



**Proud of our Veterans,
Proud of America!**

THE

epicenter

Newsletter of the VA Palo Alto Health Care System (VAPAHCS) • December 2002

A Message from the Director



**Elizabeth Joyce Freeman,
Director
VA Palo Alto
Health Care System**

Congratulations and thanks to all of you for your contributions throughout this year! We have had another outstanding year through working together. Several months ago, the Executive Council chartered three task forces – inpatient, outpatient and special programs – to help set our future direction for the next two to five years. These task forces presented their recommendations to the Executive Council on November 18, 2002. The task forces were asked to make their recommendations given no or limited additional resources in future years.

The Inpatient Task Force, led by Dr. Christophe Gimmler, Ms. Noelle Hall and Ms. Shirley Paulson, placed their recommendations in three categories: Improving Clinical Efficiency through improving Bed Management and Patient Flow; Integrating our Delivery System; and Being an Employer of Choice. They recommended developing a GM&S Leadership Council and an Extended Care Task Force to improve communication and coordination among disciplines. They recommended expanding telemetry capability and increasing the number of intermediate medicine beds. They also recommended implementing fast track hiring

processes within Nursing Service and focusing on retention strategies. Their report was extremely comprehensive and contained many additional recommendations. It is anticipated these two new leadership groups will be convened over the next few weeks.

The Outpatient Task Force, led by Dr. Stephen Ezeji-Okoye, began their work with these assumptions:

- Care should be as close to the veteran as possible
- Priority should be given to services supporting the VHA quality measures
- Priority should be given to the services most in demand
- Primary Care and Mental Health services should be offered at all sites

The task force examined the veteran demographics and observed 70% of the veterans served in FY 2001 live within 15 miles of one of our sites. They reviewed the areas of redundant services and concluded there are three distinct patient populations: Palo Alto, the Valley, and Monterey. The task force concluded improved access would be achieved by offering the majority of services at Palo Alto, the Valley and Monterey. They also concluded a service should only be offered if the quality of care is consistent with the quality of care offered at the Palo Alto Division. Finally, they concluded it would be difficult to recruit academic specialists and sub-specialists to work at the Valley sites and at Monterey due to the distance from Palo Alto.

They recommended creating a system of split hubs with the academic specialties located at San Jose and Livermore and locating non-academic services at the Valley and Monterey. Services would

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What's Inside ...

This month's edition of The Epicenter contains photos from the past year. Enjoy! In addition, you'll find:

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EMPLOYEE NEWS

New Employees

Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt.
Kenneth D. James
Manue Salvatera

Anesthesiology Svc.
Jeff Grenzke
Pamela Storrer

Business Office
Michael D. Scott

Domiciliary
George Kennedy

Environmental Mgmt. Svc.
Rudolph Aguilar
James U. Metters

Nursing Svc.
Freddie Batarao
Auro Demeterio
Carmelit Ermino

Nursing Svc. (cont'd)
Ratan Kumar
Reina Lopez
Phuong Tat
Lornado Welcome
Chri Wickersham

Nutrition & Food Svc.
Marilyn Magness

Pharmacy Svc.
Mahin Azerang

Police Svc.
Samantha Ross

Psychiatry Svc.
Doopyo A. Hong

Psychology Svc.
Rache Kimerling

Research Svc.
Dong Yu

Social Work Svc.
Laureen Vernon

Canteen Svc.
Hoa Thuy Hang

Retirees

Environmental Mgmt. Svc.
Karl Johnson (14)

Nursing Svc.
Jack Bittle (35)

Pharmacy Svc.
Nhon Huynh (10)

(Years of service are indicated in parentheses.)

Employee Service Awards

10 Years

Todd Anhalt
Dermatology Svc.

Odela Bretana
Nursing Svc.

Miriam Emanuel
Blind Rehabilitation Center

Whuida Lardizabal
Nursing Svc.

Philip Lavori
Research Svc.

Daniel Nakamura
Blind Rehabilitation Center

Kim-Lien Nguyen
Pharmacy Svc.

Lisa Solomon
Social Work Svc.

15 Years

Maureen Blair
Nursing Svc.

Dolores Dahlen
Nursing Svc.

Nellie Fallorina
Nursing Svc.

Chiou-Big Lin
Nursing Svc.

Albert Steunenberg
Dental Svc.

20 Years

Rosemary Gill
Medical Svc.

Stanford Rossiter
Radiology Svc.

Ki Ok Yi
Business Office

Mark Zemke
Blind Rehabilitation Center

25 Years

Marianne Reese
Nursing Svc.

Fidel Tadas
Nursing Svc.

30 Years

Steven Darrow
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt.

Vincent Hentz
Surgical Svc.

Francisco Ordillo
Fiscal Svc.

Philip Wong
Information Resource Mgmt.

35 Years

Judith Kane-Campbell
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt.

Paul Troop
Nursing Svc.



