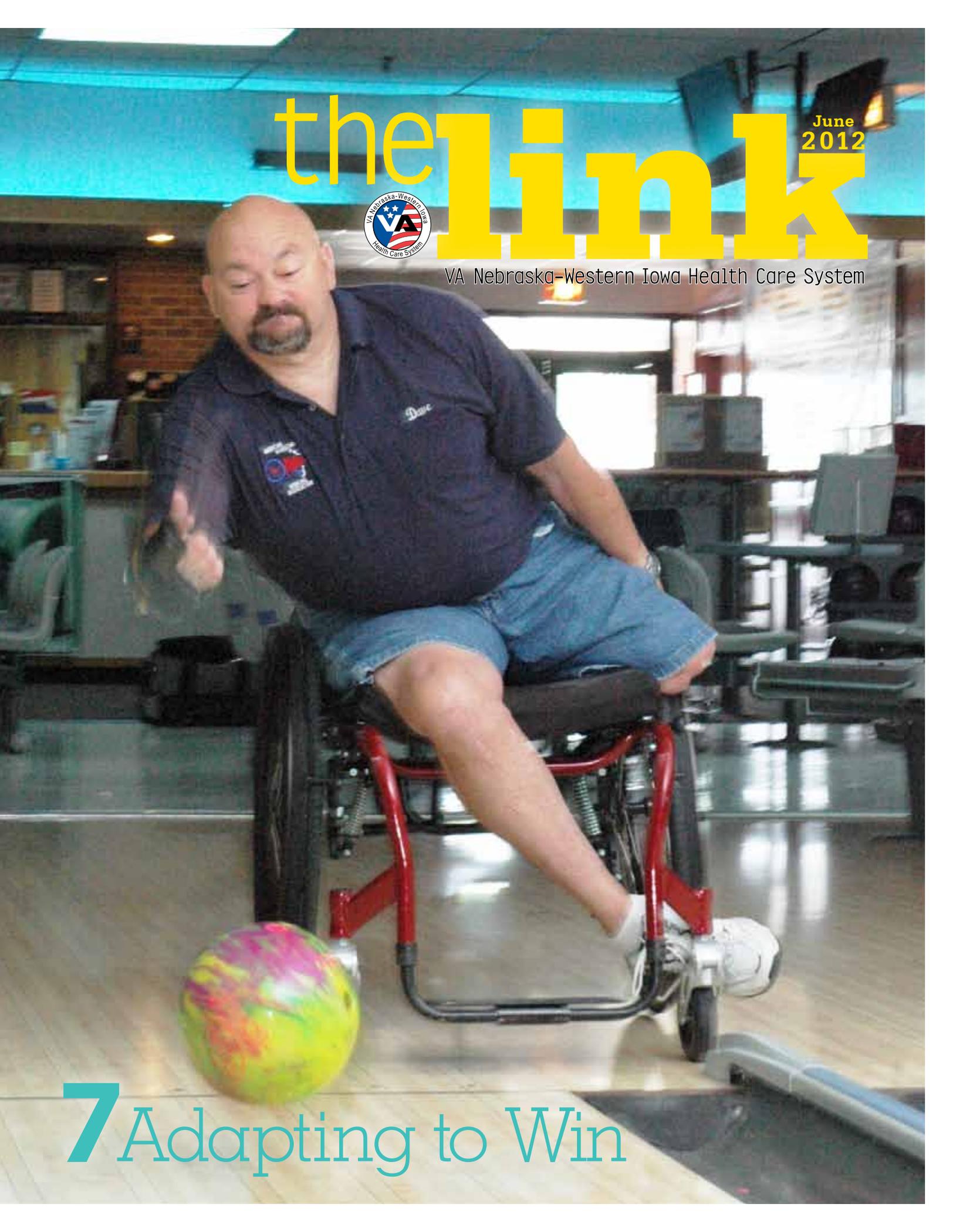


the link

June
2012



VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System



7 Adapting to Win



I have been at VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System for about five months now.

In May, I got a chance to participate in several all-employee forums and visit many of our community-based outpatient clinics. Each time I meet a new employee or see a new area within NWIHCS, I am impressed by employees' professionalism and dedication to serving Veterans.

In North Platte, our Home-Based Primary Care team presented us with an idea to move their radius of service in order to serve more Veterans. The team there also continues to serve numerous walk-in patients in addition to their regular appointment load. This spirit of serving every possible Veteran is visible in all of our CBOCs. Our CBOCs will continue to be areas for growth within NWIHCS as we focus on delivering quality care to rural Veterans.

