

# ***the VA VOICE***

## **Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center**

**November 25 – Dec. 6 2019 - Spokane, WA**



### ***Honoring All Who Served - Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena 2019***



The largest public turnout in years shared their respect, appreciation, and best of all - admiration for Veterans and their families during the annual Veterans Day celebration November 11th. At left, Dr. Robert Fischer applauds the only WWII Veteran in attendance—Mr. Ray Chermak, a sailor stationed at Northern Idaho's Farrigut Naval Station in the 1940's. Dr. Fischer then recognized each Veteran for their service in conflicts from the Korean War, Vietnam War, to the War on Terror that still continues since 9-11—with thousands of troops still in harms way.

"We are blessed to have each one of you who here with us—who has ever served in our nation's military, defend the freedom that allows us to assemble here in the Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena," explained Dr. Fischer as he asked each Veteran from all eras to stand and be publicly recognized. More coverage on page—2.



#### ***Inside this Edition***

- ★ Miss Idaho Inspires Veterans & staff
- ★ VCS Celebrates Veterans-Families
- ★ Pin Up Girls Bring Charm to CLC
- ★ Illuminating Courage —Fallen Heroes Memorial
- ★ EHRM Update... WSU Video at VA MISSION Act... and more from the Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena!



## ***Spokane Honors Veterans Day & Military Families Month***



MGVAMC's Nick Sangil, (USMC Veteran) and his wife Amber are pictured with family members following Nick's outstanding Master of Ceremonies duties for Veterans Day at the Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena.

The event also gave Spokane Mayor David Condon the opportunity to personally thank Col. Mike Delaney (USAF Ret.), Director of the 560th Retired Veterans Band - with a key to the city for the band's continued support of providing the musical medley's and patriotic themes that have been a long-standing tradition during formal military and Veterans Day events in Spokane and the region.

Pictured at bottom right, Veterans from the CLC who, thanks to the CLC team and volunteers, were proud to be recognized by Dr. Robert Fischer as he shared with the audience, how some of our Veteran patients were able to to experience the event and recognition they have earned.

In addition to the band, a 21-gun rifle salute, and playing of TAPS by Phil Kowzan, (US Army LTC Ret.), this year's tribute to the living Veterans, also included comments by Congresswoman Cathy McMorris-Rodgers; John Culton (for Sen. Patty Murray); Fairchild AFB 92ARW Commander Col. Derek Salmi, and David Baird, (US Navy Ret) who is the Spokane Vet Center Director. The Spokesman Review and their story can be found [at this link!](#)



## ***Spokane Honors Fallen Heroes during Annual Flag Changing at Illuminating Courage Memorial on Veterans Day***

Moments after inspiring everyone to share their personal "gift" inside Spokane's Veterans Memorial Arena, U.S. Navy Veteran David Baird (Vet Center Director) stepped outside the lower entrance of the arena to recognize the Gold Star Mom's and Families in the community for their loss and sacrifice, and Spokane's vision and steadfast support of the Illuminating Courage—Fallen Heroes Memorial.

Every year, Gold Star Families assemble to help keep the "flame" inside their hearts alive with memories of their fallen loved-one, killed in the line of duty. The ceremony includes recognition for each of the Veterans and their friends or families who share the honor of raising new U.S., POW-MIA, and the service flags of each U.S. Military branch on the flag poles surrounding the memorial.







# THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON

IS BEING SERVED ON

**NOVEMBER 26, 2019**  
from 11am to 2pm

VETERANS AND FAMILIES WELCOME!



# the VA VOICE

Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center

Nov. 25 - Dec. 6, 2019

## Nov.-Dec. Events

- ♦ Veterans Thanksgiving Meal 11/26  
Vet Center 13109 E. Mirabeau  
Pkwy 11am-2pm
- ♦ Caregiver Support V-Tel 11/26  
[RSVP Here](#) / 1-2:30pm B40-217
- ♦ Thanksgiving Holiday 11/28
- ♦ American Legion Auxiliary 12/2-4  
"Santa's Gift Shop" C-223
- ♦ MGVAMC Nursing Skills Fair 12/5  
Bldg-4: 9-11:30, 12-2:30, 3-5:30pm

## Veterans Gather at Vet Center for Town Hall Meeting



At left, Dallas Marcus, MGVAMC's MISSION Act Community Liaison explains some of the access standards and outreach taking place to secure more providers to assist Veterans through VA's Office of Community Care (484-7969). To his left is Patient Advocate Kaylie Ecker who like Marcus, is also a U.S. Army Veteran.



