



In this Issue

VRS News	3
SWVMHI Culture of Quality & Safety	6
Library Corner	7
Kronos Kronicles	8
Useful IT Troubleshooting Tips	9
COVID Summer Safety Guide	10
Service Awards	12
TOVA Tool Box	14
Congratulations	16
DBHDS Bonus	16
Training Corner	17

From the Director

Best Wishes to Dr. Mike Jones on his Retirement!



June 30, 2021 was declared Mike Jones Day! Staff and family gathered at a reception that day to celebrate his 41 years of service to the staff and individuals at SWVMHI.

Mike was an employee of the Commonwealth of Virginia and SWVMHI since 1980. He obtained his bachelor of science degree in psychology from James Madison University in 1977, a Master's degree in Psychology also from JMU in 1979, and a PhD in Human Services from Virginia Tech in 1987.

Mike began his career of service at the Mt. Rogers Sheltered Workshop in 1975. He also worked as an activities aide and as an orderly at Camelot Nursing Home in Harrisonburg, Virginia, in 1977. After a stint as a Mental Health Counselor at Massanutten Mental Health Center, he began his fulltime career at SWVMHI in 1980, although he actually worked here in the summer of 1976 as a social work student.

We sincerely thank those farsighted individuals in 1976 who hired Mike here as a young man, as I believe that it is at

SWVMHI that he found his true calling.

When I met Mike in 1987, he was a member of the Psychology Department. He served in that role until December, 1987, when he became Unit Director of the Geriatric Unit. I remember thinking, "Why would he want to leave the psychology department as great things were happening, as that year we were hiring a psychologist to be on each treatment team" Mike later served as Programs Director of both the Admissions and Geriatric Units. He retires as Lead Programs Director for the three units, including ERS.

You will see that we have two themes for the celebration of Mike's retirement. The first theme is the John Deere Tractors – Mike hopes to spend a lot more time on his farm on his John Deere, doing the other occupation that he loves.

The second theme is the slogan, "The legend has retired." And we have lots of references as to how venerable and legendary Mike is.

He has the 2nd longest seniority as an employee at SWVMHI. And he is a 4th generation employee and proud of it, as we are proud of him.

Continued on page 2

Hidden

There is a sunshine on every page in this edition, just like the one pictured here. Can you find all of them?



From the Director *continued from page 1*

So many of us have come to rely on his knowledge, his good sense, and his sense of humor. We have depended on his knowledge about the historical reasons for doing something, and his knowledge of the rules, regulations, and Code sections is unparalleled! – our collective brains are having to work a little harder without him.

He is universally respected by all staff and a big part of the reason is that he respected us. Mike is unfailingly modest – he would never accept a nomination for employee of the quarter or year – he felt that those accolades should go to line staff and not to managers. One of the most popular parts of orientation for new staff was Mike’s history tour – where he told tales of the past and showed new employees the hidden history and abandoned buildings.

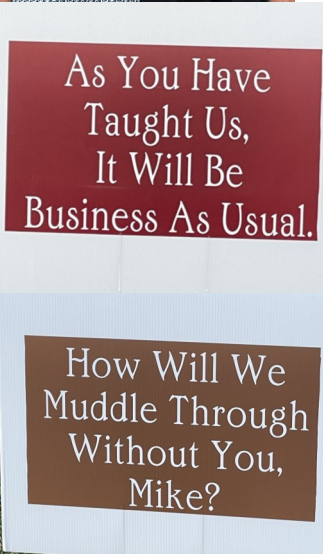
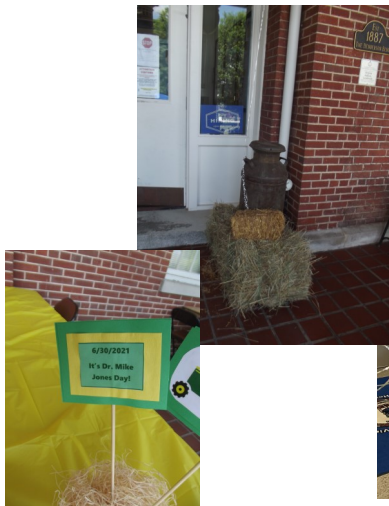
You may have seen the signs on the facility grounds announcing Mike Jones Day and wishing him a happy retirement.

You may also have seen a few other signs with some of Mike’s sayings on them. For instance, as he often said to new staff: “We’ll treat you so many different ways, you’re bound to like one of them.” Another Mike saying was “There’s nothing we can’t fix.” And while this remains true, we will miss you.

And then there’s “We’ll muddle through this together.” But it’s hard to imagine – how will we muddle through without you, Mike? One saying that didn’t make it onto a sign is “Even a blind hog can find an acorn once in a while” – well, Mike, even a blind hog knows how much we will miss you!

Mike had lately taken to signing off meetings with the phrase, “It’s a pleasure to serve the Commonwealth.” And it’s been a pleasure to serve the Commonwealth with you, Dr. Jones! You will be missed.

