currently, only the parent VA Medical Center contact information is used in the Handbook though we expect to get to the Community Based Outpatient Clinic level later this year. If you receive your care at a CBOC, please understand that no change has been made to your site of care or Primary Care assignment.
In November VA introduced **Make the Connection**, a new website launched by VA to help Veterans recognize they are not alone in their experience. If you have not logged on, we encourage you to **Make the Connection** today. Learn how other Vets have overcome challenges, reached positive outcomes for treatment and recovery, and found paths to fulfilling lives.

At [http://maketheconnection.net/](http://maketheconnection.net/) Veterans can select stories by gender, branch of service, era of service, and combat. **Make the Connection** features numerous Veterans who have shared their experiences, challenges, and triumphs. It offers a place where Veterans and their families can view the candid, personal testimonials of other Veterans who have dealt with and are working through a variety of common life experiences, day-to-day symptoms, and mental health conditions. The Web site also connects Veterans and their family members with services and resources that may help them live more fulfilling lives. Learn more at [http://maketheconnection.net/](http://maketheconnection.net/)
Honoring Veterans through End of Life Care
All Enrolled Veterans Eligible for Hospice Services

It surprises many Americans to learn that 25 percent of all deaths in the US are Veterans. That’s 1,800 people a day; more than 680,000 Veterans every year. These heroic Americans deserve the benefits derived from their military service—particularly at the end of life’s journey.

More surprisingly, many Veterans are unaware of their eligibility for hospice services through the VA.

On March 29, St. Cloud VA Health Care System and community hospice and palliative care providers participated in the 2nd annual We Honor Veterans: Partnering on End of Life Care conference in St. Cloud. The We Honor Veterans program is a national program designed to help hospice and palliative care providers understand and serve Veterans at the end of life and work more effectively with VA medical facilities in their communities.

“All hospices are serving Veterans but often aren’t aware of that person’s service in the armed forces,” said Carrie Barnes, RN, a Community Health Nurse Coordinator at the St. Cloud VA. “We want our community partners to be in a position to help Veterans, and that’s why we are participating in this conference. Moreover, we want Veterans to be aware of and, when they are needed, to be able to utilize their hospice benefits.”

“Any Veteran enrolled for VA health care, regardless of assigned priority group, is eligible for hospice benefits through the VA as a standard feature of the medical benefits package,” said Dawn Marker, Eligibility Chief at the St. Cloud VA. “The VA will provide for or purchase needed hospice and palliative care services for all enrolled Veterans, whether those services are needed in an inpatient setting or in the home.” Continued next page
Some Veterans, because of income limitations or other factors, may have not been eligible for enrollment for VA health care at the time they initially applied, Marker said. Life situations change, and as Veterans encounter terminal illnesses their eligibility may also change, she added.

“I tell everyone—apply, apply, apply! The importance of applying for eligibility cannot be overstated,” Marker said. “Even if a Veteran is deemed ineligible for VA health care enrollment, if their situation does change simply having their name and information in our system will make for a quicker review in the future.”

When the need for hospice and palliative care arises, it’s comforting for Veterans and families to know their needs can be met, she added.

To apply for VA health care benefits, Veterans can contact their County Veterans Service Officer (phone list on pg. 25 of this issue), call the St. Cloud VA at 320-255-6340, or apply online at www.1010ez.med.va.gov.

To find out which community hospice providers participate in the We Honor Veterans program, go to www.WeHonorVeterans.org and select “Visit Our Partner Directory” link in the lower right-hand corner of the page. Search by organization name, city, level or state, and quickly identify hospices in your area that have made the commitment to provide quality care and services to Veterans. Community hospice providers can learn more about participating in the We Honor Veterans program at the same site.

This month’s USELESS FACTS

There are 690 known species of bats.
The first BB gun was invented in 1886. It was a descendant of the cap gun, which was invented soon after the Civil War.
Calendar of Events

Friday, May 18—**Southwestern Minnesota Veterans’ Law Clinic**, 12 noon to 2 p.m., at the Montevideo CBOC. FREE legal consultation for Veterans for Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer Law, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal issues will be discussed. Please call 320-430-1051 to schedule an appointment.