The two, along with Dr. Sarah Oslund, Chief of Behavioral Health; Eddie Steetle, EHRM Change Management; along with Marvin Boyd and Melanie Bell, Telehealth; joined MGVAMC's Associate Director Rick Richards and Veterans for a Town Hall meeting November 21st at the Vet Center.

\*Wealth of Health Nov. Newsletter\*

\*Get HealthyLife® Newsletter at this [link](#)\*



<https://www.facebook.com/VASpokane>

<https://twitter.com/spokaneva>

**Click Here** to share suggestions or ideas for improving services or operations at MGVAMC.



## GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT NOW INCLUDES CONCERNS OVER VAPING



The GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT happens every year on November 21st. And while more and more people are realizing and committing to the benefits of quitting smoking, revelations about vaping are also helping emphasize the importance of stopping use of tobacco and vaping oil products!

At left is Navy Veteran volunteer Bill Herrlinger, who has been tobacco free for the past 8-years! He's helping Veteran "Duff" understand how quitting smoking has empowered his own life, and his fellow Veterans who have committed to MGVAMC's Whole Health and Healthy Living alternatives through Nicotine

Replacement Therapy (NRT). "It's a commitment that takes time getting used to," explains Herrlinger. "But, kicking the habit is likely the best healthy holiday present you can give yourself, those closest to you, and of course - your future," he said. Herrlinger has volunteered for the past 8-years to support the Great American Smokeout here at MGVAMC. Please [follow this link](#) to learn more as we ask Veterans, VA staff, and volunteers to remember, "Whatever your reason for quitting, VA has your back!"





## ***"If Harassment is Happening Anywhere in VA, We Want to Know About It & Stop It Now"***

Leaders at Mann-Grandstaff VAMC joined Dr. Robert J. Fischer, Medical Center Director in a public declaration Oct. 30th - announcing VA's nationwide stance against harassment of any kind occurring at any VA facility.

"VA is committed to a harassment-free healthcare environment for our Veterans, our staff, volunteers, and all visitors to our facilities," explained Dr. Fischer, himself a Veteran. "Harassment is the act of making unwelcome in-

trusions upon another. We join our entire VA enterprise in this national campaign effort to put an end to harassment by calling upon Veterans, employees, volunteers, caregivers, and visitors to our facilities to recognize, intervene (if possible) and report harassment."

While the campaign runs through November, the goal of stopping harassment must be a sustained effort. MGVAMC staff are soliciting comments from anyone who has experienced or witnessed harassment here. VA asks everyone to report it to a VA employee or Patient Advocate's office to help us ensure we are aware of these types of issues and quickly address them.



## ***More Medical School Students Training at VA***

Earlier this Fall, the *VA Voice* shared how Washington State University's Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine already has several aspiring doctors, nurses, and specialists training right here at MGVAMC.

Graduate Medical Education (GME) and opportunities to receive "hands-on, real-time" training in the dynamic health care environment at VA—helps with the constant goal of inspiring medical students to consider VA and/or their local community hospitals or clinics for their first career choice - especially in a rural setting!

Pictured at center, MGVAMC's Dr. Kimberly Morris, who is Chief of Geriatrics, Rehabilitation, and Extended Care (GREC) and also our facility's Designated Education Officer (DEO) is working with Education Services and Chief Learning Officer Kim Connolley and her team - to provide a structured and valuable experience towards professional development and personal growth.

WSU's College of Medicine is now sharing that reality in an online and broadcast media campaign promoting the opportunities available through VA - [at this link!](#)



## ***MGVAMC Happy to Receive new Mini-Residency Training for Women Veterans Health Programs***

VHA's Women's Health Services (WHS) is funding new training opportunities for providers delivering health care in rural areas, including Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) and contracted Rural Health Clinics (RHCs).

Last month, WHS instructors (from VACO) brought their mini "sim-labs" and a variety of new instruments and techniques as part of their "mobile" instruction for our providers and nurses here. The collaborative between WHS and VA's Office of Rural Health (ORH) helped MGVAMC staff—as well as our teams based at our CBOC's in Wenatchee, WA and Coeur d'Alene, ID, and our RHC in Sandpoint, ID.

