



Director's Notes

Since my arrival here in April 2014, I've made it my mission to improve the health care we provide to South Carolina's Veterans as well the overall perception and customer satisfaction of the Dorn VA Medical Center and its staff.



In 2014, Dorn VAMC was providing primary care, long-term care, rehabilitative care, specialty care and mental health care for 78,000 Veterans, with just a little more than 2,000 health care and administrative professionals.

As of During Fiscal Year 2015, between the Dorn VAMC and its seven community-based outpatient clinics, we treated 82,177 Veterans, an increase of 4.9 percent compared to previous year.

Through January of this year, Dorn VAMC had already seen more than 61,000 Veterans – 1,100 more than in January 2015.

Additionally, Dorn employees about 2,560 professionals – all dedicated to supporting our Veterans.

We firmly believe every Veteran deserves quality health care. Additionally, we understand every who steps through our doors, whether here at Dorn or one of our seven CBOCs throughout South Carolina, is personal and unique and because of that we strive to ensure the best health care is given in each situation.

– Timothy B. McMurry
Medical Center Director

New Anderson clinic officially opens

by Bob Hall
Dorn VAMC Public Affairs Specialist

In an effort to expand the availability of health care services for Veterans in Upstate region of South Carolina, the William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center officially opened a new, state-of-the-art facility in Anderson, S.C., on March 18.

The new clinic, which began seeing patients in mid-February, is located at 3030 North Highway 81 in Anderson.

The 44,000-square-foot community-based outpatient clinic replaces the previous, 6,800-square-foot, clinic used to provide services primarily to the Veterans in Anderson only. The new facility, once fully staffed, will be equipped and staffed to support, along with two the two other CBOCs in Upstate area in Greenville and Spartanburg, the 16,000 or so Veterans in the Upstate.

Where the previous clinic only provided primary care and mental health services, the new facility is primed to greatly expand services, to include:

clinical pharmacist, social work, physical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology, compensation and pension, home-based primary care (HBPC), limited sub-specialty, laboratory, general radiology and ultrasound services.

During his address to the gathered audience, guest speaker Jeremiah Palmer, referred to the previous clinic as a “shoebox,” and said “We ought to be extremely thankful we have this new facility. It's a great step beyond the shoebox we were once in.

“This new facility may not be fully staff yet,” said the Marine Corps Vietnam Veteran and current pastor for the New Broadmouth Baptist Church in Anderson, “but that is coming soon too – just like this glorious new building here. We have a lot to thankful for.”

To help celebrate this auspicious occasion, a number groups from Anderson, the surrounding counties, and the state, volunteered their time and services to make the event most memorable. To kick off the ceremony,

See Anderson, Page 2



Dorn VAMC leadership was joined by several key Anderson CBOC staff members, volunteers, and Veterans to officially open the new 44,000-square-foot facility. (photo by Ken Holt, Dorn VAMC medical media photographer)

What's happening here and around the state

MyHealthVet has moved

The MyHealthVet office has moved into the main facility. The office is now located in Building 100A, Room 1D104, which is directly across the hall from elevators to eye clinic, and directly adjacent to the White and Blue team area.

For more information about MyHealthVet, call (803) 695-6783.

New Patient Orientation

A Health Benefits Seminar designed to help Veterans new to Dorn VAMC is scheduled for the third Tuesday of every month and is hosted in the Dorn VAMC auditorium (Building 5).

The orientation was established to inform new patients how to access services within Dorn VAMC. You will be provided a booklet of crucial information to ensure your transition into VA is a smooth one.

Registration for this seminar is not required.

For additional information, please contact Evetta Gregg, director of Stakeholder Relations, (803) 776-4000 (ext. 7696).

Hiring/resource fair

There is a Veteran Hiring Event and Resource Fair in Greenwood **April 13**, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the National Guard Armory at 2116 Gateway. This is open to all Veterans and family members.

For more information, call (803) 299-2583.

Job fair in Florence

There is a job fair in Florence **April 14**, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Southeastern Institute of Manufacturing Technology at 1950 Pisgah Road.

Career Fair at Transitions

There is a Career Fair planned for 9 to 11 a.m. **April 22** at Transitions in Columbia. This is open to everyone.

Step up to end homelessness

Come out to Transitions Homeless

Recovery Center at 2025 Main Street in Columbia **April 30** from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and help end homelessness one step at a time.

This two-mile walk begins at Transitions and will make an impact as participants cover the perimeter of our facility. After the walk, participants will receive a full guided tour of Transitions and will join staff and clients for lunch in the Day Center.