*Sincerely,
Cynthia McClaskey*



VRS News



VRS has been gradually rolling out online retirement in members' [myVRS](#) accounts. Starting in mid-July, most employees will have access to this intuitive online retirement experience.

For members who are ready to retire, the self-service application offers built-in pre-retirement counseling features and guidance at key decision points based on the member's retirement options. The online process also provides a more consistent retirement experience for all VRS members across the state.

For employers, online retirement coordinates with your existing pre-retirement counseling and streamlines the application for your employees, replacing the paper form.

VRS encourages members to contact their employers when they begin to consider applying for retirement. Employers are encouraged to continue to provide the normal level of counseling to employees as they prepare to retire, especially regarding individual employer benefits.

VRS invites retiring members to log in to their [myVRS](#) accounts and explore the Retirement Planning section. The online retirement tab will be accessible in the

member's [myVRS](#) account within the Manage My Benefits menu.

To learn more about online retirement, please visit the VRS employers website. The webpage provides an overview of the process and an exceptions list, a refresher on employer certification steps, and a preview of member features. You'll also find a process guide and FAQs, all developed to acclimate you to online retirement. Because there is no employer view of the member's online application in myVRS Navigator, VRS has developed a presentation that walks the employer through the member experience screen by screen. On the website, see the resources box for a link to the Employer Guide to myVRS Online Retirement Screens presentation, which is available in the Commonwealth of Virginia Learning Center (VLC).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact VRS Employer Support for assistance, or any member of the SWVMHI Human Resource Team:

- * Joey Sword, Human Resource Director — Ext 289
- * Kim Sayers, HR Analyst II — Ext 148
- * Heather Hall, HR Analyst II — Ext 142
- * Kimberlee Hubbard, HR Analyst I — Ext 363
- * Jennifer Haulsey, HR Analyst I — Ext 145
- * Rebecca Richardson, HR Assistant — Ext 204

"Home grown tomatoes, home grown tomatoes
 What would life be like without homegrown tomatoes
 Only two things that money can't buy
 That's true love and home grown tomatoes."

- John Denver, Home Grown Tomatoes



Driving Safety



Summer Driving Tips

Summertime often means summer travel, and though your travel plans may be different this year, now is a good time to review these summer driving safety tips. Prevention and planning may take a little time up front, but will spare you from dealing with the consequences of a breakdown—or worse yet, a highway crash—later.

Prior to leaving for any trip or a summer vacation have your vehicle serviced and tires inspected

Safety First

Protect Yourself and Your Loved Ones



Buckle Up. Every Trip. Every Time. Ensure that everyone else in your vehicle is buckled-up in age- and size-appropriate car seats, booster seats, or seat belts.

Protect the Children

Heatstroke- Heatstroke can occur when a child is left unattended in a parked vehicle or gains unsupervised access. Never leave children alone in the car—not even for a few minutes or with the engine running. Vehicles heat up quickly; if the outside temperature is in the low 80s°, the temperature inside the vehicle can reach deadly levels in just a few minutes—even with a window rolled down. A child's body temperature rises three to five times faster than that of an adult.

Be mindful of your pets as well and do not leave them unattended in vehicles.

When traveling with children, take every precaution to keep them safe. Remember that all children under age 13 should always ride properly buckled in the back seat. Make sure car seats and booster seats are properly installed, and that any children riding with you are in the right seat for their ages and sizes. Never leave your child unattended in or around your vehicle. Always remember to lock your vehicle and to keep your keys out of reach when exiting so children do not play or get trapped inside.

On the Road

Stay Alert!

Keep your gas tank close to full whenever possible, and, on longer trips, plan enough time to stop to stretch, get something to eat, return calls or text messages, and change drivers or rest if you feel drowsy.

Avoid Risky Driving Behaviors

You know the rules: Do not text or drive distracted; obey posted speed limits; and always drive sober. Both alcohol and drugs, whether legal or illicit can cause impairment. It is illegal to drive impaired by any substance in all states – no exceptions. Alcohol and drugs can impair the skills critical for safe and responsible driving such as coordination, judgment, perception, and reaction time.

For more information, visit: <https://www.NHTSA.gov/summer-driving-tips>

"Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass on a summer day listening to the murmur of water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is hardly a waste of time."

- John Lubbock



NATIONAL THERAPEUTIC RECREATION WEEK July 11, 2021 - July 17

National Therapeutic Recreation Week has been celebrated during the second week of July every year since 1984. Established by the National Therapeutic Recreation Society, the week is intended to raise awareness of therapeutic recreation programs and services that could improve the health and well-being of individuals with physical, mental, and emotional disabilities.

Recreational therapy, as it is often called, refers to the use of recreation and other activities prescribed as treatment interventions provided by professionals who are trained and certified. Healing interventions within the realm of recreation might include adapted sports, expressive arts, family intervention, progressive muscle relaxation, horticulture, or a therapeutic outing designed for reintegration into a community.