Nearly 30 MGVAMC staff completed on-demand lecture content through TMS, followed by day-long, face-to-face training with simulation equipment and clinical oversight.





## EHRM Message from VA Secretary Robert Wilkie

Dear VA friends and colleagues:

"Because of your tireless efforts, VA is no longer on the cusp of transformation; we are in the middle of it. Our efforts to modernize VA's legacy systems are essential to our mission of providing the highest level of care to Veterans today and into the future. The largest of our modernization efforts—in fact, one of the largest in Government—is the Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) program.

EHRM will be a game changer, giving doctors instant and seamless access to Veterans' complete health records and medical history, including their active-duty care. The new Electronic Health Records solution will allow the Department of Defense, VA, and community care providers to make faster, smarter connections between military service and health outcomes.

I ask each of you to take time to learn about the program by visiting the [EHRM Web site](#) and the [EHRM Intranet Web page](#). Once you are armed with the facts, discuss the impact of EHRM with your colleagues and how your office can coordinate with and support the program. Share our vision for the future of VA health care with Veterans as well as families and caregivers. EHRM is a priority for the Nation, for our Veterans—and as a Reserve Servicemember, it is a priority for me. With your support, the EHRM program will be the crowning achievement of our generation at VA."

## New EHRM Developments / Products: (Save Links to your Favorite URL's)

In addition to Secretary Wilke's message above to employees nationwide, VA's Office of Electronic Health Record Modernization (VA-OEHRM) and the Cerner Corporation's Change Management/Communications teams are all producing new outreach products for VA staff, Veterans, and stakeholders. Don't forget Integration Validation (IV) testing (Phase-1) is planned to start December 2, 2019 at MGVAMC!



[National OEHRM website](#)



[OEHRM "On The Record" Newsletter](#)



[Latest OEHRM News Releases](#)



["EHRM Why Video"](#)



[OEHRM Q & A Database \(QAD\)](#)



[Cerner's Local EHRM Express](#)

ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD  
MODERNIZATION



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



## CFC Cause of the Week: "Eradicating Hunger"

The Combined Federal Campaign is underway! As a federal employee, this is your opportunity to make a tax-deductible donation to a favorite charity. Your donation can be simple: either a one-time payment, or automatic deductions from your bi-weekly checks throughout 2020. Each week, CFC organizers are presenting a "Cause of the Week" and during Thanksgiving, you guessed it: It's about Eradicating Hunger! Click [here for online pledge portal!](#)

**\$20** donation supplies one family in a developing country with a fuel-efficient stove.

**\$30** donation purchases a holiday meal box, including all the fixings for a traditional meal.

**\$67** donation purchases a month of fresh food for a pregnant woman and baby's health!

**show Some Love**

**6** Great Reasons to Give through the CFC

- 1. The Hard Part is done!**  
Thousands of charities are already vetted and approved for you to choose from.
- 2. It's SO CONVENIENT**  
You can pledge via payroll deduction!
- 3. Choose your Favorites**  
You can support multiple charities in one pledge.
- 4. It's easy to RENEW**  
The secure online giving platform makes it easy to renew your gift each year.
- 5. You can even Volunteer**  
Don't limit your giving. Extend your impact by gifting volunteer hours.
- 6. We can have a BIG Impact**  
Together we have a collective impact, supporting the thousands of charities that depend on our generosity.



## ***Tiffani Bartel - Miss IDAHO for America 2020 Ignites Smiles and Cheers to Honor Veterans & Military Families Month at MGVAMC***

Recognizing VA's team during National Radiology Technicians Week was just the start of Miss IDAHO for America 2020's visit to Mann-Grandstaff VAMC leading into the Veterans Day holiday weekend!

Tiffani Bartel of nearby Coeur d'Alene, Idaho won the title in October, and says her first official "engagement" as Miss IDAHO for America 2020 had to be at the VA! "Veterans are important to me and that's why I've made their wishes and goals part of my platform for my year ahead as Miss Idaho," explained Bartel, who's Grandfather served in WW II. The 40-year old, single Mom says friends encouraged her to enter and after winning, is happy to begin her outreach! While at MGVAMC, Miss Idaho shared hand-made Veterans Day cards, sat with patients in waiting rooms, during lunch, and even at bedside with some of our Veteran inpatients.