Register for Transitions' Homelessness Awareness Walk and take part in this community wide event to raise

awareness about homelessness in the Midlands.

Veteran Town Hall meetings

A Veteran's Town Hall meeting is being planned in **June** for Veterans living in the Rock Hill area.

The date, time and location for the Rock Hill Veteran's Town Hall in June is still to be determined. Updated information will be posted to the Dorn VAMC official Website at www.columbiava.gov/pressreleases or www.facebook.com/VAColumbiaSC.



(photos by Bob Hall, Dorn VAMC Public Affairs Specialist)

Dorn Voluntary Services helping area Veterans

March 15 through 17 Voluntary Service conducted an on-site Stand Down for the Veterans at the Dorn VAMC. This three-day event serviced 873 Veterans with items such as blankets, slippers, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors, shaving cream, warm up suits, socks, shampoo, conditioner, body wash kits, etc. Donations were valued at greater than \$60,000.

Members of the Disabled American Veterans popped popcorn, an occasional volunteer played music for the Veterans, and many of the staff in Stakeholder Relations and all of Voluntary Service participated. Flu shots were also provided free of charge to all Veterans.

Comments and Suggestions for the Palmetto Post

The Palmetto Post is designed to help keep South Carolina's Veterans informed about the health care and services provided by the Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center and its seven community-based outpatient clinics.

This is your newsletter. So sugges-

tions on the information you'd like to see in this newsletter are most welcome. Keep in mind, space is limited as this is only a monthly newsletter at this time, so not all suggestions will be granted.

Submit your comments or suggestions to vhamcsdornpa@va.gov.

VA commemorates 50th Anniversary of Vietnam War

The Department of Veterans Affairs conducted hundreds of events in VA facilities across the nation on Mar. 29 to recognize, honor and thank U.S. Vietnam Veterans and their families for their service and sacrifices as part of the national Vietnam War Commemoration.

VA Secretary Robert McDonald hosted a wreath-laying ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial – “The Wall” to initiate VA’s contribution to the commemoration.

VA, along with more than 9,000 organizations across the country, has joined with the Department of Defense as a commemorative partner to help Americans honor our nation’s Vietnam Veterans.

Authorized by Congress, established under the secretary of defense, and launched by the president in May 2012, the Vietnam War Commemoration recognizes all men and women who served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces from Nov. 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975.

Nine million Americans, approximately 7 million living today, served during that period, and the Commemoration makes no distinction between Veterans who served in-country, in-theater, or were stationed elsewhere during those 20 years. All answered the call of duty.

“This Commemoration has special significance for those of us at VA because of our honored mission to serve those who have “borne the battle,” McDonald said. “It’s also an opportunity to remember our VA colleagues who served in this generation of Veterans, to extend our heartfelt appreciation to them and to their families who shared the burden of their loved one’s service.”

More than 329 VA medical centers, regional benefit offices and national cemeteries hosted events, many in partnership with local Veteran service organizations and volunteers.

By presidential proclamation issued on May 25, 2012, the commemoration extends from its inaugural event on Memorial Day 2012 through Veterans Day 2025.

Commemorative Partners – local, state and national organizations, businesses, corporations and governmental agencies – have committed to publicly thank and honor Vietnam Veterans and their families on behalf of the nation and have pledged to host a minimum of two events annually.

To learn more about the Vietnam War Commemoration, go to: www.vietnamwar50th.com

Dorn welcomes new assistant director

Ken Thi-bodeaux was appointed as Medical Center Assistant Director in January 2016. He has direct responsibility for Police, Environmental Management, Chaplain

and Food and Nutrition services and indirect responsibility for the Canteen, Office of Information and Technologies, Prosthetics, ISO tenant services. He is Dorn’s liaison to the NCA and local Vet Centers.

Prior to the VA, Thibodeaux, an Air Force Veteran, was a drafter/designer in the petrochemical industry. In 1997, he completed a four year nursing program in Atlanta, where he also worked as a VA Learning Opportunities Residency Program student nurse at the Atlanta VAMC.

See Thibodeaux, Page 8



Dorn to break ground for parking garage

by Bob Hall
Dorn VAMC Public Affairs Specialist

The rumors have been confirmed. The Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center is getting a three-story parking garage, which should be completed sometime in 2017.

According to Christopher Zell, the projects section chief at Dorn VAMC, “The parking garage construction project is expected to be awarded by March 2016.

Once a notice-to-proceed is issued construction is scheduled to be completed in 360 days.”

The garage, which will be located behind the main hospital building (Building 100) and directly adjacent to Building 106, is expected to support more than 400 vehicles, adding about 320 parking spaces to what Dorn already had available.