Saturday, May 19—**Old Glory Run**, Cold Spring Baseball Park in Cold Spring. This annual event, now in its 5th year, is benefits Veterans throughout Minnesota. Features a 5k Walk/Run/Wheel race, and a 1k Kids Fun Run. Lots of activities for family and friends, please visit [http://www.theoldgloryrun.com](http://www.theoldgloryrun.com) for details.

Saturday, May 19—**“Winds of Freedom” Concert**, 7 p.m., Auditorium, Bldg. 8, at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center. The “Winds of Freedom” are a woodwind quintet from the U.S. Air Force Heartland of America Band. This concert is FREE and open to the public; no advanced tickets are required. Volunteers are needed to assist in escorting Veterans from the VA’s Community Living Center to the concert. To volunteer or for more information, contact the Voluntary Service office at 320-255-6365. A woodwind quintet with percussion composed of members of the band’s larger performing ensembles, the Winds of Freedom inspires military and civilian audiences to increase patriotism. The group showcases its musical diversity with a repertoire of standard woodwind quintet pieces and unique arrangements in a variety of musical styles.

Monday, May 28—**Memorial Day Holiday**. St. Cloud VA HCS outpatient clinics and administrative offices closed in observance of the Federal holiday.

Monday, May 28—**Memorial Day Observance**, St. Cloud VA Medical Center, parade at 10:30 a.m. and outdoor ceremony at 11 a.m. Both events held in front of Bldg. 50, in the circle parking lot on the west end of the VA campus. The St. Cloud Municipal Band will provide music. The ceremony is free and the public is encouraged to attend. Attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs as seating is very limited. Volunteers are needed to escort Veterans to the program and enjoy the morning together. To volunteer, contact Voluntary Service at (320) 255-6365. The observance events are coordinated by the St. Cloud Area Metropolitan Veterans Council (Metro Vets).
Calendar of Events, cont.

Tuesday, June 5—St. Cloud Area Veterans’ Law Clinic, 12 noon to 2 p.m., Bldg. T-100, St. Cloud VA Medical Center. FREE legal consultation for Veterans for Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer Law, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal issues will be discussed. Please call 320-253-0138 or 800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment.

Tuesday, June 12—Drop-in Legal Clinic for Veterans, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Auditorium, Bldg. 8, at the St. Cloud VA Medical Center. Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans staff, County Veterans Service Officers, child support officers, and VA Mental Health Homeless Program intake available throughout the day to assist Veterans with questions, legal forms, and counsel. No appointment required.

Wednesday, June 14—Listen to Voices for Veterans, a monthly live radio interview show airing on WJON, AM 1240. Voices for Veterans airs from 8:10 to 8:30 a.m.

Wednesday, June 14—Celebrate Veterans Career Exploration Event, 4 to 7 p.m., Central Lakes College, Brainerd. See flyer on page 17 for more information.

Friday, June 15—Southwestern Minnesota Veterans’ Law Clinic, 12 noon to 2 p.m., at the Montevideo CBOC. FREE legal consultation for Veterans for Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer Law, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal issues will be discussed. Please call 320-430-1051 to schedule an appointment.

Tuesday, June 19—St. Cloud Area Veterans’ Law Clinic, 12 noon to 2 p.m., Bldg. T-100, St. Cloud VA Medical Center. FREE legal consultation for Veterans for Social Security Law, Housing, Consumer Law, Child Support, Family Law, and Employment. No criminal issues will be discussed. Please call 320-253-0138 or 800-622-7773 to schedule an appointment.