Her two hour visit to Spokane's VA included the Veterans Canteen Service's annual Veterans Day specials (including free meals and coffee, and a cake-cutting celebration) led by VCS Chief Doug Majerus and his dedicated team.

"I am impressed and proud to see all of this wonderful spirit and admiration for Veterans at VA," she said. Miss Idaho for America 2020 plans a return visit to MGVAMC, but not until a planned visit to the Northern Idaho Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in Coeur d'Alene before the holidays!





## ***Two of Three Hausmann Family Veterans Retire from MGVAMC***

With nearly 80 years of combined Federal service between them, John Hausmann II and his wife Louanne, both USAF (Ret.) Veterans and VA employees at Mann-Grandstaff VAMC are looking forward to travel and slowing down following retirements for both heading into Thanksgiving.

Their son, John Hausmann III (USMC Veteran) meantime, continues his work at MGVAMC and looks forward to a long and fulfilling career ahead of him with VA. "I can't believe the time has come, but they've earned it," he explained, commenting how, "their service and commitment to others is everything our family is all about."

All three admit receiving their health care at VA allows them to explain and better promote VA programs and services - which builds confidence for new Veterans enrolling or just beginning their journey with VA.



"Big John" earned his military retirement from the Air Force at just 37-years old. His G.I. Bill benefit allowed him to earn both his Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Business and Health Care Administration at Eastern Washington University. The former USAF Aerospace Medicine Superintendent and Technical Training Instructor says, "having a strong medical and administrative background made me want to get back to working with the military, and the VA was the logical choice." John retired as MGVAMC's Health Information Management Systems (HIMS) manager just weeks before his Wife, Louanne.

He met Louanne, while both were stationed at Zweibrucken AB, Germany in the late 1980's when their love would allow them to enjoy their military careers and traveling through Europe. Louanne was a USAF Officer and Nurse who would earn extensive experience in PACU and Trauma units, along with Infection Control and Emergency Medicine. She grew up overseas, borne into a family of military members from Grandfather and uncles who served in WWII and Korea War. Her Father would serve in Vietnam after Louanne grew up in France. "I got to see Europe through a child's eyes twice," she smiled. She would go on to serve in the same unit as her own Dad once did in Germany.

At MGVAMC, Louanne made an impact in many areas of the medical center including nursing, sterile processing, Hospice, and wrapped up by serving as a Nurse-Social worker case manager. Always a mentor, she reminds younger VA co-workers and others, "some of the Veterans and families we serve have overwhelming needs and finding solutions that make their lives easier is very rewarding and necessary."

She admits too, that it's not always easy within the ever-evolving VHA health care system. "I realize we are all under pressure to do more with less, but we cannot work against each other. We need to find ways to work together, meet in the middle, and... provide the care Veterans need and want."

The Hausmann's admit their journey has been blessed, but as most military families know, not always easy - with hardships along the way. The biggest challenge they and their family have had to overcome was the loss of one of their three daughters, Lisa, nine years ago to suicide. They've been outspoken about it, by actively sharing their faith, support and outreach during Spokane's annual Suicide Prevention Walk every September. Both remain active at St. Thomas More Church and John is active with the Knights of Columbus.

Today, they're looking forward to more cruises, after last year's cruise from Dubai to Barcelona. In 2020, they'll embark for a trip to Australia and Singapore, with plans to cruise up to Alaska and later, the Baltic Sea to visit the exchange students they hosted from Norway, Sweden, Holland, and of course - Germany. In the meantime and closer to home, there'll be lots of time listening to live jazz music, reading, and Grandkids. Son John III says he's using his family heritage and passion to serve at VA because of the bonds Veterans share. "I'm right where I'm supposed to be," he says, "because I have purpose and passion for the comradery Mann-Grandstaff VAMC delivers our Veterans."



## MGVAMC Outreach Includes Lake Roosevelt Ferry to Support American Indian Veterans Resource Fair on Colville Reservation



Following this Fall's 10th Annual Veterans Memorial & Honoring Ceremony at MGVAMC, members of the American Indian Veteran Advisory Council (AIVAC) and their local Indian Health Service clinic in Inchelium were gracious hosts for a day-long resource fair to get acquainted, answer questions and create more awareness about the new VA MISSION Act.