The unfortunate side to this construction project is that during construction Dorn will actually lose about 100 spaces, which will make parking even more of a challenge.

So during the construction of the



To call for the shuttle between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., dial (803) 695-6780.

parking garage, Veterans are encouraged to plan to arrive for their scheduled appointments at least one hour prior as parking will be at a premium. Dorn VAMC will continue to provide the free valet parking at the entrance of Building 100 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Additionally, Dorn VAMC will continue the free shuttle service for parking area further away from the main facility. For the shuttle service, please call (803) 695-6780.

The shuttle service is supported by volunteer drivers. If you’d like to volunteer to be a shuttle driver, please contact the Dorn VAMC Voluntary Service department at (803) 776-4000 (ext. 6780) or (803) 695-6780.

Anderson

from Page 1

members from the Special Forces Association Parachute Team parachuted into the back parking lot of the facility carrying a large American flag. A choir ensemble from the Southern Wesleyan University performed several patriotic musical selections including the Armed Forces medley – designed to honor service members from each branch of the armed services. Other groups included local representatives of the Disabled American Veterans, American Legion Post 184, Upstate Warrior Solutions, and the T.L. Hanna high School band and JROTC.

“This facility is a great addition to the Upstate area,” said Timothy McMurry, the Dorn VAMC director. “We

have more than 16,000 Veterans in the Upstate and we’re committed to providing quality health care to all of them. This new facility will greatly help with that endeavor.

“Not only will this new facility be able to see more patients, but by providing more specialty clinics locally, will the burden of Veterans making trips to our Columbia facility for treatment,” McMurry said. “We dedicated to providing Veteran-focused care.”

The Anderson clinic, is one of seven CBOCs in South Carolina managed by the Dorn VAMC. Dorn VAMC, and its seven Community-Based Outpatient Clinics, provides care for more than 82,000 Veterans throughout South Carolina annually.



The historical marker plaque for the new Anderson community-based outpatient clinic. Each VA facility has a similar plaque displayed somewhere near its main entrance(photo by Ken Holt, Dorn VAMC medical media photographer)



Members of the American Legion Post 184 march on the colors during the Anderson CBOC ribbon-cutting ceremony (photo by Bob Hall, Dorn VAMC public affairs specialist)



Timothy McMurry, the director of the Wm. Jennings Byrd Center speaks to the audience gathered at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for South Carolina’s newest VA community-based outpatient clinic (photo by Ken Holt, Dorn VAMC medical media photographer)



A member of the Special Forces Association Parachute Team, displaying the American flag, soars into the back parking lot of the new Anderson CBOC at the beginning of the ribbon-cutting ceremony. (photo by Ken Holt, Dorn VAMC medical media photographer)



...ran Dorn VA Medical
...cutting ceremony for
...ent clinic. (photo by



Members from the South Wesleyan University choir sang several patriotic songs during the ceremony. (photo by Ken Holt, Dorn VAMC medical media photographer)

Protect Your Health

Sick and tired of feeling sick and tired

Are you having difficulty managing your chronic health condition, such



as congestive heart failure, arthritis, chronic pain, diabetes, emphysema, heart disease, or hypertension?

William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center offers free workshops for anyone with pain, diabetes, arthritis, asthma, obesity, heart disease, high blood pleasurable, and a multitude of other chronic ailments.

The Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Program at Dorn VAMC can help by teaching you:

- Techniques to deal with problems such as frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation;
- Exercises for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility and endurance;
- Appropriate use of medications;
- Communicating effectively with

family, friends, and health professionals;

- Healthy eating habits;
- To make informed treatment decisions; and
- Disease-related problem solving skills.

This is based on a program developed by professionals at Stanford University in California.

The workshop participants meet for two and half hours weekly for six weeks in small, interactive groups with other Veterans. This program is open to Veterans and their family members.

For more information or to sign up, please call Heather Roth at (803) 776-4000, ext. 4707, or email here at heather.roth@va.gov.

April is alcohol awareness month: limit your intake

Drinking alcohol can have benefits (relaxation, social interactions, taste) as well as a variety of problems such as:

- Reduced inhibitions (doing and saying things you wouldn't do or say sober);
- Motor impairment, car crashes, and other accidents;
- Memory/concentration problems; and
- Negative interactions with prescribed medications

If you choose to drink alcohol, drink in moderation (women no more than one drink a day; men no more than two drinks a day).

Avoid "binge drinking."

If you are concerned about your drinking, talk to your VA health care team about getting help.