As I continue to meet employees throughout NWIHCS, I encourage you to share your ideas with me and with your managers. Health care is an ever-changing industry, and we need to adapt with it to continue to provide quality care.

During the forums, NWIHCS' leaders fielded many questions and heard many comments about what is going well and what can be improved. I want our employees to know they were heard, and we will follow up with these suggestions. I want our Veterans to know their caregivers – all of the employees at NWIHCS – are engaged to make sure they receive the exceptional health care they earned by serving our country.

Marci Mylan

DIRECTOR AND PUBLISHER
Marci Mylan, Ph.D., MHA

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
Will Ackerman

THE LINK EDITORIAL STAFF
Editor | Anna Morelock
Photographer | Bruce Thiel
Designer | Becky Brown

FACT: AS OF APRIL 1, 2012, THERE WERE 1,448 AMPUTEES FROM OPERATIONS IRAQI AND ENDURING FREEDOM.

Cover: David Nelson Jr. bowls on a Thursday morning at Mockingbird Lanes. After his trip to the bowling alley, Nelson had a 20- to 30-mile handcycle trip planned. Photo by Anna Morelock

“One of the things I really like about working here is there are a lot of dedicated people doing the right things for our Veterans.”

Bonnie Farkas
Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Omaha



the link

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This magazine is an authorized publication for VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (VA NWIHCS). Contents of The Link are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, or the Department of Veterans Affairs. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the VA NWIHCS Public Affairs Office.

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VISIT US ONLINE

Scan with your smart phone to view more issues of The Link online.



meet

connie holmes

Nurse Practitioner Shenandoah
Community-Based
Outpatient Clinic

How long have you been with VA?

"I have been with the VA since the Shenandoah CBOC opened in February 2009."

What does your position entail?

"My position at the CBOC is an Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP). I provide primary care to my own panel of patients. I help coordinate specialty referrals and assist with chronic disease management. I help cover the clinic for physician absence."

What is your favorite thing about your job?

"The favorite part of my job is the Veterans. We have a great group of people that we serve. It is a pleasure to care for them and get to know them. Our clinic is unique in that it is a small part of a huge organization, but we have a small-town clinic atmosphere."

What is your biggest challenge in your position?

"The biggest challenge of my job is not being here full time. I am a half-time VA employee and have a half-time family practice clinic here in town. It becomes quite challenging to keep things covered and balanced on a part-time basis. 🗣️"



Crew Cuts & Camaraderie

LINCOLN CBOC BARBER GIVES VETERANS MORE THAN HAIRCUTS

Rob McCrory | Ambulatory Care

In 1949, when a haircut only cost 65 cents, Bob Taylor started his journey to become "The Barber" at Lincoln's VA Community-Based Outpatient Clinic.

He was in the Marines from 1952 to 1954 and spent a year in Korea.

Before his retirement, Taylor owned a barbershop and grooming distribution business. After three years, Taylor said he'd been playing too much golf and said "yes," when he was asked to help cover the VA barbershop for a few weeks. He liked the VA so much, he decided to stay.

In 1995, Taylor charged \$5.25 for his first VA haircut. Today, he only charges \$10 and gives one or two free haircuts a day to those who look like they need cheered up, he said.

Taylor comes to work every day, not because he needs the money, he said, but because this has been the most enjoyable job he's ever held. Taylor said he truly appreciates what Veterans have done for the country and what VA employees have done for Veterans.

The barbershop never sees a dull moment. Taylor has an uncanny ability to talk to everyone. He jokes with employees and Veterans alike. In 1969, Taylor shaved his head and wore a hairpiece for a whole year, just to see what it was like. Taylor is closing in on his 300,000th haircut. He has been the barber for Bob Devaney, Danny Nee, Moe Iba, four governors and countless Veterans.

(continued on page 15) ▶



Courtesy Photo

Bob Taylor gives a Veteran a haircut during a recent tornado drill at the Lincoln Community-Based Outpatient Clinic.

Events Celebrate Veterans;

Provide Resource for VA Information

Will Ackerman | Public Affairs

Veterans and their families are encouraged to attend an event June 23 at the Lincoln Community-Based Outpatient Clinic to learn about their Department of Veterans Affairs benefits and enjoy a day of fun and music.

