

2013

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

LEBANON VA MEDICAL CENTER

Making Miracles Happen



VA
HEALTH
CARE

Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century





From Left to Right: Dr. Kanan Chatterjee MD, MBA—Chief of Staff; US Army Major (Retired) Robin C. Aube-Warren, FACHE, M.ED.—Associate Director; Robert W. Callahan, Jr.—Director; and US Navy Captain (Retired) Margaret G. Wilson MSN, RN—Associate Director for Patient Care Services

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This report is dedicated to Veterans and their loved ones who permit us to provide them world-class care, VA employees who Make Miracles Happen every day, Veteran Service Organizations who assist and advocate for their fellow Veterans in countless ways, the general public who supports America’s defenders and our National leaders who guarantee the Nation’s promises are kept with Veterans.



Dear Veterans, Families, Co-Workers, Supporters and Friends,

Dear Veterans, Families, Co-Workers, Supporters and Friends,

Health care today is very complicated, especially in our journey to become more patient-centered. Our facility, however, is replete with staff and volunteers who valiantly work through challenges on a daily basis, in order to guarantee that we keep the promise our Nation has made to its Veterans.

World-class, patient-centered health care is not about a “quick fix”. The Lebanon VA Medical Center team of professionals work in collaboration with Veterans to change unhealthy habits, prevent disease and improve life conditions. It is about working side by side with Veterans, touching lives and making miracles happen every day. The battle to transform care is not easily won. We believe that our Veterans deserve care that is world-class, proactive, forward-thinking, results-driven and patient-centered.

There is a popular phrase that states, “The whole is greater than the sum of the parts”. Making miracles happen requires a concerted effort from Veterans and the entire health care team. That is why this annual report to the community includes stories of staff, volunteers, Veterans, and their health care teams. Each contributes in such a way, that we are better and stronger together, than we are individually.

From our senior management team, thank you for your interest in the Lebanon VA Medical Center. We appreciate your support, service, trust, dedication and selflessness. Our commitment to walk alongside our Veterans and to continue “Making Miracles Happen” will never falter or fail.

Respectfully,

Robert W. Callahan, Jr.
Director

Robin C. Aube-Warren, FACHE, M.ED
Associate Director

Kanan Chatterjee, MD, MBA
Chief of Staff

Margaret G. Wilson, MSN, RN
Associate Director, Patient Care Services

On the cover moving clockwise: Dr. Scott Shreve DO with Cheryl and Ken Deaven making a donation to the Hospice unit in memory of Cheryl's father; Navy Veteran Frank Roerig and Dana Remlinger, Program Support Assistant, on a River Boat Cruise; Patricia Shinseki (the wife of VA Secretary Eric Shinseki) and Margaret G. Wilson, Associate Director, Patient Care Services enjoy a light moment together; Vocalist Katrina Diehm and Navy Diver Paul Beck share a smile after she sang for the Veterans; Veterans can always access their care teams through Secure Messaging in MyHealthVet; and the bronze Three Soldiers statue stands silent watch over the names of their brothers and sisters on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.



CREATING MIRACLES

Community Partnerships Create Miracles



The medical center has an unsurpassed commitment to Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn Veterans working cooperatively with the National Guard, the Reserves, and the Active Components.

The medical center and Harrisburg Area Community College have a partnership dedicated to serving student Veterans.

Central Pennsylvania's
Community College



Students from the Lebanon County Career and Technical Center assisted the medical center opening of the new Canteen.



Services Offered:

- Acute Psychiatry
- Ambulatory Surgery Unit
- Audiology
- Barber
- Behavioral Health/Mental Health Services
- Canteen
- Caregiver Support
- Community Based Outpatient Clinics
- Chapel
- CWT (Compensated Work Therapy)
- Day Care
- Dental
- Dietary
- Emergency Department
- Endoscopy
- Food Service
- Geriatric Care
- Gulf War Exam
- Health Education Library
- Hepatitis C Screening
- HIV Program
- Home/Community/Long Term Care
- Homeless Veterans Program
- Hospice
- Intensive Care Unit
- Infectious Disease
- Laboratory
- Medical Foster Home
- Mental Health Intensive Case Management
- MOVE!
- Nursing
- Nutrition
- OEF/OIF/OND
- Ophthalmology
- Occupational Therapy
- Pharmacy
- Police
- Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation
- Prosthetics
- Radiology
- Recreation Therapy
- Respiratory
- Substance Abuse Rehabilitation and Recovery Treatment Program
- Social Work
- Speech Pathology
- Spinal Cord Injury Program
- Suicide Prevention Program
- Surgery
- Veterans Activity Center
- Visual Impairment Services
- Vocational Rehabilitation Unit
- Voluntary
- Women's Health
- YMCA at the VA



**Everything we do,
every single day,
is because you served...**

VA HEALTH CARE Defining **EXCELLENCE** in the 21st Century

(717) 228-6000



**VA Core Values
and Characteristics**

Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence (I CARE) define our core values. Staff - at every level within VA - play a critical role to support VA's commitment to care and serve our Veterans, their families, and beneficiaries.

Integrity: Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.

Commitment: Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.

Advocacy: Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.

Respect: Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.