Connie Yabes-Sabolboro Earns Recognition as ONS Cancer Chemotherapy Course Trainer

Connie Yabes-Sabolboro recently completed the Oncology Nursing Society's (ONS) Cancer Chemotherapy Course Trainer Program. Connie is now recognized as an official instructor for the ONS Cancer Chemotherapy Course, a comprehensive review course for nurses who administer chemotherapy.

The ONS Cancer Chemotherapy Course is an in-depth program for registered nurses that addresses the knowledge needed to administer chemotherapy. The ONS Cancer Chemotherapy Course is taught nationwide, but only by instructors who have completed the ONS Cancer Chemotherapy Course Trainer Program. Currently, less than 600 trainers are located throughout the United States and Canada.



Country Store

Palo Alto Division

Come enjoy International Foods, Boutique, Garage Sale and *more!*

For more information please call Voluntary Service at extension 65800.

CARES

Planning now for veterans' future needs

Enhancing access, quality and efficiency
Matching services and locations with the needs of veterans

Your Input and Comments are Important!
Contact:

1-800-455-0057 or 1-650-495-4000 or
www.palo-alto@med.va.gov

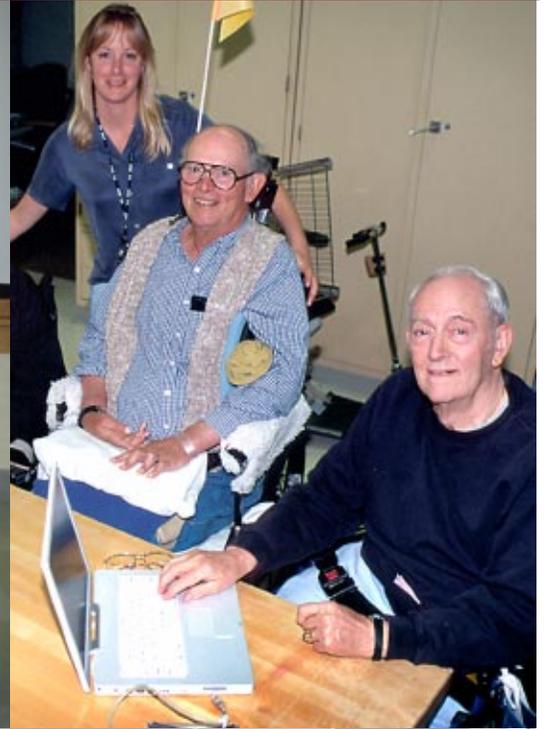
CARES Web site:
<http://www.va.gov/cares>











December Word Search

J O L L H G I E L S W I G I L I
 T A P P L E M E R R H A N U K K
 R W F C H A K K U N A H S A N T
 A I C H R I S A D A S O P S A L
 S G N I T E E R G S N O S A E S
 L I S L R C H I L H I R Z S E A
 S L E D E R U Y P N F N R U D O
 G I I R E A L L S A A A W A K Z
 O A G E O L O E T W M M E R R Y
 N E H N O D T N K E I E T R E N
 G G O J U T A N O N L N L A S P
 G C H R I S T M A S Y T O R N A
 E G Y A D S A L O H C I N S T M
 G F E L I Z N A V I D A D D A D
 G R E D I C E L P P A G R E E T

Find the following words in the letters above:

- | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|
| Apple Cider | Feliz Navidad | Merry | Seasons greetings |
| Children | Hanukkah | Ornament | Sleigh |
| Christmas | Jolly | Poinsettia | St. Nicholas Day |
| Egg Nog | Kwanzaa | Rudolph | Tree |
| Family | Las Posadas | Santa | Wigilia |

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A Message from the Director

not be duplicated at both sites within a split hub. They went on to make other recommendations specific to certain outpatient services.

The Special Programs Task Force, led by Alice Naqvi and Dr. Jerry Yesavage, compiled a compendium of the accomplishments and challenges facing each special program area and each programs future goals and areas of need. They summarized the most immediate challenges in each program area. Their work forms a terrific roadmap for understanding and addressing these challenges.

I want to express my sincere thanks to the leaders of each task force and all the task force participants. Each one sacrificed their time to take on this substantial additional duty and produced an outstanding product.

Their thoughtful work provides a comprehensive framework for our strategic planning from FY 2003 through 2007 and complements our planning through the CARES process.

Fulfilling the challenges they have set for us into the future will be exciting, rewarding work. I look forward to sharing that journey with all of you into the New Year and beyond.

Have a safe and restful holiday season.



Elizabeth Joyce Freeman
 Director



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 by and for employees of the
 VA Palo Alto Health Care System.

Submissions should be received by
 the 1st working day of the month to
 be included in upcoming issues.
 Due to space limitations, it is not
 possible to publish all submissions.

We welcome any comments,
 suggestions or story ideas
 you may have; please contact the
 Communications Officer (00A) at
 ext. 64888 or directly at
 650-858-3925.

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