

## OUR STAFF:

**Cynthia McClaskey**  
Facility Director

**Linda Bonham**  
Administrative  
Assistant

**Cheryl Veselik**  
Human Resources  
Assistant

**Mary Beth Counts**  
Office Services  
Assistant

**Amanda Phipps**  
Executive Secretary

**James Parks**  
Pest Control

**Suzy Quillen**  
Vocational  
Rehabilitation  
Supervisor

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## From The Director

### Adolescent Services

In early March, we were pleased, on behalf of youth in need of services in the region, to learn that the House and Senate conferees submitted to the Governor the full SWVMHI budget as part of the overall budget package for him to sign into law. The Governor has 30 days to sign the budget bill, so we are still awaiting the final decision.

Many stakeholders will continue to work on a statewide committee to examine the current and future role of the Commonwealth and private sector in providing services, with the goal to improve access to services for more children and youth. Although many state and CSB staff have been working on a similar committee for several years, the budget bill mandates that the Commissioner set up a committee composed of many people who have an interest in adolescent services. The language from the budget bill reads, the team "shall (i) identify the characteristics of the child and adolescent population currently served at the CCCA and SWVMHI, (ii) describe the service needs of the children served at each facility, (iii) determine what services are currently available, or would need to be available in the community, to adequately provide treatment for these children, (iv) consider alternate approaches to delivering services appropriate for some or all of the patient population, (v) define the state's continuing role and responsibility in providing inpatient services for children and adolescents, (vi) identify funding trends and

policies for providing public and private services, (vii) report on the cost of providing public and private psychiatric services, and (viii) detail other strategies to promote high quality, community-based care while maintaining a



**Cynthia McClaskey, Ph.D.**  
Facility Director

safety net for children and adolescents in need of acute psychiatric services."

The report is due November 1, 2009.

### Deputy Commissioner Visits SWVMHI

We are pleased to have hosted Deputy Commissioner Heidi Dix on the afternoon of March 17, 2009. Ms. Dix attended a meeting with the officers of the SWVMHI Consumer Empowerment and Recovery Council and a bit of the St. Patrick's Day festivities in the gym. She received an overview of the wellness efforts and toured the units, viewing completed comfort

rooms as well as all the other improvements made to the living environments.

Ms. Dix joined DMHMRAS in January, after having served as a deputy secretary of Health and Human Services. She has a wide range of experience and skills and knowledge of our system that will be of great benefit to us and the people we serve. Ms. Dix previously worked as a consultant for Avalere Health in Washington, D.C., and as a Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program analyst for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. She has a Masters of Public Health from the State University of New York at Albany.

Ms. Dix stated that she was pleased to learn more about mental health treatment in Southwest Virginia and that this would not be her last visit with us. She is genuinely interested in the consumers we serve and the work we do and is looking forward to being of assistance to us in the future. She also commented on the clean and well maintained campus and buildings.

Thanks to all who helped welcome Heidi Dix to SWVMHI.

~Cynthia McClaskey, Ph.D.  
Facility Director

## New Freedom Transportation to Begin April 1

District Three Public Transit is launching a new service that will provide area citizens with transportation to regional medical centers outside the service area. Plans are for five weekly routes to the Tri-Cities, New River Valley, Roanoke Valley, and Winston Salem. Funding is currently approved for fiscal year 2009 with the expectation of receiving continued financial support for fiscal year 2010.

The grant also funds the new position of Mobility Coordinator. Mac DeBusk of Damascus has been hired and will assist in the coordination, development and marketing of the new routes. DeBusk is a graduate of Virginia Tech and formerly worked for Blacksburg Transit.

While intended to primarily assist persons with disabilities, there is no eligibility requirement, and anyone may ride these transit routes for any reason. These transit routes will begin on April 1, 2009. The fare will be \$1 per round trip. Each transit route will run once per week waiting at its final destination for between three and five hours before returning along the same route.

Reservations are recommended, but not required for most bus stops. The Bland to Winston Salem route will start in Wytheville if no customers have reserved trips from Bland. Customers with reservations will be given preference, and walk-up customers will be allowed to ride as space allows.

A toll-free number will be provided for customers to make reservations, and this number will be published on the District Three webpage along with detailed schedules and exact stop locations.

Some deviation of the route and schedule will be considered for customers who call ahead, but, due to the length of the routes, deviation will be extremely limited.

For more information, please call Donna Smith or Mac DeBusk at 276-783-4189 or 800-541-0933.

~Jennifer Cregger  
Clinical Social Worker

### THANKS

"Thank you for  
your  
thoughtfulness, for  
your phone calls,  
visits, cards,  
money and  
prayers during my  
illness."

~Herman Kirk  
Psychiatric Aide  
Geriatric Unit

## The History of Doctor's Day

Doctor's Day observance dates back to March 30, 1933. It was started by Eudora Brown Almond of Winder, Georgia. The day marks the anniversary of the first use of general anesthesia in surgery.

On March 30, 1958, the US House of Representatives adopted a resolution commemo-

rating Doctor's Day. In 1990, the House and Senate approved legislation establishing National Doctor's Day; the resolution designating March 30 as National Doctor's Day was signed by President George Bush.

Doctor's Day was created to show appreciation for physicians. Physicians are recognized

for their contributions to treating the sick, for providing services to keep persons healthy, and for their compassion and caring.