Excellence: Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

An Average Day at Lebanon

- 895** Phone Calls Received and Handled at Call Centers
- 3,500** Phone Calls Received at the Medical Center
- 3,435** Outpatient Prescriptions Processed
- 101** Intravenous Medications Mixed
- 1,629** Unit Doses Dispensed for Inpatients
- 30** Patients Seen in the Emergency Department
- 16** Surgical Procedures
- 2,423** Pieces of Reusable Medical Equipment Sterilized
- 1,192** Labs Drawn
- 244** Complete Blood Count Samples Collected
- 461** Hospital Meals Served
- 863** Meals Served at the Canteen
- 2,119** Clinical Appointments at Main Campus
- 493** Clinical Appointments at the Community Based Outpatient Clinics
- 2,514** Miles Driven by Employees in the Execution of Their Job
- 49** Chaplain Appointments/Visitations/Counseling



There Are Miracles Behind the Numbers

FINANCIAL STATISTICS

OPERATING BUDGET
\$261,243,000

MEDICAL BUDGET
\$181,702,377

ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET
\$21,517,380

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT
\$7,263,000

FACILITIES BUDGET
\$21,759,147

**FIRST AND THIRD PARTY
COLLECTIONS**
\$21,894,233



Marine Corps Veteran James Daniels takes a break with World War II, Korea and Vietnam Army Veteran Richard Doll in the Veterans Activity Center.

OPERATIONAL STATISTICS

- Veterans Served — **43,772**
- Outpatient Visits — **482,093**
- Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan Wars Served — **4,075**
- Women Veterans Served — **3,214**

OPERATING BEDS

- Hospital — **49**
- Medical — **37**
- Psychiatry — **22**
- Community Living Center — **76**
- Residential Recovery Program — **63**

TOTAL ADMISSIONS IN FISCAL YEAR 2013 — 2,339

- Surgical — **426**
- Medical — **1,294**
- Psychiatry — **619**
- Substance Abuse Treatment Unit — **524**
- Community Living Centers — **612**



We Are Grateful for Miracle Workers and Supporters

EMPLOYEE STATISTICS

- Full Time Employees — **1,326**
- Nursing Staff — **329**
- Physicians — **100**
- Social Workers — **52**
- Psychologists — **26**

VOLUNTEER AND DONOR STATISTICS

- Monetary Donations — **\$291,341.69**
- Value of Items Donated for Veterans — **\$437,164.68**
- Volunteers — **447**
- New Volunteers — **72**
- DAV Van Drivers — **64**
- Volunteer Hours — **68,124** (*Using the Independent Sector Formula, this equates to \$1,508,265.36 saved instead of hiring employees to complete these tasks.*)



Army Veteran and VA employee Doug Etter accepts a check from Londonderry Township Chairman Ron Kopp and the Board of Supervisors. The township has raised and donated more than \$28,000 to Lebanon VA in the last 6 years during its Annual Fourth of July Community Celebration.



J. DeAngelo, Jr. of White's Harley-Davidson and Iron Valley Harley-Davidson with Scott Harman, Chief, Voluntary Service, displaying a poster that was signed by all patrons in November and December, thanking the Veterans for their service. The two dealerships also donated leather jackets to Veterans.

“Miracles are conceived in the arms of trust, compassion, service and love.”

AMANDA LOPEZ,
USAF Veteran and VA employee
with co-worker Gina Lux

31%
OF LEBANON VA
MEDICAL CENTER
STAFF ARE VETERANS.

**Thank You—
Volunteers and Employees
YOU MAKE MIRACLES HAPPEN!**



Accreditations Are the Result of Hard Work, Not Miracles

LEBANON VA ACHIEVED ACCREDITATION OR RECOGNITION BY THE FOLLOWING ORGANIZATIONS:

- ★ The Joint Commission
- ★ Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities
- ★ American Association of Blood Banks
- ★ American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer
- ★ College of American Pathologists – Laboratory—received “Gold Standard”
- ★ College of American Pathologists – Anatomical Laboratory
- ★ American Society of Health System Pharmacists
- ★ Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- ★ National Health Physics Program
- ★ Office of Inspector General
- ★ Long Term Care Institute
- ★ Management Quality Assurance Service, Financial Management
- ★ Information Technology Oversight and Compliance Office
- ★ Office of Security and Law Enforcement – Vulnerability Assessment Survey
- ★ Rainbow Learning Center Site Review
- ★ American Society of Health System Pharmacists
- ★ Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- ★ National Health Physics Program



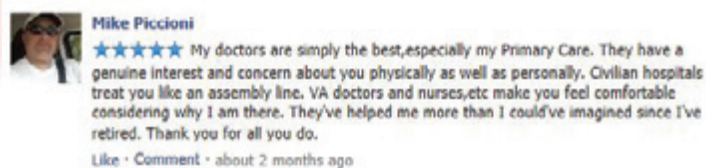
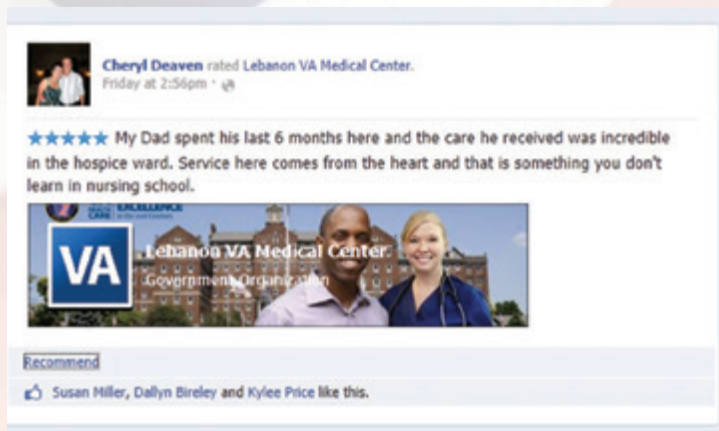
LEBANON VA MEDICAL CENTER IS ACCREDITED BY THE COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION OF REHABILITATION FACILITIES (CARF) IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- ★ Health Care for the Homeless
- ★ Homeless Outreach
- ★ Contract Housing
- ★ Grant and Per Diem Housing
- ★ Consolidated Work Therapy/Transitional
- ★ Rehabilitation/Vocational Rehabilitation
- ★ Psychosocial Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program
- ★ Substance Abuse Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program
- ★ Veterans Justice Outreach
- ★ Department of Housing and Urban Development and VA Supported Housing Program (HUD/VASH)
- ★ Visually Impaired Services Outpatient Rehabilitation (VISOR) Program



