

# the link

SEPTEMBER  
2015



VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System



**TEAM NEBRASKA**

**VETERANS COMPETE  
FOR GOLD IN  
10 OMAHA, NEB.**

**VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (VA NWIHCS) employees are well-known across the VA for providing exceptional care and customer service to Veterans.**

The recent 29th National Veterans Golden Age Games is another shining example of your commitment to excellence in service to America's Veterans.



Nearly 150 employees worked on the local organizing committee for the past year, in addition to their regular jobs, planning the largest national seniors' Veteran sporting event in the nation. Hundreds of employees also volunteered their time, and worked in every imaginable capacity – from events coordination, hospitality and registration, to public affairs, and medical services – to ensure the 800-plus Veterans, their coaches and families enjoyed a great experience and sporting event at the Games in Omaha.

This year's event and all that went into every facet of it was nothing less than a highly professional production that set the bar high for future VA medical centers that will host the Games.

I applaud all of you for showcasing Omaha and VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System and our commitment to Veterans through your outstanding work in hosting the 29th National Veterans Golden Age Games.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Don Burman".

**DIRECTOR AND PUBLISHER**

B. Don Burman, MHA

**PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER**

Will Ackerman

**THE LINK EDITORIAL STAFF**

**Editor** | Lori Bultman

**Designer** | Becky Brown

**Photographer** | Bruce Thiel

FACT: VA OPERATES MORE THAN 1,700 SITES OF CARE, INCLUDING 150 HOSPITALS (OR MEDICAL CENTERS), 985 OUTPATIENT CLINICS, 300 VET CENTERS, 70 MOBILE VET CENTERS, 135 COMMUNITY LIVING CENTERS (FORMERLY, NURSING HOMES), AND 104 RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION TREATMENT PROGRAMS. -DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Cover: Team Nebraska carries the state flag during the opening ceremony at the 29th National Veterans Golden Age Games held in Omaha, Neb Aug. 9. VA Photo.



# the link

## CONTENTS

“I enjoy meeting Veterans of multiple generations, listening to them and relating our common experiences. I receive a sense of fulfillment and pride knowing that I have helped them in the course of their medical well-being.”

Jeff McGregor, Medical Support Assistant  
U.S. Navy Veteran | Lincoln VA Clinic



Study to Compare Gout Treatments: A Gout Epidemic is Sweeping the U.S.



Immunizations: Vaccines Essential to Combatting Some Illnesses in Adults



The Healing Art of Laughter: New Class for Veterans Combines Yoga Breathing with Laughter



Planning is Key for Fit, Healthy Families



Veterans Compete for Gold at National Veterans Golden Age Games in Omaha



VA Announces New Rules Regarding Service Animals in VA Facilities



NWIHCS, Offutt Personnel Practice for Emergencies



Veterans Transportation Network Receives New Vehicle



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.

### CONTACT US

Have a story idea? Call the VA NWIHCS Public Affairs Office; Will Ackerman at 402-995-4719 or Lori Bultman at 402-995-5547 or email [vhanwipublicaffairs@va.gov](mailto:vhanwipublicaffairs@va.gov).

### VISIT US ONLINE

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



MEET

# camieberle

Medical Support Assistant | North Platte VA Clinic

## How long have you worked for VA?

"7 1/2 + years."

## What does your job entail?

"I come in early to open for Veterans that are scheduled to ride the DAV van from North Platte to Grand Island VA. I also do patient pre-registration/check-in, scheduling/rescheduling, eligibility, travel, ROI [Release of



Information] and many other functions. I am also the ADPAC [automated data processing applications coordinator] for our clinic."

## What do you like best about your job?

"I like that there is always something different happening with my job. It's never boring."

## When not at work, where can you be found?

"I can be found either at home, enjoying the peace and quiet while my husband and son are out; or I can find be found joining my husband on one of his last-minute adventures." 📍

Visit Our

## SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Like Us on Facebook

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



Follow @VANWIHCS

Get news, information for patients and upcoming events

## STUDY TO COMPARE GOUT TREATMENTS

### *A gout epidemic is sweeping the U.S.*

Selaba Travis | University of Nebraska Medical Center



Courtesy Photo

**F**our percent of the U.S. population has gout, and the number is going up rapidly. It has become the most common form of inflammatory arthritis in adults. It is also associated with significant morbidity and mortality in older men and magnified in patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD).

