



Proud of our Veterans,  
Proud of America!

# THE epicenter

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

## Medical Mission to Vietnam

For three out of the last four years, VA Palo Alto Health Care System's Bruce Lehnert, has traveled to the southern end of Vietnam for a medical mission in the city of Can Tho. Can Tho, located in the agricultural region of the Mekong Delta, is a small city surrounded by rural communities.

**“It was super gratifying to see patients who couldn't walk a year ago getting around on their own.”**

Dr. Lehnert is a founding member of Mission Peace, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing medical expertise and humanitarian aid to the people of Vietnam. The organization, established in January 2001, grew out of several medical missions to Vietnam. Although still in its infancy, Mission Peace has already made a big impact on the people living in the Can Tho area who have debilitating and painful conditions, such as club foot or deformities secondary to polio.

Mission Peace's most recent trip lasted from January 2-18 of this year. Lehnert and his colleagues treated 17 patients during their stay, performing bone fusion and dynamic tendon transfer procedures to correct deformities. Although they brought much of their own equipment, the Mission Peace team had to work under relatively rudimentary conditions.

“What the Vietnamese lack in technology, they make up for in ingenuity,” Lehnert said.

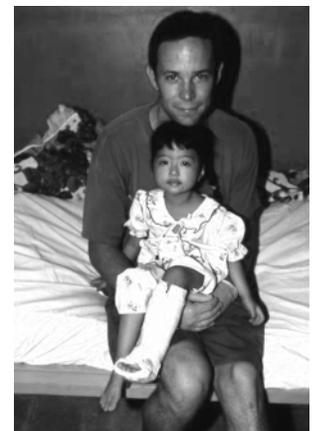
In addition to operating on new patients, Lehnert and his colleagues examined patients they had treated during a previous trip.

“It was super gratifying to see patients who couldn't walk a year ago getting around on their own. They just did really great,” Lehnert said.

The Mission Peace team also trained Vietnamese doctors on the latest foot and ankle techniques and procedures and delivered 35 boxes of donated medical supplies and other materials.

Lehnert plans to return to Can Tho next year for another Mission Peace assignment. The Mission Peace team is trying to recruit a neuro-physical therapist to accompany them on their next trip. Apparently, the population in this region has a high rate of birth defects and neurological disorders caused by polio and chemicals used during the Vietnam War, such as Agent Orange.

For more information about Mission Peace, visit its web site at [www.missionpeace.org](http://www.missionpeace.org).

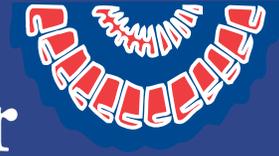


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# A Word From Our Director



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

## **CARES (Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services) Impact on VAPAHCS**

In June 2002, VA Deputy Secretary MacKay announced the commencement of Phase II of CARES. As outlined in VHA Directive 2002-032, the National CARES Program will assess veteran health needs in VHA Networks and identify Planning Initiatives to meet those needs in the future. VA's vision for the National CARES Program is that veterans will benefit from:

- Enhanced services for health care
- Improved future infrastructure in VA
- VA's capital asset realignment
- Better managed information and systems
- Sharing of VA technology advances with Department of Defense (DoD)
- Strengthened support to National Defense, Emergency Response and Homeland Security

The nine steps VA will follow in the CARES process are the following at this time:

- 1) Develop Markets, 2) Analyze Needs, 3) Identify Planning Initiatives, 4) Develop Market Plans, 5) Submit plans for Under Secretary for Health review and evaluation, 6) CARES Commission reviews plans, 7) VA Secretary makes decision on plans, 8) Implementation of plans 9) Integration of plans into strategic planning cycle.

Market plans will be prepared at the Network level. The CARES Phase I pilot test began in January 2001 in VISN 12. Decisions regarding Phase I were announced in February 2002. CARES Phase II will be conducted in the remaining 20 networks. The process is expected to be completed within the next two years. Each Network will have a CARES Communication Coordinator. Locally, William Ball, VAPAHCS Communications Officer, will address questions concerning CARES. More information on the impact of CARES on VAPAHCS will be included

in this message and through other VAPAHCS communication venues (emails, newsletters, town hall meetings, etc.). More information regarding CARES is also available on the CARES website, [www.va.gov/CARES](http://www.va.gov/CARES).