~Amanda J. Currin  
Assistant Director,  
Administrative Services

## Chaplain Corner

One is constantly hearing from others or may be saying it to themselves, "I have no energy or I feel so stressed out." I believe that is a common feeling that we have today.

I was reading today that in 2007, Americans gulped down "energy drinks" to the tune of \$5.4 billion. Experts predict this number to expand to \$10 billion by 2010. The earliest entries into the mar-

ket consisted of sugary sodas fortified with an extra jolt of caffeine. Later, herbs were added like ginseng and ginkgo, B vitamin, and amino acids. These drinks have stirred controversy. Some have referred to them as "witches brew." They are considered to be a good tasting boost. Many will continue to see them as a never ending quest for enough energy to get through the day.

With these feelings being so prominent in today's society, we can only try to be aware that the well-armed warrior knows that, when we reach up in faith, God reaches down in power. He can take away our stress and give us the needed energy.

~Peggie Roland  
Spiritual Care Assistant



# Shocking News!



**From Left to Right: Freddie Williams, Chad Funk and Steve Perry**

One of our best resources we have at SWVMHI to maintain our facility is its employees.

Please let me introduce you to the Electrician Department. Freddie Williams is the Electrician Supervisor Senior and a Master Electrician who oversees daily operations. Steve Perry and Chad Funk are in the Electrician Senior positions under Freddie's supervision.

All electricians at SWVMHI must be certified as either a master or journeyman electrician. We all, in this modern world, are completely dependent on various kinds of electric appliances

(televisions, computers, ovens, vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, air conditioners, communications, etc.). To become an electrician, is a great responsibility. An incomplete job by them may even cost others their lives. In the classroom, electricians learn blueprint reading, electrical theory, electronics, mathematics,

electrical code requirements, and safety and first aid practices. They also may receive specialized training in communication equipment, fire alarm systems, and elevators. Electricians must follow the National Electric Code and comply with state and local building codes. Technical work like this involves hard physical activities like climbing and hanging at precarious angles. Some may work in dusty, dirty, hot, or wet conditions, or in confined areas, ditches, or other uncomfortable places. Electricians risk injury from electrical shock, falls, and cuts. To avoid injuries, they must follow strict safety procedures. All of the tools of an electrician must be kept in a

well organized manner.

**Remember when you purchase or bring an electrical item from home, you must always have it inspected by one of the SWVMHI electricians before the product is put into use at this facility.**

When you get the opportunity, please let them know that they are a valued asset.

~James Parks  
Pest Control



# National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week

**This year National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week kicks off on April 19, 2009. The theme is "Laboratory Professionals Get Results."** More than 10 billion laboratory tests are performed in the United States each year. Medical diagnoses and treatment decisions depend on timely and accurate test results. Working behind the scenes, laboratory professionals are a critical component of the health care team, providing answers that guide the cures for an almost limitless range of illnesses and diseases. Of the 300,000 laboratory professionals working in the

United States today, nearly 50% are between 46 and 66 years of age and are likely to retire by 2010. Lab week recognizes these folks and calls public attention to the role of medical laboratory professionals in patient care. As many as 12,200 new laboratory professionals will be needed to meet the growing need of the world's population, but only 4,000 to 6,000 graduates will join the workforce each year. The intent is to tell everyone about the importance of laboratory medicine in today's complex world of health care.

The week of April 19-25, 2009, is

National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week. Please spread the word.

~Becky Barker, MT(ASCP)CM  
Laboratory Supervisor





# Facility Director Names Word Find

Can you find all the names of the SWVMHI Facility Directors?

H	M	C	A	L	T	E	R	V	B	E	N	A	K	N
E	C	L	S	K	F	L	O	L	S	D	E	N	F	O
N	M	T	K	E	R	E	A	T	K	D	O	F	K	T
D	E	R	M	C	C	L	A	S	K	E	Y	I	G	S
E	R	B	E	A	O	F	G	R	O	A	A	C	L	E
R	T	A	R	C	K	I	R	V	E	N	E	O	O	R
S	S	N	K	O	I	A	U	T	L	S	V	E	C	P
O	S	I	E	F	N	O	Y	N	O	R	K	F	A	N
N	N	U	R	F	M	A	A	I	Y	T	O	Y	A	S
G	N	D	H	O	P	T	I	N	T	M	L	D	P	U
I	O	G	D	N	D	I	D	C	T	T	N	D	O	T
A	Y	W	R	I	G	H	T	P	E	D	E	I	A	R
E	L	M	T	S	I	U	Q	N	E	S	O	R	M	A
I	L	M	E	A	T	O	N	L	R	E	Q	P	B	T
B	L	A	C	K	N	T	E	A	E	R	L	I	S	L

McClaskey  
Rosenquist  
Kasinoff  
Priddy

Henderson  
Preston  
Deans  
Merker

Brett  
Blalock  
King

Black  
Kirven  
Wright

~Cheryl Veselik, CPS/CAP  
Human Resource Assistant

(Answer Key on Page 16)





## VIRGINIA PUBLIC SERVICE WEEK

MAY 4 - 10, 2009

**Virginia Public Service Week (VPSW) will be held May 4-10, 2009.** During Virginia Public Service Week, employees will be publicly recognized for their hard work and dedication to the Commonwealth. Each agency will plan events that celebrate employee achievement and commitment to the Commonwealth throughout this week. A statewide program will recognize employees through the "Governor's Awards."