Patient Satisfaction Doesn't Have to be Miraculous

- #1 Overall Rating Hospital
- #1 Willing to Recommend Hospital
- #1 Communication with Doctors
- #1 Communication about Medications
- #1 Discharge Information
- #1 Pain Management
- #1 Decision Making
- #1 Privacy in Room
- #1 Noise Level in Room
- #2 Communication with Nurses
- #2 Responsiveness of Hospital Staff
- #2 Quietness of Hospital



VA NAMED BEST EMPLOYER FOR OVER 55

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has been named one of America's best places to work for employees over the age of 50. VHA ranked 25th out of the top 50 employers selected this year by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).



VHA was awarded an AARP "Best Employers for Workers Over 50" award at the Society for Human Resource Management Conference in Chicago on June 17, 2013.

The award recognizes employers who "have set outstanding examples through programs that help them retain, retrain, engage and recruit the older workers who will be increasingly crucial to their success."

VA HOSPITALS NAMED MOST WIRED

The Department of Veterans Affairs, representing 152 VA medical centers, was recently named to the 2013 'Most Wired' hospitals list. The list, which is released by Hospitals & Health Networks, in partnership with McKesson, the College of Healthcare Information



Management Executives (CHIME) and the American Hospital Association (AHA), is the result of a national survey aimed at ranking hospitals that are leveraging health information technology (HIT) in new and innovative ways



A Miraculous Space Dedicated to a Healing Environment

The Patriot Café is one of several recent projects designed to enhance the Veteran-centric look, feel and focus of south central Pennsylvania's premier Veteran's facility. It is a 9,032 square foot space filled with natural light, wood, and stone. The tall curved ceiling invites ambient light to show case the dark wood tones. The comfortable home-like atmosphere provides Veterans and their loved ones a place to have a nutritious meal or simply share time between appointments in a calming environment. The project took approximately 17 months to complete and Veterans say it was worth the wait.

The Patriot Café was also recently selected as one of the best dining facilities in the entire national network of VA hospitals. Lebanon was one of 16 recipients of the "Outstanding Canteen of the Year" award. The Outstanding Canteen Award is an annual award recognizing those dining facilities and retail outlets at local VA medical centers which exceed customer service expectations, reflect outstanding operating results, and meet or exceed standards for year-end-inventory management.

The competition for the award involves an in-depth objective and subjective evaluation of a canteen's operations and achievements. Customer

populations are requested to provide feedback about the quality of service rendered at their respective location. Facilities compete for this award with others of similar size and scope of operations. There are two categories of recognition -- large facilities and small facilities. Lebanon won in the large canteen category.

Robert W. Callahan, Jr. medical center director, congratulated the staff telling them, "Once again you have clearly outdone yourselves. Your dedication to customer service is one more reason, Veterans of south central Pennsylvania make Lebanon VA Medical Center their health care provider of choice."

The new café may not be like the canteens, chow halls, galleys or DFACs Veterans remember from their service days, but it clearly says, "Welcome Home. Thank you for your service. Come in and let us serve you."





Sharing a Miraculous Bond

Brigadier General (R) James A. Herbert, one of the founding fathers of the US Army Ranger School, presented three wounded warriors from Iraq and Afghanistan a hand-carved wooden Purple Heart plaque in recognition of wounds they received in the Nation's defense. General Herbert was himself seriously wounded three times during the Korean War before completing five tours in Vietnam and more than 30 years of special operations service.

The recipients of the plaques were: Garry Thompson, US Army, Dennis Leonard, US Army, and Jared Kreiser, US Marine Corps. All three warriors endured catastrophic combat injuries. They, along with the General, now receive their care at Lebanon VA Medical Center.

The plaques are the creation of Korean War Veteran, Leon Moyen who currently resides in Ontario, Canada. Mr. Moyen uses a variety of different woods to give the plaque its color. He then makes an intricate carving of George Washington, the creator of the Purple Heart Medal, and places it on the front of the Purple Heart as is done with the actual medals. The Purple Heart medal is earned for being wounded by forces hostile to the United States.

“What you are doing here is some of the most impressive work I have seen around the Nation.”

~ Randall R. Marchi, Major General, United States Army

Following the brief ceremony, Teresa Stump-Klinger, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker at the VA said, “These gentlemen make my work so rewarding. While I try to assist them, I often find myself inspired by their courage, determination and tenacity. I am so proud of them and what VA does for them.”

Kreiser, whose father was also a Marine, stated, “It’s very thoughtful of General Herbert to do this. He is a great warrior. The fact that he would take the time to recognize us really means a lot to me. I receive wonderful care at the VA and meet all sorts of super people there like the General.”



Dennis Leonard, his son Ethan and companion dog Dave, receive a hand carved wooden Purple Heart plaque from Brigadier General (R) James A. Herbert.



When Major General Randall R. Marchi was visiting wounded warriors at the Medical Center, he was so impressed with students from Project Search (a collaborative program with VA and the Intermediate Learning Center's special needs students) that he asked to attend their graduation where he presented each student with his challenge coin.



Service Above and Beyond

Service is something every Veteran can understand and appreciate. Sacrificial service is not a theoretical concept for those who have worn the nation's uniform. Separation from family, living in austere and sometimes dangerous environments, and learning to adapt and overcome with limited resources are accepted as necessary parts of doing one's duty. The same can also be said for certain public servants like Dr. Robert M. Boucher, an Ear, Nose and Throat Surgeon at the Lebanon VA Medical Center. Dr. Boucher, who received an appointment to the US Naval Academy but learned he had hearing loss which disqualified him for military service, volunteers with Boston-based Partners in Health to bring his unique expertise and skill to hundreds of Haitians every year during his vacation. The physician-healer is Making Miracles Happen locally and internationally.