We will make every effort to keep all internal and external stakeholders informed as CARES II proceeds.

## **Goal Sharing - Mid-point Progress**

My thanks to Enrique Vitug, Staff Assistant to the Chief of Staff, for his continued efforts to monitor and oversee our FY 2002 goal sharing program. Approximately 117 plans have been submitted enlisting the efforts of over 400 employees. We expect many more employees to become a part of this effort as the remaining incomplete plans are finalized this month.

As the mid-month progress reports are submitted, I continue to be impressed with your creativity and innovation. The breakdown of the subject areas covered through these plans is the following:

- Improving Operational Efficiency and Effectiveness - 65 plans
- Increasing Veteran Satisfaction - 42 plans
- Employer of Choice - 25 plans
- Budget Savings /Revenue Generation - 12 plans
- Increase Enrollment and Vesting of Category A Veterans - 9 plans

\*Note: Some plans covered multiple topic areas

Many thanks to everyone participating in the goal sharing process. We are already exceeding a number of our performance goals due to your efforts.

## **Summer Activities**

Finally, I know many of you will have a chance to enjoy some time off this summer to relax and enjoy time with your families. In my case, I will have the pleasure of celebrating my parents' fiftieth wedding anniversary with my six brothers and sisters in my hometown of Tulsa, Oklahoma. I hope all of you travel safely to your summer destinations, wherever in the world they may be.

Elizabeth Joyce Freeman  
Director

[A Word from Deputy Secretary Leo S. Mackay, Jr., Ph.D.](#)

## VA Health Care: On course for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Recent media reports stated that Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) hospitals may be in peril as a result of a restructuring of its health care system, now underway. But these headlines distort the purpose of what we believe is an essential undertaking: To realign and enhance VA health care to meet veterans' needs effectively and efficiently, now and in the future. The goal is not to identify hospitals for closure but to continue on our course of bringing VA's health care system into the 21st century.

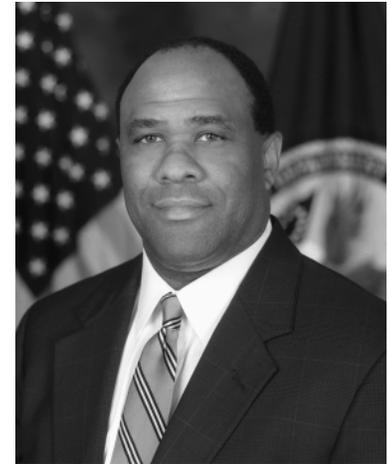
This restructuring is called Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services or CARES. Several factors prompted the Department to initiate CARES. VA's health care system was built decades ago when the focus was inpatient care. VA has already begun to shift from a hospital-based system; and, today, the majority of VA care is provided in an outpatient setting. VA also needs a process to address the projected changes in the veteran population - their locations, their declining numbers and their medical needs. In addition, VA needs to examine its infrastructure to find other uses for unnecessary and outmoded buildings that are no longer suitable for the delivery of modern health care.

The first phase of CARES was conducted in Network 12 (VA's health care system is divided into 21 Networks), which includes Wisconsin, the Chicago area and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. As a result of Phase I, nursing home beds in Wisconsin will be dispersed, improving veteran access to long-term care. Four additional community-based outpatient clinics are planned in Wisconsin, Illinois and Michigan. While inpatient services will eventually be shifted from one hospital in the City of Chicago to another only six miles away, a large outpatient clinic will remain at the former hospital site. These changes illustrate how we are shifting care where it is most needed and, at the same time, expanding its availability to more veterans.

