

THE BOISE



JANUARY 2023

FRONT

The official newsletter of the Boise VA Medical Center

welcome

Aboard

**SALUTE TO
VETERANS
WEEK PG. 13**

**BACK BY POPULAR
DEMAND 'HELLO/
GOODBYE'S' PG. 2&3**

**WORKPLACE
VIOLENCE
AWARENESS PG. 18**

Hello's



Goodbye's

THE BOISE VAMC WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME OUR NEW
EMPLOYEES WHO CAME ABOARD IN JANUARY 2023:

**Sarah Allen
Natalie Brock
Natalie Browning
William Carrico
Brienne Childers
Marcia Croffy
Lucas Densley
Nita Dmitrich
Susan Ellette
Mary Field
Jennifer Force
Dustin Frank
Emily Hamilton
Kamal Hamnach
Dawn Hansen
Jamie Lichtenhan**

**Kelly Lim
Jeffrey Lin
Clark McDonald
William McEachern
Craig Parmer
Faith Pothier
Jessica Powell
Jenisys Sarrett
Jelena Stott
Stephanie Thompson
Euphemia Walbuck
Jamie Wallace
Edward Wear
Jackie Whitesell
Madison Woodworth**

Hello's



Goodbye's

THE BOISE VAMC WOULD LIKE TO SAY GOODBYE TO
THE EMPLOYEES WHO LEFT US IN JANUARY 2023:

Erin Cain

Steven Garcia

Michael Kepler

Paula Marie Purdome

WE WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE THE TRAGIC PASSING OF A VERY
SPECIAL BOISE EMPLOYEE. OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS ARE
WITH HIS FAMILY AND THE LOVED ONES HE LEAVES BEHIND.

Paris Morrow

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Steve VanZant



I am a Navy veteran, having served a four-year hitch ('64-69). I was an AQB2, aviation fire control technician 2nd class. Worked on the electronic bombing system of the A6 Intruder. Mostly stationed at Whidbey Island WA on permanent shore duty but swapped orders with a married guy and went on a WESTPAC cruise to the South China Sea in '68/'69 during the Viet Nam war on the Connie (USS Constellation). It was one of the most eventful experiences of my life and I

wouldn't have missed it.

Grew up mostly in the Chicago suburbs. Got interested in hawks and falcons during my teen years and trained several for falconry. After leaving the Navy and working as an electronics technician, used the GI bill to earn a bachelor's degree in Physics from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Moved to Idaho in 1988 because a lot of my falconry friends were out here and in visiting them, I realized how great

Southern Idaho is. I worked as an air quality analyst for the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality in Twin Falls for 18 years before retiring in 2012. Moved to Boise shortly thereafter. Have never been married and don't have any kids but my longtime girlfriend lives here and we enjoy many of the outdoor activities the area has to offer.

I volunteer at the VA because I relate to veterans and the military experience. I try to give a

little of myself back which I have found is good for the soul. Started volunteering at the VA in 2018 and alternately have driven the campus shuttle van and provided escort assistance. I most enjoy helping veterans figure out where they need to go in the hospital and assisting them in getting there. It's a pleasure getting to know them and hearing about their lives and experiences.

BOISE is HIGHLY RELIABLE

HRO PRINCIPLES & VALUES

THEME OF THE MONTH
Sensitivity to Operations

January 2023 | National Safety Poster

Improving Processes to Keep the Power On

C

CONTEXT

The Biomedical Team at VA Pittsburgh HCS was unable to identify a circuit-breaker issue that was randomly tripping the Urology X-ray Generator, interrupting patient care. The team contacted Jason Davern, Biomedical Equipment Support Specialist, to help troubleshoot the problem.