Agencies will nominate employees to be honored at a ceremony hosted by Governor Kaine or his representative. Only Agency Heads may submit nominations. The deadline for submissions is April 3, 2009.

To share in the celebration of Virginia Public Service Week, 35 employees will be selected to attend the Governor's Award Ceremony and to say "thank you" to award recipients on behalf of the Commonwealth's workforce. For

an opportunity to participate in the awards ceremony as an Ambassador, complete and submit the Ambassador sign-up form by April 3, 2009.

**For more information, go to:**  
<http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/publicsvc/publicserviceweek.html>

~Cynthia McClaskey, Ph.D.  
 Facility Director

## National Library Week

Started in 1958, National Library Week is a time to celebrate the achievements of libraries and librarians and to encourage use and support for libraries. **This year, National Library Week will be celebrated April 12-18 with the theme "Worlds Connect @ Your Library."**

There are more than 123,000 public, academic, school, and special libraries in the United States, and, with 15,946 public libraries in the US, there are more public libraries than McDonalds. Library use is up and growing, and it's no wonder with all of the useful services they provide. In a struggling economy, librar-

ies can be extremely valuable resources for helping people in job searches, learning new skills, and research. Libraries serve an important role in the community by providing free resources to help people stay informed about world events, improve their health, help kids perform better in school, and by providing materials to promote lifelong learning and self-help. In keeping with this year's theme, libraries help people stay connected by providing free Internet access and providing a place for all kinds of groups to meet, but what really makes libraries unique is that they have trained professionals, librarians, to help people find information and use the resources that

the library has to offer. National Library Week is about encouraging people to come to the library and ask for help and use the resources that are available.

Like all libraries, SWVMHI's library has free books, computers, music, and movies, and me, the librarian, to help with research and computer use. I invite all of you to come by and say hi and use any and all resources that are available.

Christina Quillen  
 Librarian



## Who Am I? Revealed!

### Meet Jennifer Nelson!

Jennifer works in Environmental Services. Her "area" covers many different parts of the facility, including Henderson and C Buildings.

Jennifer said it was a lot of fun being the Who AM I mystery person. She especially liked hearing people talk about the article and who it might be. She was told by co-workers that they thought it was her at first, but realized it wasn't when they finished reading the information. Thank you for being our first mystery



person Jen! And, thank you to everyone who called and sent emails. One person, Cheryl

Veselik correctly identified Jennifer. Interestingly, there were several guesses that it was Steve Perry!

**Watch the May Newsletter for our next Mystery Person, it may be YOU!**

~Mary Beth Counts  
 Office Services Assistant



# History From The Hill

The newsletter staff has found some fascinating tidbits from our old Southwestern State Hospital newsletter. We have copies of the newsletter, called "Passing the Word," from 1965-1967, when it was published weekly. The newsletter was one page front and back, typed, and run off by mimeograph machine (no word processors then!). For your enjoyment, we will reprint a few of the articles here. Notice what things have stayed the same and what are different!



## From April 7, 1967: Virginia Symphony Orchestra

The Virginia Symphony Orchestra will appear in concert in the Mail Auditorium at 10:30 a.m.,

Thursday, April 13, 1967 under the direction of its founder-conductor, William Penny Hackle. This is the outstanding musical treat of the year.

## From April 22, 1966: The Inquiring Reporter

(Delores Moorefield) asked staff, "What single thing do you think would do most to improve patient care in our hospital?" Male attendant – J.D. Farmer: "More time with patients . . . give more individual attention."

Nurse – Mrs. Agnes Hurt: "More understanding of each patient and greater interest in their welfare."

## From April 15, 1966: Then and Now

1913  
Patient Population 655  
Salaries and wages \$26,767  
Total Expenditures \$11,291

1966  
Patient Population 1,544  
Salaries and wages \$2,299,441  
Total Expenditures \$2,934,493

## Be Cost Conscious

Could you use a letter instead of a toll call? Communication and office supply costs have increased beyond budgeted amounts. At the same time, utility costs have risen. Conserve, light, heat, water and power. Be Cost Conscious.



## From March 4, 1966 T.V. Course

There will be a T.V. course in "Supervisory Leadership" broadcast over Channel 6 the week beginning April 4, 1966. This is an eight-week course and Department Heads of our hospital will participate.

~Cynthia McClaskey, Ph.D.  
Facility Director

# Name The News Contest Winner

**The winning name for our SWVMHI newsletter, A View From The Hill, was submitted by Ms. Amanda J. Currin, Assistant Director for Administration.**

Amanda's suggestion was chosen by the editorial staff from a listing of 28 anonymous submissions because it embodied a

sense of vision and hopefulness, while also honoring our past as "the hospital on the hill." We thank all those who submitted names for consideration.

Amanda was awarded a check for \$50.00 for submitting the winning entry.

~Cynthia McClaskey, Ph.D.  
Facility Director



## Monthly

## Patient Census

## February

Admissions 62

Discharges 70

Passes 13

## Average Daily

## Census

144

# Changes in Income Tax Withholding



New withholding tables may reduce the amount of income tax withheld from your wages.