Phase II of CARES covers the remaining Networks. VA will involve all affected groups and seek their input to ensure their concerns are considered. An independent commission will evaluate each Network's plan to meet veterans' future medical needs, and also will be holding hearings and soliciting comments. Following that process, VA will have a national plan for directing resources where they are most needed; preserving VA's missions and special services, such as spinal cord in-

jury and blind rehabilitation; and, at the same time, providing high-quality care to more veterans in more locations. The commission will forward its recommendations to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, who will make his decision in late 2003.

We owe it to the American people to use their tax dollars wisely in managing an efficient, effective health care system. But what is most important is fulfilling the debt we owe to our Nation's veterans by maintaining a viable, modern, world-class health care system - one they can rely on now and in years to come.



*Leo S. Mackay, Jr., Ph.D.  
Deputy Secretary  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*



**Did you know?**

**The VA was born in 1930.**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY  
VETERANS AFFAIRS!**

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# What is the Sierra-Pacific MIRECC ?

The Sierra-Pacific Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (SP-MIRECC) is one of eight new MIRECC centers nationwide. These centers were designed to help improve mental health care for veterans. The SP-MIRECC is directed by Jerome Yesavage, M.D., and its activities are based at the following facilities: VA Palo Alto Health Care System, San Francisco VA Medical Center, Reno VA Medical Center, Honolulu VA Medical Center, Northern California Health Care System and Fresno VA Medical Center.

The SP-MIRECC specifically focuses on veterans with dementia and also veterans with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). One goal of the SF-MIRECC is to improve the care of veterans with dementia and PTSD by attempting to better match veterans to the types of mental health treatments that are best for their own personal situation. Our MIRECC strives to achieve this goal with a multi-pronged approach that integrates cutting-edge methodologies, innovative research, and state-of-the-art clinical and educational activities. Professionals from varied disciplines collaborate on multiple projects to bring scientifically sound information to the clinician and effective mental health treatments to the veteran. In developing research and education products, we work to take into account veteran needs and clinical and research perspectives from individuals across disciplines. This collaborative approach is designed to enhance the overall success of the SP-MIRECC's mission - quality mental health care.

One of the exciting projects developed by the SP-MIRECC is the searchable on-line educational resource on PTSD and Dementia. Our PTSD website, for example, provides a number of useful tools for both veterans and mental health care professionals. Veterans who log on to the site will find information ranging from tools to help them cope with PTSD symptoms to family help guides to art and poetry centers written by and for veterans. Professionals can find streaming videos related to PTSD intervention and education. Ad-

ditionally, we are developing a relapse prevention site specifically designed for use by the veteran. Veterans will be able to track and monitor symptoms, be referred to useful symptom management tools within the site, engage in monitored discussion with other veterans, and ask experts about their PTSD, family concerns, and other pressing issues. We plan to get feedback from veterans about the usefulness of this relapse prevention section. Our website provides information for health care professionals, caregivers, trainees, and patients and their families and contain a library of audio and visual materials, PowerPoint presentations, journal articles and chapters related to PTSD and dementia. One of the unique features of our MIRECC website is its video-streaming capability that allows professionals to view educational presentations either from their personal desktop computer or from designated computers.

In another project, the SP-MIRECC is conducting focus groups in order to assess the needs of health care providers, researchers, and trainees across the VISN to develop programs that are informed by clinical needs. Accordingly, our educational programs have been designed to have practical utility for health care providers in the field. A series of Clinical Demonstration Projects are also being set up as a third task. These projects integrate new clinical approaches with research and educational efforts. An example includes one project that is currently underway. The Seeking Safety Treatment Protocol designed by Dr. Lisa Najavits from Harvard University is a cognitive-behavioral treatment addressing concurrent PTSD and Substance Abuse. We have trained a number of professionals in this treatment approach and have received reports of ease of use and clinical utility following implementation. Veterans have also reported that they find the treatment helpful, practical, and constructive. In a similar outreach project, MIRECC investigators Craig Rosen, Ph.D., and James D'Andrea, Ph.D. have been awarded a grant from the State of California to improve the quality of dementia care in primary care clinics. This study will look at whether providing part-time dementia consultants to the primary care team can enhance quality of care for patients with dementia.