Tuesday, June 19—Going Blind: Coming Out Of The Dark About Vision Loss, a Vision Impairment Services Education Event. 6 to 9 p.m., Eden Valley Events Center, Eden Valley, MN. This education event features demonstrations of low vision/blindness aids, a showing of the film Going Blind, Coming out of the Dark About Vision Loss, and a questions and answer session devoted to low vision and vision loss issues among Veterans and families. Contact Heidi Ampe at 320-255-6480, ext. 7235, for more information.
A MOVE! Success Story

“MOVE!® Has Saved My Life”: Vietnam Veteran Loses Over 150 Pounds Through MOVE!® Program and Bariatric Surgery

"I always felt like the 'fat kid',' says Vietnam Veteran Steven Boigon. "And even though it's not fair, people discriminate against you if you're overweight."

In fact, the 4 years Steven served in the U.S. Air Force had been the only period of time when he didn't struggle with his weight and people's perceptions of him. Controlling his weight with intense physical activity was easy during his time as a ground radio repairman in the military. But when Steven separated from the service, he began a new civilian career—and an upward spiral in weight gain.

A walking time bomb

Over the years, he steadily accumulated weight, along with a litany of health problems: diabetes, high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, and sleep apnea. As his career as a florist and designer wound down, he prepared to retire and spend more time with his grandchildren. But Steven was fearful about the future. "I was taking 25 different pills each day," he reports, "and I had gotten up to 335 pounds!" In 2009, the 64-year-old's diabetes had progressed, and he was prescribed a daily abdominal insulin injection.

It was the trigger that made him realize that he needed to change before it was too late. He had become, in his own words, a walking time bomb." (continued)
A last chance, and success

Encouraged by his wife, Steven went to the VA San Diego Healthcare System and received a thorough medical evaluation. His medical team recommended him for bariatric surgery—but only after he addressed his weight problem by enrolling in the MOVE!* Weight Management Program.

MOVE!* was part of Steven's "last chance" at getting healthy, and it worked. By gradually increasing his physical activity and changing his diet, he lost a total of 38 pounds, which exceeded his initial goal of a 5-percent weight loss. With his Body Mass Index (BMI) reduced from 51 to 45, Steven felt much better. But his weight-related medical problems did not resolve, so it was time for him to take the next step and undergo bariatric surgery. Steven and his surgical team considered all the options and decided that a vertical sleeve gastrectomy would be best for him.

A 180-degree turn

The surgical procedure—which left Steven with a stomach the size of a hard-boiled egg, big enough for about 6 ounces of food—was just what he needed: an extra hunger management tool to complement his improving exercise and eating. (continued)
Now, just 2 years into his weight management program, the 66-year-old has reduced his BMI to 28 and lost a total of 150 pounds! "I don't feel like the fat kid anymore," Steven says. "When I walk down the street now, people don't stare—instead they look at me, smile, and say 'hello..'" His health has taken a 180-degree turn for the better: his diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea, and congestive heart failure are gone, and he only takes one pill a day—a multi-vitamin. Steven weighs 187 pounds and is nearing his ultimate weight loss goal with the continued support of his wife (who's also lost weight). Things have changed for the better in Steven's life. "I walk every day now," he says, "and if I don't get that activity, I miss it." The combination of exercise and a better diet has yielded another surprising result for Steven: he is saving money. Both his grocery bills and his clothing sizes are shrinking. "My pants went from 56 to 36 inches," he reports, "so I no longer shop at the big-and-tall store, where I used to spend as much as four times the normal price for clothes!" Steven offers fellow Veterans the following tips for ensuring that they succeed in meeting their weight management targets with MOVE!:

- **Go to all the MOVE! meetings.** "It's so important to attend because you get to talk to people who are having problems just like you, and you can use them as a resource, as well as a source of positive feedback."
- **Give yourself time to make gradual changes.** "It can take months to 'un-indoctrinate' yourself from old, bad habits involving diet and activity."
- **Follow the guidance and direction of your MOVE! weight management team.** "They will guide you, and they will probably prod and push you. They will do whatever it takes to keep you motivated, so stick with them."
- **Follow the instructions of the MOVE! program.** "It's a wonderful tool to help you succeed in losing weight."

