



Defining
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Network Director's Update

April 2011



National News: *(Click on titles to read full press release)*

[VA/DOD Smart Phone App Helps Veterans Manage PTSD](#) - Veterans dealing with symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can turn to their smart phones for help anytime with the PTSD Coach application created by the Department of Veterans Affairs

(VA) and the Department of Defense. (4/19/11)

[VA Infection Control Practices Featured in New England Journal of Medicine](#) - A Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) initiative that reduced the global health care issue of methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) infections by more than 60 percent in intensive care units (ICU) across the Nation is featured in the latest issue of the New England Journal of Medicine. It reports data from the first three years of the initiative that is now in its fourth year of implementation, and which continues to be associated with decreased rates of MRSA infections. (4/13/11)

[VA Changes Billing Process for Third Party Pharmacy Prescriptions](#) - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is implementing a new billing process for charging third party insurers for outpatient prescription medications provided to Veterans for conditions unrelated to their military service. This change will not affect Veterans' co-payments for prescriptions. (4/7/11)

[VA Begins Process to Create Open Source Electronic Health Record](#) - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today released a draft Request for Proposal (RFP) aimed at forming an Open Source community around its ground-breaking VistA (Veterans Integrated System Technology Architecture) electronic health record (EHR) system. When award is made under a planned RFP for a custodial agent, VA will commit to deploy the Open Source version of VistA to all of its facilities, and will contribute all non-security essential modifications to the product it makes or pays for directly to the Open Source custodian. VA will also commit to participate in Open Source VistA with other public and private sector participants. (4/1/11)

[Paralympic Veterans May Qualify for New Benefit](#) - Some Veterans in training for the Paralympics will be able to qualify for a monthly subsistence allowance from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), under a new program to help disabled Veterans more easily take part in competitive sports. (4/1/11)

VISN 19:



VA Quality Care is in the Limelight...

A vigorous quality-improvement program at more than 150 Veterans Affairs hospitals has achieved remarkable results controlling infections over the past several years. VA reduced the spread of one of the most deadly bacterial infections, known as MRSA, by 62 percent in intensive care units and 45 percent in other hospital units. If other hospitals could replicate the effort, thousands of patients might be saved from needless infections acquired after they entered the hospital.

A report on the VA's accomplishment was published in The New England Journal of Medicine. The agency used a "bundle" of measures, including screening all patients with nasal swabs and isolating those found infected with MRSA, or methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus. All health care workers were urged to take special precautions to prevent spreading germs from those patients and to wash their hands carefully. And the VA sought to change its "institutional culture" so that all personnel felt responsible for controlling the bacterium.

Read the entire article here:
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/18/opinion/18mon3.html?_r=1&hp#

VISN 19 Homeless Program Manager Award Recipient of Veteran Service Award

Mr. Richard DeBlasio, VISN 19 Network Homeless Program Coordinator, was honored during the UVC's Annual Banquet at which time he was recognized for his passion, service and strong commitment to helping Homeless Veterans throughout VISN 19.



Left to right: Governor Hickenlooper, Richard DeBlasio and George Thomas

The UVC is a coalition of 45 chartered and federally recognized veterans service organizations and affiliates established in 1972. This organization works to address issues and concerns affecting Colorado's veterans in the new millennium by working closely with members of the Colorado General Assembly and all agencies of state government serving veterans.

Over the years, UVC has achieved an enviable record of legislative accomplishments for Colorado's veterans and has earned a reputation for sound leadership, integrity and substantive legislative agenda. It is a great honor to be recognized by this organization.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

This April, Veteran's Affairs and Wellness Is Now (WIN) encourage you to educate yourself and your loved ones about the dangers of alcohol abuse. Alcohol Awareness Month is a national effort to inform people about the health consequences of drinking and the harmful misconceptions that are prevalent in our society. Drinking too much alcohol can lead to health problems including alcohol poisoning and an increased risk of heart disease. The health effects of alcohol largely depend on your age, health status and how much you drink.

Warning Signs of Alcohol Abuse

If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you may have a problem with alcohol:

- Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- Does your drinking ever make you late for work?
- Does your drinking worry your family?
- Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't?
- Do you ever forget what you did while drinking?
- Do you get headaches or have a hangover after drinking?

Strategies to Cut Back or Quit Drinking

There are many strategies you can try to cut back or quit drinking:

- Keep track of your drinking and set a drinking limit.
- Try to avoid places where heavy drinking occurs.
- Ask for help from a doctor, family, or friends.
- If you keep alcohol in your home, keep only a limited supply.

