



# VA SALUTING NATIONAL WOMENS HISTORY MONTH WRITING WOMEN BACK INTO HISTORY

# NEWSLETTER

- March 17, **Fried Green Tomatoes** movie presentation
- March 24, **Women's History Month Celebration**
- March 31, **The Family that Preys** movie presentation
- All events will be held in the **Pete Wheeler Auditorium**



March 2010

# Chaplain's Corner ...

## Are you feeding yourself good?

A story is told of an evening gathering between a grandfather and granddaughter. The grandfather tells the granddaughter about a battle that goes on inside of people. He says the battle is between two wolves; one evil and one good.

The grandfather says the characteristics of the evil wolf are anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, lies, false pride, superiority and ego. The characteristics of the good wolf are joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith.

The granddaughter asked, "Which wolf wins?" The grandfather replied, "The one you feed."

We, too, are like the wolves. Every day we're deciding whether to do good or evil. Whether we decide to indulge in good or evil, the decision makes a remarkable difference. Sometimes a decision will affect an individual for a life time. Good decisions lead to good out-

comes, but evil decisions can lead to evil outcomes. When we choose to do good, it can be said that we're choosing to follow God or a Higher Power. We're choosing to trust and walk by faith believing God or our Higher Power will lead us by grace.

When we choose to do evil, it can be said that we're setting ourselves up for failure and adversity. After choosing evil we can experience anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt or resentment. These emotions can begin to affect our whole being (physically, spiritually and mentally).

Can we learn how to overcome evil?

Overcoming evil primarily consists of practicing good.

The question you could ask yourself is: As I journey through life, which wolf will win today?

## Personal sales, purchases unauthorized at VA Medical Center

We have observed a number of visitors and/or patients in the Atlanta VA Medical Center selling goods or promoting their services. This activity is prohibited without prior approval. If such individuals are identified, Police should be notified and they will be asked to stop the activity, leave the medical center or face potential criminal charges. The Mission of the Atlanta VA is to provide timely and compassionate healthcare, which contributes to the well-being and quality of life of our veterans. Promoting one's own entrepreneurship or private gain is unauthorized on federal property. Buying and selling are violations

of Code of Federal Regulations 38CFR, 1.218, (a) (8) and (b) (20) and can result in fine or arrest (depending on the items being sold).

Please be aware that all sales activities require approval by the Public Affairs Office and Veterans Canteen Services.

If you are an employee selling personal items, please be aware of regulation 5 C. F. R. 2635.701-705 that states,

Employees may not misuse official time. This includes the employee's own time as well as the time of a subordinate.

**Atlanta VAMC** is published to provide the Veteran community of patients, their families, staff and faculty with information on people, policies, operations, technical developments, trends and ideas of and about the Department of Veterans Affairs in Atlanta and VISN7. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the VA.

■ Send story ideas, letters to the editor and other correspondence to **Editor, Atlanta VAMC (OOPA)**  
**1670 Clairmont Road, Decatur, GA 30033-4004**,  
 call 404-321-6111 ext. 5155 or send e-mails to **Robin.Brown5@va.gov**. ■ All photographs belong to the Atlanta VAMC unless otherwise credited.

## Services of Worship



### Protestant/ Interdenominational

Sunday

10 a.m. Chapel and TV (Ch. 30)

12:30 Psychiatry Unit

1:30 p.m. NHCU (2nd Fl. Day Room)

### Catholic

Monday 11:30 a.m. Chapel

### Islamic

Friday 1:30 p.m. Chapel

### Jewish

The Jewish Chaplain is available by request in the chaplain's office at ext. 6870

### Dial-A-Prayer

VAMC's Chaplain Service provides a Dial-A-Prayer service/ministry. Dial-A-Prayer is always available. If calling from an outside telephone, dial 404-321-6111, ext. 4161.