OPERATION SAFE DRIVER WEEK July 11, 2021 - July 17



This year's Operation Safe Driver Week will take place July 11-17 with an emphasis on speeding. During Operation Safe Driver Week, law enforcement personnel will be on the lookout for commercial motor vehicle drivers and passenger vehicle drivers engaging in risky driving behaviors in or around a commercial motor vehicle. Identified unsafe drivers will be pulled over and issued a citation or warning.

“Data shows that traffic stops and interactions with law enforcement help reduce problematic driving behaviors,” said Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) President Sgt. John Samis with the Delaware State Police. “By making contact with drivers during Operation Safe Driver Week, law enforcement personnel aim to make our roadways safer by targeting high-risk driving behaviors.”

CVSA selected speeding as its focus this year because despite a drop in roadway travel last year due to the pandemic, nationally, traffic fatalities increased. According to the National Safety Council's (NSC) preliminary estimates, the estimated rate of death on roads last year increased 24% over the previous 12-month period, despite miles driven dropping 13%. The increase in the rate of death is the highest estimated year-over-year jump NSC has calculated in 96 years.

In addition to speeding, law enforcement personnel will be tracking other dangerous driver behaviors throughout Operation Safe Driver Week, such as reckless or aggressive driving, distracted driving, following too closely, improper lane change, failure to obey traffic control devices, failure to use a seat belt, evidence of drunk or drugged driving, etc. CVSA's Operation Safe Driver Program was created to help to reduce the number of crashes involving commercial motor vehicles and passenger vehicles due to unsafe driving behaviors.

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SWVMHI Culture of Quality & Safety:



Material Storage

Workplace accidents can occur due to improper storing of materials. So let's work together to keep SWVMHI safe. Being aware and following the guidelines for material storage will reduce incidents of falling products or collapsing loads and avoid potential serious injuries.



Don't forget....

All hazardous, flammable, or caustic materials will be stored in accordance with the SDS and the standards of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).



Bulk storage of both types of oxygen tanks shall be permitted only in the storeroom, located on the first floor of the Blalock Building. Stored oxygen tanks in the Storeroom shall have a three-part yellow tag attached with sections for "full," "in use," or "empty." Only full or empty tanks are stored in the Storeroom; "in use" tanks are kept on the Ward until completely used.

Ensure a minimum of 18 inches is maintained between stored items, hanging plants, top of furniture etc. and the bottom of all sprinkler heads.

Maintain your assigned work area in a clean and orderly manner (free of an accumulation of debris, excessive storage, cardboard, paper to be recycled, and any other flammable material).

Maintain unobstructed access to all rooms, electrical panels, fire extinguishers, and fire alarm key stations throughout the facility.

What precautions must employees take to avoid material storage hazards?

- * Keep storage areas free from accumulated materials that cause tripping, fires, or explosions, or that may contribute to the harboring of rats and other pests.
- * Observe height limitations when stacking materials and consider the need for availability of the material.
- * Stacking materials can be dangerous if employees do not follow safety guidelines.
- * In adhering to fire safety precautions, flammable and combustible materials must be stored according to their fire characteristics. Flammable liquids must be separated from other material by a fire wall. Also, other combustibles must be stored in an area where using an open flame or a spark-producing device is prohibited.
- * Employees must ensure that stored materials are not obstructing any hallways and doorways.
- * Dissimilar materials that are dangerous when they come into contact with each other must be stored apart.
- * You can find Safety Data Sheets On the SWVMHI Intranet (SharePoint) on the left hand menu and on Ward K.



Around the Hill

If you find yourself down near the employee café, be sure to check out the bulletin board near Food Services. Several staff update the bulletin board monthly. Below are just a couple of their latest creations. Well done!



Memorial Day Bulletin Board



Combined Service



June was Great Outdoors Month. During the past year, we have been limited in the things we can do, but being outdoors is one of the things that is still available and encouraged. Being outside is not just fun, it has also been proven to reduce feelings of anger, fear, and stress, and improve both physical and mental health. If we ever needed the benefits of nature it has been this year!

The month started off with June 1st, National Trails Day, which celebrates our walking trails. Getting out and stretching our legs in nature can be very relaxing and can clear the mind. We live in a great place, right here, to fish or watch birds or animals, or just to enjoy the simple pleasure of watching a sunset, taking our dogs for a walk in a dog park, or reading a book by the water. Even gardening or having a small family barbecue in our own yards can bring great stress relief and relaxation.

Here at the library, we have many magazines about nature and the outdoors and books about hiking, fishing, golf, and gardening. Come check them out!

