Volunteers of All Ages Lend a Helping Hand During Summer of Service

See page 8
Thank you for making the Summer of Service events held this summer so successful. The events helped emphasize the need for more volunteers and donations. Please see pages 8-9 for more highlights.

Please join me in welcoming Dennis Fogg the new Voluntary Service Program Manager for the Syracuse VA. Dennis has been the Environmental Services Manager since March 2012. He joined Syracuse VA in April 2008 and prior to that he held various managerial positions in the private sector following 10 years of service in the Marine Corps.

Two volunteer initiatives – we are asking for your help with.

Email – if you have not done so already we would like to ask you to provide Voluntary Service with an email address if you have one.

Please send an email message to your local Voluntary Service Manager. Email addresses are on the left side of this page.

The chart below shows the number of volunteer emails we currently have by medical center. Medical Centers would like to increase the number of volunteer email addresses by 10% by December 2015. Please help us make our goal.

We will not share your email address. It will only be used for Voluntary Service notifications such as the need for volunteers, upcoming events, badge renewals, annual re-orientation, etc.

Number of volunteer email addresses

E-Donate has made giving to VA medical centers and VA programs easier than ever. Please help us spread the word about E-Donate. It’s quick. It’s fast and it’s easy. Donors can go to www.pay.gov/public/form/start/46646309/ or their local VA medical center’s home page and click on E-Donate.

Sincerely,
Darlene A. DeLancey, M.S.
Interim Network Director
More than 25 volunteers and VA employees marched in the annual Albany Memorial Day parade. Left to right: Dawn Williams, volunteer; Josh Couts, Air Force Veteran and volunteer; and Oscar Sylvan, Army Veteran and volunteer.

The Albany VA Medical Center’s “Summer of Service” began with Girl Scout Troop 2351, from Niskayuna, serving breakfast to Veterans. Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks #1500 host this well attended event each month. Not only did these young ladies serve breakfast, they provided companionship, and best of all, sang songs and danced. Troop 2351 also did a great job cleaning up and have already scheduled their next volunteer day at VA.

Calendar

Thursday, July 2
Veterans Welcome Home Event
7:00 p.m., Joseph Bruno Stadium

Saturday, July 4
Patient Visitation and Gift Distributions
8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 1
Annual Car Show sponsored by Vietnam Veterans of America
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., VA Employee Parking Lot

Tuesday, September 8
VA Voluntary Service Committee Meeting
1:00 p.m., Auditorium

Friday, September 18
POW/MIA Remembrance Day
10:00 a.m., Auditorium

Saturday, September 26
Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans of America “Watch Fire”
12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., Altamont Fair Grounds
All are welcome to attend

Saturday, October 3
Capital Region Homeless Veterans Stand Down
8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Colonie Elks Lodge, Latham

Tuesday, November 3
VA Voluntary Service Committee Meeting
1:00 p.m., Auditorium

Wednesday, November 11
Albany Veterans Day Parade
11:11 a.m.

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Girl Scout Cookie Donation

Girl Scout Troop 2351 hosted a special two hour “Cookies, Coffee and Games” event for Veterans at the medical center on July 1st. The scouts personally served the Veterans, took time to play games with them, and thanked them for their service. Linda Weiss, Director Stratton VA Medical Center, attended the event and lent a helping hand. (Pictured below)

While this free event was a huge success, it simply would not have been possible had it not been for the tremendous donation of twelve large pallets of Girl Scout cookies and coffee, graciously supplied by Soldiers' Angels. The Soldiers’ Angels organization has been an invaluable partner in helping the medical center support Veterans in Albany this past year.

Wish List

- Coffee creamer, sugar and cups
- Crossword puzzles and word find books (large print)
- Gift cards for Price Chopper, Shop-Rite or Walmart
- iTunes gift cards
- Shower shoes (all sizes)
- Sweatpants and sweatshirts (all sizes)
- T-shirts and underwear (all sizes)
- Winter gloves

Please contact Jim Keller at (518) 626-5506 for more information.

Volunteer Opportunities

- Canteen Service
- Clothing room
- Companionship program
- Disabled American Veteran (DAV) drivers
- Event planner
- Fisher House support
- Kiosk
- Lab courier
- No Veteran Dies Alone - Hospice
- Vocational program support
- Voluntary Service Office
- Wheelchair escorts

Please contact Noney Grier at (518) 626-5507 for the most up-to-date opportunities.
Valley Fuel Donation

Randy Metz, Logistics Manager (right), accepts a check from Larry Gnau, Valley Fuel.