Dr. James O'Dell, Chief of Rheumatology and Immunology at the Omaha VA Medical Center and the University of Nebraska Medical Center is the principal investigator on a four-year, \$23 million VA Cooperative Study titled "Comparative Effectiveness in Gout: Allopurinol vs. Febuxostat."

“The prevalence of gout in patients with renal failure is upwards of 30 percent. Our study will be the first time that a substantial number of patients with kidney disease who have gout will be studied.”

Dr. James O'Dell, VA NWIHCS chief, Rheumatology and Immunology

The study will include 950 patients from contracted sites around the country, including UNMC, various VA sites and various Rheumatoid Arthritis Investigational Network (RAIN) sites. Because gout is common in the demographic of the VA patient population, this study could lead to significantly improved patient outcomes.

Documentation shows gout is the most mismanaged chronic disease there is, Dr. O'Dell said. Ninety percent of patients with gout have problems with chronic gout. This number should be less than 10 percent if properly managed.

"The prevalence of gout in patients with renal failure is upwards of 30 percent," Dr. O'Dell said. "Our study will be the first time that a substantial number of patients with kidney disease who have gout will be studied."

(continued on page 14) ▶

# IMMUNIZATIONS

## Vaccines essential to combating some illnesses in adults

Lori Bultman | Public Affairs

**Immunizations are a very important part of a child's early years; however adults should be just as adamant about keeping their vaccinations current.**

"Everyone really needs to be up-to-date on all routine vaccines for adults," said Dr. Marvin Bittner, staff physician, infectious diseases, VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (NWIHCS), and associate professor of medicine, Creighton University School of Medicine. "While Veterans may have received many vaccines in the military, they still need the influenza vaccine every year," he said. "Even if you are not at risk for having severe complications from the flu, you could be around someone who can have complications from it," Bittner said. "Even if you don't live with someone who has issues, you could run into someone who does. That person could get very sick, and even die from something you gave them."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that from the 1976-1977 influenza season to the 2006-2007 season, flu-associated deaths ranged per year from a low of about 3,000 to a high of about 49,000 people. It was determined that about 90 percent of influenza-associated deaths occurred in adults 65 years and older.

In addition to Veterans, the flu vaccine is also important for health care workers.

**"While Veterans may have received many vaccines in the military, they still need the influenza vaccine every year. Even if you are not at risk for having severe complications from the flu, you could be around someone who can have complications from it."**