Dr. Boucher's sense of duty springs from a deep sense of moral responsibility and connectedness. "It is very gratifying, very satisfying to be a surgeon," says the former physician's assistant and US postal employee. "It is also a privilege and very humbling. In our shared humanity and mutual dependence on one another we are all, ultimately, in the same boat; therefore, we must pull for one another. I think we all have a responsibility to contribute in some way. Veterans have done it and civilians should serve, too. I work to bring the same care and compassion to both American Veterans and poverty-stricken Haitians. Caring for Veterans is a tangible way of thanking them; caring for needy Haitians reminds me that serving them reflects a service obligation we who have been given so much have."

Dr. Boucher's missions to Haiti involve more than diagnosis and treatment. "There is no real medical infrastructure in Haiti," says the doctor who worked at the Food and Drug Administration in drug safety before returning to clinical practice in the VA. "We are building an amazing state of the art surgical center at Lebanon, but in Haiti, every surgical resource is scarce. Physicians not only cover all their transportation and room and board costs, but they must also often bring their own supplies and equipment. The lack of resources definitely impacts how care is delivered. It also affects how we travel and work. Volunteers like me don't bring family members because they would inadvertently be competing for limited transportation, food and lodging resources."

The contrast of life in Haiti with that in south central Pennsylvania is striking. And it's not simply the poverty, homelessness or lack of logistical support. "Many people do not realize it but there are still 7,000 United Nations peacekeepers in Haiti. In the recent past it was not unusual to hear automatic weapons as they engaged street gangs. When that happened, we knew wounded would be brought in," says the VA provider. "Those experiences have definitely increased the already tremendous respect I have for Veterans."

Nevertheless, the Long Island native, who performs 15-20 major head and neck operations a week when in Haiti, says, "The opportunity to serve in Haiti has been immensely gratifying and I intend to stay involved even after I retire from the VA."



Dr. Boucher with a Haitian ENT colleague, Dr. Phoebee Jovin



Young woman with a slow-growing non-cancerous jaw tumor. Patients often present to the Cange ENT clinic with advanced disease because they have limited resources and are frequently turned away from other clinics.



Never Quit

Never quit. For many who have worn the uniform, these are not just words. They're not a catchy phrase or slogan meant to inspire. They are a choice, a conscious decision – a way of thinking, living and behaving that many civilians cannot fully comprehend or appreciate. But COL (R) Ken Graf, a surgeon at Lebanon VA Medical Center understands. In fact, he embodies the two words that can be found deep inside every Veteran.

Graf was a draftee during the Vietnam War. "I was drafted in 1963 just as I was starting my residency," states the Notre Dame grad and former butter bar, "Once I finished, I spent the next 3 years giving physicals to other draftees stateside. I finished out my service obligation in the reserves in 1976."

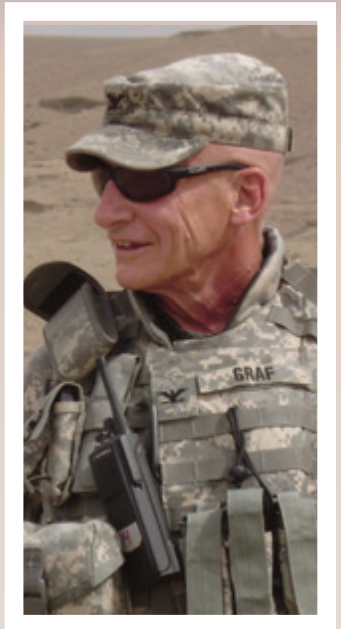
But in November 2001, as the 58 year old doctor stood looking into the gaping wound known as Ground Zero, he said to his wife Lynn, "I need to go back. I need to re-up. If they'll take me, I will give them everything I have." Eighteen months later, after jumping through more hoops than a recruit at airborne school, a 60-year-old Lieutenant Colonel reported to Fort Sam Houston for Officer Basic Course. His fellow volunteers called him grandpa.

Since that time, Graf has seen parts of the world few Americans outside the military have seen. He's done tours in Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan and at the internationally famous Landstuhl military hospital in Germany. The surgeon has exercised his skills in severe and austere places along the Pakistan border at Forward Operating Base Sharana and he's marveled at the state-of-the-art operating rooms inside C-17 Globemasters which transport the wounded between Landstuhl and the United States.

Despite his sharp analytical mind, Graf's voice sometimes quivers when he talks about his work as a surgeon for America's men and women in uniform. For him, the mission is not simply professional --it is also deeply personal. He said recently, "[Saving their life] is what keeps you going. Those kinds of moments are priceless and unforgettable. You think, 'This is why I've trained. This is what I'm here for. This is my vocation.'"

After his last tour, the doctor had one of those profound moments reserved for only those who have saved a life. Graf was out processing at a southern base when he met a Special Forces Operator and his wife. The soldier had been severely wounded. The surgeon did his best but didn't know if the young American would make it. After the soldier was transferred to Landstuhl, Graf never received any follow up reports on the man he had worked on so desperately to save. But 7,000 miles away from where he had been wounded, the Operator's wife recognized the doctor. "Are you Colonel Graf?" she asked. "Yes." "I'm so and so and this is my husband. You operated on him in Afghanistan. YOU saved his life. Thank you. We can never repay you."

No one can ever repay him or his colleagues who work under such stressful conditions. They don't do it for the money. They do it, to make a contribution. They do it, to make a difference. And we can never thank them enough for the difference they make each and every day — for Making Miracles Happen.