The new tables, prescribed by the Department of the Treasury, reflect the Making Work Pay credit

and other changes resulting from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. You do not have to submit a Form W-4, Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate, to get the automatic withholding charge. If you do not want to have your withholding reduced if you have more than one job or if you are married and your combined income places you in a higher tax bracket, you may want to file a

new Form W-4 with your employer. You may claim fewer withholding allowances on line five or request additional amounts to be withheld on line six. For additional help, get IRS Publication 919, How Do I Adjust My Tax Withholding? Or visit the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and use the "Withholding Calculator."

You may also view your Federal Tax Withholding information on Payline at <http://secure.doa.virginia.gov/payline/>.

~Lonzo Lester  
Financial Director

## LEADERSHIP

*A person is a leader when he or she is*

*functioning in the interest of values outside of their role. Leaders keep an eye on the vision!*

## Happy Community Services Month!

The Community Services Department of Southwestern Virginia Mental Health Institute is an integral part of service delivery in

tifying deficiencies in the linkage system.

Goals of the Community Services

various surveys with our partners; and involvement with state, regional, and local partners influencing the continuity of care for the

### *Community... Help, Inspire, Change*

the psychiatric service continuum in Southwest Virginia. The Department is responsible for providing a link between the internal and external customers of the Institute and for taking it a step further for monitoring and identifying

Department are met by monitoring and mediating individual case problems; identifying systemic issues by regularly scheduling meetings between the Institute and Community Services Boards' staff, as well as meetings with CSB liaisons; through

mentally ill citizens of Southwest Virginia.

~Robyn Anderson LCSW  
Community Services Director

## HPO Value of the Month: Leadership

SWVMHI believes that creativity and the ability to lead are not limited to a few, but reside within each of us. Given the opportunity, people at all levels can be leaders.

- Closely intertwined with the values of Teamwork and Self-Initiative, leadership behavior includes being a good follower.
- Is not just a function of expertise



or position: leadership can be demonstrated by fulfilling your own role.

- Staff should be ready to identify and support leaders.
- Staff is encouraged to identify impediments to achieving our mission and work collaboratively to make improvements.

~HPO Resource Team





## MEETING

Cynthia McClaskey will begin conducting a “Quarterly Communications With Staff” meeting in April, 2009. Staff will be selected hospital-wide at random to attend this meeting. During this meeting, staff will be able to have open discussion with the Facility Director, as well as EMC members, regarding any topic they wish to discuss or about which they would like to ask a question.

# Personnel Changes

## Separations

Tammie Minton, RN	02/02/2009
Linda Lee, Physician II	02/03/2009
Judith Reid, Physician II	02/09/2009
Lenney Arnold, RNCA	02/24/2009
Lily Hodges, Physician II	02/24/2009
Barbara Mullins, RNCA	02/28/2009

## March 2009 Night Shift Nursing Forums

Night Shift Nursing Forums were held on March 12 and 13.

Topics discussed were:

**Updates on Two Previous Topics:** ATM: This has been revisited, and now it looks very likely that an ATM machine may be set on campus by a local bank. Pain Management of Patients with Addictions: Dr. Gordon will be sharing material regarding this for the nurses.

**Update on Adolescent Unit:** Much was discussed and is available in the full report on the units. There was acknowledgment of stressful effects of continued uncertainty and revolving changes throughout the facility, and appreciation for the efforts and successes of the staff in maintaining adequate care on all the units.

**DSA Career Ladder:** April 1 is the deadline to submit portfolios to Nurse Coordinators. Dis-

cussion was held regarding the requirements.

**Nurse's Week:** Begins at SWVMHI Monday, May 4, for RNs and LPNs. Ward Clerks and office support staff will be included in April Administrative Assistant recognition and the Psychiatric Aides in September with Direct Support Professional Recognition.



**Weekend Coverage on Geriatrics:** There was discussion about aide vacancies on night shift Geriatrics and about

staff not getting the regular weekends off. Further discussion will be held with the Nurse Managers about feedback from the Forum as there are always ways to improve communication and be more efficient with staffing and/or scheduling. It is acknowledged and appreciated that the nursing staff are effectively helping to cover for the vacancies and the increased acuity with more patients on constant observation right now.

**NPI Reminders:** Debbie Borders shared a flyer reminding nurses of two patient identifiers and the need for process for read back of critical values.

Thanks to the staff members who participated in the Nurse Forums.

~Alicia Alvarado, RN, MS  
Chief Nurse Executive



## Employee Passes CCS Exam

Linda Parks passed the Certified Coding Specialist (CCS) examination on Friday, March 6, 2009. This exam is offered through the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), with AHIMA certification having industry-wide respect as the gold standard of Health Information Management professional excellence.

These coding practitioners:

- Review patient records and assign numeric codes for each diagnosis and procedure.
- Possess expertise in the ICD-9-CM and CPT coding systems.
- Are knowledgeable about medical terminology, disease processes, and pharmacology.

Different facilities and institutions make use of a CCSs' skills:

- Hospitals and medical providers

take the coded data created by CCSs to insurance companies--or to the government in the case of Medicare and Medicaid recipients--for reimbursement purposes.



**Congratulations**

**Linda Parks!**

- Researchers and public health officials also use this data to monitor patterns and explore new interventions.