Dr. Marvin Bittner, staff physician, infectious disease, NWIHCS

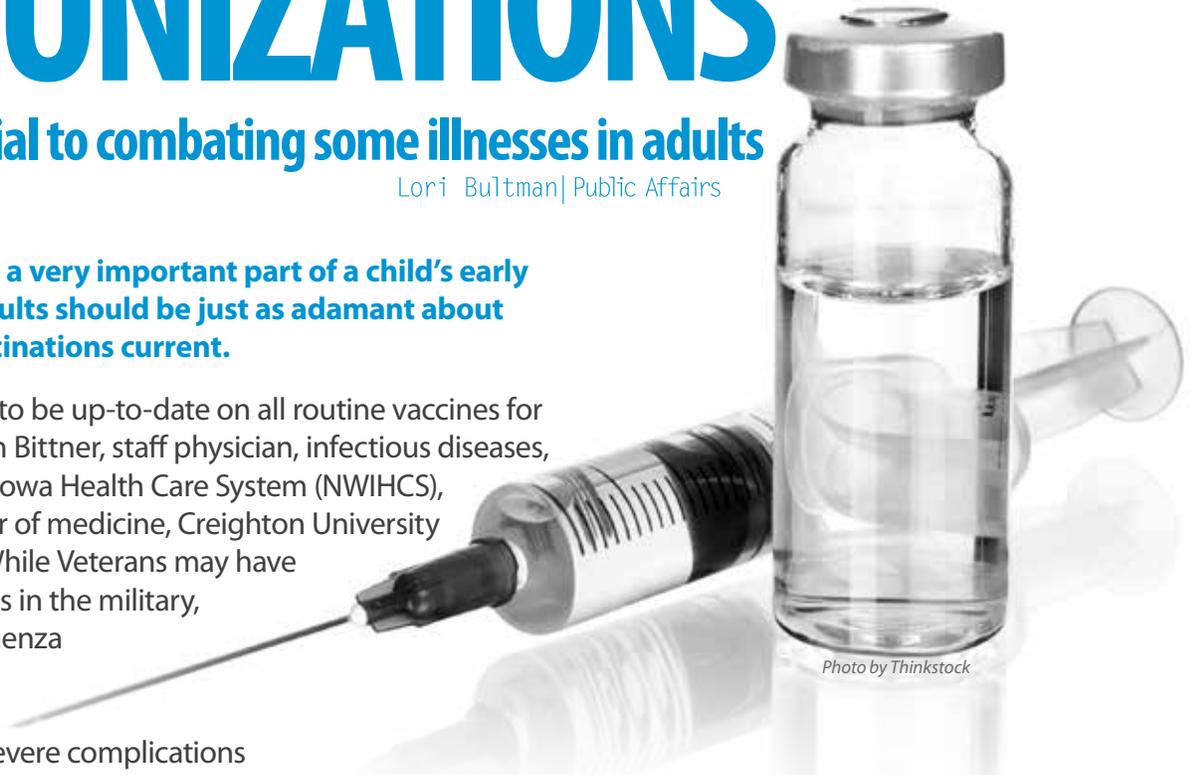


Photo by Thinkstock

"Patients who have influenza will tend to seek medical care. If you work at a place where medical care is provided, you may get more exposure," Bittner said. "Also, if you are working around people with health problems and you have influenza, you could spread it to patients. It is very important to have routine vaccinations if you work in a health care setting."

**Flu shots should be available for eligible Veterans and employees at NWIHCS in October.**

Bittner said there is really no excuse for not getting a flu shot. "There is now an influenza vaccine that is made with no eggs at all; so egg allergy is no longer a reason not to get the vaccine."

Bittner said in addition to the annual flu vaccine, there are other immunization all health care workers should have.

"The Tdap (tetanus diphtheria pertussis) vaccine is very important," Bittner said. "There have been a number of pertussis outbreaks in health care facilities in recent years."

*(continued on page 14)* ►

# The Healing Art of Laughter

*New Class for Veterans Combines Yoga Breathing with Laughter*

**V**eterans enrolled at VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (NWIHCS) are encouraged to come out and tickle their funny bone twice a month with Laughter Therapy and Yoga Breathing at the Polytrauma Clinic in Omaha, Neb.

“We developed this class to help Veterans with pain, depression and stress,” said Larry Krafska, RN, pain management case manager, NWIHCS. “It may also help Veterans have a better quality of life because we also do exercises and practice yoga breathing as part of this group activity.”

There is no need to brush up on joke-telling skills before class. Participants wear funny hats, practice different ways to laugh, move around and act silly.

Top center: Larry Krafska, pain management case manager, NWIHCS, and Veteran Jaideen Hruby talk jibber jabber while wearing funny hats during Laughter Therapy and Yoga Breathing class in Omaha.

Right: Veteran Jerome Gillen shows off his wolf hat while doing yoga breathing during class.

Far Right: Laughter Therapy and Yoga Breathing class participants relax and practice yoga nidra, sleep like meditations, during the final portion of the class.



“We developed this class to help Veterans have a better quality of life because we also do exercises and practice yoga breathing as part of this group activity.”

Larry Krafska, RN, pain management case manager, NWIHCS

Jokes are not required for laughing, Krafska said. “The affect you get from laughing just to laugh is the same as if you were laughing at a funny program.”

Laughter is a big part of the class, but the yoga breathing between laughing is also very important.

“Yoga breathing can help reduce anxiety and depression, lower or stabilized blood pressure, increase energy levels, relax muscles and decreased feelings of stress,” Krafska said.

Laughter Therapy and Yoga Breathing is already helping NWIHCS Veterans.