Dr. Ken Graf



Putting their lives on the line for troops on the front line, Dr. Ken Graf and his surgical team along the Pakistan border.



Hearts of Excellence Reveal the Miracle of Commitment

— Hearts of Excellence —



Lebanon VA Medical Center honored outstanding staff members at the sixth annual “Hearts of Excellence” recognition ceremony on Thursday, May 2, 2013. The medical center Director, Robert W. Callahan Jr., recognized the dedicated and selfless service of employees who demonstrate unsurpassed commitment to keeping the Nation’s pledge to care for “those who have borne the battle.” The recognition ceremony is a simple and genuine expression of gratitude and thanks to employees who personally contribute to improving the lives of Veterans. These employees Make Miracles Happen wherever they serve.

The “Hearts of Excellence” is an annual event developed by a joint partnership between labor and management that recognizes outstanding staff achievements in a variety of areas. Employees may be nominated by their supervisors, co-workers or Veterans. A joint labor-management committee reviews the nominations and competitively selects individual and group honorees in several categories. Honorees at Lebanon VA were also forwarded to a regional competition, sponsored by the Federal Executive Board, which includes 170 Federal agencies. This year’s honorees include:

Non-Supervisory Rookie of the Year:

Noah Whiddon

Supervisory Rookie of the Year:

Stacie Price - Gold; Teresa Columbus - Silver

Outstanding Trades and Crafts Performer:

Brad Wildermuth

Economy in Government Operations:

Receiving & Distribution Team (Dean Steckbeck, Christopher Heilman, Carl Walkowiak, Tessa Herb and Warren Wenger)

Outstanding Administrative Support Accomplishment:

Casey Christ

Outstanding Technical Support Accomplishment:

Jody Boyer - Gold; Julie Willard - Silver

Outstanding Technical Achievement:

Pressure Ulcer Team (Nancy Fitting, Lynn Kern and Dr. Barbara Keenan)

Outstanding Professional Achievement:

Dr. Jorge Diduszyn

Supervisor of the Year:

Amanda Wise - Gold

Gary Margut - Silver

Manager of the Year:

Gary Houtz – Gold

Scott Harman - Silver

Improved Federal Image:

James Sumlin – Gold

Jane Long – Silver

York Community Based Outpatient Clinic (Gaye Bailey, Laurie Catalfo, Melissa Gouge, Melvin Latham and Meridith Moore)

Valor:

Dr. Kenneth Graf – Gold

VA Police Capt. Scott Whisler and Lt. Lynn Rutt – Silver

Outstanding Community Service:

Cheryl Green – Gold

Cynthia Campbell-Samuels – Silver

Federal Executive Board Winners Included:

Dr. Kenneth Graf – Gold Award for Valor (Individual)

Scott Whisler & Lynn Rutt – Gold Award for Valor

(Group) Cheryl Green – Silver Award – Outstanding Community Service (Individual)



Never Leave

Many service members have drawn inspiration from the Warrior's Creed. It could also be argued, however, that it needs an additional line. The Creed would be more complete, if it concluded with the sentence, "I will never forget; I will always remember my brothers and sisters-at-arms." We should never forget because our time in the military helped to shape who we are. We must always remember those who stood at our shoulder, at our left and our right, because it is too easy for our fellow citizens to forget the price that so many have paid to guarantee our freedoms. Much to their credit, the logistics department has taken this idea even one step further. With more than 50% of their department rightfully claiming the title Veteran, the logistics department has dedicated itself not only to remembering those with whom they served, but also their families, like the family of Heather Reed.

Heather was 8 months pregnant and the mother of 2 children when her husband, SPC Jesse D. Reed, 26, was killed in action (KIA) on July 14, 2010, in the Zabul province, Afghanistan. SPC Reed was assigned to the 27th Engineer Battalion (Combat Airborne), 20th Engineer Brigade (Combat), Fort Bragg, N.C. Many folks initially wrapped their arms around Heather in response to her family's tragic loss but over time, folks moved on with their own lives.

In the fall and winter of 2012, Logistics Chief, Regina Stoltzfus, a Command Master Chief in the Air National Guard, and Inventory Manager, David Bobb, a former Marine, decided to focus offering holiday cheer to the families of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Veterans. The logistics team had been providing care packages to others for a couple of years but as the department grew, they decided to dedicate their efforts to the families of other Veterans through a strictly voluntary donation program. Ms. Stoltzfus states, "this provides a way for our staff to come together in a way that fosters pride and camaraderie." Mr. Bobb adds, "this is part of the continuum of care. We are still caring for our brothers and sisters and their loved ones. We are trying to bring miracles, no matter how small, into their lives."

Ms. Reed, who named her third child in honor of her husband, summarizes her thoughts and feelings this way, "It's very difficult to put into words. This means so much to me and our children. Even though the years keep passing away, we are remembered and appreciated. How can we ever say thank you?"

Heather, you don't need to say thank you. It is we, a grateful Nation, which must. For your sacrifice, and that of your children, and that of Jesse, we say, "Thank you for our Freedom and Liberty."



The Logistics Staff provided gifts to a fallen soldier's family as a way of saying, "thank you for your sacrifice."



Lending a Hand and Bringing a Smile

It's not surprising that Paul Fetzer is often mistaken for a wounded Veteran. After all, he and his warm smile can be seen at Lebanon VA Medical Center at least 3 days a week. It also becomes quickly apparent whenever someone engages him, that like a lot of Veterans, he has a hearing disability. (Never mind that he is actually deaf and has been since having scarlet fever as an infant. He reads lips so well that he readily understands what others are telling him. It's his speech and use of American Sign Language that are clues to his hearing disability) But what stands out visually to most people is his prosthetic right arm. Many people make the mistaken assumption that Paul lost his arm in combat. He did not. He couldn't serve, at least in the military, because of his hearing disability. No, he lost his arm in an industrial accident years ago. Like a good soldier, he's never given up, never quit and never accepted defeat. And like so many who have worn the uniform, he finds his greatest joy and satisfaction in serving others.