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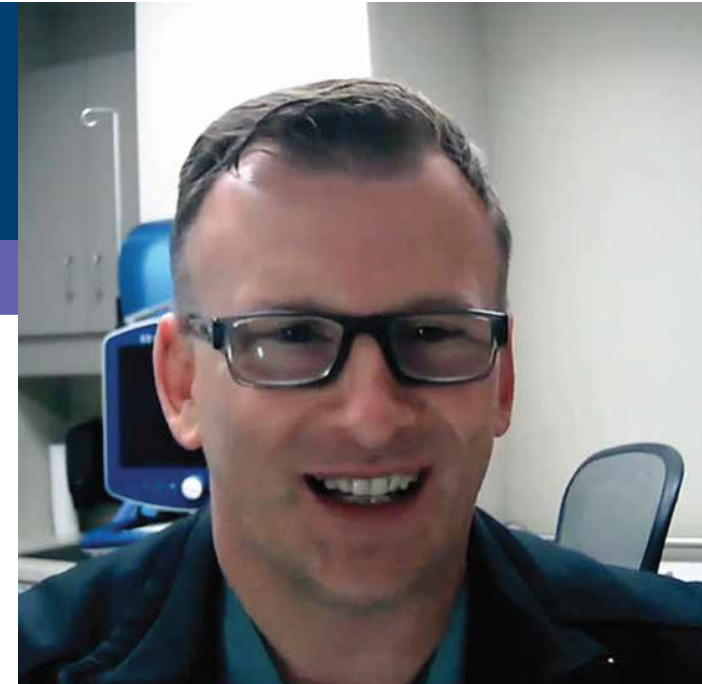
ACTION

Mr. Davern found that the breaker was tripping overnight, even with the generator off. Digging into the root cause, he discovered that part of the circuit-breaker issue was related to the equipment's Emergency Stop (E-stop) button. A laundry cart had been placed near the generator at night. When its lid was opened, the cart triggered the E-stop button.

R

RESULTS

Mr. Davern exercised a Sensitivity to Operations, being mindful of how the current process could impede patient care. He relocated the laundry cart and acquired a safety cover for the E-stop to prevent it from being triggered. Although, as a Biomedical Equipment Support Specialist, he did not interact directly with patients, his interventions improved front line care processes, and as a result, patient care.



“Understanding the necessity of X-ray machinery for daily operations, I cleared space around the E-stop to keep the breaker from tripping.”

*Jason Davern
Biomedical Equipment Support Specialist
VA Pittsburgh Health Care System
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

For more information, visit: http://bit.ly/HighReliability_sp

VHA'S JOURNEY TO

**HIGH
RELIABILITY**

Your Care is Our Mission.

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH DECEMBER



Milo Swearingen

Milo is an extremely dedicated housekeeper currently working on 2MS. Prior to moving to our newly renovated unit, Milo worked hard to ensure rooms were clean in a department that was definitely a challenge due to shared rooms and a tight work space. On a regular basis, we interview our veteran patients for feedback on how we're doing. One of the questions is related to cleanliness of their rooms. Here are the compliments Milo has received from our patients:

"Milo has been great! Excellent worker, I give him brownie points."

"Milo is amazing, fastest worker I've ever seen!"

These are just 2 of the many comments we hear from our patients about Milo. For this reason, we feel he displays the ICARE values of commitment and excellence. He shows every day his commitment to his job and our veterans. He also strives for the highest quality in his work. Our staff love having him on 2MS and are proud to have him as part of the 2MS family.

Patient Safety Minute

It's about the Veteran

Patient Safety Forum News

Our next Patient Safety Forum is **JANUARY 20, 2023 10:00** during bimonthly Town Hall. Some agenda items:

HRO HeRO Award, RCA lessons Learned, Filling out a JPSR, Guest Speaker, Interactive activities, Open Forum

Goals of Patient Safety Forums

Enhance our sharing of lessons learned, best practices, & process improvements

Open forums for all staff to discuss safety concerns/events

Further cultivate our Just Culture by creating a safe space to speak up

Recognize our staff for their commitment to safety



Did you know??