Beyond injuries, health problems, birth defects, and mental health risks, frequent heavy drinking also is linked with personal problems. It's up to you as to whether and when to change your drinking. Other people may be able to help, but in the end, it's your decision. Weighing your pros and cons can help. Need help getting started? Contact your Employee Assistance Professional or medical provider for additional assistance. Only you can take control of your health.

Eastern Colorado Health Care System



Denver, CO – Replacement Medical Center Facility

The Denver VAMC (parent Eastern Colorado Health Care System) provides monthly updates on the status of the Denver Replacement Hospital. Updates are distributed

via e-mail monthly and can be found on www.denver.va.gov or on Facebook WWW.facebook.com/denverva .

The April 2011 Update reported that as the design phase comes to a close, staff is making final reviews, focusing on the function of their space. Examples of space questions include: when Veterans visit the new facility for a clinic appointment where will they park, how will they get to the check-in desk, how far will they have to walk to get to an elevator, can they identify where the clinic is once they step off the elevator, etc. The entire process is being analyzed to make sure that it is convenient, intuitive, and efficient for Veterans.

Another major activity underway is the design peer review. When VA designs a major construction project, there is a process to ensure it meets all VA criteria, all accrediting body criteria, National Fire Protection codes, OSHA rules, etc. The VA Office of Construction and Facilities Management have field experts in architecture, mechanical, plumbing, fire safety and many others. They will review the plans for their area of expertise. The VA also hires an independent reviewer to examine all of the documents.

And lastly, the integrated design construction firm Kiewit-Turner will review the documents to make sure they can build as the design was intended. Over 2,200 drawings were submitted for the final design. Once all groups review the documents, the Joint Venture Team (JVT) who is responsible for the design will address how concerns will be handled and tracked in a database. Only after all comments are addressed will the project move forward into construction documents.



Of great significance was the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announcement that a construction contract for renovation of the clinic building south phase of the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System Replacement

Medical Center Facility to be located in Aurora, Colorado was awarded.



ECHCS Director Roff

This award is the first construction option in the integrated design and construct (IDc) contract with Kiewit-Turner a Joint Venture of Englewood, Colorado. VA has the option to award additional phases of construction when the design of those phases is complete.

The contract was awarded to the joint venture, located in Englewood, Colorado, in the amount of \$22,463,597. The initial phase of this contract is scheduled for completion in January 2012. The contract will provide for renovation of the 120,000 square foot clinic building south from business space to clinical and administrative spaces for VA and the Department of Defense.

The total project consists of a new 184 bed medical center facility with a total space program of approximately 1.2 million square feet, which includes the remodeled clinic building south (formerly the UPI) building; a 120-bed inpatient bed tower with a 30-bed spinal cord injury/diagnostic unit; and separate building(s) for a 30-bed nursing home community living center with 4 additional beds for blind rehabilitation.

Compliance with sustainability and physical security requirements are included in the project. Renewable energy requirements are also a part of the project. The project will be Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certified.

The total replacement Medical Center is scheduled to be completed in February 2014 for a total cost of approximately \$800 million. The construction of the new Medical Center in Aurora will enable VA to continue collaborating with the University of Colorado Hospital which is now also located on the Fitzsimons campus. The Clinic Building South is located at the corner of Colfax and Wheeling Street on the Fitzsimons campus.

Three ECHCS Employees Receive UVC Awards



Distinguished Service Award

Herb Nagamoto, MD

In recognition and appreciation of Dr. Nagamoto's dedication to Colorado veterans, the UVC recognized his exemplary service as Chief, Mental Health Service for the Eastern Colorado Health Care System and aid provided to countless veterans and their families. As a principal investigator for chronic homelessness, he has established milestones that have assisted in a marked reduction in the number of homeless Veterans. His continued efforts on behalf of all Veterans and their families earned him the respect and admiration of the military and veteran communities.

Eastern Colorado Health Care System has aided countless veterans and their families. Her contribution to the design and operation of the new Jewell Clinic "patient first" philosophy is a boon to all polytrauma patients. Dr. Blake's continuing efforts on behalf of paralyzed veterans and their families earned the respect and admiration of the military and veteran communities.



Outstanding Service Award

Amanda Eckman

In appreciation for her dedication and committed service to Colorado veterans and their families, Ms. Eckman was recognized for her excellent leadership and untiring efforts in supporting the development, organization and implementation of the 2010 Wheelchair Games.