The annual Welcome Home celebration is being held in conjunction with the Veterans Freedom Music Festival and a performance by the Nebraska National Guard's 43rd Army Band at 600 S. 70th St., Lincoln, Neb. The events are from 9:45 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Veterans of all eras are encouraged to visit dozens of VA and Veteran-related information tables at the Welcome Home event being held in the auditorium.

“The Welcome Home Event is an important opportunity to reach Veterans and let them know what VA benefits are there for them. We also want to show them that we want to be their health care provider of choice.”

Duncan Fallon,
Lincoln CBOC Site Director

This year, to attract more Veterans to the Welcome Home, and to honor them for their sacrifices, VA is partnering with the ►



VA File Photo

► Lincoln VA Veterans Advisory Council, which is hosting the Veterans Freedom Music Festival. The event's focus is to honor all Veterans.

“Everybody loves music,” said Terry Gillespie, a Vietnam Veteran who heads the advisory council. “We hope that Veterans who attend this event will mingle with other Veterans and be exposed to the services the VA provides at the Lincoln VA.”

The day features nine bands, children's activities, food vendors and a formal opening ceremony at 9:45 a.m. The day will culminate with a performance by the 43rd Army Band beginning at 7 p.m.

Free parking will be available at Lincoln East High School, 1000 S. 70th St. with free shuttle service to the VA. ⓘ

Visit www.nebraska.va.gov/Veterans_Freedom_Music_Festival.asp for more information.



Memorial Day Commemoration

STAFF, VETERANS, VISITORS GATHER TO HONOR FALLEN SERVICEMEMBERS

more than 100 people gathered at the Fourth Annual Memorial Day Commemoration May 25 at the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System medical center in Omaha to celebrate the lives of America's servicemen and women who died in service to their country.

Janelle Wormuth, chief of Pharmacy Services for VA NWIHCS, who gave comments on behalf of the director, said it's important for Americans to remember the selfless sacrifice fallen servicemembers have made over the centuries.

“These heroes served their nation to protect and defend the freedoms that we often take for granted. They willingly went into battle in foreign lands, fully realizing that they may be called upon to give their lives.”

Janelle Wormuth, VA NWIHCS Chief of Pharmacy Services

The event featured comments by Brig. Gen. Scott A. Gronewold, director, Joint Staff, Nebraska Joint Force Headquarters. Eight local American Legion and Veterans of Foreign War post members were part of a joint color guard.

Brian Miller, a U.S. Navy Veteran who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom, led the Pledge of Allegiance. ▶



Photo by Anna Morelock

VA Police Officer Jack Nelson, Lt. John Torchia and Officer Ronald Freestone fold the flag during a retreat ceremony May 25. The retreat ceremony was part of the Fourth Annual Memorial Day Commemoration at VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System.

▶ Although the commemoration honored all of America's servicemembers who have died, there was a special tribute to honor the more than 6,400 U.S. servicemembers who were killed in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

“We want to pay a special tribute and recognize the end of the Iraq war that occurred on December 18, 2011, and recognize that we still have troops serving in Afghanistan,” said Will Ackerman, public affairs officer, VA NWIHCS.

The event culminated with the playing of taps by Airman 1st Class Tim Schleinat of the U.S. Air Force Heartland of America Band, followed by the national anthem and a Retreat ceremony performed by the VA NWIHCS Police Ceremonial Honor Guard.

Music for the event was provided by New Horizons from the U.S. Air Force Heartland of America Band. 🎧

Prosthetics and Sensory Aid Service

Giving Veterans the Freedom of Mobility and More

Anna Morelock | Public Affairs

the word prosthetics invokes the thought of artificial limbs, but the Prosthetics and Sensory Aid Service for VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System goes much beyond that. Prosthetics touches just about every department in NWIHCS, said Bob Pavolka, chief of Prosthetics. As much as they're involved, they are really behind the scenes.

“VA prosthetics is anywhere from a blood pressure monitor to a myoelectric arm.”

Bob Pavolka,
VA NWIHCS Chief of Prosthetics

“We do surgical items, hospital beds, power chairs, wheelchairs. If it's a durable medical equipment item, we'll provide it as long as it's for somebody in an outpatient setting in their home. Probably 30 percent of our budget goes to surgical implants – hips, knees, pacemakers, heart valves, all that stuff,” Pavolka said.