Check it out– copy and paste <https://vaww.va.gov/Acronyms/fulllist.cfm>

November Good Catch Award— Jennifer Ruwo, Vinny Naidoo, and Tracy Wright- Congratulations Pharmacy
Our pharmacy buyer, Tracy Wright, was notified by our compounding pharmacy that a medication compounded at that pharmacy was erroneously labeled with the intended strength, not the actual strength of the product. This mislabeled compound had just been mailed out to a veteran the day prior. After being notified immediately, Pharmacist, Jennifer Ruwo, was able to make contact with the veteran and instruct him not to take the medication, which was discarded. The correct medication was mailed to the veteran, who was thankful for the catch and follow up ensuring his medication was correct. Through timely, transparent communication, the pharmacy was able to notify this veteran, correct the error, and continue to build trust in the Boise VA to do the right thing in a High Reliability Organization. It truly is about the veteran!

Patient Safety + HRO = Working together toward Zero Patient Harm

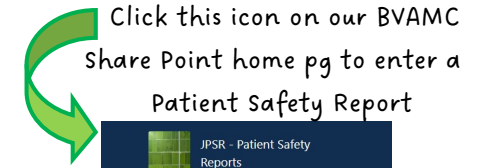


HRO Theme for January:
Sensitivity to Operations

Learn more at Share point



Click this icon on our BVAMC Share Point home pg to enter a Patient Safety Report



January JPSR TIP

JPSRs, or “incident reports” as commonly referred to, are **privileged and confidential, and should NOT be referred to when documenting in the patient’s EHR (CPRS).**

We call them **Joint Patient Safety Reports** Because we share our reporting system jointly with Department of Defense and Transcom.

SAFETY FIRST

Compliance Corner

The Ethics of Fundraising at Work

Around this time of year, many federal employees wonder whether they are allowed to engage in fundraising activities such as selling Girl Scout cookies on behalf of their scouts in the federal workplace and the simple answer is no. Not under any circumstances, with no exceptions.

This restriction applies to all fundraising activities i.e., raffles, candy/gift wrap sales, Boy Scout popcorn and yes even those yummy Girl Scout cookies. Under the Code of Federal Regulations 5 C.F.R. Part 950 § 2635.808 Fundraising Activities, the only allowable fundraising activity on federal property is for approved events associated with the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC).

Below are some commonly asked questions and answers related to fundraising on VA Property:

Q: Can I fundraise to VA employees off VA property?

A: Yes, but not to subordinate employees.

Q: Can I email people letting them know that I have Girl Scout cookies to sell?

A: Not via your work computer or phone.

Q: What should I do if I see someone fundraising for an organization that is not part of the CFC?

A: Ask them to please not do it on VA property and let your supervisor know.

Q: Can I have a "I have Girl Scout cookies" sign in my car window?

A: It is best to take it down while on campus, so people do not inadvertently break any of the above rules.

Q: Can I verbally let people know that I am selling something as part of a fundraiser?

A: Not while on the clock – lunch or break is okay but be cautious not to come across as pressuring.

Q: Can I leave order forms for cookies, popcorn, or other fundraising in the breakroom?

A: No, this is a violation of the fundraising activities rule.

Q: Can I use the copier/printer in my section to print order forms?

A: No, minimal personal use of government resources does not apply to printing non-Combined Federal Campaign fundraising documents. (VA Directive 6001)

Need more guidance regarding fundraising? Please contact the Boise VAMC Integrity and Compliance Officer, Steven Waltari, at 208-422-1267 or Steven.Waltari@va.gov.

COMPLIANCE CORNER





FREE TO ATTEND!

2023 VETERANS LEGAL CLINICS

17 January
21 February
21 March
18 April
16 May

Legal clinics are free & open to veterans and spouses.

Clinics are held from 2PM to 4PM at the Boise VA Medical Center, Bldg. 54. Located at 500 W. Fort Street, Boise, Idaho 83702.

Additional phone appointments with attorneys are available on a case-by-case basis.

Please contact Amanda Pentland, LCSW at (208) 422-1000 ext. 7099 for additional information.