Back left to right: Bill Lavallee, Larry Gnau, Kevin Mark, Valley Fuel.

Front: Randy Metz, Logistics Manager

Wish List

- Bread machine mixes
- Car models
- Coffee
- Gift cards for fast food, Walmart or Tops Market ($5-$10)
- Jewelry making supplies/beads
- Plain fleece blankets - twin size
- Stamps
- New sneakers
- Sweatpants and sweatshirts (M, L, XL, 2X, 3X)

Friendly Reminder

At this time we do not have a need for puzzles, books, VHS tapes or lap robes.

*Homeless Veterans program and Jump Start program need cleaning supplies, Toasters, coffee makers, dishes, silverware, new towels, new sheets and pots & pans (can be gently used).

Volunteer Opportunities

- Disabled American Veteran (DAV) volunteer drivers
- Kiosk/lobby
- Friendly Visitor Volunteer – visit with Veterans
- Recreational assistance
- Special event volunteers

Please contact us if you are interested in volunteering!

Calendar

Saturday, August 1
Cuba American Veterans Chicken BBQ

Thursday, August 6
VA Voluntary Service Meeting/Picnic
5:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 15
Alleghany Vietnam Veterans Picnic

Sunday, August 16
Open Comedy/Radio Show

Friday, September 18
POW/MIA Luncheon

Saturday, September 19
American Veterans Riders BBQ

Sunday, September 20
Trumansburg Steak Dinner

Saturday, September 26
Elks - Ithaca College Football Game

Sunday, September 27
District 7 American Legion Auxiliary Field Day
1:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 10
Knights of Columbus Red Pin Bowling

Sunday, October 11
Daughters of American Revolution Women's Tea

Thursday, October 15
VA Voluntary Service Meeting
1:00 p.m.

Friday, October 30
Halloween Party
Community Living Center
Canandaigua Highlights

Thanks to each and every one of you for your help and support in making the Canandaigua VA/Rochester VA Outpatient Clinic VA2K Walk & Roll a huge success.

- Value of donations, cash, and gift cards - $2,931.00
- Total number of donated items - 957
- Employee participants - 87
- Veteran participants - 41
- Non-employee participants - 54

Jay Askew, Veteran, (left) and Pat Bencus, volunteer, (right) create an oasis for mama duck and her ducklings in the Veteran’s Serenity Garden at the medical center.

Holiday Stockings for Veterans

We’re gearing up for the holidays and need your help! We are collecting holiday stockings filled to the brim with unwrapped treats. Our goal is to fill 1,200 stockings for Veterans by December 12.

Items needed:

Hairbrushes/combs, toiletry items, puzzle books, travel games, hats, gloves, non-perishable snacks, socks, playing cards, music CDs, stationery sets, cologne, greeting/note cards of thanks. Please no razors or glass items.

Hope you can help us and thank you for making the holiday season memorable for those who served! Please call (585) 393-7761 for more information.
Volunteer Opportunities

All volunteers must complete an orientation prior to volunteering. Weekly orientations are held every Thursday at 10:00 a.m. in Voluntary Service. Please call Gina Deck to schedule an appointment at (585) 393-7761. Thank you for considering volunteering with the Canandaigua VA Medical Center!

Canandaigua VA/Rochester VA Outpatient Clinic

- Activities – recreation activities, visiting, games, cleanup, and wheelchair escorts. Includes evenings, weekends & holidays
- Clerical Assistant - filing, organizing, answering the phone. Days and hours flexible
- Hospice Care – visiting, escorting, hospice 101 training is provided
- Transportation – driving a government vehicle to transport ambulatory Veterans to and from medical appointments. Various locations and times available
- Laundry - weekdays 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., three or more hour shifts
- My HealtheVet - distribute information and assist Veterans interested in registering in the program
- Wheelchair Escorts – various times available to take Veterans in wheelchairs to their medical appointments or for a stroll around the park-like grounds
- Veterans History Project – assist with recording interviews with Veterans to be sent to the Library of Congress

On May 14, the community was invited to attend the medical center’s annual “Pie, Ice Cream, Plant & Rummage Sale.” This year’s event raised $2,368.25. Thanks to all who attended!