If Veterans need alterations to their homes to help them get around, Prosthetics takes care of that. In collaboration with the Veterans Benefits Administration, they also provide vehicle adaptations.

The Home Improvement Structure Alteration Program provides a \$6,800 benefit for service-connected Veterans and a \$2,100 benefit for non service-connected Veterans. That benefit can take care of most improvements, Pavolka said. Anything above the limit the Veteran has to take care of. ▶



Photo by Anna Morelock

Adam Jacobsen, the prosthetist at VA NWIHCS, works with Veteran Dan Noll to adjust his prosthetic leg.

▶ Generally improvements are for ambulatory reasons and the vast majority of alterations are to make sure Veterans can get into their bathrooms to shower.

(continued on page 15) ▶

Amputation

CANNOT STOP THIS VETERAN FROM THE SPORTS HE LOVES

Anna Morelock | Public Affairs

after having his leg mangled in a car accident in 1983, U.S. Navy Veteran Dave Nelson Jr. had to adapt his bowling style to make up for not being able to slide on his damaged left leg.

“As a right-handed bowler, you’re supposed to slide on your left leg. I taught myself to slide on my right leg. It worked for me. I’ve got 17 300s and three 800s. You do what you can with what you have.”

Dave Nelson Jr. | U.S. Navy Veteran

After numerous surgeries, Nelson had the leg amputated in 1996. That wasn’t so bad, Nelson said. The pain from his leg was gone, and he still slid on his right leg when he bowled. In 1999, he had to have his leg amputated above the knee. That, he said, made a huge difference.

During the National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Omaha in 2008, Nelson was introduced to wheelchair sports. He competed in bowling, handcycling, shot put, discus and swimming. ▶



Photo by Anna Morelock

▶ He continued to adapt his bowling style, and now competes in about eight wheelchair bowling tournaments a year. He is on the boards of the Omaha Bowling Association and the American Wheelchair Bowling Association. Besides riding 20 to 50 miles a day four or five days a week on trails around Omaha, he also competes in handcycling races across the country.

For Veterans who may be thinking about trying out adaptive sports, Nelson said, “get in there and do it.” He suggested Veterans contact the Paralyzed Veterans of America to find out more about adaptive sports.

“There’s something for everybody,” Nelson said. “They’ve just got an array of sports you might not be aware of until you get in there and talk to someone. Just don’t sit at home; that sucks. You can only watch TiVo shows for so long.”

Nelson has coached high school wrestling and plans to get back into that after moving this summer. He would also like to see more opportunities for area youth to participate in adaptive sports. ▶

▶ It is expensive, Nelson said, but there are programs to help. Nelson gets his care and prosthetics through the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System Prosthetics and Sensory Aid Service.

“I’ve talked to a lot of people at races who aren’t Veterans, and we’ve really got a lot of help while they don’t. We’re lucky to have it. Without (VA) I wouldn’t have that leg. I’d have some rickety wheelchair because I wouldn’t be able to afford a prosthetic.”

Another goal of Nelson’s is to bring a national wheelchair bowling tournament to Omaha in the next few years.

“There are a lot of people who are really good at the sport and just really enthusiastic about it who aren’t even Veterans,” he said. “But out of all of them, probably 60 percent of them are Veterans so that’s kind of neat.” ⓘ

David Nelson Jr. got his “cut below dotted line” tattoo after his left leg was amputated above the knee in 1999. Since then, Nelson has participated in numerous adaptive sports and has his eye on the Paralympics.