**The official Atlanta VAMC Newsletter**

Medical Center Director: **James A. Clark**  
 Internal Information Officer: **Robin Brown**

# Spotlight on you



**Name:** Mrs. AmyJo Vaughn Brumage Lovelady

**Age:** 95 years old

**Service:** Air Force, 1944-1945

**Home of Record:** Mullins, Texas

**Current residence:** Community Living Center/Atlanta VAMC

**Her accomplishments:**

- Earned her nursing degree at Baylor University
- Elected as post commander with the American Veterans in Tulare, California
- Advanced to Worthy Matron of the Eastern Stars
- Served with the Disabled American Veterans
- Became a “Rebekah” and received her 25 year pin. Rebekah is a women’s auxiliary to “The Three Link Fraternity.”

Lovelady remembers her childhood fondly. She was raised by her older sister Lesta and her husband, who was part of the notable Buford family that the city and highway in Doraville are named after.

Later, during World War II, she was commissioned a second lieutenant. She met her husband, Byron Lovelady, while she hospitalized after contracting rheumatic fever. Byron served as a flight control officer.

After the war, the couple moved with to Tulare, Calif., where Byron’s parents lived and owned a grocery store. While the plan was for Byron to get his pharmacy degree in Arizona, their plans shifted as they started raising their three children: Dianne, Linda and Byron Lester (named after her sister Lesta). Lovelady continued to work as a nurse until her retirement in 1975. The couple eventually took over the family business.

“I was glad to serve my country,” remarked Lovelady. She said she enjoyed a great career and a robust life. “I want to be known as a good nurse and someone who had lots of fun in life.” Her son Byron Lester, lives in Cumming, GA, and volunteers at the VA.



# VA nurse shares skills as translator

Haiti native helps neighbors arriving in Atlanta for medical care after earthquake destroys hometown

“When I first heard the news that a massive earthquake had struck Haiti, the information was more than I could initially take in. I experienced sleepless nights and nightmares along with physical and mental exhaustion. I was glued to the television, watching CNN, hoping to see my mother. The horror of humans suffering and the sight of familiar and now demolished landmarks were almost too much to grasp! I felt a sense of hopelessness because I was unable to help.”

After receiving news that her family was ok, Marie Mompont was able to concentrate her efforts on helping others right from Atlanta.

“It was frustrating that I could not be there to help in person. The first chance I got, I jumped into it,” said the Port-au-Prince, Haiti, native. “I knew that I could assist as both a translator and medical professional.”

Working at the Atlanta VA Medical Center was just the advantage she needed. The medical center is part of the Atlanta National Disaster Medical System Federal Coordinating Center. The staff coordinates the reception of medical board-validated patients in order for them to receive definitive care in Georgia-area facilities. As of Feb. 25, 47 Haitian earthquake victims, including an 18-month-old with brain injuries, were airlifted to Dobbins Air Force Base for treatment at area hospitals. Contributing as a nurse and translator, Mompont was part of the VAMC team that also included physicians, social workers, health administrative specialists, an information technology tech and other support staffers.

“I chose nursing because it is a helping profession,” explained Mompont, who is one of 30 Haitian nurses with the Atlanta VAMC. “I wanted to work in a field that is challenging and in demand. Nurses are especially valuable in these times because there is such a great nursing shortage around the world.”

Those same skills Mompont uses every day in the medical Specialty Care unit at the VA.

“Words of comfort will go a long way in showing patients how much we care for



*Photos by Ann Hamilton*

**Marie Mompont assists patients as they arrive at the Dobbins Air Force Base in February during the Atlanta National Disaster Medical System mission.**

them,” said the 19-year VA employee. “In the midst of pain, emotion, and deep sadness the hurting patient needs to know that they are not alone or forgotten and acts of kindness toward them does that. I immediately show that I am there for my patient. I provide comfort, care, trust, compassion and a listening ear.”

Joe Jenkins, an emergency preparedness coordinator for the medical center, can attest to Mompont’s caring demeanor.