With his sights set on reaching 175 pounds, Steven has a new lease on life. He's excited about a future that, until recently, looked bleak. "I feel energetic, and I'm confident that I will live to see my grandchildren get married," he says. "I believe that the MOVE! Program has saved my life!" (End)

*Find out more information about the St. Cloud VA MOVE! Program by contacting Deb Baumgartner, the St. Cloud VA’s MOVE! Weight Management Program Coordinator at (320) 252-1670 extension 6640.*
1. ARBITRATOR: A cook that leaves Arby's to work at McDonalds
2. AVOIDABLE: What a bullfighter tries to do
3. BERNADETTE: The act of torching a mortgage
4. BURGLARIZE: What a crook sees with
5. CONTROL: A short, ugly inmate
6. COUNTERFEITERS: Workers who put together kitchen cabinets
7. ECLIPSE: What an English barber does for a living
8. EYEDROPPER: A clumsy ophthalmologist
9. HEROES: What a guy in a boat does
10. LEFTBANK: What the robber did when his bag was full of money
11. MISTY: How golfers create divots
12. PARADOX: Two physicians
13. PARASITES: What you see from the top of the Eiffel Tower
14. PHARMACIST: A helper on the farm
15. POLARIZE: What penguins see with
16. PRIMATE: Removing your spouse from in front of the TV
17. RELIEF: What trees do in the spring
18. RUBBERNECK: What you do to relax your wife
19. SELFISH: What the owner of a seafood store does
20. SUDAFED: Brought litigation against a government official
Just think - no more phone tag!

With Secure Messaging thru My HealtheVet, you can contact your VA Healthcare team without waiting on hold or playing phone tag. Secure Messaging is as easy to use as email, but completely safe and secure. It’s great for non-urgent communication and general healthcare-related questions.

No Waiting on Hold!
No Waiting for a Call Back!
Don’t Delay, Opt-in Today!

How to use Secure Messaging:

1) Log into your My HealtheVet account at: www.myhealth.va.gov
(Forgot your User ID or Password? Simply click on the ‘Forgot User ID’ or ‘Forgot Password’ link directly below the sign in box. Note, you only need to answer one of the two security questions that will appear.)

2) Select “Secure Messaging” on the top navigation bar, then click on the orange “Open Secure Messaging” tab in the middle of the screen.

3) If it’s the first time you’re accessing your Secure Messaging inbox, you will need to read the terms and conditions and select ‘Opt In’.

4) Click ‘New Message’ and your provider’s name will automatically be in the ‘To’ line of the message.

We hope you take advantage of Secure Messaging. If you have any questions about Secure Messaging or My HealtheVet, please contact me via phone or email. I’ll be happy to explain this time-saving tool.

You can also stop by my office during your next visit to the St. Cloud VA and I’ll help you get on-track with Secure Messaging and many of the other great tools and features of My HealtheVet.

Brian Vetter
My HealtheVet Coordinator
St. Cloud VA Healthcare System
Phone: 320-252-1670, dial 9 then ext: 7335
CBOCs Add Services for Veterans

The Community Based Outpatient Clinics at Brainerd, Alexandria and Montevideo are adding services for Veterans with the addition of site visits of the Mobile Audiology Clinic. The Mobile Audiology Clinic made its inaugural visit to the Brainerd CBOC on February 22, to the Montevideo CBOC on April 19, and is scheduled to go to the Alexandria CBOC on June 5.

“Having audiology services available at the clinic will help us to better serve Veterans,” said Michelle Thein, RN, Clinic Coordinator at the Montevideo VA Clinic. “Veterans in the area should no longer need to travel to St. Cloud for audiology exams.”

The Mobile Audiology Clinic will help fill a critical need of Veterans throughout central Minnesota. Staffed with two Audiologists, the mobile clinic will travel to VA Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) in Montevideo and other locations, delivering audiology services closer to Veterans’ homes.

Current plans call for the mobile clinic to visit each CBOC at least one week per month.

“When it’s not on the road, the mobile clinic will be used at the St. Cloud facility to augment services performed there,” said Dr. Alan Sias, an audiologist overseeing the mobile clinic. “This will allow us to serve more Veterans while we await the construction of an addition to the Audiology Clinic at the St. Cloud VA.”