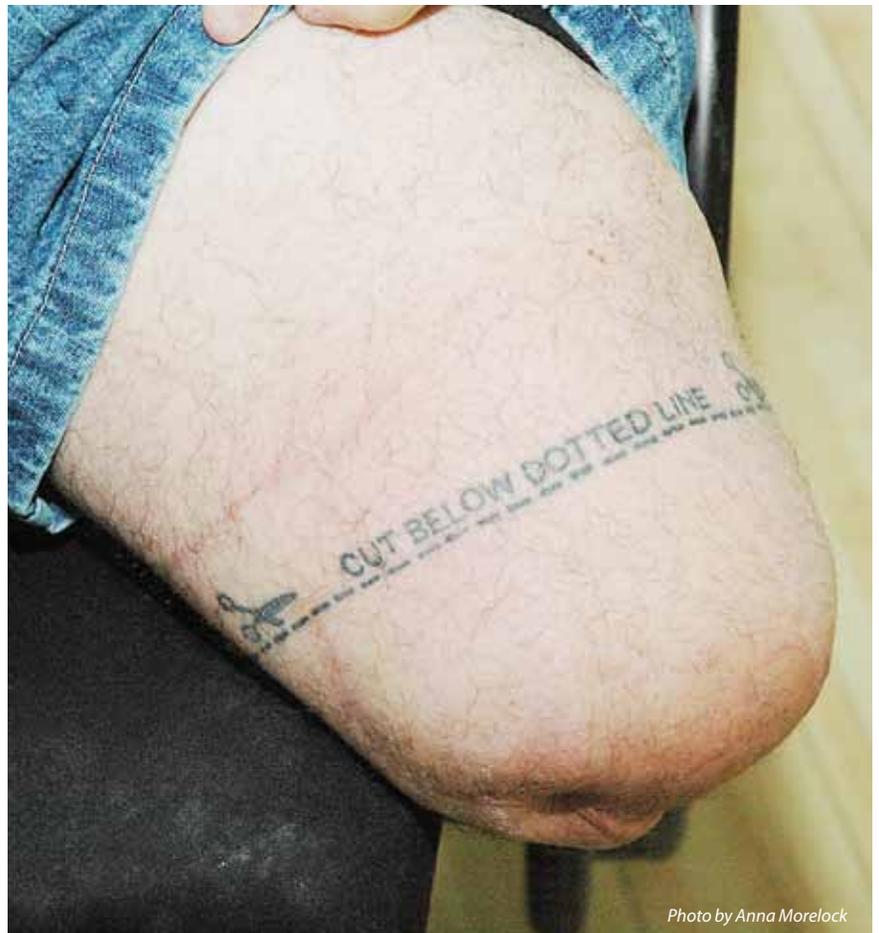


Photo by Anna Morelock

Left: David Nelson Jr. bowls a game at Mockingbird Lanes in Omaha. Nelson taught himself how to bowl when his left leg was damaged and later amputated. He’s bowled 17 300 games and three 800s.

Veterans interested in learning more about adaptive sports including rugby, volleyball, handcycling, sled hockey, softball and other sports, can contact:

The Eastern Nebraska Wheelchair Athletic Association
www.enwaa.org

Great Plains PVA
www.greatplainspva.org

Paralympic Sport Omaha
Jena Munson at 402-572-2276 or
jena.munson@alegent.org

National Veterans Wheelchair Games
www.va.gov/opa/speceven/wcg/index.asp



Recognizing the

Excellent Care

NURSES PROVIDE TO VETERANS EACH DAY

The following nurses received Nursing Excellence Awards during May's National Nurses Week:

Linda Mattson – Holdrege CBOC; RN in an Expanded Role

Kaylyn King – Grand Island; Community Living Center (CLC) LPN

Tonia Konen – Grand Island; CLC Nursing Assistant

Peggy Ondracek – Grand Island; Primary Care Clinical RN

Maria Long – Omaha; RN

Ronda Fritz – Omaha; RN in an Expanded Role

Tobbie Elliff – Omaha; LPN

Kay Memmer – Omaha; Nursing Assistant

2012 recipients of the Nursing Research/Evidence-Based Practice Fellowships were:

Kathleen A. Patasch, RN, MSN –

The Development of a Nurse Residency Program

Tony A. Onstott, BSN, RN, CCRN-CMC –

Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infection Prevention in the ICU

Kathleen Hirsch, RN, MSN –

The Actualization of Caritas at NWHCS

Top Right: Eileen Kingston, NWHCS nurse executive, presents a Nursing Excellence Award for Nursing Assistants to Kay Memmer at the Omaha VAMC during National Nurses Week.

Bottom: Linda Mattson was surprised by her family members who showed up at the Holdrege Community-Based Outpatient Clinic to watch her receive a Nursing Excellence Award during National Nurses Week. Pictured are: (front row) Mattson; Jerry Weber, Mattson's father and a patient at the Holdrege CBOC; (back row) Blaine Fritsche, brother-in-law; Jennica Seyler, daughter; Erica Vannier, daughter; and Nancy Fritsche, sister.



Photo by Anna Morelock



Photo by Anna Morelock

No call
is more
important
than
someone's
life

Acting on Safety



NATIONAL
SAFETY
MONTH 2012

Learn more about acts of safety:

nsc.org/nsm

What's your favorite thing about working at a **Community-Based Outpatient Clinic**?