“I love it,” said Veteran and class participant Jerome Gillen. “In this class you really



Photos by Lori Bultman

ans with pain, depression and stress.  
er quality of life because we also do  
ing as part of this group activity.”

ger, VA NWHCS

have to let yourself go and not worry. It is good not to take everything so seriously sometimes.”

Gillen said the class makes him feel better. “I get headaches, and if this class can calm it even for a little bit, it helps,” he said. He especially likes the yoga nidra portion of the class, where the participants experience a sleep-like state during their meditations.

Krafka hopes more Veterans will join this new therapy group as part of their pain management treatment.

“This class can help Veterans to enjoy a better quality of life based on the benefits of exercise and breathing,” Krafka said. “The overall goal is to help them increase their ability to function and enjoy life.”

# Five Points of Laughter:

**1** Laughter Yoga is fun and new

**2** Laughter releases pain-relieving chemicals: endorphins, neuropeptides dopamine and serotonin are created in response to exercise, excitement, pain, spicy food, among other things.

**3** We initiate laughter as an exercise but we free our authentic laugh because laughter is contagious.

**4** It is called Laughter Yoga because it has laughter exercises that are enhanced by deep yoga breathing. More oxygen is delivered by this deep yoga breathing.

**5** It makes you feel alive by changing your biochemistry regardless of whether the laughter is real or not.

*If you are an NWHCS enrolled Veteran and would like to find out what Laughter Therapy and Yoga Breathing can do for you, call 402-599-4000 for more information.*



# Planning

**R**egular physical activity and a healthy diet can help improve your families' physical and mental health, while reducing the risk for several chronic illnesses.

"Physical activity comes in many forms, and is considered anything that moves your body while burning calories," said Larra Petersen-Lukenda, M.A., Ph.D., staff psychologist and health behavior coordinator, VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System. "Popular activities include walking or running, swimming, biking, taking the stairs or playing many sports."

Finding the time for a family activity program may seem daunting at first, but in the long run it can be a healthy choice for your family.

According to the American Heart Association (AHA), to improve overall cardiovascular health, it is recommended to obtain at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise per week or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise per week. For people who would benefit from lowering their blood pressure or cholesterol, the AHA recommends 40 minutes of aerobic exercise of moderate to vigorous intensity three to four times a week to lower the risk for heart attack and stroke, Petersen-Lukenda said.

Having a healthy diet can also help families stay fit. "Eating healthy helps prevent chronic disease. Getting the right balance of vitamins, minerals and nutrients will improve the way you feel and



*Finding the time for a family activity program may seem daunting at first, but in the long run it can be a healthy choice for your family.*

Photo by Bruce Thiel

## What do you do at home to keep your family healthy and fit?

*"I have a husband and three very busy kids, and luckily, we all LOVE to play! We do water sports, mountain sports, school sports, volleyball, biking, walking, hiking, swimming, fishing and anything new that peaks our curiosity. We play together, laugh together and we love them like lunatics!"*

**Cindy Wemhoff, RN, Ambulatory Care**  
Grand Island VA Clinic



*Get plenty of sleep, daily exercise walking our dog, bike rides, yard work and try to eat healthy meals.*

**Kristine Birchard,**  
Eye Technician  
Omaha VAMC



# is Key for Fit, Healthy Families

Lori Bultman | Public Affairs

increase your energy level,” said Natalie VanKat MS, RD, CSSD, LMNT, sports dietitian and MOVE! program manager at NWIHCS.

A healthy diet includes all five food groups each day: lean meat, low-fat dairy, whole grains, vegetables and fruit, VanKat said. “To help with feeling satisfied at meal times, include at least three food groups per meal and two food groups per snack.”

When preparing meals at home, planning is the key. “When making meals for the whole family, it is best to start each week with a plan,” VanKat said. “One easy way is to use a Healthy Plate diagram as a guide, putting vegetables on half of the plate, lean meat on a quarter of the plate, starchy foods on a quarter of the plate and low-fat dairy on the side.”

Most families are busy and on-the-go, so planning and cooking healthy meals can be difficult.

“When pressed for time, a good way to make sure you get a healthy meal is by using a slow cooker,” VanKat said. “Throw in lean meat and vegetables and let them cook all day. When serving, add a whole grain and low-fat dairy to round out the meal. Slow cookers do not require much prep work, a variety of foods can be cooked in them and they allow a one-step clean up!” 