A large number of research projects are also underway within the SP-MIRECC. Research activities include psychopharmacology, neuroimaging and genetic studies, which aim to increase our understanding of the etiology of dementia and of PTSD. Practical utility is always an issue at hand. Therefore, under the direction of biostatistician Dr. Helena Kraemer, the SP-MIRECC focuses on methodological and statistical methods which translate our research findings into clinically useful application. For instance, using signal-detection methods, MIRECC investigators can systematically evaluate the usefulness of biological, genetic and psychosocial markers to examine which veterans respond best to which treatments. Our SP-MIRECC educators can then organize and disseminate this state-of-the-art knowledge to mental health care clinicians, thus helping to attain the SP-MIRECC goal of improving the mental health care of veterans.



*Jerome Yesavage, MD, directs the SP-MIRECC.*

# EMPLOYEE NEWS

## New Employees

Anesthesiology Svc.  
**Kenneth Goodman**

Audiology & Speech Path. Svc.  
**Michelle Beelen**

Chaplain Svc.  
**Alma Galvan**  
**David Mundy**

Environmental Mgmt. Svc.  
**Bernard K. Watts**

Medical Svc.  
**Deborah B. Dembo**  
**Norry Lan**

Nursing Svc.  
**Delores Cabrera**  
**Linda Chang**  
**Jane Cummings**

**Barbra Lao**  
**Janet Peter**  
**Erik Rutland**  
**Noralin Samson**  
**Yolanda Santo Domingo**  
**Norma Turgano**  
**Elizabeth Vranes**  
**Loida Ybanez**

Nutrition & Food Svc.  
**William H. Hammond**  
**Joslyn White**

Pathology & Laboratory Svc.  
**Russell A. Sanchez**

Police Svc.  
**Nicola Spagnolo**

Research Svc.  
**Sarah D. Borjal**  
**Judy K. Jang Jan**

Social Work Svc.  
**Dale Elzie**

Ward Admin. Svc.  
**Jack Bittle**  
**Patricia Chapple**  
**Uhaneokalani James**  
**Rose Marie Nolan**  
**Louisa Taulafoga**