Coding accuracy is highly important to healthcare organizations, and has an impact on revenues and describing health outcomes. In fact, certification has become an implicit industry standard. Accordingly, the CCS credential demonstrates a practitioner's tested data quality and integrity skills, and mastery of coding proficiency.

~Kim Ratliff, RHIA  
Manager, Health Information Management

## Happy Volunteer Services Week!

National Volunteer Week is April 19-25, 2009. In the United States, it is estimated that over 75 million people volunteered through or for an organization last year. Our volunteers here at SWVMHI are proud to be part of that number.

Volunteers serve in many ways at SWVMHI and provide important patient support. Please remember to thank any volunteer you may see, whether here at SWVMHI or in the community. Their contribution is a very important part of

our program.

Our Volunteers help with the Bonanza Clothes Closet, pet therapy, shopping, reading, playing piano and singing, and providing holiday presents for the patients, and they helped out at special events.

*"What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal."*  
~Albert Pike (1809-1891) American Lawyer, Journalist and Soldier

See Page 12 for more information regarding our Pet Therapy Volunteers.

~Doug Smith  
Volunteer Services



## Department Head Meeting Minutes Posted

**The next Department Head meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 16, 2009, at 2:00 p.m. in the Patient Dining Room.**

Remember that all staff may review Department Head meeting minutes, and other minutes as posted, by going to the SWVMHI intranet.

- Under the "Contents" section, Click on "Meeting Minutes."
- Click on the "Meeting Minutes" folder you wish to review (for example, Department Head Minutes or Library and Training Minutes).

Other units/departments are encouraged to have meeting minutes, as appropriate, posted on the intranet. Please contact Joe Arp at Extension 417 or via email to begin posting your meeting minutes.

~Linda Bonham  
Administrative Assistant

## CommonHealth Information



### **Future Moms**

Expecting? One of the best things you can do for yourself and your baby is to enroll in Future Moms. This prenatal program is available at no cost to you, your spouse or your eligible dependents covered in a state health benefits plan. Future Moms is designed to help women

have healthy pregnancies and to reduce the chances of premature birth. Enroll within the first three months of pregnancy to get the most out of the program. Just call 1-800-828-5891, and look what you'll receive:

- Unlimited access to a registered nurse with expertise in prenatal and postnatal care. Call any time, day or night.
- A prenatal package with pregnancy and childcare information.
- Postpartum support and guidance in areas like breastfeeding and depression.

### **Calm Your Nerves**

Staff members who participated in the recent CommonHealth

activity, "Calm Your Nerves" were entered into a drawing. The following staff members won prizes:

#### Duffle Bag

- Debbie Haga, Utilization Review Coordinator
- Bryant Darnell, Security
- Shannon Jackson, RN, Admissions Unit
- Johnny Cregger, Security

#### Visor CD Holder

- Josephine Tolbert, PA, Geriatric Unit
- Steve Perry, Physical Plant Services

~Cindy Jones, RN, CIC  
Infection Control and Employee Health Nurse Coordinator

## Join The Global Diabetes Handprint



OneTouch® diabetes care products is donating \$5 up to \$250,000 to one of two diabetes charities (Diabetes Education and Camping Association or Taking Control of Your Diabetes) for every hand that is uploaded to their website [www.DiabetesHandprint.com](http://www.DiabetesHandprint.com).

You can also design a virtual handprint.

Inspired by The Word in Your Hand™ Project found on Tudiabetes.com®, OneTouch® created the Global Diabetes Handprint project.

"By writing a word on your hand expressing your feelings about diabetes, and sharing the story behind it, you'll become part of a global community that puts a human face on diabetes for all the world to see.

People with mental illness have higher than expected rates of physical illnesses including diabetes, and they die, on average, 25 years younger than people without mental illness. Support diabetes education and awareness. When we all speak together, our voice will be heard!

~Cynthia McClaskey, Ph.D.  
Facility Director

## Communication Tip

**Ignore the Excuse, Address The Issue.** The validity of excuses should not be argued or debated. Everyone makes excuses at one time or another. It's better to ignore the excuse and focus on the goal. For in-

stance, if a person tells you that he "would have done something except people kept interrupting," don't explore or problems solve the excuse. Instead say, "Okay. What is the status now, and how can I help you meet your goal?"

The right answer keeps the discussion focused on the outcome, not the excuse.

~HPO Communications Workgroup

## Voices Uniting for Mental Wellness

The sixth annual Mental Health Awareness Days will be held Friday and Saturday April 3 & 4, 2009, on the Emory & Henry campus. Former Virginia Tech running back Tommy Edwards will speak Friday night, and he has had a personal struggle with mental illness. Tommy created The Heart of Virginia Foundation to raise awareness of mental health issues through artistic endeavors. Dinner, at 6:00 pm, is free to the first 200 people and requires

advance registration to [cpeterson@highlandscsb.org](mailto:cpeterson@highlandscsb.org). Tommy will speak in Memorial Chapel at 7:00 pm.

Saturday morning will feature a keynote address, a campus walk and entertainment beginning with registration at 9:00 am. Former Washington Post reporter and New York Times best-selling author Pete Earley wrote "Crazy: A Father's Search Through Amer-

ica's Mental Health Madness" after his son was declared mentally ill. He will speak Saturday morning.