## START MOVING

*Finding the right activity plan for your family might take time. You may need to try different types of activities, at different times of the day.*

### Start slow and build up.

Too much too soon may leave your family members injured or discouraged. When exercising becomes easy, increase the length, time or intensity of the activity.

### Keep it interesting.

Different types of activity help avoid burnout or boredom and also work different muscle groups.

### Seek support.

Studies show people are better at maintaining an activity program with support from others. Family members can encourage each other to make changes.

### Make it a habit.

As your family becomes more comfortable with the plan, the effort to be active is less. Consider starting by penciling in exercise, but soon your family will find it is like brushing their teeth or taking a shower...a habit.

### Track it.

A national weight registry shows that tracking health goals leads to greater success long term.

*We try to walk in the evenings as much as possible. I have been cooking more healthy meals and watching portion sizes, along with going for healthy snacks. My youngest son is in high school sports, so football and baseball keep him active.*



**Tina Randles, LPN**  
Norfolk VA Clinic

*We don't manage our kid's diet and exercise like an adult would manage their own. We are aware of health risks with inactivity and poor diet. However, we still let our children enjoy less-healthy snacks, or have "screen time" on a regular basis. We do our best to have all things in moderation. Our children enjoy the simple sugars, like candy and donuts, just like anyone else. We don't deny them those enjoyable snacks. However, we try to be responsible and limit their intake of these types of foods to a healthy amount. They also eat fairly balanced meals, with plenty of fruits and vegetables and hearty carbohydrates. Exercise is not difficult for our children, as they are fairly active. We encourage our kids to play outside. We also encourage reading and playing with toys, as a good imagination fits into the picture of an overall healthy lifestyle.*



**Jacob Ulfers, Physical Therapist** | Omaha VAMC

# Veterans Compete for **G**



at National Veterans Golden Age



**T**he 29th National Veterans Golden Age Games was held in Omaha, Neb., Aug. 8-12. More than 800 participants competed in the Games, including Veterans from 46 states, Washington D.C. and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Veteran athletes and their coaches prepared over the last year for this, the premier senior adaptive rehabilitation program in the United States, and the only national multi-event sports and recreational seniors' competition program designed to improve the quality of life for all older Veterans.



“It is a blessing that we are all able to be healthy and be here. I always have a good time at the Games, and I appreciate the city welcoming us.”

David Kelley, U.S. Air Force Veteran, Virginia



“We were thrilled to have the Games in Omaha this year,” said Anna Morelock, local coordinator for the 29th National Veterans Golden Age Games. “It was exciting to see the competitions, comradarie and presentations of the medals to the winners.”

Photos by VA.

# LD

## Games in Omaha



Lori Bultman | Public Affairs

The National Veterans Golden Age Games are about more than competing for medals, it's about keeping Veterans healthy.

"It warms my heart to know that these Games promote health while also strengthening the bonds between Veterans, VA staff members and the community," said Don Burman, director, VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System. Burman presented medals to winners at several events.

Veteran Claudia Barber-Martin of Michigan said she had a great time at this year's games.

"It's all about the camaraderie," she said. "You see people at the Games from year to year. We are all Veterans and we know we have each other's back." Barber-Martin said she was glad to see more female Veterans at the Games this year.

David Kelley, a U.S. Air Force Veteran from Virginia, competed in this year's Games, and was thankful for the opportunity.

"It is a blessing that we are all able to be healthy and be here," Kelley said. "I always have a good time at the Games, and I appreciate the city welcoming us."

The 2016 National Veterans Golden Age Games will be held in Detroit, Mich. 



Photos by VA.

VA ANNOUNCES  
NEW RULES  
REGARDING

# Service Animals

IN VA FACILITIES

VA Communications

**T**he Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced, Aug. 17, that it has revised its regulation regarding the presence of animals on VA property. The updated regulation will ensure VA practices remain consistent with applicable federal law. It will also assist individuals entering VA facilities in developing a clear and consistent understanding of the criteria governing facility access for service animals.