Congratulations to Charlotte Ridley and Gabe Cinquegrana, recipients of this year’s “Above and Beyond Volunteer Award.”

A recent project was completed by a team of volunteers in the Canandaigua VA Woodshop. Radiology needed a step stool with hand railings to be used by patients when they need to complete medical imaging. Volunteers in the woodshop took the idea and ran with it! They were able to acquire the necessary hardware and wood and delivered a very creative step stool to Radiology. The project was accomplished as a result of work by Jim Remmel, Kip Utter, Eric Watson, Rick Nudd, and Don Kelly.

This was a great example of collaboration between many different programs/services (Voluntary Service, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Recreation Therapy, and Radiology) which led to improving patient care.

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Gabe Cinquegrana (left)

Charlotte Ridley (center)

Al Suffredini, volunteer.
More than 200 motorcyclists from the Jesters Motorcycle group came to the Bath VA Medical Center on June 6, 2015. The group donated more than $5,000 worth of items to Veterans.

Employees from Deloitte & Touche, LLP helped to begin the celebration of Albany VA’s “Summer of Service” by spending a full day completing a makeover of the Fisher House gardens. They donated over 100 bags of mulch, numerous flowers, plants, and a full collection of gardening tools.

Albany High School students were honored for participating in the Youth Volunteer Program with a recognition and awards ceremony hosted by Linda Weiss, Director Stratton VA Medical Center. This is the second year that students from Albany High School are participating in the program. This year more than 71 students served 4,000 hours.

Students from the LeRoy High School Housing Environment class, taught by Kristen Rich, showcase their finished quilts for Batavia Veterans. This is the second year that LeRoy High School has donated quilts to Batavia Community Living Center Veterans. Left to right: (Back row) LeRoy High School students; (Front row) Mark Francis, Volunteer Program Manager; Kristen Rich, Housing Environmental Class Teacher.
Genesee County United Way employees volunteer annually as part of a “Day of Caring.” This year, during the month of May, United Way volunteers gave back to Veterans by helping beautify Batavia VA grounds.

More than 50 members of the State University of New York at Albany Great Danes football team, escorted by VA volunteers, took time to visit with Veterans this summer. Additional photo below
Canandaigua Highlights

Wish List

- Baking items
- Body lotion, deodorant
- Forever postage stamps
- Gift cards for Dunkin' Donuts, prepaid gas cards, Tim Horton's, Tops, Walmart, and Wegmans
- Granola bars, snack size chips
- Nail clippers
- Paper products (plates, napkins)
- Shampoo, shaving cream
- Sneakers, socks, shoelaces
- Sweatpants and sweatshirts
- Swim trunks
- Tickets to bowling, movies, sporting events, zoo and Bristol Mountain Rope Course
- T-shirts, underwear (new)

For Homeless Program:

- Air mattresses (new)
- Alarm clocks
- Blankets and pillows (new)
- Brooms, mops, kitchen dishes and utensils (new)
- Cleaning supplies and toilet paper
- Pillow cases, sheets and towels (new)
- Vacuum cleaners

Best wishes to Craig Howard, Director Canandaigua VA Medical Center, who retired on May 30th after 37 years of VA Service.

Calendar

Second Monday of each month (January – December)
Bee Keepers Association Meeting
7:00 p.m.

Third Monday of each month (January – December)
Canandaigua Lake Trout Unlimited Meeting
7:30 p.m.

Fourth Tuesday of each month (January – May)
Canandaigua Lake Trout Unlimited Meeting
7:00 p.m.

*Fourth Wednesday of each month
R/C Model Flying Club
6:00 p.m.

*Tuesday, August 4
Ice Cream Social with Denny and Her Escorts
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, August 5
VA Voluntary Service/Community Council Meeting
1:00 p.m.

*Tuesday, August 11
Skychiefs Annual Air Show
10:00 a.m.

*Friday, August 14
Summer Music Show
12:30 p.m.