The principle way Paul serves the country and his community is by creating beautiful works of art. His canvas is the fire retardant ceiling tiles throughout the medical center. What began years ago as a project to help Veterans

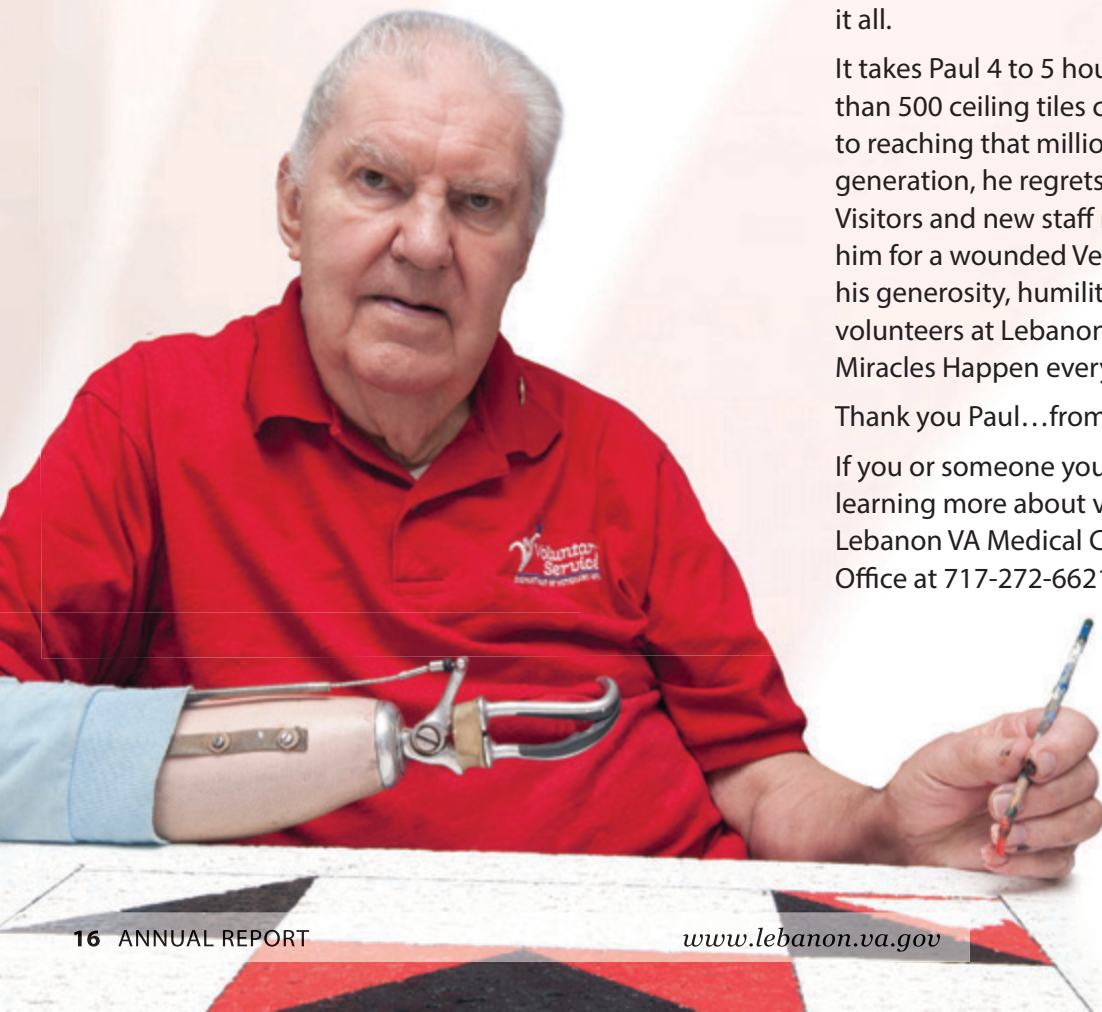
find their way, has been transformed into a healing environment and a way of bringing beauty, serenity and inspiration to many who have personally witnessed ugliness, horror, and the ravages of war. Remarkably, Paul does all of this without tracing, copying or modeling his projects. He does it free-hand. And even more remarkably, he does it, with his left hand since losing his dominant arm. Yes, although Paul began painting before his accident, he had to relearn how to paint using his less dominant hand. This is part of the inspiration he provides. He is living proof that determination and attitude can overcome many disabilities. He shows the same tenacity and strength of character that many Veterans possess.

For his selfless service, dedication and inspiration, Paul was recognized by the White House as a recipient of the President's "Points of Light Award", which was presented to him by President George H. W. Bush. Paul was also nominated for the prestigious Jefferson Award. And while he appreciates these accolades, all he really wants is, "to bring a million smiles here." Paul has never accepted payment for his talent, nor has he ever allowed anyone to purchase his paint or brushes. Like his time, he donates it all.

It takes Paul 4 to 5 hours to paint each tile. With more than 500 ceiling tiles completed, he is well on his way to reaching that million-smile mark. Like others of his generation, he regrets being unable to serve in the military. Visitors and new staff members will still probably mistake him for a wounded Veteran, however, there's no mistaking his generosity, humility, or artistic ability. Paul and all the volunteers at Lebanon VA Medical Center are Making Miracles Happen everyday.

Thank you Paul...from all of us!

If you or someone you know would be interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities at the Lebanon VA Medical Center, please call the Voluntary Office at 717-272-6621, extension 4064.