"Bringing health care to rural Veterans."

Terasa Cuypers, Clerk Holdrege CBOC



"We all know each other and know all of the patients by name."

Michelle Holmes, LPN Shenandoah CBOC



"It's nice to be in a smaller facility where you know everyone."

Mindy Heath, LPN Holdrege CBOC



"It's smaller and you get to know the patients more."

Susan Jones, LPN North Platte CBOC



"It's in a small town. I grew up in a small town. And, it's a fun atmosphere."

Dr. Gary Vandeweghe North Platte CBOC

VA Police Lieutenant Helps Veteran

to World War II Memorial

Will Ackerman | Public Affairs

va police officers serve Veterans every day. One Grand Island VA police lieutenant took service to a different level recently by escorting a Veteran on an Honor Flight to the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Lt. Dennis Wagoner was called at the last minute to escort 90-year-old Lowell Kuhtz, a former U.S. Army private, to the memorial after four other Veterans who were scheduled for the flight could not make it. He also paid his own way – \$300.

"It was an honor for me to do this."

Lt. Dennis Wagoner, VA NWIHCs Police Officer

In addition to visiting the World War II Memorial, he and Kuhtz visited the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum where there was a B-29 replica. Wagoner said Kuhtz shared stories of how he had trained bombardiers at an Army post in Texas how to drop bombs on target during the war.

"I trained them to hit a barrel from 16,000 feet in the air with a 90-pound bomb," Kuhtz said.

It also was an emotional trip for Wagoner, a Vietnam Army Veteran, who found the names of several of his friends whose names are on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.

"I wanted to see the Vietnam wall," Wagoner said. ▶



Lt. Dennis Wagoner and Lowell Kuhtz, a former U.S. Army private visit the U.S. Air Force Memorial.

▶ This wasn't Wagoner's first involvement with the honor flights. He is part of the committee that planned the flights. They raised more than \$200,000 so the World War II Veterans could make the trip for free. Wagoner said getting the Veterans to the World War II memorial is important.

"This is history," he said. "They saved us (during the war)." 📌

Leading at all levels

Anna Morelock | Public Affairs

Employees can be leaders no matter what their level within VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System. It's that thought that led to the name of the leadership program, which recently turned out its latest bunch of graduates.

Leading At All Levels is the facility-level program that mirrors the criteria of the network-level and national-level leadership program, said Nancy Brock, supervisor of Employee Education. It is targeted toward individuals at NWIHCS who are interested in developing leadership skills.

Five NWIHCS employees, along with their mentors, were honored for completing the yearlong program. Graduate Carol Bohanan, project support clerk for the Office of Research and Development, said that while the program was a big time commitment, it was well worth it. Benefits, she said, included getting to meet people outside of her department and attending training classes that moved her toward her goals. ▶



Pictured are: (back row) Rachael Meinders, Angela Williams, Joyce Heger*, Denise Harrison, Jeannie Meyer Hoagland, Joyce Clayton; (front row) Cindy Stoehr*, Kimberly Kay Scheuler*, Carol Bohanan* and Sigrid Gustafson* (* mentees)

▶ Besides participants, Leading At All Levels also recruits mentors throughout NWIHCS. Angela Williams, site director at the Grand Island Community-Based Outpatient Clinic, was a first-time participant as a mentor. Williams said it was exciting to watch her mentee grow over the course of the year, gain confidence and reach her goals. It also gave Williams a chance to evaluate her skills.

“It’s a very, very valuable experience. I think it’s a win-win for both the mentee and the mentor.”

Angela Williams,
Grand Island Community-Based Outpatient Clinic Site Director

“A lot of time we think we have enough on our plate, and we just can’t spare the time. But, I think this is one program where it’s worthwhile making that additional time and sacrifice to be able to help somebody, but also to be able to help you grow personally,” Williams said.

A new round of participants began Leading At All Levels in May. ①

Employees interested in becoming mentors or mentees for Leading at All Levels should contact Nancy Brock at 308-382-3660 ext. 2352 or Char Thiessen at 402-995-5814. Applications for the next available program will come out in February 2013.