We recently got a big batch of donations including the following:

- ◆ *Standoff* by Sandra Brown
- ◆ *Proof: A Play* by David Auburn
- ◆ *Learning DSM 5 by Case Example* by Michael First
- ◆ *Clinical Assessment of Malingering and Deception* by Richard Rogers
- ◆ *The Wonder* by Emma Donoghue
- ◆ *Shopaholic Takes Manhattan* by Sophie Kinsella
- ◆ *English Music* by Peter Ackroyd
- ◆ *Undue Influence* by Anita Brookner
- ◆ *Griselda Takes Flight* by Joyce Magnin
- ◆ *Child 44* by Tom Rob Smith
- ◆ *Every Breath* by Nicholas Sparks
- ◆ *Doc* by Mary Doria Russell
- ◆ *The Cat Encyclopedia* by Van Zyl Miezian

The library would like to thank the following people for donating items: Caroline Norris, Sheila Thomas, Laurie Goral, Kyra Shumate, Ashley Privett, Jennifer Cannon, Jan Barrom, Smyth County Public Library, Tim Graham, Wallace Middle School. We are also very thankful for the many anonymous cards, magazines, and books donated by anyone I may have accidentally left off the list.

~ **Christina Quillen, Librarian**

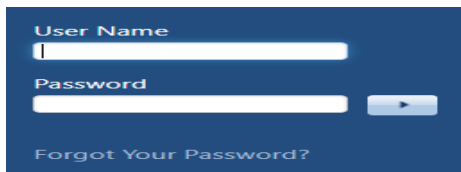
Kronos Kronicles



As a result of increased focus on system security, Central Office IT changed the Kronos password requirements for all DBHDS facilities to conform to SEC 525, Hosted Environment Information Security Standards.

Effective April 12, 2021, Kronos Passwords must meet the following requirements:

1. Must contain ALL of the following:
 - o Uppercase letters
 - o Lowercase letters
 - o Numbers
 - o Special Characters - ****NEW****
2. Password minimum length is 12 - ****NEW**** was 8
3. Your password will expire every 60 days - ****NEW**** was 90
4. You will NOT be able to use the previous 24 passwords



If you forget your password, you should first try the “forgot your password” link located below the username and password entry. This feature will ask you one of the security questions that you set up when you first logged into Kronos. Please be sure when you set up your security questions, you answer questions that you are sure you know the answers to, and please remember that Kronos is case sensitive.

If this still does not work and you cannot get into your Kronos account, just email me at cheryl.veselik@dbhds.virginia.gov and ask me to reset your account. I will then email you a temporary password and instructions for logging back into Kronos. You will be required to reset your password to one of your choosing (that also meets the requirements above), and you will also be required to reset your three security questions. Please note that I cannot see what your current password is — I can only see when it was last changed. This is a security feature, so please do not ask me to set your permanent password for you. I can only give you a temporary password, which you will be required to change before you can access your timecard, schedule, or leave balances.

If you have questions about a specific Kronos issue or concern, please send them to me for inclusion in a future newsletter. If you need an immediate answer, please call me at Ext. 201.

~ Cheryl Veselik, Executive Assistant to Director/
Kronos Administrator

July Lunar Phases



CURRENT MOON



Waning Crescent
5% of Full
Age: 93%
N. HEMISPHERE ☾

moon phases

Current Moon View as of today

1
Last Qtr.
5:12 pm
EDT

9
New Moon
9:17 pm
EDT

17
First Qtr.
6:11 am
EDT

23
Full Moon
10:37 pm
EDT

31
Last Qtr.
9:18 am
EDT

Full Moon on the 23rd is called "Buck Moon" by Native Americans of New England and the Great Lakes because at this time of the year, the new antlers of the buck deer begin to appear.

It's also called the "Thunder Moon" due to all the summer storms.

July 28th there is the Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower.



Useful IT Troubleshooting Tips

It seems there isn't a day that goes by when our computers aren't being uncooperative! Here is some useful information that may come in handy when you're in a pinch for time.

When all else fails, restart your computer. This simple step eradicates over 90 percent of user computer problems. Why, you may ask? One big reason a restart will fix so many PC problems is that it will clear your Random Access Memory (RAM). When the RAM cannot take any more, it leads to a memory leak, which causes slowdowns and various kinds of errors. Each and every program stops when you restart the computer; power cuts off, and RAM gets cleared. In more simple terms, RAM is your computer's short term memory. Having too many tabs open and using too much of this short term memory, will slow your computer's processing down tremendously.

Also, our computers update software frequently. If an update is needed and you haven't restarted your computer, things will sporadically quit working.

Your camera/microphone isn't working for a Google Meet. If you find that your camera/microphone isn't working and it had been, more than likely it reverted back to a default setting. If this happens, click the three dots at the bottom right hand corner. Select Settings, Audio, Select the Microphone Drop Down Arrow, Select the Default Microphone. If there is an HD Microphone option, do NOT choose that.

If the camera/microphone you use is an external USB Type (one that you actually mount on your computer), try unplugging the USB from your dock or using a different USB port if it's available, reinsert the USB.

Useful IT Terms

What is the difference between reboot and restart? Reboot is (computing) to cause a computer to execute its boot process, effectively resetting the computer and causing the operating system to reload, especially after a system or power failure, while restart is to start again. Also, Rebooting is the same thing as saying shut your computer completely down and starting it back up.