## Retirees

Chief of Staff  
**Wanda Johnson (27)**

Engineering Svc.  
**Paul Endresen (20)**

Nursing Svc.  
**Ellen Swartz (30)**  
**Patricia White (11)**

Nutrition & Food Svc.  
**Shirley Jackson (28)**

Readjustment Counsel  
**Jessica McNamara (20)**

*(Years of service are indicated in parentheses.)*

## Employee Service Awards

### 10 Years

**Carole Bridgeman**  
Nursing Svc.

**Nancy Ann Cunha**  
Business Office

**Valentino Demayo**  
Nursing Svc.

**Jennine Kirby**  
Surgical Svc.

**Jen-Shi Liu**  
Nursing Svc.

**Koon Louie**  
Pharmacy Svc.

**Jesusa Magbanua**  
Nursing Svc.

**Carolyn McDuffey**  
Nursing Svc.

**Jennifer Norcia**  
Nursing Svc.

**Jan Plona**  
Business Office

**James Romby**  
Nursing Svc.

**David Van Syckle**  
Radiology Svc.

**Brian Tucker**  
Nutrition & Food Svc.

**Kathleen Williams**  
Prosthetics Svc.

**Linda Wolbers**  
Medical Svc.

### 15 Years

**Isabel Arroyo**  
Acquisition & Materiel Mgmt. Svc.

**Roger Ballesteros**  
Engineering Svc.

**Pamela Courtright**  
Social Work Svc.

**Willie Davis**  
Engineering Svc.

**Rose Encina**  
Dental Svc.

**Sherri Gipson**  
Nursing Svc.

**Anthony Gonzales**  
Building Mgmt. Svc.

**Morten Green**  
Engineering Svc.

**Tanyle Herring**  
Nursing Svc.

**Marion Jean Hogan**  
Medical Svc.

**Billy Lacy**  
Nutrition & Food Svc.

**Rosita Lopez**  
Nursing Svc.

**Susan Malloy**  
Recreation Svc.

**Elizabeth Parker**  
Nursing Svc.

**Joseph Pockalny**  
Nursing Svc.

**Judith Rowe**  
Nursing Svc.

**Eugene Schacht**  
Director's Office

**Virginia Ulanimo**  
Nursing Svc.

### 20 Years

**Deadra MacArthur**  
Pathology & Laboratory Svc.

**Violeta Tangalin**  
Nursing Svc.

**Katranker Thompson**  
Social Work Svc.

**Rowana Woods**  
Nutrition & Food Svc.

### 25 Years

**Rodrigo Cifriano**  
Pathology & Laboratory Svc.

**Faaiutausaga Mauga**  
Nursing Svc.

**Dawn Stewart**  
Nursing Svc.

### 30 Years

**David Freehill**  
Pharmacy Svc.

**Peter Greenberg**  
Medical Svc.

### 35 Years

**Christine Van-Ness**  
Nursing Svc.

### 40 Years

**Ruth Ford**  
Nutrition & Food Svc.

# CALENDAR OF TRAINING & EVENTS

EES=VA Employee Education System • HR=Human Resources • ORM=Office of Resolution Management • TQI=Total Quality Improvement • TBA=To be announced

DAY	DATE	SERVICE	TIME	PLACE	INFORMATION
Thursday	7-4-02				Independence Day Holiday
Wednesday	7/10/02	Psychiatry	12-1pm	Menlo Park, Bldg. 324, Conf. Room E117	Optimal Management of Psychosis and Agitation in the Elderly Patient with Stephen Holtz, M.D.
Wednesday	7/17/02	Psychiatry	12-1pm	Menlo Park, Bldg. 324, Conf. Room E117	Assessment of the Patient with Aphasia with Ellen Coman, PhD.
Wednesday	7/24/02	Psychiatry	12-1pm	Menlo Park, Bldg. 324, Conf. Room E117	Case Presentation with Patrick Fitzsimmons, M.D.
Tuesday & Wednesday	7/16/02 7/17/02	HRMS	8:00-4:10pm	Palo Alto, Building 101, Canteen, Staff Dining Room	New Employee Orientation
Wednesday	8/21/02	Psychiatry	12-1pm	Menlo Park, Bldg. 324, Conf. Room E117	Unique Problems and Issues Facing Men Who Are Caregivers, with Dolores Gallagher-Thompson, PhD. and Joel Kaye, PhD.
Tuesday & Wednesday	8/27/02 8/28/02	HRMS	8:00-4:10pm	Palo Alto, Building 101, Canteen, Staff Dining Room	New Employee Orientation



## SATELITE BROADCASTS



Log onto our intranet site, [VAPAWEB](#), to find a schedule of upcoming satellite broadcasts.

## Right To Representation

In accordance with Title VII, Section 7114 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, employees represented by the exclusive bargaining unit are informed that:

**“An exclusive representative in an appropriate unit in an agency shall be given the opportunity to be represented at any examination of an employee in the unit by a representative of the agency in connection with an investigation if the employee reasonably believes that the examination may result in disciplinary action against the employee; and the employee requests representation.”**

If you have any questions, please contact the Employee/Labor Relations Section in Human Resources Management Service at extension 65668.

# Skills Faire a Success!

How do you keep nursing staff up to date? We are fortunate to have experienced, dedicated nursing staff at VA Palo Alto Health Care System. However, inpatient nursing is a very complex job. There are constant changes with new technology and it is important that our staff have the most up to date skills to assess patient problems and give our patients the best care.

Enter the Back to Basics Skills Faire: The leadership team in Medical-Surgical and Rehabilitation areas developed an innovative competency faire to give staff “Clinical Practice Pearls”, tips to help reinforce the key points of systems assessment. All staff received a teaching manual and attended a lecture, given by a VAPAHCS nurse who is also a San Jose State professor of nursing, Dr. Sharon Wahl.