2011-2012 Program Graduates

MENTEE

Carol Bohanan
Sigrid Gustafson
Kimberly Kay Scheuler
Joyce Heger
Cindy Stoehr

MENTOR

Jeannie Meyer Hoagland
Denise Harrison
Joyce Clayton
Angela Williams
Rachael Meinders

2012-2013 Program Participants

MENTEE

Jen Croson
Kelli Stott
Angie Swaney
Becky White

MENTOR

Pat Moffatt
Janelle Wormuth
Linda Swenson
Kim Shambaugh-Miller

Employees Walk and Roll for

Almost 200 employees in Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island participated in the annual VA2K Walk and Roll May 16. Over a two-hour time span, employees headed outside to complete the 2K course. The event is held each year to bring awareness to homeless Veterans. Those who donated two items to the homeless program were able to wear jeans for the day. More than 800 items were collected. 



Photo by Anna Morelock



Photo by Coral Selden



Photo by Bruce Thiel

employees | NEW | LEAVING

HELLO

April 8 to May 5

- Myron Gill Acosta, *Surgery*
- Amanda Baird-Halsey, *Surgery*
- Alphonso Benjamin, *Environmental Management Service*
- Danielle Benson, *Inpatient Care*
- Shaun Burdess, *Inpatient Care*
- James Chamberlain, *Lab*
- Natasha Hamilton, *Nurse Executive's Office*
- Mallory Johnson, *Nutrition*
- James Krahling, *Primary Care and Specialty Medicine*
- Suzie McCann, *Extended Care*
- Jason McClaren, *Surgery*
- Anna Nolette, *Nurse Executive's Office*
- Benjamin Radke, *Human Resources*
- Jennifer Ragland, *Extended Care*
- Sandra Ramirez, *Inpatient Care*
- Teresa Reinhart, *Mental Health*

- Johnny Roebuck, *Police*
- Lorri Salber, *Inpatient Care*
- Brian Schnieder, *Inpatient Care*
- Carla Schroeder, *Nurse Executive's Office*
- Bogdana Shcherbiy, *Surgery*
- Molly Shimerdla, *Surgery*
- Corri Synak, *Safety*
- Debra Tanner, *Surgery*
- Tracy Wilson, *Surgery*
- James Wolfe, *Extended Care*
- Gina Woods, *Quality Management*

GOODBYE

April 8 to May 5

- Venkata Andukuri, *Chief of Staff's Office*
- Samuel Bottaro, *Pharmacy*
- Constance Griger, *Business Office*
- Elizabeth Earhart, *Business*
- Angela Fuehrer, *Police*

- Ronald Kortum, *Environmental Management Service*
- Jerome Kreifels, *Biomedical Engineering*
- Preston Johnson, *Outpatient Care*
- Brooke Marceaux, *Mental Health*
- LeaAnne Ottis, *Mental Health*
- Patrick Powers, *Primary Care and Specialty Medicine*
- Lauri Ritchie, *Mental Health*
- Hyla Robbins, *OEF/OIF/OND*
- Calvin Robinson, *Business Office*
- Shirley Rothell, *Mental Health*
- David Shane, *Shenandoah CBOC*
- Sheila Sundberg, *Veterans Canteen Service*
- Nelson Torraca, *Sterile Processing Service*
- Sandra Tysinger, *Business Office*
- Mary Webb, *Business Office*
- Dorothy Wright, *Business Office*
- Benjamin Young, *Environmental Management Service*

Planetree Retreats Planned for All Employees



Michele O'Connor | Patient Centered Care
Training Coordinator

as many of you may have heard, Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System has contracted with the Planetree organization to help us on our patient centered care journey.

The Planetree philosophy focuses on delivering health care and creating an organizational culture around the needs of the individual. Our goal for NWHCS is to shift from the current system, which is problem-based disease care, to a patient-centered health and healing model of care and operation.

Like many of the other caring initiatives in place at NWHCS, including Jean Watson's Caring Theory, Magnet, ICARE and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) 12 Core Principles of Patient-Centered Care, Planetree emphasizes providing the patient and their family with positive experiences in addition to excellent service and care. Plans for this change in the NWHCS culture have been in place for almost two years, and there are 14 patient-centered care committees in place working to enhance our caring environment and community.

To ensure all employees are on board, and to officially kick off the organizational change process, Planetree leadership retreats will be held in June and July in Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island. Full-day employee retreats will begin in September 2012. All employees will be encouraged to attend one of these sessions to fully understand the important role everyone plays on this journey.

But, we need to identify and develop Planetree facilitators. Facilitators will be needed to moderate the more than 70 employee retreats planned during the next year. Planetree training for facilitators will be in held Aug. 14-16, three full days. If you are interested in becoming a facilitator and joining the facilitation team, please complete the application found on the Patient Satisfaction SharePoint site. 