“As I have traveled to VA facilities throughout the country, I have heard from many Veterans about what a vital role their service animals play in their lives,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald. “The revised regulation will ensure Veterans and employees have clear guidance regarding the presence of service animals in our facilities. VA remains committed to ensuring America’s Veterans have access to the health care benefits for which they are eligible.”

“As I have traveled to VA facilities throughout the country, I have heard from many Veterans about what a vital role their service animals play in their lives.”

Robert A. McDonald,  
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Under the revised regulation, only dogs that are individually trained to perform work or tasks on behalf of an individual with a disability will be considered service animals. Other animals will not be permitted in VA facilities, unless expressly allowed as an exception under the regulation for activities such as animal-assisted therapy or for other reasons such as law enforcement purposes. The regulation further confirms that service animals may access VA property subject to the same terms that govern the admission of the public to VA property, and may be restricted from certain areas on VA properties to ensure that patient care, patient safety and infection control standards are not compromised.

In accordance with required practices, the revised regulation was published in the Federal Register in November 2014, to obtain feedback from Veterans, advocacy organizations and other stakeholders.

Over the next 30 days, VA will provide training to frontline employees and ensure policies at all facilities are consistent with the new regulation. 



Photo by Thinkstock

# NWIHCS, Offutt personnel practice for emergencies

**O**maha VA Medical Center personnel participated in an Offutt Air Force Base (AFB) active-shooter, full-scale exercise Aug. 20 and their skills were tested under simulated stressful circumstances.

Offutt AFB was testing their emergency response procedures to an active shooter incident, said James Jenkins, emergency manager, VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (NWIHCS). "Although this was primarily a security response exercise, Offutt medics notified their casualty response teams. The Omaha VA is one of the designated community hospitals scheduled to receive (exercise) casualties."

The Omaha VA Medical Center received simulated patients, complete with artificial wounds, and initiated treatment accordingly. "We received nine mock wounded at our facility," said Aaron Moore, MSN, RN-BCRN, staff nurse, Emergency Department, and

“When NWI facilities are part of an exercise or a real-world event, it is important to know that anyone at the location may be asked to participate.”

Jim Jenkins, emergency manager, VA NWIHCS



Photo by Lori Bultman

Jim Krahling, PA, talks to a mock patient about her simulated injuries during an exercise at the Omaha VA Medical Center Aug. 20. The simulated active shooter exercise was initiated by Offutt Air Force Base, but patients were evacuated to several local medical facilities.

lead for the NWIHCS Hospital Emergency Response Team (HERT). "The Omaha VA activated its emergency response plan and we were met with a multitude of help."

The HERT was activated at the beginning of the exercise and supplied four nurses to ride on the vehicle transporting patients to the VA, Moore said. "They were then met by other members of the HERT at the Omaha VA ER."

Five of the simulated patients met the criteria for treatment in the Yellow Clinic, which is set up as the tertiary treatment center in a mass casualty, Moore said. Dr. Ann Polich, staff physician, NWIHCS, and her team of nurses cared for and treated those minimally wounded patients, he said, adding that Dr. Matt Rivard, staff surgeon, NWIHCS, was crucial to the success of the exercise due to his work in triaging and treating the emergent patients

"The Emergency Room staff members were met with ample support and treated four simulated critical patients who required lifesaving treatments and disposition to the operating rooms," Moore said. "Even though it was an exercise, all staff members treated this as a real activation. The Emergency Room had ample ancillary support from X-ray, lab, clinics and the operating room, and multiple staff members answered the "all call" for help." 

Jodi Manley, LPN, and Jim Krahling, PA, discuss a mock patient's treatment plan during an exercise at the Omaha VA Medical center Aug. 20. The simulated active shooter exercise was initiated by Offutt Air Force Base, but patients were evacuated to several local medical facilities.



Photo by Lori Bultman

# Veterans Transportation Network Receives New Vehicle

Representatives from the Department of Nebraska Disabled American Veterans (DAV) presented keys to a new vehicle to Don Burman, director, VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System Aug. 19. The vehicle was donated to the DAV and will be used by its volunteers to transport Veterans to and from their VA medical appointments. 📍

Right: Roger Franklin (right), commander, Department of Nebraska DAV, present keys to Don Burman, director, VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System.