*Saturday, August 15
Sky Chiefs Air Show
10:00 a.m.
Escorts needed to transport Veterans to Chiefs Airfield

*Friday, September 11
Patriot’s Day Program
1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, September 15
Food Safety Class
(needed for volunteers who provide food for Veterans)
6:00 p.m.– 8:00 p.m.
Pavilion

Catholic Mass is held Monday, Tuesday and Friday in the Catholic Chapel in Building 3 at 11:00 a.m. and Sunday in Building 8B at 6:30 p.m.

Protestant Services are held on Sundays starting at 9:10 a.m. on 8B and 10:30 a.m. on 7B.

Please contact Chaplain Service at (585) 393-7886 for more information.

*Escorts Needed
Escorts are needed 45 minutes prior to events to take Veterans to the Auditorium and/or Pavilion. Without your assistance, many of the Veterans may not be able to participate.

*Sunday, September 6
Bingo
Noon
Congratulations to **Marsha K. Connor**, President, **American Gold Star Mother** and Marcellus resident, who was honored by Senator **John A. DeFrancisco** as the 2015 New York State Senate Woman of Distinction. Ms. Connor is the American Gold Star Mothers representative at Syracuse VA Medical Center.

On May 8, 2015, our friend and mentor, **Bob Hawes**, passed away after a lengthy illness. He began his career at the Syracuse VA Medical Center in 2000. Bob was a great Voluntary Service manager and he touched the lives of thousands of Veterans, family members, volunteers and VA staff. He had a great compassion for Veterans and a management style and vision that saw beyond today and into the future. He will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with Bob’s family during this very difficult time. Rest in peace, Bob.

Congratulations to **Linda Flanagan** named Syracuse VA Medical Center Volunteer of the Year, (left) shown with **James Cody**, Director Syracuse VA Medical Center.

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Wish List

- Black pocket combs
- Sweatpants (medium, large, extra large)
- Sweatshirts (medium)
- Shorts (small, medium, large, extra large, 2X, 3X)

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During National Volunteer Week the medical center holds small events to celebrate the contributions of the volunteers. This year, unbeknownst to the volunteers, the medical center held drawings for gift baskets that were donated for volunteers! To be entered in the drawing, volunteering during National Volunteer Week was required. Yolanda Skinner and Ernest Brosseau were the lucky winners! The baskets were donated by Hearth on James Street.

Special Achievement Honorees were recognized at the Volunteer of the Year event for their many hours of dedicated service. Special Achievement Honorees (left to right): William Fowler (17,500 hours), Norman Davie (15,000 hours), Lois Evans (12,500 hours), Donald Evans (8,750 hours), James Cody, Director Syracuse VA Medical Center, Charles Reiner (7,500 hours).

On May 9, 2015 the Central New York Counties Council Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts and Auxiliaries held a Cinco de Mayo celebration for Community Living Center Veterans. Patients and family members were served tacos, fruit salad, chips and root beer floats. Norm and Donna Davie provided musical entertainment and Don and Lois Evans spearheaded the event to a great conclusion. Everyone had a great time! Left to right: Donald Evans, Lois Evans, Donna Davie, Norman Davie.
Western New York Highlights

**Genesee County American Legion** donated $250.00 to the medical center. The funds will be used to purchase coffee for Veteran enjoyment. Left to right: [Mark Francis](#), Volunteer Program Manager; [Wallace Kornow](#), American Legion VA Voluntary Service Representative.

**Richard Fronkowiak** was awarded the Buffalo VA’s 2015 Top Volunteer Award. Left to right: [Richard Fronkowiak](#), volunteer (20,000 hours) and [Brian Stiller](#), Director VA Western New York Healthcare System.

During the Batavia Volunteer Awards Program, Deborah Riley was presented with the 2015 Student Award. Left to right: Reverend [Robert Chambers](#), VA Chaplain; [Deborah Riley](#), student volunteer; and [Royce Calhoun](#), Assistant Medical Center Director VA Western New York Healthcare System.

**Emerson Campbell** received Batavia VA’s 2015 Top Volunteer Award. Left to right: Reverend [Robert Chambers](#), VA Chaplain; [Emerson Campbell](#), volunteer (17,500 hours); [Royce Calhoun](#), Assistant Medical Center Director VA Western New York Healthcare System.