(cont. next page)
Audiology appointments for Veterans at the mobile clinic are scheduled through the St. Cloud VA’s normal scheduling process, Sias added. The St. Cloud VA Audiology Clinic can be reached at 320-255-6370, or (800) 247-1739, ext. 6370.

“Audiology services are in high demand by Veterans,” said Sias. “Hearing loss and ringing in the ears are the two highest claimed conditions for service connected disability. We anticipate that demand for audiology services will increase as the mobile clinic moves around central Minnesota.”

The mobile clinic features a double-walled audio booth and equipment that allows the audiologist to perform complete hearing evaluations, hearing aid fittings, and post fitting appointments. All of the audiology equipment, such as an audiometer and tympanometer, is brand -new and state-of-the-art. The mobile clinic is also equipped with a wheel chair lift, making it accessible for Veterans needing mobility assistance.

The mobile clinic was funded by a grant from the VHA’s Office of Rural Health. All Veterans are encouraged to apply for VA health care benefits. Veterans with hearing loss as a result of military service should file a disability claim with the VA.

Information on filing disability claims and applying for VA health care benefits is available in every Minnesota County through the County Veteran Service Office (see pg. 25 for a CVSO phone listing. (End)
THE VOW TO HIRE HEROES ACT OF 2011
NEW BENEFITS FOR UNEMPLOYED VETERANS

VETERANS MAY QUALIFY FOR ADDITIONAL EDUCATION BENEFITS.

The Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) offers 12 months of retraining assistance to Veterans who are:

- Unemployed
- At least 35 but no more than 60 years old
- Have an other than dishonorable discharge
- Not eligible for any other VA education benefit program (e.g., the Post 9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment)
- Not in receipt of VA compensation due to Individual Unemployability (IU)
- Not enrolled in a federal or state job training program
- Enrolled in a VA approved program of education offered by a community college or technical school

The program is limited to 45,000 participants from July 1, 2012 through September 30, 2012, and to 54,000 participants from October 1, 2012, through March 31, 2014. Participants may receive up to 12 months of assistance at the full-time payment rate under the Montgomery GI Bill–Active Duty program (currently $1,473 per month). The program must lead to an Associate Degree, Non-College Degree, or a Certification, and train the Veteran for a high demand occupation.

Visit www.gibill.va.gov/VRAP to learn more and read frequently asked questions about VRAP. More details about VRAP, including information on how to apply, will be published at www.gibill.va.gov as they become available.

VETERANS WITH A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY MAY QUALIFY FOR ADDITIONAL VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

Veterans who previously completed a VA vocational rehabilitation program and have used the initial 26 weeks of unemployment benefits may qualify for an additional 12 months of VA vocational rehabilitation benefits.

- You must have previously completed a VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program and been considered “rehabilitated” by VA.
- You must apply within six months of using up your initial 26 weeks of unemployment benefits. You may still qualify for extended or emergency unemployment benefits.
- You can apply now, but cannot start any education or training until June 1, 2012 and you must apply to VA by March 31, 2014.

VA may offer incentive payments to encourage employers to hire and train program participants.

- VA may be able to reimburse an employer up to one-half your annual salary for 6 months or longer
- This can provide you with a competitive advantage with employers
- You must apply and qualify for VA vocational rehabilitation benefits prior to being hired

To apply or learn more information about vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits please call 1-800-827-1000, visit the www.va.gov and fill out an online application (VONAPP), or Complete VA Form 28-1900, Disabled Veterans Application for Vocational Rehabilitation, and submit it to the nearest VA Regional Office.

Please continue to check www.va.gov for changes and updates to the VOW to Hire Hero Act programs and benefits. Last updated on 03/08/2012.
Celebrate Veterans Career Exploration Event

Wednesday, June 13, 2012
4:00 to 7:00 pm
Veterans Celebration at 5:30 pm in the Chalberg Theatre
at Central Lakes College

All Veterans and their families are invited to attend.