Left: Don Burman, director, VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System, stands with representatives of Department of Nebraska DAV, Roger Franklin, commander, Mike Jackman, state junior vice commander, and Greg Holloway, past department commander.



Photos by Lori Bultman

► (Gout story continued from page 4)

According to the proposal, two drugs have been endorsed as first-line treatment for gout, allopurinol and febuxostat. Both drugs are effective and generally well-tolerated, but febuxostat costs considerably more. However, according to a previous survey of 179 VA practitioners, febuxostat appears to be the drug of choice. The reasoning seems to be the perception that febuxostat provided superior efficacy and tolerability.

This study will compare the two therapies for lowering uric acid levels to see which is the most clinically and economically effective, Dr. O'Dell said. 📍

► (Immunizations story continued from page 5)

"People who work in microbiology labs or have special health conditions might also need additional vaccines," he said. "The meningococcal vaccine is one that adults might need in special circumstances."

Persons over a certain age might need additional vaccines.

"If someone is at least 60-years old, the shingles vaccine should be given," Bittner said. "If a person is over 65-years old, he or she needs both of the pneumonia vaccines." There has been a recent change to the timing of the pneumonia vaccine, Bittner added. "They are now given one year apart."

For more information about immunizations, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), or the Immunization Action Coalition at [www.immunize.org](http://www.immunize.org). 📍

## HELLO

**ANISE ADELL**, Pathology and Lab  
**KENNETH ALDRIDGE**, Nursing  
**JENNIFER ANDERSON**, Nursing  
**DERRICK ANTONIAK**, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine  
**HARMON BARTA**, Nursing  
**MELODIE BIGGER**, Nursing  
**ASHLEY BRONDUM**, Pharmacy  
**TARA CALLISON**, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine  
**QUYNH DINH**, Nursing  
**CYNTHIA DOUGLAS-YBARRA**, Nursing  
**JAMES DUBBS**, Prosthetics  
**CURT ESTWICK JR**, Nursing  
**MAR GBADAMOSI-AKINDELE**, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine  
**KATHERINE GOFF**, Nursing  
**NORMAN GOLDSMITH**, Engineering  
**JESSICA GREEN**, Safety  
**JEREMY GROSS**, Environmental Management Service  
**BRANDON HEUERMANN**, Pharmacy  
**JOHN HORNE**, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine  
**SCOTT JOHNSON**, Veterans Canteen Service  
**JESSICA JONES**, Pharmacy  
**STEFANIE JONES**, Mental Health  
**MICHAEL KEISER**, Pharmacy  
**JEFFERY KIBERT II**, Pharmacy  
**TAYLOR KOEHRSEN**, Pharmacy  
**MAGGIE KRUSCHEL**, Pharmacy  
**JUSTIN LANE**, Pharmacy  
**PATRICIA LONGCRIER**, Veterans Canteen Service  
**MARINA LOTFY**, Pharmacy  
**CONRAD MCSWAIN**, Sterile Processing Service  
**MARIE MOSER**, Pharmacy  
**LINDA OLIVER**, Nursing  
**VALERIE PRESCHER-BUMAN**, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine  
**JEREMIAH SAUNDERS**, Pharmacy  
**SCOTT SPOFFORD**, Logistics  
**JERI STUDT**, Nursing  
**MICHAEL WEGNER**, Pharmacy  
**AMY WEINMAN**, Pharmacy

**DARA WHITE**, Safety  
**JENNA WHITE**, Social Work  
**KIMBERLY WILKEN**, Mental Health  
**SHELLY YOUNG**, Nursing  
**JACQUELINE ZECH**, Nursing  
**ANDREA ZUELOW**, Nursing