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH **DECEMBER**



Kacy Watkins

Ms. Kacy Watkins started her nursing career at the VA as a VALOR, then continued as a Nurse Resident and now works as a Registered Nurse in the Emergency Department. She routinely goes above and beyond her assigned responsibilities to deliver excellent nursing care to our veteran population. Ms. Watkins is a detail oriented and compassionate nurse who remains calm during stressful situations. Recently, a veteran was transferred from a clinic appointment to the ED for a life-threatening condition and Ms. Watkins assumed care of him. She immediately understood the gravity of his condition and worked with the provider to titrate an intravenous infusion to lower his blood pressure. It became apparent that this veteran needed to be moved to a community hospital for emergent treatment, yet the EMS service that was called could not do so for another 90 minutes as the patient was receiving a continuous infusion necessitating a specially trained nurse. Without hesitation, the provider contacted a different transport service and Ms. Watkins volunteered to accompany the ambulance team to the community hospital to ensure the patient's safety and continued titration of the infusion. She collaborated with the ED charge nurse to cover her patient assignments, the ED provider for specific titration orders, the RNOD, and EMS service and ensured that the transport went smoothly. As a result of Ms. Watkins' commitment to her patient, advocacy to support this veteran's needs, and excellence in all she does, the veteran was safely transported to the receiving facility in a timely manner. We would like to recognize Ms. Watkins for her dedication to our mission, the outstanding nursing care she provides and for being such a tremendous asset not only to the Emergency Department, but the Boise VAMC as a whole.

2023 IDAHO DISABLED VETERANS ELK HUNT

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED JANUARY 2 - JANUARY 31 2023



The Idaho Division of Veteran Services will coordinate an elk hunt for two disabled Veterans with 40% Service Connected Disability Ratings or Higher.

A selection committee will review applications and choose two Idaho Veterans.

Applications are available at <https://veterans.idaho.gov/> or you can scan the QR Code

If you have any questions about this opportunity call (208) 780 – 1300.



THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME!

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH **DECEMBER**



Dr.. Theodore Lange

We are nominating Dr. Theodore Lange employee of the month because he displays all of the ICARE values daily, weekly and monthly for all the years he has worked here. He opens clinics while he is attending in the ICU to see pts during his lunch time. He is the only person we have seen who utilizes their lunch hour to see patients while on an inpatient rotation. An example is patient "R" who was recently diagnosed with cancer and is 50 years old. Dr. Lange is not the doctor for his patient she is going to another pulmonologist who happened to be out. Dr. Lange is seeing this patient ON HIS LUNCH TIME while attending in the ICU so that he can assess her and place the consult for her biopsy with community care interventional radiology because the VA is not able to do it. Dr. Lange took his time while attending to contact outside radiologists to get this patient seen quickly so that oncology can be provided with the requested tissue diagnosis to begin her treatment. Dr. Lange is a very clear example of the ICARE values on a daily basis and this is only one of the many I have seen working with him the past many years!! Dr. Lange is a walking example of the ICARE values as clearly seen in this example.



**JOIN US IN CELEBRATING SALUTE TO
VETERAN PATIENTS WEEK FEB. 12-18.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO VOLUNTEER TO HELP CONTACT
TAMMY LANNING X.1175**



BOISE RESEARCH PROGRAM FEATURED IN PUBLICATION

BOISE VA RESEARCHER, DR.. MARY CLOUD AMMONS-ANDERSON, IS PART OF THE NATIONAL VA SHIELD PROGRAM. SHE AND HER TEAM ARE PART OF A RECENT PUBLICATION IN THE RESEARCH JOURNAL CALLED OPEN FORUM INFECTIOUS DISEASES, PUBLISHED BY OXFORD PRESS. IN THE ARTICLE BOISE IS RECOGNIZED AS A KEY SITE IN THE VA SHIELD PROGRAM, WHICH CREATES A NATIONAL BIOREPOSITORY TO HELP RESEARCHERS STUDY COVID AND OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

[READ THE FULL STORY HERE: HTTPS://PUBMED.NCBI.NLM.NIH.GOV/36601554/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36601554/)

SUPERVISOR OF THE QUARTER Q1 FY23



Judy Trejo

Ms. Trejo is the Nurse Manager of 2M/S. She is the type of manager who not only goes above and beyond for our veterans, but also facilitates a cohesive working environment, always elevating and growing her 2M/S staff.