**Calendar**

- **Saturday, August 8**
  Welcome Home Troops and SSG Christopher Dill Cruise in
  10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
  Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park

- **Monday, September 7**
  Labor Day Observed – Holiday

- **Wednesday, September 16**
  VA Voluntary Service Representative & Deputy Representative Meeting
  1:30 p.m., Batavia Campus, Building 4 Auditorium

- **Friday, September 25**
  Commanders Day Reception
  9:00 a.m., Buffalo Campus, Freedom Hall

- **Monday, October 12**
  Columbus Day Observance - Holiday

- **Saturday, October 17**
  VA Voluntary Service Representative & Deputy Representative Meeting
  11:00 a.m., Buffalo Campus, Freedom Hall

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Western New York Highlights

The Clarendon Lions Club generously donated $250.00 to the medical center. Left to right: Charlie Smith, Clarendon Lions Club; Mark Francis, Volunteer Program Manager; Bob Dexter, Clarendon Lions Club.

Rich Product Incorporated employees took time to recognize Buffalo Veterans with a $450.00 donation for Veteran activities.

Texas Roadhouse donated $5,000 worth of gift cards to Western New York Veterans. Left to right: Larpheila Clemons, Veteran and volunteer; Royce Calhoun, Assistant Medical Center Director VA Western New York Healthcare System; Geoff Reingold, Texas Roadhouse Manager; and Dylan Konn, Texas Roadhouse Marketing Manager.

Holland Speedway generously donated 250 complimentary tickets to Buffalo VA Medical Center Veterans.

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many volunteer opportunities available at the Buffalo and Batavia VAs. Volunteer opportunities include volunteering in the Adult Day Health Care Program, Canteen Service, Emergency Room, Women’s Wellness Clinic, providing computer assistance, grounds support, and much more. Please contact us if you are interested in volunteering.
Western New York Highlights

The **Brockport Elks Lodge 2110** donates annually to the medical center. This year $1,000 was donated to Recreation Therapy Service and $250.00 to the Women’s Center for Hope.

**Veterans of Foreign Wars Orchard Park Post 6247** presented a $1,000 check donation to **Jason Jaskula**, Volunteer Program Specialist. The VFW Orchard Park Post 6247 donates annually to Veterans.

**St. Lutheran Church** donated a variety of gift cards for Veterans activities. Left to right: **Kelly Clark-Roberts**, Volunteer Program Specialist; **Pamela Figel**, St. Lutheran Church.

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### Wish List

- Art therapy supplies – Buffalo
- Birthday cards – Batavia/Buffalo
- Bus passes (Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority) – Buffalo
- Bread mixes – Batavia/Buffalo
- Canteen books – Batavia
- Comping coupons – Batavia/Buffalo
- DAV Volunteer Transportation Network – Batavia/Buffalo
- Diabetic socks – Batavia
- DVDs – Buffalo
- Gift cards for Babies”R”Us, Target, Tops, Walmart, and Wegmans - Buffalo
- Gift cards for local restaurants such as Alexi’s, TF Browns, Tully’s, Pauly’s Pizza – Batavia
- Patient activities – Batavia/Buffalo
- Phone cards – Batavia/Buffalo
- Rolls of quarters for daily newspapers – Batavia/Buffalo
- Seasonal admission tickets for the Buffalo Bills, Buffalo Sabres, and other recreational outlets – Batavia/Buffalo
- Snack packs – Batavia/Buffalo
- Stamps/stationery - Buffalo
- Travel dollars/financial support for Veterans in need – Batavia/Buffalo
- Treadmill(s) – Batavia/Buffalo
- Veteran clothing items – combs, diabetic socks, large nail clippers, sweatpants, sweatshirts, t-shirts, men’s and women’s undergarments (please check sizes needed prior to purchasing) and socks, as well as new clothing – Buffalo
- Welcome kits, personal hygiene items – Batavia/Buffalo

**Homeless Veterans Program**

Please call **(716) 881-5855** for donation needs. Items can be dropped off at the Buffalo VA (new socks and undergarments all sizes, new seasonal clothing for Veterans in need, personal care items, and small/basic apartment appliances).

**Please Note:** Before purchasing any item, please contact the Volunteer Program Office to determine that the item has not been already purchased.

**Friendly Reminders:** We no longer have a need for used clothing, puzzles, VHS tapes, hard cover books, and magazines (dated over three months).

**Batavia** (585) 297-1196  ■  **Buffalo** (716) 862-8672