Helpful Tips

One drink is:

- 12-oz. regular beer, usually about 5percent alcohol;
- 8-9-oz. malt liquor;
- 5-oz. table wine (12 percent); or
- 1.5-oz. 80-proof hard liquor

Binge drinking is having:

- More than three drinks in two hours for women and adults over age 64.

- More than four drinks in two hours for men.

Remember, on average, women should have no more than

one drink a day (and no more than seven drinks per week) and men should have no more than two drinks a day (and no more than 14 drinks per week).

For many adults, drinking small amounts of alcohol does not cause serious health problems. Too much alcohol use or binge drinking can lead to higher risk of health problems, such as liver damage or other injuries.

The following people should not drink alcohol at all:

- Children and teenagers;
- People of any age who cannot limit their drinking to the recommended levels;
- Pregnant women or those who plan to become pregnant;
- People who plan to drive, operate machines, or take part in other activities requiring attention, skill, or coordination ;
- People taking certain medications;
- People with certain medical conditions;
- People recovering from alcohol dependence (alcoholism);

Alcohol dependence can be treated. Effective treatments include individual counseling, group treatments, medications to reduce craving or prevent relapse, and inpatient or residential treatment. Talk to your VA health care team about the resources VA has that can help. If you have questions or interest in making a healthy living change, please see your primary care team at the VA facility in which you receive health care.

Call center to help with Choice Program billing issues

Veterans can now work directly with the Department of Veterans Affairs to resolve debt collection issues resulting from inappropriate or delayed Choice Program billing.

In step with MyVA's efforts to modernize VA's customer-focused, Veteran-centered services capabilities, a Community Care Call Center has been set up for Veterans experiencing adverse credit reporting or debt collection resulting from inappropriately billed Choice Program claims.

Veterans experiencing these problems can call (877) 881-7618.

"As a result of the Veterans Choice Program, community providers have seen thousands of Veterans. We continue to work to make the program more Veteran-friendly," said Dr. David Shulkin, under secretary for health.



"There should be no bureaucratic burden that stands in the way of Veterans getting care," Shulkin added.

The new call center will work to resolve instances of improper Veteran billing and assist community care medical providers with delayed payments.

VA staff are also trained and ready to work with the medical providers to expunge adverse credit reporting on Vet-

erans resulting from delayed payments to providers.

VA is urging Veterans to continue working with their VA primary care team to obtain necessary health care services regardless of adverse credit reporting or debt collection activity.

VA acknowledges that delayed payments and inappropriately billed claims are unacceptable and have caused stress for Veterans and providers alike.

The new call center is the first step in addressing these issues.

For more details about the Veterans Choice Program and VA's progress, visit: www.va.gov/opa/choiceact.

Veterans seeking to use the Veterans Choice Program can call (866) 606-8198 to find out more about the program, confirm their eligibility and schedule an appointment.

VA announces additional steps to reduce Veteran suicide

The Department of Veterans Affairs recently announced new steps it is taking to reduce Veteran suicide. The steps follow a February 2 Summit, "Preventing Veteran Suicide – A Call to Action," that brought together stakeholders and thought leaders to discuss current research, approaches and best practices to address this important subject.

"We know that every day, approximately 22 Veterans take their lives and that is too many," said VA Under Secretary for Health Dr. David Shulkin. "We take this issue seriously. While no one knows the subject of Veteran suicide better than VA.

"We all have an obligation to help Veterans suffering from the invisible wounds of military service that lead them to think suicide is their only option," Shulkin added.

Several changes and initiatives are being announced that strengthen VA's approach to Suicide Prevention. They include:

- Elevating VA's Suicide Prevention Program with additional resources to manage and strengthen current programs and initiatives;
- Meeting urgent mental health needs by providing Veterans with the goal of same-day evaluations and access by the end of calendar year 2016;
- Establishing a new standard of care by using measures of Veteran-reported symptoms to tailor mental health treatments to individual needs;
- Launching a study, "Coming Home from Afghanistan and Iraq," to look at the impact of deployment and combat as it relates to suicide, mental health and well-being;
- Using predictive modeling to guide early interventions

for suicide prevention;

- Using data on suicide attempts and overdoses for surveillance to guide strategies to prevent suicide;
 - Increasing the availability of naloxone rescue kits throughout VA to prevent deaths from opioid overdoses;
 - Enhancing Veteran Mental Health access by establishing three regional tele-mental health hubs; and
 - Continuing to partner with the Department of Defense on suicide prevention and other efforts for a seamless transition from military service to civilian life.
- For information about initiatives to prevent suicide, visit www.mentalhealth.va.gov/suicide_prevention/.