Integrity: Ms. Trejo is well-trusted and an amazing advocate for staff on 2M/S. Her door is always open and she takes the time to listen and address staff concerns. She consistently goes out of her way to find answers if she does not know them. Ms. Trejo is always looking for ways to elevate her staff through recognition for their hard work. She finds ways to help them grow professionally through encouragement of taking certification exams in addition to encouraging involvement on committee's and performance improvement projects. Ms. Trejo is an excellent example of a leader everyone should aspire to be.

Commitment: Ms. Trejo is committed completely to a cohesive work environment where staff feel supported. She is always finding ways to bring happiness to her staff through creative endeavors such as pizza/sandwich parties for exceeding various performance activities and celebrating holiday-type days (ex. AES Survey completion, SPH training, Nurse's week). Ms. Trejo fulfills her organizations responsibilities by exceeding expectations within her role as a Nurse Manager.

Advocacy: Ms. Trejo consistently advocates for her staff. Recognition of others is extremely important to her and she appropriately nominates her staff for well-deserved awards such as Employee of the Month, Good Catch, and the C20 Chai Care Award.

Respect: Ms. Trejo sets an example of courtesy and respect everyday she comes to work. Through her many years at the Boise VA, she has been recognized as someone everyone would love to work for.

Excellence: Ms. Trejo is accountable to her actions and holds others accountable for their actions. She is an excellent co-worker and team player as she continually looks for ways to improve care provided on 2M/S. Her immense healthcare experience makes her an amazing leader as a Nurse Manager.

VA Privacy and Information Security



REASONS FOR VETERANS TO CONTACT THE PRIVACY OFFICER

- Request a change or to delete information within your medical record
- Request a list of individuals who have accessed your medical records
- Request a list of where your medical records have been released
- File a complaint if you are concerned your privacy rights have been violated

REASONS FOR EMPLOYEES TO CONTACT THE PRIVACY OFFICER AND INFORMATION SYSTEM SECURITY OFFICER

- Report a privacy or information security violation
- Request authorization to transport/remove VA information or equipment from VA property
- Report unsecured patient information or unlocked computers

REMINDERS FOR EMPLOYEES

- Lock or logoff your computer when leaving it unattended
- Secure patient information when unattended
- Wear ID badge while on VA property
- Use encryption when sending Protected Health Information in email
- Recycle all paper documents in locked recycle bin
- Take your mandatory annual Privacy, HIPAA, and Information Security Training



IT Area Manager

Scott Brown
208-422-1066



Information System Security Officers

Matt Biggs
208-422-1560



Tony Gulbis
208-429-2245



Privacy Officer

Gina Thruston
208-422-1031



Upcoming Employee Whole Health Events



Employee Whole Health Healthy Teaching Kitchen Winter Series

Virtually on [Teams](#)



12:00 – 12:30 PM Mountain Time
Last Wednesday each month
Hosted by Madison Keller, RD



January 25: [Zucchini Fritters](#)

February 22: [Microwave Chocolate
Mug Cake](#)

March 29: [Tuscan Tuna Salad Wrap](#)

Recorded sessions and recipes are on the Boise VA
[Employee Whole Health SharePoint Site](#).
Want an Outlook invite? Contact [Jeanette Berry](#)

Open to all VISN 20 staff!