Distinguished Service Award

Donna Jo Blake, MD

In recognition and appreciation of Dr. Blake's dedication to Colorado veterans, her exemplary service as Chief, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service for the

Denver VA Prepares for National Disaster Response: Massive Federal Coordinating Center Exercise Tests the Denver VA

When a recent earthquake struck the New Madrid Fault in Arkansas, the medical facilities and services in that area were quickly overwhelmed. Hundreds of patients were left without resources or options for treatment. Authorities in Arkansas needed federal assistance to manage the casualties, and that assistance came from the VA Medical Center in Denver, Colorado.

Fortunately, the Arkansas earthquake was only an exercise scenario. But if you would have been in Denver recently, the sound of C-130s and military helicopters thundering overhead might have convinced you otherwise.



An Army Lakota medical helicopter flies over Denver, Colorado on its way to a local hospital (Stephen Szapor).

On Wednesday, April 20, 2011, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Eastern Colorado Health Care System (ECHCS) and community partners conducted a full-scale Federal Coordinating Center (FCC) exercise at Centennial Airport in Centennial, CO.



Denver VAMC RN Faye Salas (right) briefs her staff prior to patient arrival (Shawn Fury).

The exercise was major test of the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), and culminated in the triage, treatment and transport over 200 volunteers acting as patients to 15 Denver-area hospitals via 15 ground ambulances and 10 helicopters in less than 6 hours. In total, more than 300 individuals from 20 community agencies participated in the exercise.

“In light of the tragedy that is still unfolding in Japan, people want to know how the US is preparing for a major, national disaster,” said Roger Rewerts, ECHCS Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. “This exercise is an example of local, regional and federal efforts to promote a unified response to large scale incidents. Our objectives include enhancing capacity, building sustainment and creating surge for receiving medical facilities.”



Army Blackhawk helicopters transport patients to local hospitals (Shawn Fury).

FCCs are managed by the Department of Homeland Security NDMS and may be activated in times of federally declared national or international emergencies to coordinate definitive medical care of evacuees from the emergency area to the FCC's assigned area.



Roger Rewerts, (left) ECHCS Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, watches as the exercise unfolds (Shawn Fury).

The Denver VA Medical Center FCC, as part of that system, could potentially receive and process hundreds of patients from anywhere in the world. The NDMS solicits and organizes community support services, enrolls non-federal local hospitals and coordinates community hospital bed availability.

C-130 air-crew members unload “patients” for triaging at the FCC site (Shawn Fury).



At the disaster site, patients are stabilized for transport. In most cases, patients will be evacuated by the Department of Defense (DoD) aeromedical evacuation system. At the airport of the NDMS reception area, patients are met by a local medical team that sorts, assesses, and matches those patients to participating hospitals, according to procedures developed by local authorities and the local area's NDMS Federal Coordinating Center. Patients are transported to participating hospitals using locally available ground and air transport.



Peggy Kearns, ECHCS Associate Director and FCC Agency Executive, gives an interview to local media regarding the exercise and its importance (Shawn Fury).

The exercise scenarios are not abstract, and the exercises have tangible purpose. In fact, the most recent activation of the FCC system involved the Tampa and Atlanta VA Medical Facilities to support the evacuees from Haiti following the earthquake in January, 2010.

Ultimately, the Denver FCC may one day be activated, or it may not. But if Rewerts gets the call late at night, he and his team will be ready.

More information:

VA ECHCS: <http://www.denver.va.gov>

NDMS:

<http://www.phe.gov/preparedness/responders/ndms/Pages/default.aspx>

Grand Junction VAMC



The Grand Junction VA Medical Center has placed a significant focus over the last month on building and enhancing the facility's informal partnerships and relationships with organizations and communities throughout its catchment area.

Staff has attended health fairs, senior fests, and other community events to promote education and awareness of VA services such as home hospice care. The Grand Junction VAMC has also connected with community leaders and organizations to help plan how they can better inform Veterans of their VA benefits including when they are unemployed.

As these community relationships have strengthened, the Medical Center staff are not only providing education to key leaders in what is available to Veterans on the Western Slope, but they are also identifying and learning about perceived barriers to accessing those benefits.

For instance, several visitors to the facility's booth at a recent regional health fair were unaware that they qualified for VA health care even though they already had health insurance; while another Veteran thought he would have to pay a 50% co-pay until he had a confirmed service connected disability rating.

