

VETERAN'S WATCH

A Newsletter FOR Veterans written BY Veterans

Winter 2010

Volume 1, Issue 1

VFAB MEMBERS

Martin Cappelli

Jack Croall

Don Sullivan

Ron Whitcomb

Jessica Zuehlke

FREE (NO-TIPPING) VALET PARKING

Are you using the Valet Service? A team of helpful young men will park your car for FREE as you drop it off at the door. The return time is usually ten minutes or less. No fee, no tipping and the business is owned by one of our own; a service disability Veteran-owned company. Give it a try; it is safe, easy and it works.



CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

In FY09, Providence VAMC had approximately \$50 million of construction work in progress. In FY10, we will have approximately \$100 million of construction work ongoing.

The Providence VAMC's new Center for Restorative and Regenerative Medicine (CRRM) was recently completed, and staff are currently moving in. This new research center will be fully operational by spring 2010 and will serve as a continuation of the VA's commitment to cutting-edge research, including research programs to help Veterans with amputations, traumatic brain injury, neuro-degenerative

diseases, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

The Operating Room is scheduled for completion in April and tentatively scheduled to be operational by the summer of 2010.

The contract for a new Emergency Room (ER) and a new Intensive Care Unit (ICU) will be awarded this year and construction will be underway in FY11. The new ER and ICU will include an increase in the number of beds.

Construction on a new Outpatient Pharmacy will begin this spring. The new Outpatient Pharmacy will be on the first floor and have a bigger waiting area.



The PVAMC's new Mental Health Inpatient unit (4A) is tentatively scheduled for completion in spring 2010.

New additions: A Specialty Clinic, a new Mental Health wing, and expansion of the PTSD building.

Additional enhancements include a new fire alarm system, improvements to the building's façade, and a digital signage system, which consists of several large-screen monitors throughout the main hospital.

ACCESS FOR RURAL VETS

The PVAMC has recently setup a contract with Wood River Health Services to provide outreach and health care service to

eligible Veterans who live in the Washington County and nearby Connecticut areas. "Veterans in rural areas of RI re-

ceive less primary care and mental health services than Veterans in urban and suburban areas," notes Director Vincent Ng. "This new arrangement allows

us to increase outreach and access to care using the latest technologies."

Enrolled Veterans may call (401) 273-7100 x4256 to make an appointment.

VETERANS FAMILY ADVISORY BOARD

Veterans Family Advisory Board (VFAB) is a mental health consumer council made up of Veterans and some staff members. Our mission is to lead in building a working alliance between Veterans and VA leadership to ensure the highest quality of service and care to us, the Veterans. We also serve to allow Veterans voices

to be heard by VA leadership.

The suggestion boxes placed around the VA and the Vet Center are to be used for you to make suggestions about how the VA could be better. Your suggestions are collected and read by Veterans so that we can target areas for improvement.

Veteran's Watch is

a quarterly publication written BY Veterans FOR Veterans. If you have suggestions for future articles, please contact Ron Whitcomb at 1-860-564-1561 or email at RonVet2Vet@aol.com. If you are interested in joining the VFAB council, please contact Jessica Zuehlke, PsyD, at 401-273-7100 x2629.

Visit

www.Providence.VA.gov

MY HEALTH VET

My HealthVet is VA's award-winning e-health Website, which offers Veterans, anywhere/anytime Internet access to VA health care information and services. My HealthVet is a free, online Personal Health Record that empowers Veterans to become informed partners in their health care. With My HealthVet, America's Veterans can access trusted, secure, and current health and benefits information as well as record and store important health and military history information at their convenience. Registering and using My HealthVet is easy, and it's for YOU!

Visit www.myhealth.va.gov to create an account and login. You will need to stop by Medical Records to sign a release form.

VA ON FACEBOOK

Login to Facebook and search for "US Department of Veteran's Affairs". Follow what's going on nationally in the VA and interact with the VA by posting comments.

Proud to be



an American

OPERATION VET 2 VET

Ron Whitcomb and Don Sullivan run Operation Vet2Vet, a present-focused support group run by Vets with PTSD for Vets. Although they are not clinicians, they have been trained and certified as peer facilitators. Groups are confidential. Groups assist Soldiers and Veterans in addressing everyday life situations and in navigating the VA system. The groups are

well liked by participants.

Ron and Don presently facilitate four groups on a volunteer basis: three at the VA and one at the Vet Center. Look for new posters that give days and times.

Ron and Don are featured in the current (Nov/Dec) issue of the *Yankee Magazine* and are grateful to the magazine for the wonderful coverage.

ESCORT SERVICE/ GREETERS

If you need help getting to your VA appointment, ask one of the volunteer Veterans located just to the right of Check-In at the main ambulatory care entrance. These escorts will push your wheelchair or hold your arm to assist you. Feel free to ask them for directions too.

In addition, note the friendly faces standing by Check-In. These greeters are there to welcome you with a smile.

PATIENT ADVOCATE

David DosReis is the PVAMC's Patient Advocate. He is an Iraq war veteran and very helpful, caring and an all-around good guy. Feel free to stop by his office, Room 102, located on the first floor of the main hospital near the elevators.

NATIONAL

SUICIDE PREVENTION

LIFELINE™

I-800-273-TALK

I-800-273-8255

www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org