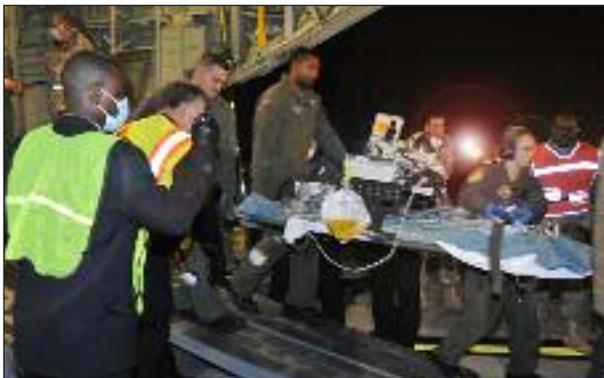
“Mompont is always willing and ready to help all the patients arriving at Dobbins. While we were chosen because we have outstanding medical care in the area, she was chosen for her excellent ability to bridge the gap and eliminate barriers of communication in a way that was both comforting and reassuring to our Haitian neighbors,” he commented.

Mompont has longed to be a nurse practitioner since childhood.

“Ever since I was a child, my grand-father had always wanted me to be a nurse. By the time I graduated high school, I knew I wanted to study nursing. I deviated and received two associated degrees in business and computer science. I was not satisfied and went back in tract to my first love, nursing. From that point on, everything fell into place.”

Graduating from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte School of Nursing in 1987, Mompont would later muster up the courage to earn her master’s degree in 2002 as a nurse practitioner.

**Mompont** continued from Page 6



## Key to healthy diet:

# Improving nutrition from ground up

An important part of a healthy lifestyle, but most people have trouble figuring out what to do when planning a complete diet overhaul. March is National Nutrition Month, and the American Dietetic Association reminds everyone that an easy way to focus on eating better is to start with the basics: build your nutritional health from the ground up.

“By starting slowly and giving yourself a good foundation, you can work towards a healthier life,” says registered dietitian and ADA spokesperson Toby Smithson. “Change doesn’t have to be dramatic to make a difference.”

Listed are five suggested ways to improve nutritional intake from the ground up:

1. Focus on fruits and vegetables: What’s in your current diet? Are you eating enough fruits or vegetables? “Add a serving each day to one meal and increase it every few weeks. Adding more of these foods into your diet is important whether you buy frozen, fresh or organic.”

2. Shop locally: Most farmers’ markets have many options to find new, fresh foods in the area. “This can be a great way to eat well and economically support the community at the same time.”

3. Make calories count: When choosing foods from the good and not-so-good categories, focus instead on the one with

more of the vitamins and nutrients needed. Sometimes, foods with fewer calories aren’t always the healthiest options. To figure out how many calories you need to achieve a healthy weight, visit [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov).

4. Test your taste buds: A healthy eating plan emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat or fat-free dairy and includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans and nuts. There are lots of choices within this wide range. Take this opportunity to try new things and find new favorites.

5. Eat treats: Got a sweet tooth? Have fruit and yogurt for dessert. If you want a snack in the afternoon, have some trail mix or nuts. There is no reason to go hungry just because you’re making healthy changes.

For more tips on building a healthful diet from the ground up, during National Nutrition Month and all year long, visit [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) and click on “For the Public.”

For more information, contact any of Atlanta VA’s 13 registered clinical dietitians at 404-321-



**National Nutrition Month® March 2010**

American Dietetic Association

6111, ext. xxxx:

Dan Bacon, (Lawrenceville Community-Based Outpatient Clinic/Oakwood CBOC), ext. 1715

Phyllis Gatewood, (MOVE! program coordinator), ext. 3125

Martha Grimsley, (7th floor), ext. 6894

Susan Hagood, (Community Living Center/Bronze SCI), ext. 6838

Donna Henderson, (9th floor), ext. 6819

Carolyn Kendrick, (Stockbridge CBOC), ext. 5756

Kim Massey, (MICU, SICU, Dialysis, Smyrna CBOC), ext. 6845

Jatun Neal, (Decatur Clinic), ext. 5238

Donna Ruiz, (Rome CBOC), ext. 4304

Yvostay Rushing, (Newnan CBOC), ext. 3632

Valorie Sherrill, (HBPC/Platinum Team), ext. 6812

Julie Tabor, (Gold, Oncology, Purple, Women's Wellness), ext. 6363

Tiffany Taylor, (East Point CBOC), 1667.

Revised from the American Dietetic Association article.