EMPLOYEE WHOLE HEALTH TAI CHI

THURSDAYS

12:15 – 12:45 PM MT

~~~~~B.88 REHAB GYM  
(ORANGE/GOLD TEAM BUILDING  
ENTER FROM BACK PATIO)  
AND  
VIRTUALLY [ON TEAMS](#)

Hosted by Lydia Campbell-White, RN

**Take time to relax and reenergize your day!**  
**Free for Boise VA employees**

No experience or equipment needed.  
Sessions are recorded and shared on our  
[Employee Whole Health SharePoint Site](#).



Scan QR code to join the meeting.  
If logging in from home, "join as guest."



# Everyone's Safety is Everyone's Responsibility: What You Can Do to Prevent Workplace Violence

As part of VA's commitment to creating a safe workplace, the Workplace Violence Prevention Program is making sure you have the training and resources you need.

## BE PROACTIVE



Obtain training so you will be ready should an incident arise. *Prevention and Management of Disruptive Behavior (PMDB)* training is available to all employees and gives you skills and tools to intervene effectively and deescalate situations.

## BE AWARE



Be aware of threats (physical or verbal). Learn the warning signs of pending violence and escalating disruptive behavior. Take all threats seriously and know how to contact your local VA Police, safety, and security resources.

## REPORT IT



Report patient and employee-generated disruptive behaviors by using the electronic *Disruptive Behavior Reporting System (DBRS)* at your facility.

Want to learn more about keeping everyone safe?  
<https://dvagov.sharepoint.com/sites/VHAWVPP/SitePages/Home.aspx>

**REMEMBER: If there is an immediate threat to the safety of patients, staff and visitors, contact VA Police.**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs







MARCH 2023 IS  
COLONOSCOPY  
AWARENESS MONTH

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## Q & A

ALL STAFF, STUDENTS,  
AND VETERANS  
WELCOME!!

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BOISE VAMC

L.R. BUILDING

CONFERENCE ROOM

1 HOUR DROP INS

MARCH IS COLON CANCER  
AWARENESS MONTH!!!

The Copper Team (Endoscopy) is excited to host several Q & A sessions in March 2023.

Topics in discussion:

- Importance of screening colonoscopies.
- Importance of laxative preparation/ compliance for colonoscopies.

Each session is 1 hour. We look forward to chatting with you!!

Every **TUESDAY** in March 2023  
from 13:00-14:00

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Every **WEDNESDAY** in March  
from 10:00-11:00, **NO** session on  
March 15<sup>th</sup>.

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Every **FRIDAY** in March 2023  
from 07:00-08:00





EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS POINTER  
FEBRUARY 2023



# HEAT YOUR HOME SAFELY

This winter learn how you  
can heat your home safely.



Learn More

[www.adaprep.id.gov](http://www.adaprep.id.gov)

**HEATING IS THE SECOND LEADING CAUSE OF HOME FIRES. THIS WINTER, LEARN HOW YOU CAN HEAT YOUR HOME SAFELY.**

FIND OUT MORE HERE: [HTTPS://ADACOUNTY.ID.GOV/EMERGENCYMANAGEMENT/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/SITES/39/FEBRUARY-EMERGENCY-PREPAREDNESS-POINTER.PDF](https://adacounty.id.gov/emergencymanagement/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/february-emergency-preparedness-pointer.pdf)





# FEEDING AMERICAN HEROES

**THURSDAY**

**MARCH 23RD**

**1PM - 4PM**

**VA HOSPITAL**

**AT THE FLAG POLE**

**500 W FORT ST, BOISE, ID 83702**



**VETERANS  
& FAMILIES**

**HOT FOOD FOR  
THE FIRST 200**

**SUPPLY BAGS FOR THE  
FIRST 200 VETERANS**

**FOOD FROM CONED  
FOOD TRUCK**

**SPONSORED BY**



**The  
Idaho  
Foodbank**

PROVIDING ESSENTIAL FOOD ITEMS AND SUPPLIES TO HELP VETERANS STAY SAFE AND STILL BE ABLE TO MEET BASIC NEEDS DURING ANY NATIONAL EMERGENCY, CATASTROPHE, OR PANDEMIC.

**REGISTER ONLINE!**

[HTTPS://WWW.EVENTBRITE.COM/E/VETERAN-REGISTRATION-MARCH-FEEDING-AMERICAS-HEROES-BOISE-TICKETS-514295560867?AFF=EBDSSBDESTSEARCH](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/veteran-registration-march-feeding-americas-heroes-boise-tickets-514295560867?aff=EBDSSBDESTSEARCH)

## VETERANS!

**DON'T MISS YOUR CHANCE TO RECEIVE  
FREE VALUABLE GROCERIES AND  
HOUSEHOLD GOODS!**