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN DORN VA MEDICAL CENTER

PALMETTO POST

The *Palmetto Post* is a monthly newsletter for the Veterans at and around the Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center, or one of its seven community-based outpatient clinics in Anderson, Florence, Greenville, Orangeburg, Rock Hill, Spartanburg or Sumter.

This newsletter is a product of the Dorn VAMC Public Affairs Office. Any questions, concerns, comments or suggestions should be directed to Bob Hall at (803) 776-4000 x 6519 or by email to vhaemsdornpa@va.gov.

Dorn VAMC Staff

Director Timothy McMurry
 Associate Director David Omura
 Associate Director of Nursing/Patient Services Ruth Mustard
 Chief of Staff Bernard DeKoning
 Assistant Director Kenneth Thibodeaux

Public Affairs Officer/Editor Bob Hall

Frequently Called Numbers

Admissions	(803) 776-4000 x4983/7190
Appointment Line.....	(803) 647-5829
.....	(800) 293-8262
Billing and Insurance	
Collections – pay a bill	(888) 827-4817
General questions.....	(866) 258-2772
Medical claims	(803) 776-4000 x6763
Chaplain Services	
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.	(803) 776-4000 x6332
After hours	(803) 776-4000
Compensation and Pension.....	(803) 776-4000 x6183
Enrollment Eligibility	(803) 776-4000 x7010
Information Desk (Dorn VAMC).....	(803) 776-4000 x4179/8055
Medical Records	(803) 776-4000 x6283
Mental Health	(803) 776-4000 x
MyHealthVet.....	(803) 695-6783
Patient Advocate	(803) 776-4000 x7998/6937
Prosthetics.....	(803) 776-4000 x6323
Release of Information	(803) 776-4000 x6290
Telephone Advice Line	
Outside Columbia	(888) 651-2683
In Columbia	(803) 647-5829
Travel Office	(803) 776-4000 x4492/4525/4484
Veteran’s Transportation Service	(803) 776-4000 6398
Veteran Service Organizations	
American Legion	(803) 776-4000 x7539
AmVets.....	(803) 776-4000 x2421
Disabled American Veterans	(803) 776-4000 x2422
Military Order of the Pearl Heart.....	(803) 776-4000 x2430
Paralyzed Veterans Association	(803) 776-4000 x2432
Veteran’s of Foreign Wars.....	(803) 776-4000 x2443
Voluntary Services	(803) 776-4000 x6780/7081

Community-Base Outpatient Clinics

Anderson CBOC
3030 N. Hwy 81
Anderson, SC 29621
Tele (864) 224-5450

Sumter CBOC
407 N. Salem Ave
Sumter, SC 29150
Tele (803) 938-9901

Greenville OPC
41 Park Creek Drive
Greenville, SC 29605
Tele (864) 299-1600

Orangeburg CBOC
1767 Village Park Drive
Orangeburg, SC 29118
(803) 533-1335

Spartanburg CBOC
279 North Grove Medical Plaza
Spartanburg, SC 29303
Tele (864) 582-7025

Rock Hill CBOC
2670 Mills Park Drive
Rock Hill, SC 29732
Tele (803) 366-4848

Florence CBOC
1822 Sally Hill Farms Blvd
Florence, SC 29501
Tele (843) 292-8383



Thibobeaux

from Page 3

His nursing work in the private sector included several years at the Shephard Center where he specialized in spinal cord and brain injury rehabilitation.

Inspired by his VALOR experience, he returned to the VA as a Graduate Healthcare Administration Training Program resident at the Asheville VAMC located in Asheville, N.C.

Thibobeaux holds a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing from Georgia State University in Atlanta; a Master Degree in Business Administration from GSU and a Master Degree in Health Administration from GSU.

Thibobeaux served as the chief of Consolidated Care at the Anchorage, Alaska, VA Regional Office; chief of Health Information Management Section at the New Orleans VAMC and Assistant Central Business Office at the Palo Alto VAHCS.

He has also worked as a Health Systems Specialist in the Office of the Principle Deputy Under Secretary for Health at VA Central Office.

He spent three years as the Veterans Integrated Service Network 20 OIF/OEF/OND point of contact and Polytrauma Program Coordinator.

Prior to his appointment at Dorn, Thibobeaux was the special assistant to the medical center director and facility strategic planner at the Grand Junction VAHCS located in Grand Junction, Co.

He was also a member of the VISN 19 Strategic Planning Board.

Stay connected to with Dorn VAMC

Dorn VAMC official Web site:
www.columbiasc.va.gov/

Dorn Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/VAColumbiaSC

Dorn Twitter handle:
[@VAMCColumbiaSC](https://twitter.com/VAMCColumbiaSC)