# Suicide:

## Preventable effect of war

The invisible pain of war and life are real ... As Ernest Hemingway put it, "The world breaks everyone, and many become stronger at the broken places."

Our men and women in uniform are coming home after multiple deployments from Iraq and Afghanistan different than when they left — their loved ones have changed as well. Whether deployed or on the home front our friend, spouse, child or buddy may be struggling with a moral injury, psychological trauma or medical illness. Our military family is all in this together, we must remind each other that we are not alone and reaching out is a sign of courage and strength.

As a community, we can educate ourselves on the resources available to those struggling with the seen and unseen injuries of combat. If left untreated, the psychological health issues our warriors face can manifest in several ways and be compounded by pain, anxiety, substance misuse and conflicted relationships and be fatal.

The largest barrier that prevents our warriors and their families from seeking treatment is stigma. Stigma is deadly, toxic and hazardous.

The book, *Why People Die by Suicide* by Dr. Thomas Joiner, helps to identify three emotional elements a potential suicide victim may be feeling — perceived or real. These are: 1) a sense of being a burden to others, 2) a profound sense of loneliness, alienation and isolation, and 3) a sense of fearlessness. All three of these motivations or preconditions must be in place before someone will attempt suicide.

As human beings we all want to belong. Quite often someone contemplating suicide may feel they don't belong or may feel invisible or alone. They may see themselves as a burden to their friends and family. And they are often desensitized to violence, pain and injury — virtual or real — that was once seen as abnormal.

We owe our warriors, Veterans and their families the very best. If you are worried about someone who is demonstrating some of the warning signs and think he or she may be contemplating suicide, take action by expressing those concerns and asking if he or she is feeling hopeless or suicidal. If so, reach out for professional help immediately, and escort him or her to safety.

By acknowledging and being aware of the risks and resources available everyone can assist those they know as well as others who take courage from the example.

For those in crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **800-273-TALK (8255)** or visit [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/).

*Defense Centers of Excellence  
for Psychological Health  
and Traumatic Brain Injury*



**Mompoint** continued from Page 4



**Mompoint reviews a patient's medical record with the immigration team.**

"I did not stop there, but accomplished another dream that was personally significant to me. I went back to school while working full-time and I graduated from the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program in 2009," Mompoint announced. "I was able to make my own history when I completed the doctorate program and graduated in the first class of Samford University IDA V. Moffett School of Nursing Doctor of Nursing Practice."

Mompoint's motto: "believe in yourself even when no one believes in you."

Despite discouraging comments about her strong accent and inability to speak fluent English, Mompoint remained optimistic and confidently registered for classes. While English is her third language, (French is the native with Haitian Creole being the second), the wife and mother of two persevered to become a U. S. citizen in 1983.

"While I felt that English was the hardest language to learn, I did not allow the difficulty of it to create a barrier that would prevent me from reaching my goal," she said.

"People reach a stage in life where they must decide what they want to be. Next, they have to reflect on what is important and what makes them happy. Finally, one must take into consideration the resources available to help them achieve their goals. Nursing fulfills all of the criteria I am looking for in my personal definition of the perfect job," Mompoint explained.

# Combat Vets find help making seamless transition

Did you know the VA has a program that is specifically geared towards newly returning combat Veterans? Well there is! It's called The Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) program.

This program has one unique purpose: to provide OEF/ OIF Veterans with a friendly, caring, seamless transition into VA health care.

"We are truly grateful for the men and women who have risked their lives to fight terrorism in Afghanistan, Iraq and other locations around the world," said Kerry Traviss, OEF/OIF program manager.

"We can provide assistance for OEF/OIF Veterans to enroll for priority health care and benefits even if they are still on active duty or an activated mem-

ber of the National Guard or Reserve. Their initial physical/mental health evaluation, and assessment for case management services are also included in our support efforts," explained Traviss.

The OEF/OIF program consists of a program manager, six case managers, and a PSA. We have a collaborative relationship with the Primary Care staff.

If you know an OEF/OIF Veteran who has not established primary

care at the Atlanta VAMC, refer him or her to the OEF/OIF Program Staff at 404-321-6111 ext. 2097.