Sign Off. Click the Windows Icon on the bottom left hand side of your screen, click the icon that looks like a person or you can press Ctrl-Alt-Delete at the same time and select sign off. This signs the user out of the computer so another user can log on.

H Drive. This is a drive that is specifically assigned to you. You need to save all your work to this drive. If you are saving to your desktop or under documents, you take the chance of permanently losing your information if there is a server update or if the server shuts down. If you don't have access to your H Drive, let IT know and we will map that to you.

Flash Drive/Thumb Drive. These are very useful and convenient; however, unless they are encrypted and approved by Central Office, you are not to use one. Also, if you are saving your important information to one of these, you also take the chance of losing your information permanently. These cannot be fixed and your information is not retrievable.

Your IT Department is always ready to be of help in any way we can. The quickest way to reach us is to email svwmhiithelpdesk@dbhds.virginia.gov.

You can also call:

Brian Combs Extension 378
Eric Rhodes Extension 856
Tina Mitchell Extension 842





Your COVID-19 Summer Safety Guide



A summer of fun in the sun is looking a lot more possible this year compared with last year, thanks to COVID-19 vaccines that have changed the course of the pandemic in the United States.

“Truly, it is a miracle of science that we have not just one but multiple types of vaccines that are so highly effective in preventing serious disease, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19,” says Lisa Lockerd Maragakis, MD, MPH, associate professor of medicine and epidemiology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and senior director of infection prevention at the Johns Hopkins Health System, both in Baltimore.

“It’s really going to change what people are able to do this summer and heading into next fall,” she adds. On top of that, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new COVID-19 guidelines in May, saying that people who are fully vaccinated can resume most activities without wearing a mask or social distancing, both indoors and out.

Many states around the country have responded to this rather sudden change by expanding the capacity of parks, trails, and restaurants and no longer requiring masks or social distancing in public spaces or at events.

Unvaccinated Individuals: Still at High Risk

The revised CDC guidance led to joy and celebration for many fully vaccinated people, but seemed to cause a fair amount of confusion and uncertainty in those who aren’t, says Dr. Maragakis.

One unintended consequence of the CDC shift may be that some unvaccinated individuals will opt not to wear masks, raising their risk of getting or spreading the virus.

“Unfortunately, the risk to unvaccinated individuals is going to dramatically rise as everyone else abruptly stops wearing masks. These individuals might need to curtail their activities even further and be even more cautious until they can become fully vaccinated,” says Maragakis.

“The bottom line is that if you are unvaccinated, you are susceptible to the virus,” she emphasizes.

Masks Aren’t Necessary While Running or Biking

Both vaccinated and unvaccinated people can walk, run, wheelchair roll, or bike outdoors without a mask, according to CDC guidelines.

The risk of COVID-19 transmission outdoors is orders of magnitude lower than it is indoors, says Maragakis. “It’s much, much safer to be outdoors without a mask than to be indoors without a mask due to the large volume of air and the way that air moves, and because of the kinds of activities that we do outdoors,” she says.

Outdoor Contact Sports Are Relatively Safe

Outdoor sports like soccer present a relatively low risk of COVID-19 transmission, says Maragakis. “Studies of sporting events show that contestants on the different teams don’t spend a great deal of time in very close proximity to each other over the course of a basketball game, for instance,” she says.

But Paul Pottinger, MD, a professor in the division of allergy and infectious diseases at the University of Washington’s Department of Medicine in Seattle, points out that team gatherings off the field — for water breaks or huddles, for instance — could allow unvaccinated people to spread the virus.

“They should follow the guidelines to avoid the spread of COVID-19, which would include social distancing and wearing a face covering,” he says.

Outdoor Sporting Events and Concerts Could Be Risky for the Unvaccinated

Continued on page 15



Help SWVMHI Get the Word Out

NEW
SWVMHI
Sign-On
Bonuses



Please Tell
Someone You
Know About
These Incredible
Opportunities!

JOIN SWVMHI's EMPLOYEE REFERRAL BONUS PROGRAM

Refer Someone To Join Our Team, Have Them List Your Name On Their Application, Submit An Employee Referral Bonus Form To Human Resources, And If Hired, Receive The Following Bonus Amounts After 90 Days of Employment:

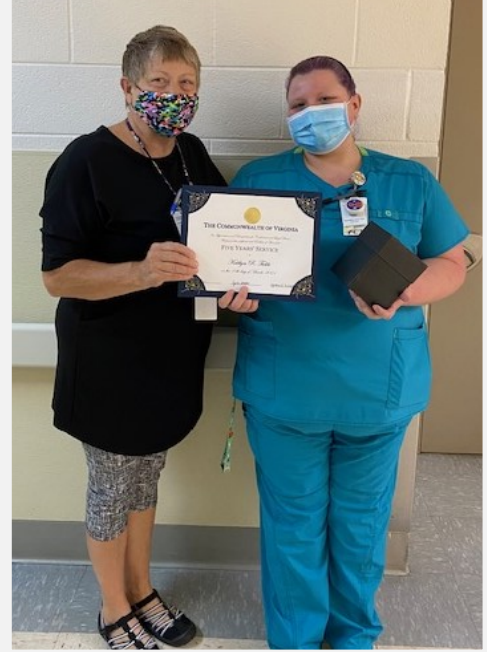
- \$5,000 PSYCHIATRISTS (Paid After 30 Days of Employment)
- \$1,500 PSYCHOLOGISTS
- \$500 for PCTs with Current VA CNAs
- \$500 FOOD SERVICE TECHS. & HOUSEKEEPERS (\$300 After 90 Days, \$200 Additional at 6 Months of Employment)
- \$500 LPNs
- \$1,500 RNs

Get Rewarded For Your Referrals!

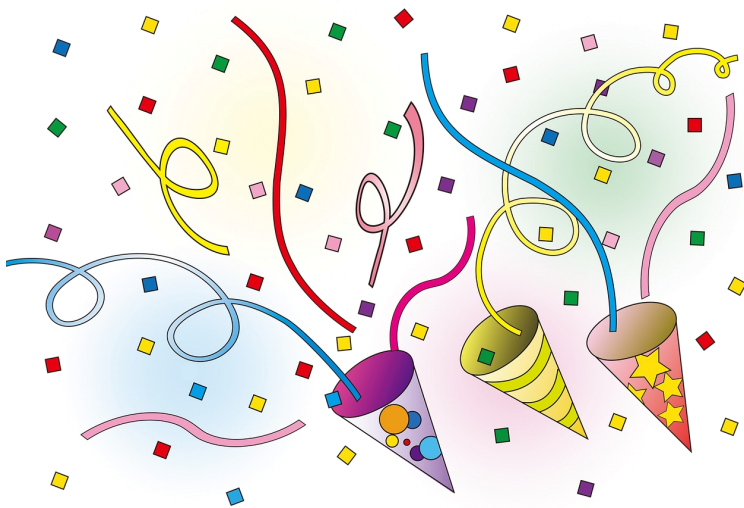
Service Awards



25 Years — Angela Garrett, Rehab Resource Coordinator (middle) shown with Lori Heyward, Rehab Resource Coordinator (left) and Laurie Goral, Rehab Resource Coordinator Supervisor (right), all of Central Rehab Services.



5 Years — Kaitlyn Tickle, PCT (right), shown with Ellen Bear, Unit Nurse Coordinator, Geriatric Unit



Congratulations



25 Years — Mike Anderson (holding certificate), Vocational Rehab Specialist, show with (left to right) Heather Trail, Central Rehab Services Director, Matthew Moorner, Vocational Rehab Supervisor, and Brittany Phipps, Central Rehab Services Supervisor

“Off the cuff” July holidays to celebrate:

July 4 — National BBQ Ribs Day

July 9 — National Motorcycle Day

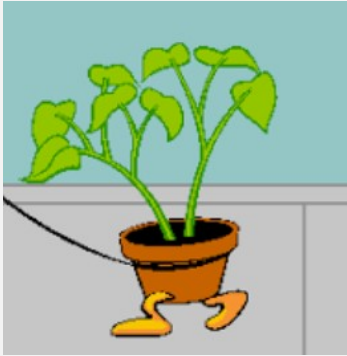
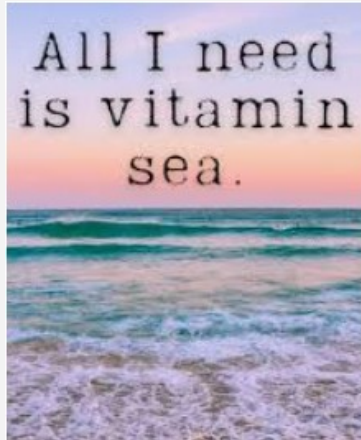
July 13 — National French Fries Day

July 17 — World Emoji Day

July 20 — National Lollipop Day

July 27 — Take Your Houseplant For A Walk Day

July 31 — National Avocado Day



MONTHLY PATIENT CENSUS

June 2021

Admissions - 82

Discharges - 74

Passes - 8

Average Daily Census - 165

Census



Commissioner Land met with the DBHDS Facility Chief Nurse Executives on June 17. Julie Stoots, SWVMHI Acting Chief Nurse Executive, is pictured bottom left, with Commission Land second from right in middle row.



SWVMHI Culture of Quality and Safety:

The TOVA Toolbox

Physical Skills for Personal Protection



Important Skills

Charging and Rushing

These usually take the form of the person rushing toward you, either to grab, shove with both open hands, and strike. The target of this attack is usually your chest, face, or hair. Raise your cupped hands in front of you, and using the Pivot Maneuver, move off the line of attack, allowing the person to continue forward. It is important that you do not push him or guide him down to the floor, or act on him in any way other than **perhaps making light contact on his outer forearm** in order to **maintain** awareness of his **position and momentum as he moves past you**.