For more information, call Judy Salyer at 276-479-2800.

~Cynthia McClaskey, Ph.D.  
Facility Director

## Save The Date!

**The next Employee Recognition event will be held for all three shifts on May 7, 2009 in conjunction with the Waste Minimization Committee's Earth Day events.** The theme for this event is "The 1970s," and, as has been our custom for the last several years, we will combine the May quarterly Employee Recognition event with a celebration of Earth Day. The 1970s was a time of love, peace, and harmony; of daisy chains, love beads, pet rocks, smiley faces, and peace signs; of folk music and the Bee

Gees; of tie-dyed shirts, bell bottom jeans, maxi-skirts and leisure suits; of lava lamps and disco balls! Join us for a groovy time!

~Cynthia McClaskey, Ph.D.  
Facility Director



## Cultural Competency Websites of Interest



The following are links to an online interactive course sponsored by the United States Department of Health and

Human Services, Office of Minority Health, in order to promote cultural competency in healthcare practice:

- Culturally Competent Nursing Care: A Cornerstone of Caring. Nine free CEUs for nurses or social workers.  
[www.ccnm.thinkculturalhealth.org](http://www.ccnm.thinkculturalhealth.org)
- A Physician's Practical Guide to Culturally Competent Care. Nine free AMA/PRA category I CME credits for physicians or nurse practitioners.  
[www.cccm.thinkculturalhealth.org](http://www.cccm.thinkculturalhealth.org)

Both courses include three modules which can be done at different times. A certificate is issued by email upon completion. I recommend these sites and found them to be informative as well as easy to use.

~Alicia Alvarado, RN, MS  
Chief Nurse Executive



# Pat Them On The Back... Or The Head

Here are some highlights from our very special Animal Assisted (Pet) Therapy Volunteers at SVVMHI. When you see any of these special volunteers be sure to pat them on the back... or the head... and thank them!

## Fluffy

Favorite Treat: "Beggin' Strips"  
Favorite Toy: Cat/Dog Chew Toy  
Favorite Activity: Licking  
Special Talent: Making everyone happy  
Breed: Bichon Frise

## Xena

Favorite Treat: "Pupperoni"  
Favorite Toy: Toys that hit her in the face so she can "kill it"  
Favorite Activity: Snuggling!  
Special Talent: The "belly crawl"  
Breed: Rat Terrier  
The owner of Milo, Duke and Xena is Sherri Wheeler, Recreation Therapist.

## Failte

Favorite Treat: Any meat  
Favorite Toy: Toy skunk  
Favorite Activity: Visiting people  
Special Talent: Agility training  
Breed: Golden Retriever

## Riley

Favorite Treat: Any meat  
Favorite Toy: Toy starfish  
Favorite Activity: Eating  
Special Talent: Agility training  
Breed: Golden Retriever



The owner of Failte and Riley is Alice McDowell, Volunteer.

## Cotton

Favorite Treat: "Beggin' Strips"  
Favorite Toy: Cat/Dog Chew Toy  
Favorite Activity: Guarding the house  
Special Talent: Making everyone happy  
Breed: Bichon Frise  
The owner of Fluffy and Cotton is Ellen Tilson, Geriatric Unit Nurse Coordinator

## Paco

Favorite Treat: Popcorn  
Favorite Toy: His Daddy  
Favorite Activity: Coming to work to play with the patients  
Special Talent: Making people happy  
Breed: Boxer

## Oscar

Favorite Treat: Dog biscuits  
Favorite Toy: Rubber Duck  
Favorite Activity: Running around  
Special Talent: Likes to be with people  
Breed: Schnauzer  
Owner: Dave Thomas, Volunteer

## Milo

Favorite Treat: "Pupperoni"  
Favorite Toy: He doesn't play with toys. He would rather have his belly rubbed.  
Favorite Activity: Snuggling!  
Special Talent: He sings... very loudly!  
Breed: Bird Dog Mystery Mix

## Perry

Favorite Treat: Anything!  
Favorite Toy: Paco  
Favorite Activity: Barking at nothing  
Special Talent: Giving hugs  
Breed: Terrier Mix  
The owner of Paco and Perry is Lesu Cole, Recreation Therapist.

## Spaghetti

Favorite Treat: Molasses flavored cookies  
Favorite Toy: He likes to chew on his lead rope  
Favorite Activity: Loves to go on trail rides, sun bathe and stand in the creek on a hot day.  
Special Talent: He touches everyone's heart.  
Breed: American Quarter Horse  
Owner: Ashley King, Recreation Therapist

## Duke

Favorite Treat: "Pupperoni"  
Favorite Toy: The toys that make a "crackly" sound  
Favorite Activity: Snuggling!  
Special Talent: He dances when you touch his feet.  
Breed: Terrier Mystery Mix

## Gypsy

Favorite Treat: "Pupperoni"  
Favorite Toy: Balls in all shapes and sizes  
Favorite Activity: Strolling the neighborhood and barking at neighbors  
Special Talent: Lap Dog  
Breed: Boxer/Dalmatian Mix  
Owner: Angela Berry, Clinical Social Work Supervisor

~Ellen Tilson, RN, BSN  
Geriatric Unit Nurse Coordinator

~Amanda Phipps  
Executive Secretary, Nursing



## Be A Good Sport

As we all know, April showers bring May flowers, but how many of you know that the month of April is also designated as National Youth Sports Safety Month? Since 1993, over sixty national organizations, including the President's Council on Youth Fitness have recognized April as an important time of year in terms of youth safety.