Staff attended a faire with booths to enhance assessment skills for skin and wound care, intestinal, urinary and nervous systems, and heart and lungs. To make it interactive and capture staff attention, they created various clinical games: a “Jeopardy” game to review the nervous system, a “Tic Tac Toe” game on intestinal and urinary systems, a “Name that Sound” game to review heart and lung sounds and a “Wheel of Fortune” game that reinforced skin and wound care.

The nurses finished their faire by completing a physical assessment station and taking an exam to verify their newly honed knowledge. Based on staff feedback, the faire was a resounding success!



## Minority Donor Awareness Day

There is a critical shortage of organs and tissue needed for transplants. More than 60,000 Americans are waiting for organ transplants, while hundreds of thousands more need tissue transplants. Every 16 minutes, another name is added to the list of Americans waiting for life-saving transplants. Tragically, thousands die each year because the organs or tissues they need are not available. Learn about what steps you can take to share your life – your decision can help save lives.

Sponsored by the African American Special Emphasis Program Committee in cooperation with the Asian/Pacific Islander, Federal Women's, Hispanic, Native American and People with Disabilities Special Emphasis Program Committees.



## VA National Medical Musical Group Award

The VA National Medical Musical Group (VA-NMMG) has been named the 2002 winner of the prestigious Congressional Medal of Honor Society's (CMOHS) Bob Hope Award. The Award is offered for outstanding service to or positive portrayal of the US Military. Prior winners include Denzel Washington, Stephen Ambrose and Bill Mauldin (who drew the Willy and Joe cartoons during WWII) just to name a few. The award is given to VA-NMMG for their dedication to veterans as evidenced in their annual Veterans Day Concerts and in the “Veterans Hymn.” It symbolizes the musical group's commitment to their mission of performing music with a message of inspiration, healing and patriotism. The award will be given at the CMOHS Annual Meeting in Shreveport, LA in September of this year. Local members of VA-NMMG include Jill Striegel and Marsha Miller.

# Fireworks!



The craft of blending pyrotechnic mixtures and packaging them is an ancient one, having existed in China for centuries before it spread to Europe. The Chinese made war rockets and explosives as early as the 11th century, and the craft spread to Arabia in the 13th century. The Arabs called the rockets Chinese arrows. The Chinese claim to have made gunpowder during the Song dynasty (960-1279), and their chronicles mention the use of war rockets against the Mongol invaders in 1279. Historians generally agree that the Mongols probably introduced Chinese gunpowder and rockets into Europe in about 1241. The first authoritative records of their use in Europe date from 1258.

In spite of China's initial progress, Europe surpassed it in pyrotechnic development in the 14th century, about the time the gun was invented. Shot and gunpowder for military purposes were made by skilled military tradesmen, who later were called firemakers, and who also were required to make fireworks for celebrations of victory or peace. During the Renaissance, two European schools of pyrotechnic thought emerged, one in Italy and the other at Nurnberg, Germany. The Italian school of pyrotechnics emphasized elaborate fireworks, and the German school stressed scientific advancement. Both schools added significantly to further development of pyrotechnics, and by the mid-17th century fireworks were used for entertainment on an unprecedented scale in Europe, being popular even at resorts and public gardens. In the mid-19th century fireworks became popular in the United States. Injuries associated with fireworks, particularly to children, eventually discouraged their unrestricted use. As a result, in many states of the U.S. and in parts of Canada the sale of fireworks is restricted by law.

## Fireworks Safety:

To help you celebrate safely this Fourth of July, the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the National Council on Fireworks Safety offer the following safety tips:

1. Always read and follow label directions.
2. Have an adult present.
3. Buy from reliable sellers.
4. Use outdoors only.
5. Always have water handy (a garden hose and a bucket).
6. Never experiment or make your own fireworks.
7. Light only one firework at a time.
8. Never re-light a "dud" firework (wait 15 to 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water).
9. Never give fireworks to small children.
10. If necessary, store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
11. Dispose of fireworks properly by soaking them in water and then disposing of them in your trashcan.
12. Never throw or point fireworks at other people.
13. Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
14. Never shoot fireworks in metal or glass containers.
15. The shooter should always wear eye protection and never have any part of the body over the firework.
16. Stay away from illegal explosives.