Featuring:
• Career Opportunities by Area Businesses
• Central Lakes College Program Demonstrations
• Education and Career Planning Options
• Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)
• MN Department of Employment and Economic Development
• Minnesota Workforce Centers & Rural Minnesota CEP
• Veterans Affairs Representatives

Special guest speakers, food and activities for the entire family.

For more information contact Kathy Marshik 218-855-8279 or Deb Norlin at 218-855-8156

sponsored by
St. Cloud VA Earns “Green” Awards

The St. Cloud VA HCS was recently notified that 20 patient care and administration buildings on the St. Cloud VA campus were certified with the achievement of Green Globes ratings by the Green Building Initiative.

Most significantly, of the five buildings earning the top rating of four green globes, two were built in 1923 and three were built prior to World War II. “We are very proud of our facilities, and place great emphasis on providing our Veterans with a clean and modern hospital. Ensuring the sustainability of our facilities gives us energy efficient buildings to accomplish our primary mission – serving Veterans with the best care possible,” said Barry Bahl, Director, St. Cloud VA.

The Green Globes are an independent ratings based on environmental assessments. The ratings criteria include building energy efficiency, low greenhouse gas emissions, conservation and protection of water, comprehensive recycling of waste, high indoor air quality, reduced environmental impact of products and materials, employee use of public transportation and many other factors.

The Green Globes assessment rates each building on a 1000-point scale. Buildings earning a score of three Green Globes achieve 70% of the available points and buildings assigned a score of four Green Globes must achieve 85% of the available points.

“These awards reflect the dedication of Facilities Management employees,” added Bahl. “They also reflect the commitment of all of our staff to green and environmentally friendly practices.”

(Continued next page)

Barry Bahl, St. Cloud VA Director; Mary Wenck, St. Cloud VA GEMS Coordinator; Joan Bowen, VISN 23 Industrial Hygienist; and Matt Helde, VISN 23 Energy Engineer, pose with the Green Globe plaque for Bldg 1.
Green Globes and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) are the only two environmental building rating systems developed by organizations that are accredited by the American National Standards Institute.

Building earning four Green Globes include: Ambulatory Care/Medical Bldg. 1; Extended Care Bldg. 51; Extended Care Bldg. 50; Administration/Dietetics Bldg. 4; and Extended Care Bldg. 49.

Building earning three Green Globes include: Primary Care/MH Bldg. 28; Administration/ADHC Bldg. 48; Business Tenant Bldg. 29; Domiciliary Bldg. 2; Administrative/Dental Bldg. 3; Domiciliary Bldg. 9; Laundry Bldg. 59; Mental Health Primary Care Bldg. 111; Canteen Bldg. 95; Pharmacy Bldg. 5; Warehouse Bldg. 14; Chapel Bldg. 88; Station Garage Bldg. 54; Recreation Bldg. 8; and Administrative Services Bldg. 10.

In addition to the Green Globes certification, the same buildings achieved a Guiding Principles compliance rating of 4, the highest score available. The Guiding Principles are a set of established criteria for federal agencies who have committed to leadership in the design, construction, and operation of High-Performance and Sustainable Buildings.

As a federal agency, VA is required to have 15 percent of buildings incorporate sustainable practices by 2015 in accordance with Executive Order 13514. The five Guiding Principles with which federal agency buildings must comply are to Employ Integrated Design Principles; Optimize Energy Performance; Protect and Conserve Water; Enhance Indoor Environmental Quality; and Reduce Environmental Impact of Materials.

The St. Cloud VA campus in St. Cloud was originally built in 1923, and the majority of buildings were built before World War II. Over 50 buildings provide approximately 850-thousand square feet of floor space. (End)
Rosemary Chicken Breasts

Ingredients

4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
5 garlic cloves, minced
2 T. minced fresh rosemary or 1 tsp. dried
1 T. Dijon mustard
1 T. lemon juice
3/4 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. ground pepper
2 T. olive oil

Directions

In a small bowl, mix together all ingredients, except chicken.