Punches and Slaps

The first option for responding to a punch or a slap is to move back and to give the person space. It may be that the punch or slap was a warning or an attempt to communicate (e.g., "Get away from me and leave me alone!").

It may be that by moving back out of his attack zone and by re-establishing communication we can resolve the situation without further aggression

Punches and Slaps Continued

Perhaps that was the only punch he would throw and wouldn't have the motivation to strike out again if we move out of range.

If he delivers a punch or slap, raise your cupped hands in front of you, and using the Pivot Maneuver, move off the line of attack, allowing the person to continue.



Kicks

Kicks are far less common than punches and slaps, but they do happen. Often, a kick, like a punch, is a form of communication ("Leave me alone!") and can happen when we intrude too far into a person's space.

Our best option in dealing with a kick is to move back and give the person more space. Again, this is most safely done using the shuffle step. Once we have gained a safe distance we may try to re-establish communication.



Your COVID-19 Summer Safety Guide *continued*

The CDC considers attending a crowded outdoor gathering such as a sporting event or live performance a “least safe” activity for people who aren’t vaccinated.

Many venues have arranged “pod seating” to help minimize COVID-19 risk. For instance, Citi Field in New York City offers socially distanced sections, with tickets to baseball games sold in pods ranging from one to six seats. Each pod is separated from others by at least 6 feet.

Unvaccinated people should socially distance and wear a face covering when away from their pod, Maragakis says.

Playdates for the Youngest Kids Require Caution

COVID-19 vaccines may be available this fall for U.S. children as young as 6 months, according to The New York Times, but for now, children under 12 can’t get one. That means indoor playdates still present a COVID-19 risk.

“Anybody of any age who’s unvaccinated or partially vaccinated needs to continue to wear a mask when indoors in proximity of other people who are outside their own household,” says Maragakis. Social distancing, she says, is advisable as well. “It’s really the same precautions that we’ve all utilized throughout the pandemic,” she explains.

Parks and Playgrounds Also Pose Risks

Parks and playgrounds require COVID-19 precautions, too, according to the CDC. The agency recommends that unvaccinated people avoid crowded areas and stay at least 6 feet away from people who don’t live with them.

Washing hands often for at least 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer can help reduce the spread of germs, the CDC says.

Amusement Parks Require New Strategies

“I would be concerned about going to an amusement park if it were being approached in the old normal way of doing things,” says Humberto Choi, MD, a pulmonologist at the

Cleveland Clinic in Ohio. “There can be a bunch of people in long lines for several minutes or even an hour or more. Sometimes people have to go into a smaller room before a ride to watch a video or for pre-ride entertainment, and that could be a confined space where social distancing is difficult.” These scenarios would not be safe for unvaccinated people, including children, according to the CDC. While you’re out mingling in the amusement park, social distancing is likely to be difficult, so masks should be worn, Dr. Choi says.

Outdoor Hangouts: The Smaller, the Safer

Going to a barbecue attended by a few other people is probably okay as long as you are social distancing, says Choi. “If you aren’t from the same household, it’s a good idea to bring your own food, drink, supplies, and utensils,” he says.

The CDC recommends that unless everyone in the group is vaccinated, it’s best to keep any gathering small to reduce the risk of the virus spreading.

Swimming Pools Are Fine With Social Distancing

There’s currently no evidence that COVID-19 can spread from person to person through the water in pools, hot tubs, spas, or water parks. The disinfection with chlorine and bromine that are part of the daily maintenance of the water should inactivate the virus, according to the CDC. Outdoor pools are relatively safe provided that people maintain physical distancing or keep interactions brief, says Maragakis. “Since crowds carry more risk, crowded swimming pools should be avoided, especially for the unvaccinated,” she says.

The CDC recommends not wearing a cloth mask while swimming because it can be hard to breathe once the mask gets wet, and wet masks aren’t as effective in preventing virus spread as dry ones. Social distancing while enjoying the water is the best way to stay safe.

Continued on page 16



Your COVID-19 Summer Safety Guide *continued*

Beaches Are Back

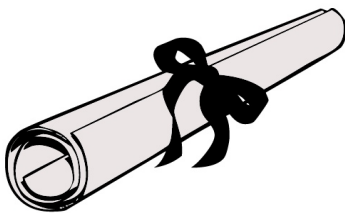
“If there’s any transmission in the beach setting, I would suspect that it would most likely be from close proximity to people,” Choi says.

Especially if you’re unvaccinated, make sure you’re setting up your towel or area at least 6 feet apart from other groups. “What you really want to avoid is a large conglomeration of people in a small space, and this is possible at most beaches,” says Choi.

The aerosols (tiny, airborne respiratory droplets) from a person infected with COVID-19 will disperse in a short time outside, which makes transmission unlikely, says Choi. “When the weather is windy or sunny, that time is even shorter,” he adds.

Reprinted from: <https://www.everydayhealth.com/coronavirus/your-covid-19-summer-safety-guide/>

Congratulations are in order!