The office is located on the 2nd Floor of the "B" building near the Lab.



## Create, submit for drawing, win grand prize

The Atlanta VA Medical Center's Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom (OEF/OIF) program is developing a new Post Deployment Clinic for combat Veterans.

The staff is soliciting ideas to help name the program. Drawing forms will be collected in a box. One random form will be selected for a grand prize at the Director's Town Hall Meeting scheduled for May 25, 2010.

### Post Deployment Clinic Details:

• To create a nationwide VA system of integrated post-combat care that begins with: an acknowledgement of and expressed appreciation for the service; the sacrifice of our combat veterans results in the greatest possible healing of the wounds of war by paving the way back home for our combat veterans; integrates the full array of post combat care services currently available in the VA into a coherent, systematic approach to care for all returning combat veterans

• Integrated Post Combat Care: Normalizes all aspects of post-combat assessment and care; is Accessible, effective, efficient and veteran

friendly for all veterans returning from Iraq or Afghanistan; De-stigmatizes the mental health aspect of care; Appreciates the common as well as the unique aspects of military service as an occupation and combat as an environment

Submit your ideas on the form below and bring it to the OEF/OIF Program office located on the 2nd floor of Building B across from the laboratory or drop boxes outside the cafeteria and the ground floor atrium during the OEF/OIF Awareness Week slated for May 17, 18 and 20.

For more information, call the OEF/OIF staff at ext. 6343.



### OEF/OIF Program Drawing Form

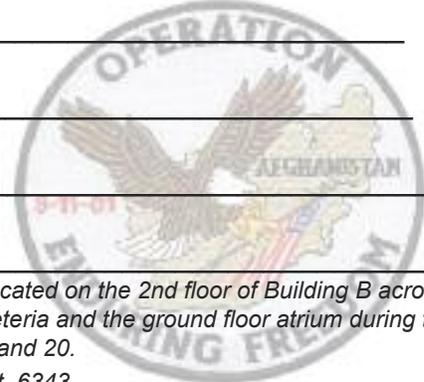
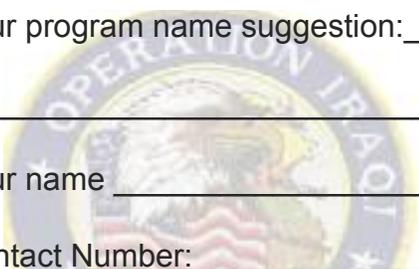
Your program name suggestion: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Submit this form to the OEF/OIF program office located on the 2nd floor of Building B across from the laboratory or drop boxes outside the cafeteria and the ground floor atrium during the OEF/OIF Awareness Week slated for May 17, 18 and 20.

For more information, call the OEF/OIF staff at ext. 6343.





## Complementary, alternative medicine: help/hinder?

**Jacqueline Huntly**

*Contributing writer*

The National Center of Complementary and Alternative Medicine, a branch of the National Institutes of Health, defines Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) as being a group of systems, methods and products that are not part of conventional medicine. Although there is scientific evidence for the safety and effectiveness of some of these practices, there remains a need for ongoing research to evaluate many of them.

It is extremely important for patients to educate themselves about CAM, if they are considering using it. Inform the health care provider of participation. This is particularly important with the biologically-based products, since there can be significant side effects and interactions with conventional drug therapy. Also, pa-

tients considering surgery need to inform their doctors if they are using any biologically-based medicines.

Some useful definitions include:

✦ Alternative medicine is used instead of conventional medicine.

✦ Complementary medicine is used together with conventional medicine.