Grand Junction VA staffs are making plans to work with a hospice team in a remote community to educate these health care professionals on Veterans Benefits in their work with Veterans who have never accessed their benefits or as they work with family members who are Veterans.

Closer to home, the Medical Center celebrated the invaluable contributions Volunteers make every day at the Grand Junction VAMC with three weeks of events that ranged from handing out ice cream bars to volunteers as they entered the facility to the annual volunteer recognition ceremony. This year's recognition

events took special care to ensure all volunteers were recognized whether they attended the ceremony or not.

April also saw the completion of several other projects and the beginning of others. This included a major electrical upgrade, completion of the seismic structural project. One reoccurring project that is often low key, but has a major impact of patients and family members' mental health and environment was the annual Spring Planting of the facility's memorial garden.

Each year the local Master Gardner's Association descends on the garden to clean out winter kill and expand the floral display that blooms from May until late October.



GJVAMC Director Atienza and Peggy Vanderberg

Grand Junction VAMC Director Terry Atienza was honored to present Ms. Peggy Vanderberg with the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award. Ms. Vanderberg was chosen to receive the Award of Excellence from the Colorado Masons for her many outstanding volunteer efforts. She has served as a vital asset in her many roles to help the VA including her driving efforts to gather donations such as new clothing for female inpatients and her support for the Grand Junction VA Police.

VA Montana Health Care System:



Inpatient Mental Health unit to open June 3 By Mike Molina

Veterans needing inpatient mental health treatment will soon have a place to get care in Montana.

VA Montana Health Care System is set to unveil a 24-bed inpatient mental health facility at Fort Harrison on June 3. The nearly \$7 million facility will allow Veterans who need acute psychiatric care and residential rehabilitation for post traumatic stress disorder or substance abuse to get care at the VA campus near Helena.

Currently, Montana's Veterans in need of inpatient recovery care for PTSD, substance abuse, and acute psychiatric treatment must travel to VA facilities in North Dakota, Wyoming or Idaho.

The new mental health facility allows VA Montana to provide the state's Veterans with a full array of comprehensive services, and continues the VA's commitment to expanding community partnerships for inpatient and outpatient mental health care.

Eight of the 24 beds will be in a locked acute unit that will provide a safe therapeutic environment for Veterans that need acute psychiatric stabilizations.

The remaining 16 beds will be split up for eight PTSD beds and eight substance abuse treatment beds.

Staff for the new unit will include psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, a licensed addiction counselor, a peer support technician, seven registered nurses and 12 licensed practical nurses.

Family support is also an important part of recovery for the Veteran. The Liberty House allows family members to stay on campus for free.

Sweat lodge ceremony held at Fort Harrison By Mike Molina

Montana Veterans may soon be able to attend sweat lodge ceremonies at the Department of Veterans Affairs Fort Harrison campus here.

Attendees at the annual Tribal Veterans Representative training at Fort Harrison participated in the first sweat at the Mitakuye Oyasin (pronounced Mee-tah-koo-yay O-yah-seen), which means "We are all related or all my relations", sweat lodge at the medical center's campus April 20.

Sweat lodges provide a traditional American Indian ceremony, or spiritual event, where participants enter a sacred domed lodge and participate in various ceremonies for individual healing and to seek healing of

others through prayer and songs. Stones are typically heated in an exterior fire and then placed in a hole in the center of the lodge. Water is placed on the heated rocks to create steam, which is an integral part of the sweat lodge, carrying prayers and songs of participants upward.



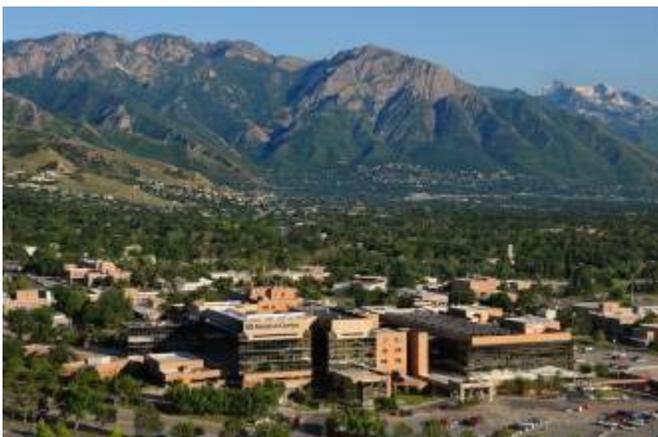
Lexie Follette Country, an American Indian Veteran of the Marine Corps and Army, prepares to participate in the first sweat at the Mitakuye Oyasin sweat lodge at Fort Harrison. Attendees at the annual Tribal Veterans Representative training at Fort Harrison participated in the sweat at the medical center's campus April 20.