## GOODBYE

**SANDRA ASK**, Nursing  
**LEAH BENSON**, Pharmacy  
**SHAUN BURDESS**, Business Office  
**WILLIAM CARPENTER**, Mental Health  
**ADAM CRABBE**, Pharmacy  
**JACQULYN CRAIG**, Nursing  
**PHILIP DAUBENMIER**, Nursing  
**AGNES DAVIDSON**, Environmental Management Services  
**SAYANTAN DEB**, Nursing  
**TREVOR EISEMAN**, Environmental Management Services  
**ALEXANDER FOREHEAD**, Prosthetics  
**EVAN GAHAN**, Pharmacy  
**SARAH GILLIS**, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine  
**HEATHER HAWLEY**, Pharmacy  
**ELIZABETH ISLEB**, Pharmacy  
**PAUL JACKMAN**, Nursing  
**PIERRE LAVEDAN**, Extended Care and Rehabilitation  
**MELANIE LINNAUS**, Extended Care and Rehabilitation  
**ROBIN MCDOWELL**, Mental Health  
**BARBARA MORACZEWSKI**, Nursing  
**MICHELE OCONNOR**, Chief of Staff Office  
**KEVIN PRICHARD**, Prosthetics  
**JYOTI RAMACHANDRAN**, Primary Care and Specialty Medicine  
**CATHERINE RAVENSTAHL**, Nursing  
**EVAN ROBB**, Pharmacy  
**JENNA RODIS**, Mental Health  
**MARK RUST**, Environmental Management Services  
**MARTIN SAIENNI**, Nursing  
**KAREN TVEDT**, Quality Management  
**JANELLE WEBER**, Pharmacy  
**ELLEN WILSON**, Nursing

## events

# WHAT'S GOING ON?

- Sept. 2** Food Pantry, Community Resource and Referral Center, 825 Dorcas St., Omaha
- Sept. 3** VA Benefits Fair, Central Community College, Grand Island
- Sept. 7** Food Pantry, Lincoln VA Clinic Labor Day (Federal Holiday)
- Sept. 11** Patriot Day
- Sept. 15** Begins Hispanic Heritage Month
- Sept. 16** Food Pantry, Community Resource and Referral Center, 825 Dorcas St., Omaha
- Sept. 18** VA Coffeehaus, Lincoln VA Clinic
- Sept. 23** VA Community Book Club, Lincoln VA Clinic
- Sept. 29** Stand Down for Homeless Veterans, Pinnacle Bank Arena, Lincoln

For more information about VA NWIHCs events, visit [www.nebraska.va.gov](http://www.nebraska.va.gov).



## RETIRED

**JACK MYERS**, Voluntary Service  
**BETH CECIL**, Nursing  
**JUDY CERNY**, Nursing  
**MARY DIMAURO**, Nursing  
**LLOYD FELSTOW**, Research  
**DIANNE FRAZIER**, Pathology and Lab  
**ROBERT JOHNSON**, Logistics  
**SYNTHIA STANOSHECK**, Surgery  
**DEBRA STEARLEY**, Nursing  
**KAREN THOMPSON**, Nursing

# VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

# STANDDOWN

## for Homeless Veterans Eligible for VA Health Care

*Stand Down is a military term meaning Servicemembers are removed from the field of combat to receive rest and rehabilitation.*

### LINCOLN

**Tuesday, September 29**  
**10 am to 3 pm**

*Held in conjunction with Project Homeless Connect at:*

#### **Pinnacle Bank Arena**

Haymarket, 400 Pinnacle Arena Drive  
Lincoln, Nebraska

### GRAND ISLAND

**Thursday, October 22**  
**10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

*Held in conjunction with Project Homeless Connect at:*

#### **Evangelical Free Church**

2609 South Blaine Street  
Grand Island, Nebraska

### OMAHA

**November**

***Date, Time and Location  
to be Announced***

*Watch [www.nebraska.va.gov](http://www.nebraska.va.gov) for more information  
or visit our Facebook page at  
[www.facebook.com/NebraskalowaVA](http://www.facebook.com/NebraskalowaVA).*

**Registration Encouraged at Your Nearest VA Business Office**

### **FREE Health Care and Other Services Offered Including:**

**Drug and Alcohol Counseling | Suicide Prevention | OEF/OIF/OND | Veterans Assistance Agencies | Clothing  
Health Screening | Eye Exams | Glaucoma Screening | Benefit Info | Chaplains | Foot Care | Lunch**

*\*No Alcohol, Drugs or Weapons Allowed*



## **Veterans Health Administration**

*Nebraska-Western Iowa  
Health Care System*

402-346-8800 | 1-800-451-5796  
[www.nebraska.va.gov](http://www.nebraska.va.gov)