Congratulations to Captain Dave McConnell, Security, on the completion of both his Associate of Applied Science Degree with a major in Administration of Justice, as

well as a Career Studies Certificate in Foundations of Criminal Justice.

Any time our staff complete a degree while working full or part time, we applaud their dedication, both to their career at SWVMHI and to furthering their knowledge and

DBHDS Funds Bonuses for Certain Roles

On July 16, 2021, I announced via email that bonuses would be awarded using DBHDS funds for individuals in certain roles.

Due to critical staffing levels across DBHDS facilities, Nursing, Security, Nurse Practitioner, and other DSA III Roles will receive Retention Bonuses (current employees) and Sign-on Bonuses (new employees) for the quarter 7/1/ to 9/30/21.

The bonuses are generous, but are subject to several requirements including that a Retention Bonus Agreement be signed, no Standards of Conduct in the current Performance Cycle from 10/25/20 to now, and that the latest performance rating be at least a rating of Contributor. The full requirements are listed below.

Additional actions are being requested from the General Assembly, which meets in Special Sessions beginning 8/2/21 to determine how to spend more than \$4 million in federal relief funds over approximately 2 years. These actions, if taken, will further address staffing concerns.

We regret that not every staff member at SWVMHI will receive a bonus at this time; however, we all received a 5 percent raise on 7/1/21, and there is hope for future actions.

The reason for the Bonuses:

- On Friday 7/9/21, DBHDS Commissioner Land ordered that five state hospitals (Catawba, CSH, ESH, PGH, and WSH) close to admissions due to critically low direct care staffing levels.
- Patients who need admission where are placed on an emergency department waiting list.
- This has given the system relief from the "last resort" law, which required that state facilities accept admissions whether or not there was a bed available and whether or not there were staff available to care for the individuals admitted.
- While there are concerns for the system that must be addressed, there are no plans to close state facilities and we believe there is relief in sight.

As predicted, this has caused additional stress to the three facilities still taking admissions (us, SVMHI, and NVMHI) and, most of all, to those individuals who are waiting for a bed.

Today’s announcement is the beginning of the effort to address the system issues and the beginning of “the relief in sight” ! DBHDS has developed a plan to retain existing direct care staff and compensate them for the high stress and environment that they are working in while also working to address starting pay salaries to a competitive wage.

To start, *and for this is quarter only*, DBHDS is using one time non-general fund balances to fund Retention Bonuses and Sign-on Bonuses in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2022 (7/1/21 to 9/30/21). There is hope that additional funds will become available through the General Assembly for subsequent quarters for bonuses and also to fund salary increases. You have likely seen the news articles and the TV news stories.

- Cynthia McClaskey



Word Search



Just for fun, how many of the following words can you find related to summer?

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

Barbecue

Baseball

Beach

Camping

Fun

Grill

Ice Cream

Lemonade

Picnic

Pool

Sand

Sandals

Shorts

Sprinkler

Summer

Sun

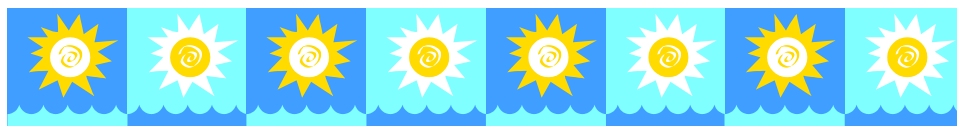
Sunglasses

Sunscreen

Swimming

Travel

Vacation



"Dirty hands, iced tea, garden fragrances thick in the air and a blanket of color before me,
 who could ask for more?"
 - Bev Adams, Mountain Gardening



NEWS FROM THE TRAINING DEPARTMENT



July 2021! A very busy summer already. Here in training we are implementing a new Supervisor training, which is open to departments for their current and new supervisors. It is a two-day training which covers all the need-to-know facts for being a superior supervisor. This month we are training nursing staff, July 28 and 29!

New Employees

We send big a welcome to all of our new employees as they join our dedicated staff at SWVMHI. July is ramping up to be a large class of new employees hopefully to help staffing shortages soon. Best of luck to all the new employees

Currently

We are teaching CPR competency class this year, so when you come to class it will not be a card renewal, but a class to keep you current on all your skills. Recently, we taught an instructor class and soon we will have 6 new CPR adjunct instructors! Congratulations to Michael Cregger, Michael Caudell, Kim Heath, Nikki Davidson, Chris Furches, Mary Chandler, and Darian Hamm. In addition, we are expecting a new TOVA class or update in the fall or winter. We are excited to see what new information this will add to our program.





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**Comments, Suggestions or Ideas?
SHARE THEM!**

Please send any comments, suggestions, or ideas you have regarding the newsletter to the Office of the Director.



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L E M O N A D E S
A N S U
C A B U L M
H S C A M P I N G L M
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Please submit articles for the next newsletter to Cheryl Veselik by July 20, 2021.