Volunteer artist, Paul Fetzer, pauses painting a quilt design on a ceiling tile.



Serving Until the Very End



SFC (R) Ben Thomas found the tranquility of the Memorial Garden far more peaceful than the jungles of south east Asia. The World War II Veteran rose everyday at 5 a.m. to begin tending the garden he adopted after becoming a hospice patient.

His humility prevented him from fully appreciating or maybe even understanding the value others assigned to him. He was in the only elite airborne division in the Pacific theatre during the Second World War and had combat jumps under his belt. He also had participated in amphibious landings. Even after the Army awarded SFC (R) Ben Thomas a Bronze Medal for Valor because he took out an enemy howitzer position by himself, the wounded combat Veteran modestly replied, "Somebody had to do it." But what he did - saved hundreds of American lives.

He also didn't have to work in the Memorial Garden. He was a patient in the Hospice unit. The transplanted Texan could have just spent his time reading or watching old Westerns. Instead, he went out to the garden everyday at 5 a.m. to weed, water, and nurture that tiny piece of land. "There's no use just sitting around," the terminally ill cancer patient said, "I like being out here. I like making it pretty. I've seen a lot of things that aren't so pretty."

And so nearly every day, until the day he died, Ben Thomas made his little corner of the world more beautiful. But it wasn't just the soil he touched - he also touched our hearts. He reminded us of the difference one person can make. He made the land better and he made each one of us who knew him better.

And after he was gone and we gathered to dedicate the garden to his memory, we realized, each one of us, that what he had done, was - miraculous.



A humble sign, much like the man, marks the spot where SFC (R) Ben Thomas invested so much of himself. He said he had seen a lot of ugliness in war and wanted folks to be reminded there's still a lot of beauty out there.

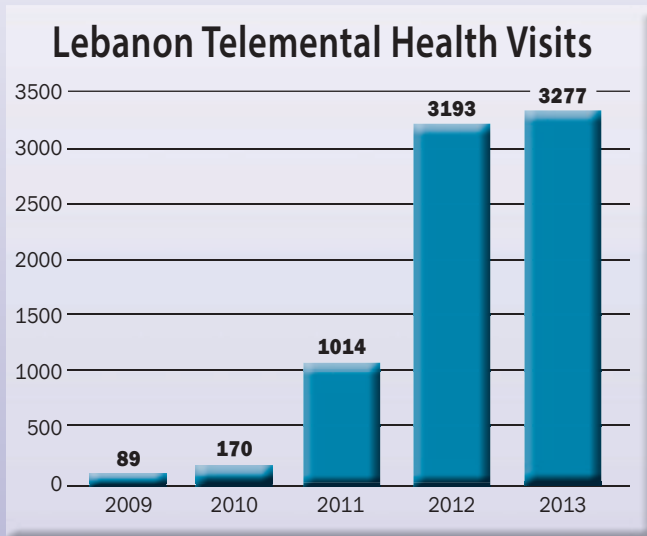


The Miracle of Modern Technology



"It couldn't be easier." That's how Army Veteran Elaine Adams describes using MyHealtheVet. "All I have to do to order my medications is check them off a list. It's also a definite plus that I can contact my primary care provider with questions and know that I am going to get an answer shortly from someone who knows me and works with me. It's wonderful. So is my provider. I don't know what I'd do without the VA."

The Behavioral Health and Sciences (BH&S) care line at Lebanon VA Medical Center has been at the forefront of an initiative to increase access to mental health care by using Clinical Video Teleconferencing (CVT). This technology permits a Veteran to receive mental health care at a remote site which is more convenient than driving to where the provider is physically located. This saves the Veteran time and resources while still receiving the same high quality level of care from our providers. Our 12 separate CVT clinics across the facility and its community based outpatient clinics (CBOCs) have accounted for 3277 visits for FY13; and have reached 662 Veterans.