✦ Integrative medicine involves combining CAM with conventional medicine. CAM examples are:

### **Biologically-based medicines**

- Herbal Remedies
- Dietary Supplements

### **Energy medicine**

- Pulsed Electromagnetic Field
- Therapeutic Touch- practitioners use their perceived healing energy to heal another

- Reiki- transfer of universal energy from one person to another for healing

- Qigong- part of Chinese medicine using movement, meditation and controlled breathing to re-establish energy flow

- Cranial Electrotherapy Stimulation

### **Mind-body medicine**

- Meditation
- Yoga
- Tai Chi- developed in China, sometimes described as moving meditation

- Dance, music and art therapy

- Spirituality

### **Manipulative body-based medicine**

- Chiropractic

- Massage

### **Whole systems**

- Ayurvedic medicine - use of herbs, massage and yoga to integrate mind, body and spirit

- Chinese medicine - use of herbs, massage, meditation and acupuncture to re-establish balance in the body

- Homeopathy - use of highly diluted substances to heal

- Naturopathy - use of diet, lifestyle changes, herbs, massage and joint manipulation

There are a number of resources available to learn more about CAM. These websites will not only describe the different types of CAM, but also list the latest research in this field.

✦ The National Center on Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) Clearinghouse - <http://nccam.nih.gov>

✦ National Institutes of Health, Office of Dietary Supplements – <http://ods.od.nih.gov/> (under dietary supplement fact sheets)

✦ US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

<http://www.fda.gov/aboutfda/center-offices/cfsan/>

<http://www.fda.gov/food/dietarysupplements/consumerInformation/ucm110567.htm>

<http://www.fda.gov/food/dietarysupplements/alerts/>

<http://www.fda.gov/safety/medwatch/>

✦ Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality – <http://www.ahrq.gov/>

*Jacqueline Huntly is a resident physician with the Department of Preventive Medicine at Emory University School of Medicine.*

### Exercise Tip



**Anaerobic vs. Aerobic Exercise:**  
Aerobic exercise is an activity that uses major muscle groups such as walking, running, swimming, and

cycling. This type of exercise strengthens your cardiovascular system by increasing your heart and respiratory rate and brings in more oxygen into the body. To reap the full benefits of aerobic exercise, you must be at 60%-80% of your target heart rate for at least 20 minutes, between three and five times a week.

## Women help write history

American women's history has been full of pioneers: Women who fought for their rights, worked hard to be treated equally and made great strides in fields like science, politics, sports, literature and art. These are just a few of the remarkable accomplishments that historians not to mention people across the United States celebrate. What "Famous Firsts" will American women achieve next?

Here is a timeline:

**1941** -- Linda Darnell. First woman to sell securities on the New York Stock Curb Exchange

**1949** -- Georgia Nesse Clark. First woman treasurer of the United States

**1967** -- Muriel Siebert . First woman to own a seat on the New York Stock Exchange

**1968** -- Janice Lee York Romary. First woman to carry a U.S. flag at the Olympic Games

**1978** -- Mary Clarke. First woman named major general in the U.S. Army

**1978** -- Ella Grasso. First woman governor re-elected (Connecticut)

**1981** -- Sandra Day O'Connor. First woman U. S. Supreme Court justice

**1983** -- Sally Kristen Ride. First American woman to reach outer space.

**1984** -- Joan Benoit (Samuelson). First woman to win an Olympic marathon

Geraldine Ferraro. First woman to run for vice-president on a major party ticket.

**1985** -- Penny Harrington . First woman police chief of a major U. S. city (Portland, OR)

Wilma Mankiller. First woman chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.

**1986** -- Ann Bancroft. First woman to walk to North Pole  
Christa McAuliffe. First woman citizen passenger on a space mission

**1989** -- Lt. Col. Eileen Collins. First American woman to pilot a Space Shuttle

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, of Florida. First Hispanic woman elected to congress. She serves in the U.S. House of Representatives.

In Boston, the Rev. Barbara C. Harris becomes the first woman consecrated as a bishop in the Episcopal Church.

**1990** -- Dr. Antonia Novello is sworn in as U.S. Surgeon General. First woman (and first Hispanic) to hold that job.

**1991** -- On January 2, Sharon Pratt Dixon is sworn in as mayor of Washington, DC. First black woman to serve as mayor of a major city.

**1992** -- Carol Moseley-Braun of Illinois. First African-American woman elected to the U.S. Senate.

Mae Jemison becomes the first black female astronaut.



Photo by Peter Grattan

**Like on the cover**, women play a vital part in our country's freedom and victories. We take this time to salute their many contributions.