In support of youth safety month, the National Youth Sports Foundation has released this list of important tips for athletes:

- The most important thing is to have fun!
- Remember youth sports are de-

signed for your enjoyment. Play to please yourself and have a good time.

- Learning how to play a game is more important than winning and losing.



- Some children grow faster than others and some have better coordination than others.

- Everyone catches up eventually. Be patient.
- Who you are as a person does not depend on your wins and losses.
- Treat other athletes and your coaches with respect.
- Honor the rules of the game.
- Be a good sport.
- Support your teammates.

Do you think any of these tips might also apply to our "team" here at SWVMHI?

~Safety Committee

### CLARIFICATION

Only those employees who received service awards in February 2009 (for service anniversaries in October, November and December 2008) were listed in the March 2 newsletter.

## Regional Deferred Compensation Meeting

**When: April 27, 2009**

**Where: SWVMHI HR Conference Room**

**Sessions: 10:00 AM- 12:00**

**PM.** Employees may come and ask questions as well as enroll or make changes to their current information.

**Where: Rehab Building Lobby**

**Sessions: 1:00 PM- 2:00 PM.**

Deferred Compensation and Cash Match Plan Overview. This session will present a basic overview of plans and the investment options available.

**2:30 PM- 3:30 PM.** Managing

Your Accounts. This session provides an overview of the plans investment options and reviews basic investment principles.

**4:00 PM- 5:00 PM.** Retirement Distribution Strategies. This session reviews the plans distribution options and provides information on potential taxes and penalties.

**When: April 28, 2009**

**Where: Virginia Highlands Community College** (exact campus location to be determined), Abingdon, Virginia

**Sessions: 9:00 AM-** Deferred Compensation and Cash Match Plan

Overview.

**10:15 AM-** Guide to Defined Contribution Plan Website.

**11:00 AM-** Managing Your Accounts.

**1:15 PM-** Retirement Distribution Strategies.

Registration is NOT required for any session. The presenter, Ms. Janice Parker, will be available after the final session for individual questions.

~Annasue Cook, PHR  
Human Resource Analyst I

## April Days to Celebrate

April is Community Services Month and Occupational Therapy Month. This month, we also celebrate National Library Week April 12-18, National Volunteer Services Week April 17-23, National Medical Laboratory Week April 19-25 and Administrative Professionals' Day April 22.

"Off the cuff" April holidays to celebrate:

**April 1**

April Fool's Day

**April 7**

No Housework Day

**April 13**

Blame Somebody Else Day

**April 16**

Moment of Laughter Day

**April 20**

National Pineapple Upside Down Cake Day

**April 30**

Oatmeal Cookie Day

**April 30**

National Honesty Day



# National Occupational Therapy Month

To observe Occupational Therapy month this year, let us recap our hospital's encouraging and hope-filled crusade for the provisions of comfort areas on our wards. Comfort areas and/or rooms serve as a quiet, safe, and respectful place of retreat where patients may calm themselves by listening to music, reading, covering themselves with a blanket, working a puzzle, browsing magazines, coloring, etc. Comfort rooms provide an environment that nurtures the body and invites persons to engage in activities that help them feel good and focus on strengths and interests. Comfort rooms are freely accessible to patients at all times in order for them to maintain/regain their self-control when needed and hopefully prevent a crisis which may have otherwise

led to seclusion and/or restraints---which deprives the senses and therefore invites disorientation.

So, how important is sensory input? Input from a variety of sensory stimuli is essential for our overall development and health. Sensory input also has a powerful impact on the adult nervous system. For example, do you know why you enjoy hugs? The pressure touch of a hug activates our nervous system by releasing dopamine. Dopamine releases into the 'pleasure center' of our brain's limbic system. Have you ever wrapped your body tightly in a blanket or quilt and felt more relaxed? The sensory input received here is called proprioceptive input (input into your joints, muscles and tendons), and proprioceptive input releases serotonin.

Serotonin makes us feel safe, secure and contented.

Thus, OT is excited to coordinate our efforts with all disciplines to provide our patients with comfort areas and/or rooms which can be used for crisis de-escalation and crisis prevention as patients learn safer and healthier ways to regain their self-control.

~Sandy Guthrie, OTR/L  
Occupational Therapist



## Administrative Professionals Week

"**Excellence in Action**" is the theme for the 2009 observance of Administrative Professionals Week, April 19-25. Administrative Professionals Day is Wednesday, April 22. The "Excellence in Action" theme signifies that administrative professionals are key, front-line representatives for their employers, their profession, and organizations such as IAAP.