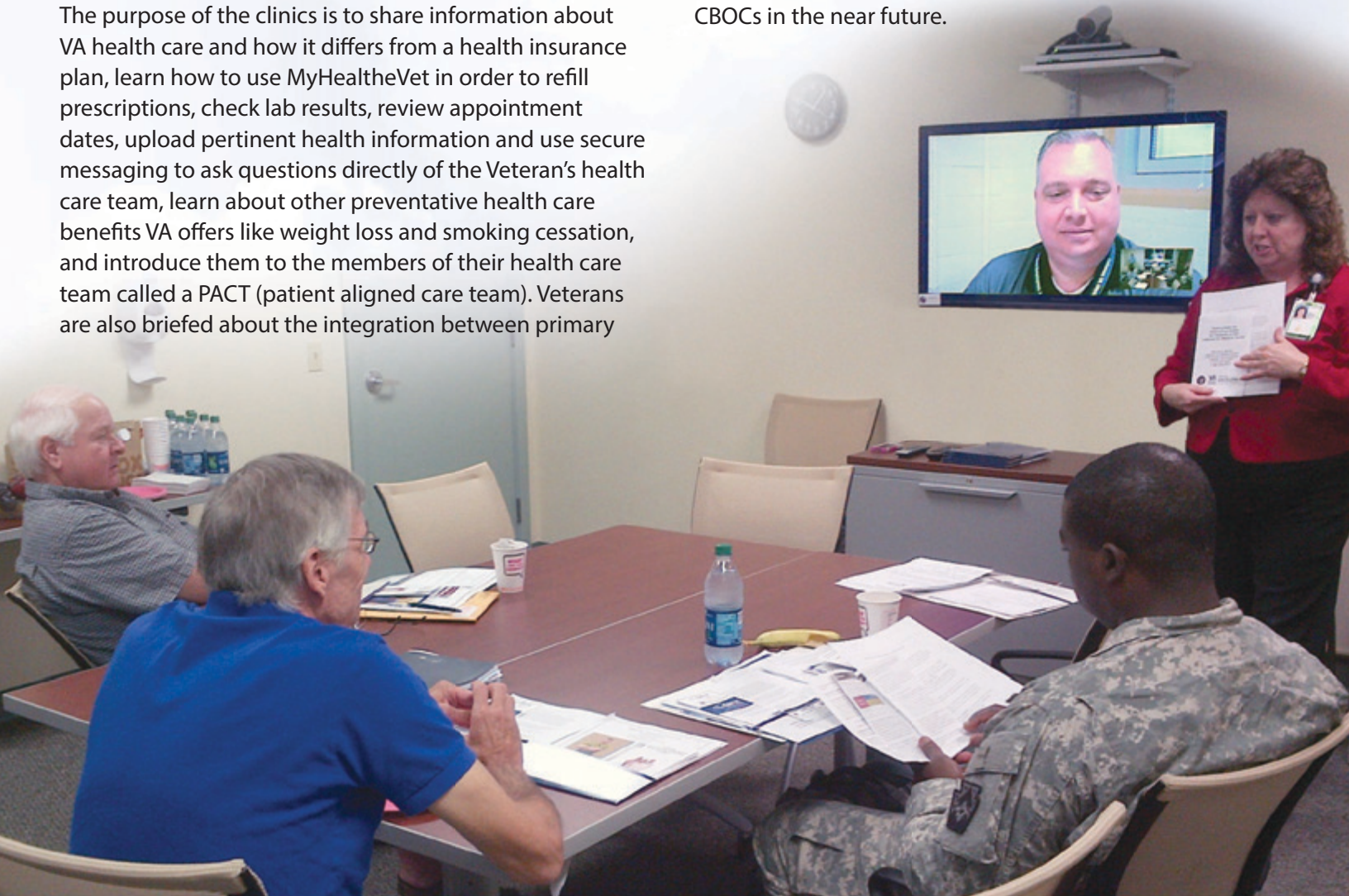
Access Which Others Describe as Miraculous

VA is the largest health care system in the United States. Consequently, when a Veteran begins to receive care here, there are a few things they need to learn. Historically, Veterans learned these things going through the process until Physicians Assistant, Jody Searight, PA-C, decided they should learn these things intentionally. With the blessing of the Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC) care line Manager Bill Griffiths, Jodi began what she calls, "Welcoming Clinics" at the Lancaster CBOC.

The purpose of the clinics is to share information about VA health care and how it differs from a health insurance plan, learn how to use MyHealthVet in order to refill prescriptions, check lab results, review appointment dates, upload pertinent health information and use secure messaging to ask questions directly of the Veteran's health care team, learn about other preventative health care benefits VA offers like weight loss and smoking cessation, and introduce them to the members of their health care team called a PACT (patient aligned care team). Veterans are also briefed about the integration between primary

care and behavioral care so that Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, and other mental health issues may be aggressively addressed. Specialty care and clinics are also discussed and the Welcoming Clinic concludes with a question and answer session.

Veterans who have attended the Welcoming Clinic have reported a much better understanding of VA processes. They also report that they are very comfortable. We look forward to introducing the Welcoming Clinics to all of our CBOCs in the near future.



In 2014...two of our six Community Based Outpatient Clinics will move to new locations!
Watch our Facebook page for more details.

The Camp Hill CBOC will relocate to:
New Cumberland County CBOC
3 Crossgate Drive
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

The Berks County CBOC will relocate to:
Ridge View Veterans Clinic
2772 Century BLVD.
Reading, PA 19610



LEBANON VA MEDICAL CENTER

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Lebanon, Pennsylvania 17042

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800-409-8771

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Am I a Veteran?

You might be surprised how many times we are asked this question. Folks seem to have all sorts of preconceptions about what makes someone a Veteran. Fortunately, however, the answer is quite simple. If you served in the active Armed Forces of the United States, then you are a Veteran! Pure and simple. It's not necessary to have served overseas or during a time of war. National Guard members and Reservists who have been called to active Federal service are also Veterans. Age, income, race, gender, religion, creed or marital status do not matter—the only thing which does, is that you wore the uniform of an American defender. Thank you for your service!

Returning Veterans

If you are a recently discharged Veteran with service in a theater of combat operations (OEF/OIF/OND—Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn), VA can provide you with free care for 5 years from your discharge from active duty for conditions possibly related to your service, regardless of your income.

**Call 1-717-228-6000 or 1-800-409-8771, ext. 6000
to speak to one of our enrollment specialists!**

Combat Veterans

Veterans, including activated Reservists and members of the National Guard, are eligible if they served on active duty in a theatre of combat operations after November 11, 1998, and have NOT been discharged under dishonorable conditions.

Documentation used to determine service in a theater of combat operations can include any of the following:

- Military service documentation that reflects service in a combat theatre, or
- Receipt of combat service medals, or
- Receipt of imminent danger or hostile fire pay or tax benefits.

Am I Eligible for Care?

ALL VETERANS ARE ELIGIBLE to apply for VA care. Our enrollment specialists review your military service record to determine your benefit eligibility. The results are sent to you in writing. You will be assigned to a priority group based on your specific eligibility status, income, and service information you provided on the 10-10EZ form. Your enrollment information is reviewed each year or whenever you have a life change. Your ability to remain enrolled in VA may depend on the funding that VA receives from Congress to provide your care. You will be notified in writing if VA cannot renew your enrollment for another year. You should contact our enrollment specialists any time you have a major life change such as retirement, loss of income or housing, change in marital status or a disability condition.

Veterans enrolled in VA Healthcare meet the minimum required standards of the Affordable Healthcare Act.



**VA
HEALTH
CARE**

Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century