**1993** -- Shiela Widnall. First secretary of a branch of the U.S. military when she is appointed to head the Air Force.

Janet Reno. First woman U.S. Attorney General.

Toni Morrison. First African-American woman to win the Nobel Prize for literature.

**1995** -- Madeleine K. Albright. First woman Secretary of State and highest ranking woman in the U.S. government

**1997** -- Hillary Rodham Clinton. Only First Lady ever elected to the United States Senate

**1998** -- During Operation Desert Fox in Iraq, Lt. Kendra Williams, USN, becomes the first U.S. female combat pilot to bomb an enemy target

**1999** -- Lt. Col. Eileen Collins. First woman astronaut to command a space shuttle mission.

Nancy Ruth Mace is the first female cadet to graduate from the Citadel, the formerly all-male military school in South Carolina.

**2000** -- Hillary Clinton is elected to the U.S. Senate. First First Lady ever elected to national office.

**2002** -- Halle Berry. First African-American woman to win a Best Actress Oscar

**2005** -- Condoleezza Rice. First African-American woman to be appointed Secretary of State

**2006** -- Effa Manley, co-owner of the Negro Leagues team Newark Eagles. First woman elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

**2007** -- Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) becomes the first woman Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Harvard University names Drew Gilpin Faust its first woman president in the school's 371-year history.

Dr. Peggy Whitson, an American astronaut, becomes the first woman to command the International Space Station.

**2008** -- Hillary Clinton wins the New Hampshire Democratic presidential primary. First woman in U.S. history to win a presidential primary contest.

Sarah Palin, governor of Alaska. First woman to run for vice president on the Republican ticket.

## VA reappoints Atlanta scientist employee as senior research career scientist

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has renewed the appointment of Yerkes National Primate Research Center Director Stuart Zola, PhD, as senior research career scientist (SRCS). The seven-year appointment, which is the highest honor the VA bestows on a PhD scientist, provides continuing support for Zola's memory and amnesia research at the Atlanta



VA Medical Center.

As one of the world's leading neuroscientists, Dr. Zola is widely regarded for his valuable insights into how the brain organizes memory and how this relates to memory problems such as amnesia. He is also well known for effectively communicating science and research to the public.

## Military service record online, easy access

It's official; DD-214s are now online.

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online: [www.archives.gov/veterans/eve-trecs/index.html](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/eve-trecs/index.html).

This may be particularly helpful when a veteran needs a copy of his DD-214 for employment purposes. NPRC is working to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files.

Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online

military personnel records system to request documents.

Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site. Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized. The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records centers mailroom and processing time.

## SICU wins *Welcome Pamphlet* contest

The project was created to inform incoming residents of the tagteam practices between nurses and physicians who positively impact the overall care the unit provides to Veterans, as well as, enlighten others of specific practices promoting a smooth transition of patients from admission to discharge.

SICU's winning pamphlet detailed strategies used in improving the nurse-physician relationship.



SICU team members display contest winnings. From left, Deborah Combs; Christopher Sanchez; Nia Simmons-Roland, chairperson, Professional Practice Council; and Theresa Sun-Isbell.



**Congratulations to John Adams.**

**He was selected as the 2010 Today's Trailblazer recipient. The Trailblazer award is given to employees that have demonstrated a commitment to diversity, equality and outstanding contributions to the African-American community. Through his volunteer work, church and even at the Atlanta VA Adams has shown he is a true TRAILBLAZER. Adams is a health technician in Audiology and Speech Pathology and has worked at the Atlanta VAMC for 15 years. Great job!**



## Shuttle vans not equipped for wheelchairs

The off-site parking shuttle vans are not equipped to carry wheelchair-bound patients to an from the VA Medical Center. Patients using supportive equipment may continue to use valet parking at the medical center.

## Want to tell your story?

Input for the monthly newsletter is due to Robin.Brown5@va.gov by the 15th of each month. Images to accompany the word document should be sent separately, yet in the same e-mail message.

Then, have the Newsletter electronically sent to you.

Just include your name and e-mail address in a message to Robin and be added to the growing list of readers.



## Reminder

### Voluntary Leave Transfer Program

The following are approved participants in the VLTP and are eligible to receive annual leave donations.