This annual event was originally organized in 1952 as "National Secretaries Week" by the National Secretaries Association (now known as the International Association of Administrative Professionals) in conjunction with public relations executive Harry Klemfuss and a consortium of office product manufacturers. It was established as an effort to recognize secretaries for their contributions in the workplace and to attract people to secretarial/administrative careers. In the

year 2000, IAAP announced a name change for Professional Secretaries Week and Professional Secretaries Day. The names were changed to **Administrative Professionals Week** and **Administrative Professionals Day** to keep pace with changing job titles and expanding responsibilities of today's administrative workforce. Over the years, Administrative Professionals Week has become one of the largest workplace observances. The event is celebrated worldwide, bringing together millions of people for community events, educational seminars, and individual corporate activities. Although the purpose of the celebration is sometimes altered by other groups and individuals, a tremendous amount of publicity is obtained for the profession during this time.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, there are more than 4.1



million secretaries and administrative assistants working in the United States and 8.9 million people working in various administrative support roles. IAAP suggests that employers observe Administrative Professionals Week by providing training for their administrative staff through seminars, continuing education or self-study materials. Another suggestion is to make a commitment toward delegating responsibilities that better utilize the skills of administrative professionals.

~Cheryl Veselik, CPS/CAP  
Human Resource Assistant

## Materials Management Tip

One of our obligations as a Commonwealth of Virginia agency is to utilize the automated purchasing system commonly known as "eVA." In fact, we are actually graded on a monthly basis on whether we use this system appropriately. Vendors that register with eVA pay a small fee in order to become a business partner for the Commonwealth as well as a small percentage of each dollar spent on any purchase. When we purchase from a vendor that is not registered with eVA guess who has to pay those fees? You guessed it.....WE DO!

Sometimes when we make that purchase with a non-eVA vendor and think we are saving a few bucks, we could actually be paying a bit more after the fees are added. It pays to try and locate an eVA vendor prior to making any purchase. **These simple steps can help you locate a vendor that is already an eVA member:**

- Go to SWVMHI intranet site
- Click on "Web Links"
- Click on "eVA"
- The eVA website will open
- Scroll down to the bottom right of the page and click on "Vendors"



- The "Registered and Pending eVA Vendors" screen will open
- Type the vendor name into the empty box at the top left of the screen
- Click search

Spending a little time doing this may find you a suitable supplier, as well as possibly save you money.

~Steve Kiley  
Materials Management Supervisor

## New Procedure to Report Employee Incidents

To report a work-related incident, illness or near miss, the employee completes section 1 of the Employee Incident form, and the supervisor (designee) completes section 2 of the form.

**Effective April 1, 2009, to complete the reporting process, the employee must deliver the form to the Staffing Nurse Coordinator (SNC) on duty before the end of the shift during which the event occurs.** Do not mail the form via inter-department mail or fax it. If the employee finds the SNC office locked, call cell 780-2119 (SNC cell number) to

determine the location of the SNC and how to get the form to him or her before the end of the shift.

The purpose of this change is to simplify / expedite the reporting process. If you get hurt, complete page 1 of the employee incident form with your supervisor and deliver it to the SNC that shift.

Human Resource (HR) staff will pick up all forms from the SNC office Monday through Friday, and will distribute copies to Security, the Safety Director, Infection Control, or the Department Head/designee for completion of page 2 of the form.

You can find the updated version of the Employee Incident form (4-1-09) on the forms directory as well as part of the HR policy 6300 (user directory) after 4-1-09. *Starting April 1, 2009, recycle any blank forms you have of the current version and begin using the new form and process.*

As always, in an **emergency**, the employee should notify the supervisor immediately to ensure timely medical treatment. In such case, if the employee cannot complete the form, the supervisor may do so and give it to the SNC during that shift.

~Annasue Cook, PHR

## Centralized Rehabilitation Services

On March 6, 2009, the Centralized Rehabilitation Services Department hosted a plant sale featuring plants that the patients have grown as part of their vocational programming. Approximately fifty plants were made available, and almost all of them were sold. Available were: Kalanchoe, Wandering Jew, Ferns, Christmas Cactus, Spider Plants, Lemon Basil, Rosemary, and Tropical Plants. It was a very successful event. The patients are working on cultivating additional hanging baskets, 6-packs of various flowers, and tomato plants for

sale in the next few months. The patients will also sell plants at the upcoming Earth Day / Employee Recognition event scheduled for May 7, 2009. All proceeds from these sales go back into the patient funds.

On March 17, 2009, the Centralized Rehabilitation Services Department hosted a St. Patrick's Day Carnival for patients campus-wide. The patients were able to play a large variety of carnival games and win tickets to redeem for a vast array of prizes. Irish and Celtic music was played, and popcorn and drinks were

served.

### Upcoming Events:

For Easter, the Centralized Rehabilitation Services Department will host an old fashioned Easter egg hunt and a May Pole Dance for patients campus-wide. The patients can hunt for Easter eggs and then dance to lively tunes as they take part in a Maypole Dance. The date and time for this event will be announced at a later time.

~Suzy Quillen  
Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor





## Southwestern Virginia Mental Health Institute

**Address:** 340 Bagley Circle  
Marion, Virginia 24354

**Phone:** 276-783-1200

**Fax:** 276-783-1465

### Comments, Suggestions or Ideas?

#### SHARE THEM!

Please place any comments, suggestions or ideas you have regarding the newsletter in the Suggestion Box located outside of the copier room on the Clinical/Medical/Nursing Administrative Offices hallway.



## Facility Director Names Word Find Answer Key

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Please submit articles for the next newsletter to Amanda Phipps by April 17, 2009.

The next newsletter will be published May 1, 2009.