Place chicken breasts in a single layer in a glass baking dish. Pour sauce over chicken, turn to coat well. Cover and marinate a minimum of 1/2 hour.

Remove chicken from marinade and place on grill 4-6 inches from heat source. Grill at a medium temperature, turning once and basting with reserved marinade until chicken is white throughout, but still juicy, approximately 8-10 minutes.

Serving size: 1 chicken breast.
The Veterans Crisis Line (formerly the “National Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline”) is a free, confidential hotline, online chat, and text service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Even if they are not registered with VA or enrolled in VA healthcare, Veterans, Service members, and their friends and family can call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, chat online at www.VeteransCrisisLine.net, or send a text message to 838255 to reach a trained VA responder for support and referrals.
Adult Day Health Care Bowlers Capture Second Place in National BVL Veterans Bowling Tournament

Bowlers representing the St Cloud VA Health Care System placed second in the nation in a national bowling tournament held in March.

The St. Cloud VA team competed in a division which used the popular Wii bowling game, allowing Veterans who are physically unable to get to the bowling lanes the opportunity to enjoy the sport.

The nation’s league bowlers, through the national charity known as the Bowlers to Veterans Link (BVL), sponsor the Veterans Bowling Tournament.

The St. Cloud VA team was comprised of Veterans in the Adult Day Health Care unit. The eight bowlers on the team rolled a combined total of 45 games, and sent their scores into the BVL headquarters to see how they measured up against VA bowlers from more than 100 hospitals around the country. Members of the local team included Steve Evans, Bruce Dalton, Duane Haakinson, Richard Reignier, Richard Weisen, Cliff Brandenburg, Kurt Onstad, and Willie Olson. Team members ranged in age from 60 to 85.

Richard Weisen, Bruce Dalton, and Richard Reignier each rolled a high score of 247 to help lead the St. Cloud VA team to their second place finish. The team average over 45 games was 206. (End)
Automated Phone Service System

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

A touch tone phone is needed to use this system

The Automated Phone Service System assists you in managing appointments and ordering prescription refills 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services include:

Appointment Inquiry: Find out the dates and times of your future appointments. You may also cancel or request rescheduling of appointments.

Prescription Refill & Status: Access the automated prescription refill system to order refills, check status of refills and to receive refillable prescriptions by mail, up to three days earlier than with mail-in requests.

How to Use the System

Call 855-560-1724

For Appointment Inquiry:

At the prompt, enter your full Social Security Number, followed by the "#" button. Then,

⇒ Press 1 for Appointment Inquiry

For Prescription Refills & Status:

At the prompt, enter your full Social Security Number, followed by the "#" button. Then,

⇒ Press 2 for Pharmacy Options

After you Press 2 for the Pharmacy Options you will be asked to:

- Press 1 for REFILLS (Enter prescription number followed by the “#” button)
- Press 2 for STATUS OF PRESCRIPTION (Enter prescription number followed by the “#” button)
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<td>Aitkin</td>
<td>Penny Harms</td>
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<td>Benton</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>320-968-5044</td>
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<td>Big Stone</td>
<td>Dan Meyer</td>
<td>320-839-6398</td>
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<td>Cass</td>
<td>Kathleen Ramos</td>
<td>218-547-1340x314/308</td>
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<td>Chippewa</td>
<td>Tim Kolhei</td>
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<td>Crow Wing</td>
<td>Bob Nelson</td>
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<td>Ray Kallstrom</td>
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<td>James Rostberg</td>
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<td>Genell Reese</td>
<td>763-682-7325</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yellow Medicine</td>
<td>Michelle Gatz</td>
<td>320-564-3134</td>
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For a complete statewide directory, visit [http://www.macvso.org/](http://www.macvso.org/)
Help a fellow Veteran enroll for VA health care. Contact your County Veteran Service Officer, call the St. Cloud VA at 320-255-6340, or apply online at www.1010ez.med.va.gov

Take care of your buddy!