Atlanta Vet Center- Anita Salamon.

Logistics-Wayne Carr.

Patient Care-Linda Gould.

Environmental Service -

Claytis Wright.

Extended Care- Karen Riggsby,

Tawanna Burton.

Primary Care- Shaunda Lynch,

Zina Moore.

Mental Health- Kristi Harris.

To make a leave donation, call Freida Philpotts at ext. 6306 or Marie Robinson at ext. 4376 for help completing form OF-630A.

## Did you know ...

You have a direct line to the Medical Center Director? Would you like to send an anonymous email to the director to share your concerns and suggestions?

To send an anonymous vista email:

Access Code: **ATL1997**

Verify Code: **ATLANTA1**

## Joint Commission

For patient safety concerns, contact Patient Safety at ext. 4823; to file a complaint, contact the Office of Inspector General at 800-488-8244 or VA IG at 53E/P.O. Box 50410, Washington, DC 20091 or contact Joint Commission at 800-994-6610 or via email at: [complaint@jointcommission.org](mailto:complaint@jointcommission.org). No adverse actions are taken against those who report safety or quality of care concerns.

## Wanted Vanpool Riders

Join a vanpool and ride comfortably to and from work, while saving money on gas and car maintenance.

12-hour shifts? No problem.

There's a group going your way.

For more information, call transit coordinators Jerry Travis at ext. 2774 or Joshua Jenkins at ext. 1569.

Children younger than 12 are not authorized to ride complementary shuttle vans to and from the off-site parking locations. They must also be properly supervised at all time within the Atlanta VA Medical Center.

Operation Enduring Family Support Group  
The OEF/OIF Program will begin an eight-session family support group April 1, 2010. The sessions will be held Thursdays from 4:30 until 5:30pm in Room GC302. The group will cover topics including: Family Life after Deployment, Improving Family Relationships, Communication and Intimacy, Managing Anger and Coping with Post Traumatic Stress.

For more information, contact Indira Brevick, OEF/OIF staff, at ext. 6374.

# VA Newsletter Reader Satisfaction Survey

*As the Director of the Atlanta VA Medical Center, I want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve you. Please help us serve you better by taking a couple of minutes to tell us about the quality of the monthly newsletters you have received so far. We appreciate your support and want to make sure we meet your expectations. Please complete the survey and return it to the Customer Service desk. Thank You.*

Q1. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Atlanta VA Medical Center newsletter?

1. Very satisfied    2. Satisfied    3. Somewhat Satisfied    4. Not Satisfied

Q2. How often do you read our VA newsletter?

1. Every month    2. Once in a while    3. Never

Q3. Regarding the amount of contents, would you say it is ....

1. Too much to read    2. Much to read    3. Appropriate    4. Lack of information

Q4. How many pages do you think appropriate to read considering the standard newsletter? (Standard 4 pages)

1. More than 4 pages    2. 8 pages    3. 12 pages    4. Size doesn't matter

Q5. How would you rate the quality of writing?

1. Easy to read    2. Confusing    3. Too technical

Q6. What type of material do you prefer?

1. News    2. Features (Human interest)    3. Editorials    4. Medical columns

Q7. What is your preferred method or form of newsletter?

1. Paper    2. E-mail    If E-mail, please provide your address, ie. robin.brown5@va.gov.

Q8. Which of these contents that VA newsletter started to feature do you like the most? (Multiple answers possible)

1. Health related    2. Veterans related    3. VA hospital news    4. Worship corner  
5. Women's Health    6. Other

Q9. What kinds of information or articles should we provide in addition to the above contents.

Q10. How would you rate overall quality of VA newsletter? Would you say it is....

1. Excellent    2. Very good    3. Good    4. Fair    5. Poor

Q11. Do you have any ideas/ opinions for improving the VA newsletter? Please leave a comment.

Q. 12. What other communication materials would you like to see at the Atlanta VAMC?

1. In-house commercials    2. Broadcast special events    3. Health-related webcasts

Q13. Please indicate your status.

1. A patient    2. An employee    3. A family member