## Where to Find Fireworks Displays

All the following occur on July 4th.

### Fireworks at Princeton Harbor, Half Moon Bay

**Admission:** Free

**Description of Event:** Fireworks will be shot off the beach in Princeton Harbor

**Directions:** Princeton Harbor, off of Highway 1.

### San Francisco Chronicle Fourth of July Waterfront Festival, San Francisco

**Contact:** Dianne Levy at 415-777-8497, or email to [dalevy@usa.net](mailto:dalevy@usa.net)

**URL:** [www.sfgate.com/chronicle/events](http://www.sfgate.com/chronicle/events)

**Admission:** FREE

**Description of Event:** A free day-long festival along San Francisco's beautiful waterfront from historic Ghirardelli Square and the Maritime Museum, along Fisherman's Wharf to PIER 39. Seven stages of entertainment. Beginning at 9:30 p.m., Pyro Spectaculars presents one of the largest fireworks displays in the country.

### San Jose America Festival, San Jose

**Contact:** (408) 294-2100 x444

**URL:** [www.americafestival.com/](http://www.americafestival.com/)

**Admission:** Free

**Description of Event:** This year's show is again sponsored by the San Jose Mercury News/ Nuevo Mundo/Viet Mercury and beautifully executed by Pyro Spectaculars one of the most respected fireworks producers in the nation - who have also done shows at Disney World, The Olympics, and six Super Bowls. This year's show will include more than 1100 shells and scores of different effects in this brilliant, 20+ minute presentation.

### Great America 4th of July Extravaganza

**Contact:** (408) 988-1776

**Description of Event:** Celebrate in style at Paramount's Great America. Fireworks, a BBQ, music and more.

### Ripon Chamber of Commerce's Fantastic Fourth Independence Day Celebration, Ripon, CA

**Admission:** Free

**Description of Event:** Children's bicycle parade, food, entertainment culminating in a pyrotechnic extravaganza at dusk.

**Directions:** Highway 99, between Manteca and Modesto. Take the Main Street exit, then ask for directions to Ripon High School.

# You Make a Difference!

*Submitted by our veterans and their families. We welcome more contributions from LVD, Stockton, Modesto, San Jose, and Monterey.*

Dear **Ms. (Tess) Estrin, R.N.**, and fellow **324-MPD Staff Members**:

Thanks so much for inviting me to your Interdisciplinary Care Plan meeting regarding my husband. I was half way home before I realized that I had not thanked all of you. From the bottom of my heart, I appreciate the things you do to help my husband be well and comfortable.

My daughter flew down to visit your unit to see if she could give it her "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval." She walked in unannounced to see what her eyes and ears told her about your staff and the care you give.

What she saw on her initial tour was the same as I now observe when I visit each week. You treat your patients with great respect, calling each by name. You know specific needs, add quality to their lives, and create an environment in which life is pleasant. You don't treat us families as damned nuisances. Wow! Thank you so much! In this day of medical systems that are under fire on every corner, you are to be admired.

My husband, the man you've cared for week after week, is the handsome military man I married years ago- not just the grizzled, incontinent, old man you see now. As I walk out of your building and stop to look at the pictures of patients and staff from years ago, I think of families like mine who appreciate people like you and who probably don't thank you half enough.

For me, it's not just what meds and treatments you give to my husband and other patients; it is how you do things. Thank you a million times over!

**Kristin Collins** (PAD), Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service, is an extremely dedicated person. She always greets the patients with that infectious smile that puts you at ease. She treats the patients as though they were the only ones in the clinic. She is dynamic and operates at full speed. She has the ability to work with several patients at any given time, still providing each with individual and professional therapy.