Below left, MGVAMC's Bret Bowers, Alan McArthur, Jessica Lockyear, Stacey Danker, Isaiah Bryant and Andrew Cypher are pictured onboard the ferry with VA Community Partner Goodwill Corporation's-SSVF housing team. The Lake Roosevelt Community Health clinic had more than three dozen Veterans participate by meeting individually with each of the VA and Community Resource Subject Matter Experts present. In addition to the interaction with Veterans, the clinic team's hospitality was fabulous!



## Holidays on the Horizon

Mann-Grandstaff VAMC's Voluntary Service is beginning to receive more and more donations as we begin the holiday season. At right, VA Volunteers Tom Guier and Ed Haskell (US Navy Veterans) are more than happy to receive hand-made lap-blankets donated by the fantastic team of quilters from St. Johns Lutheran church off US-195 in Spokane.



## Volunteer Deb Mallion, USAF Ret. Helping Veterans through DAV

Disabled American Veteran volunteer Deb Mallion, (USAF Ret.) is happy to transport her fellow Veterans to their medical appointments at Mann-Grandstaff VAMC. That's her on the far right, pictured with MGVAMC Voluntary Service Chief James Deen and DAV Coordinator Jeannie Kyle.



All three are smiling after local media outlets [KREM-2](#) (CBS) and the [Spokesman Review](#) committed to profiling DAV's need for more volunteer drivers in the region.

At no cost to VA enrolled Veteran patients, Mallion and other DAV volunteers know their time and service are highly valued by the Veterans they serve. Still, there's a constant need to attract more volunteers, especially in the rural areas of NE and North Central Washington, Idaho panhandle, and even up into NW Montana!

DAV's support for Veterans getting their care at Mann-Grandstaff VAMC dates clear back to 1988. Since then, DAV has transported more than 75,000 Veterans to and from Spokane's VA medical center. Drivers have logged more than 181,000 hours and nearly 4.4-Million miles during that time. Following the recent media interest, DAV's Kyle received more than two-dozen inquiries from interested volunteers, who must pass a physical and a VA background check. Call (509) 434-7019 for more info!

**American Legion Auxiliary**

**GIFT SHOP**

OPEN TO ALL VETERANS, BOTH INPATIENTS AND OUTPATIENTS

December 2-4, 2019, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

December 5, 2019, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Room C223  
(Second Floor)

Not available to employees

Happy Holidays!

After Thanksgiving American Legion Auxiliary members from throughout Central/Eastern Washington will host their annual "Santa's Gift Shop" for Veterans who could use a little extra help this holiday season. It's free and allows Veterans to select 2-3 gifts for loved ones, and the kind-hearted Legion members will

gladly wrap up nicely and then send with the Veterans as they depart MGVAMC!





# ***Retro Pin-Up Girls Share Smiles, Styles, and Glamour with Veterans at VA***



Look at the smiles, appreciation, and the joy created for Veterans by four lovely ladies (among them a Veteran) who surprised patients and staff at Mann-Grandstaff VAMC with treats, nostalgia, glamour, and joy during the Veterans Day weekend in Spokane.

Having reached out to VA about the idea earlier in the Fall, Ms. Lynn Ellis coordinated this first-ever visit to MGVAMC with the help of her friends from a North Idaho Retro Photography studio. They didn't come to VA to take pictures. They came to honor Veterans... with charm and charisma.

"I have to admit," says Ellis, "it was emotionally difficult, but after seeing their smiles and being welcomed with open arms, it was definitely worth it!" Ellis is pictured in all blue (at left in bottom left picture) and was joined by (L-R): Melissa (Veteran), Valentina (hat) and Rachel - as the four brought in donuts for Veteran patient Rebecca Hamm (US Army Nursing Corps 1963-'74) and all of the inpatients in our Community Living Center, Hospice Unit, and main hospital building.

"We enjoyed it tremendously," said Ellis, who shared, "the visit really touched our hearts to be around the men and women who have served for all of us." Admitting she's very patriotic, Ellis explained the group's desire to bring more of the 1940-50's era Retro Pin-up Dolls back to Mann-Grandstaff for a future event! In the meantime... Veterans and VA are extremely grateful for this sincere, heart-felt effort to honor and spend time with the men and women who have sacrificed so much for the freedoms we all enjoy! This community's support of Veterans is amazing!



**Choose VA**