Upcoming Events

JUNE - JULY 2012

Planetree Leadership Retreats

Held in Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island

SEPTEMBER 2012

Full-Day Employee Retreats Begin

AUGUST 14 - 16, 2012

Planetree Training for Facilitators



The Patient-Centered Care Grapevine is a new feature to highlight patient-centered care activities and training. Watch the Daily Briefs and the Intranet for this logo.

If your department or program has a unique way of being patient-centered and wants to be featured, contact Michele O'Connor in Omaha at ext. 5809 or micheleoconnor@va.gov.

For more patient-centered care information, visit the Intranet page at vwww.nebraska.va.gov/PCC.asp.

► *Lincoln Barber continued from page 4*

While he's now busy cutting hair, Taylor didn't completely give up golf. He plays three times a week when the Nebraska weather is cooperating. When the weather is not cooperating, he can be found playing ping-pong.

Born in Lewellen, Neb., Taylor won't reveal his age, but shows the zest for life of a 20-year-old. He and his wife, Bev, have three children, eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

His pride really shows through when given an opportunity to talk about his family, especially about his grandson's golf accomplishments – he won both state and amateur titles in 2011.

Whether Veterans and employees are looking for a haircut or a story, they can find Taylor in the basement Barber Shop, Room 002, from 8 a.m. to noon Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays; and from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursdays. 

► *Prosthetics and Sensory Aid Service continued from page 7*

"We can remove an old tub or shower and put in a walk-in shower," Pavolka said. "Of course those have to be Americans with Disabilities Act compliant so they'll have stools and grab bars and everything in there so they can take a shower safely."

The Automobile Adaptive Program can help Veterans modify a vehicle to fit their needs with changes such as lowered floors, tie-downs and ramps. NWHCS does around 20 to 25 of these alterations for Veterans each year, Pavolka said.

While most of the Prosthetics and Sensory Aid Service staff is wrapped up in purchasing equipment and arranging for home and vehicle modifications, Adam Jacobsen works with Veterans who need artificial limbs. As the sole prosthetist on staff, Jacobsen recently received equipment to begin crafting limbs in his own lab at NWHCS. With a digitized scanner, Jacobsen now can scan a Veteran's residual limb and send that scan to a company that produces the socket. Assembling the rest of the limb is up to Jacobsen.

Getting a limb outside NWHCS, depending on the limb, could cost anywhere from \$7,000 up to \$80,000, Pavolka said. The average limb contracted out is about \$12,000 to \$15,000. With Jacobsen creating the limb at NWHCS, the cost goes down to about \$3,000 to \$5,000. Not only is it less expensive, a Veteran can expect to see their new limb in about three weeks instead of the 10 to 12 it took when contracting the service out.

"It's a tremendous cost savings to the VA," Pavolka said, "and it also keeps our prosthetist doing what he's used to doing. Instead of just fitting shoes and arch supports, he can actually come in and do his craft and do it well." 

EVENTS what's going on?

- June 1** Teen Volunteer Orientation, Omaha
- June 14** Flag Day
- June 11-17** Men's Health Week
- June 12** Blood Drive, Omaha
- June 14-21** Nursing Assistants Week
- June 17** Father's Day
- June 19** Farmer's Market, Omaha
- June 20** Summer Begins
- June 23** Welcome Home and Veterans Freedom Music Festival, Lincoln
- June 25-30** National Veterans Wheelchair Games, Richmond, Va.
- June 26** Farmer's Market, Omaha

For more information
about VA NWHCS events,
visit www.nebraska.va.gov.



VA NWHCS is now engaging Veterans through Twitter and Facebook



[www.twitter.com/
VANWHCS](http://www.twitter.com/VANWHCS)



[www.facebook.com/
NebraskalowaVA](http://www.facebook.com/NebraskalowaVA)

Watch for news, information for
patients and upcoming events.

Starting Mid-June

farmers market

For Veterans, Volunteers, Visitors & Employees

Lincoln
Wednesdays
2 to 4 pm
Outside the Outpatient
Clinic Doors

Omaha
Tuesdays
Noon to 4:30 pm
In Circle by
Main Entrance

Farmers Markets will
Start Mid to Late June.
Watch for Upcoming
Announcements on the
TV Screens.



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