**Mason Nall** (PAD), Acquisition and Material Management Service, is always full of energy a smile on his face and willing and able to help. He keeps good communication with the Nursing staff to ensure all cystoscopes are ready for use. When we have seven or more cystos on one day, he is extremely quick and efficient. Mason is an awesome employee.

**Erlinda Dela Cruz** (PAD), Nursing Service, has been a wonderful nurse for my husband during his stay at the VA Hospital on 4C. Her cheerful attitude has lifted his spirits. She is always willing to help, even if she isn't assigned to him. She showed interest in his well being and his progress. It helps patients to be uplifted and feel a little better. She certainly made his stay more bearable.

## HBPC Practitioner Helps Veteran Proudly Display WWII Memories

Thanks to the thoughtfulness and creativity of HBPC Nurse Practitioner, Bonnie Anderson, veteran Edmond Laine can now proudly display his purple heart, military ribbons and a picture of himself in uniform from WWII. Edmond Laine, a native San Franciscan who is legally blind from a service connected injury, had put the items away in a drawer and it was actually his caregiver, Yolanda, who found them and showed them to Bonnie on one of her home visits. Yolanda mentioned how her grandchildren love to hear Edmond tell them stories about time he spent in Italy during the war. She recalled once when her youngest grandson was going to spend the night with them and was frightened about being away from home, it was an older grandson who said don't be afraid, you're sleeping in the house of a brave soldier. That fact made everything ok with the young grandson. To honor Edmond's achievements as well as provide a way for all his visitors to see his medals, Bonnie decided to make a display box.

Bonnie set about to select the materials needed, construct the box and arrange the display. She incorporated the cover and backing of the original box that the Purple Heart came in with fabric to form the backdrop for the various medals, ribbons and picture. When finished, she presented it to Edmond and his caregiver who gave it a prominent spot on the bookshelf in the living room of the house that has been in Edmond's family since the early 1900s. Thanks Bonnie, for preserving this piece of history for a feisty veteran who at age 94, still likes to reminisce about the events of his life as a soldier in Italy.



# May Word Search



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

Find the following words in the letters above:

America  
Beach  
Brave  
DOD  
Fireworks

Flag  
Heat  
Independence  
Loyal  
Parents

Parks  
Recreation  
Splash  
Veterans  
Wheelchair



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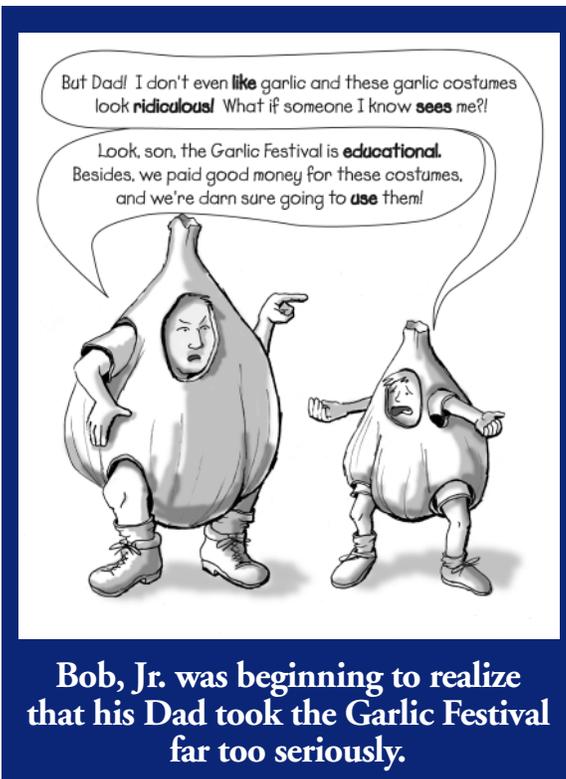
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California supplies approximately 90 percent of garlic grown in the United States and is rated among the best in the world.

There are two major types of garlic: softneck (*Allium Sativum Sativum*), which has a long storage life; and hardneck (*Allium Sativum Ophioscordon*) which has a shorter storage life but better flavor.