Details are still being developed for VA enrolled Veterans to participate in sweat lodge ceremonies at Fort Harrison.

According to the Department of Defense, American Indians have the highest record of service per capita of any ethnic group. Nearly 300 Veterans who receive care at VA Montana medical center and outlying clinics have identified themselves as American Indians, but the exact number may be much greater.

With more than 100,000 Veterans throughout the state, Montana has one of the highest per capita of military service in the country.

VASLCHCS



Mock Disaster Drill Tests VASLCHCS E.R.

The Scenario: A truck full of prisoners collides with a tanker full of a dangerous chemical. The Players: VA Emergency Personnel and the Salt Lake County Sheriff's Office. This time it was pretend but you never know when VA Salt Lake City Health Care System will be faced with a real catastrophe.

The VASLCHCS Emergency Management team facilitated a county wide disaster drill to make sure we can take care of mass casualties in emergency situations. The VA Decontamination team donned their hazmat suits to decontaminated prisoners and other civilians exposed to the dangerous chemicals.



This full scale exercise would not have been possible without our brand new Communications Center capable of talking to anyone, anywhere.

The incident command center will serve as the center for all communications valley wide should a real disaster occur.

Participation in these drills help the VASLCHCS gauge how well we would respond in a real time scenario and identifies areas in need of improvement.



Earth Day Brings Awareness to Vets and VA Employees

VA's growing "green" awareness makes Earth Day an excellent opportunity to educate employees and Veterans about ways to reduce energy and waste at home and in the workplace.



VASLCHCS put on a great Earth Day event with many information tables and shoe, cell phone, and glasses donation drop off points. Among the big awareness campaigns this year is Earth friendly medication disposal.

Remember what you did the last time you discarded your expired medication? Chances are that you did what most people usually do, flush them down the toilet. This used to be the standard protocol but not anymore. Over the years, researchers have discovered that flushing meds down the toilet is not as harmless as we might have thought.

Waste water treatment plants are not designed to filter out many of these drugs and usually end up in ground or in surface water. Antibiotics that end up in water can also kill beneficial bacteria needed to operate sewage processing plants. What's remedy? Learn how and where you can dispose of medications and educate our Veterans.

During VA's Earth Day celebration, Penny Tenhet and Lynnette Rynearson were on a mission to educate Veterans and employees on proper medication disposal.



VA does not currently accept expired or excess medication for disposal which makes educating our Veterans on proper disposal procedures that much more important.

Second Chances: Veterans Justice Outreach Program

The Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Program is a VA based initiative focused on partnering with local law enforcement, jails and courts to get eligible Veterans the treatment they need. Eligible Veterans have access to mental health care, substance abuse treatment and other VA services.

Veterans Justice Outreach program efforts in Salt Lake City are thriving due to the relationship between the VA and the court system on a city, state and federal level.

Close to 10 percent of people in jails and prisons are Veterans and 70% of these Veterans are arrested for non-violent crimes. Veterans in jail are at significant risk for mental health problems, medical issues, homelessness, drug and alcohol use and re-incarceration if intervention and re-entry services are not delivered. The VASLCHCS justice outreach workers go to the Salt Lake County jail routinely to meet with Veterans. They help determine a Veteran's eligibility and options for a better future upon release.

The admission criterion for the 3rd District Mental Health Court has been changed to include PTSD for Veterans, so the VA VJO staff also attends Utah's 3rd District Mental Health Courts for Salt Lake County.

The VASLCHCS VJO is currently working with the Salt Lake County District Attorney on setting up a program called VIPS – Veterans Intervention and Probation Support. Amy Earle, LCSW, Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator, VASLCHCS relates "I am honored to have the opportunity to serve Veterans in this capacity. The criminal justice system is difficult to navigate and people often get lost in the shuffle. My job is to make sure that doesn't happen to our Veterans and that they get the help they need. The veterans who served our country and are in need of help should not be sitting behind bars. They should be at the VA receiving the treatment they deserve!"

VA's Biggest Loser Kicks Off with Big Numbers!

Over 200 people were inspired to join our Biggest Loser competition which is over 10 percent of the VASLCHCS workforce! The Kick Off was a huge success with the VASLCHCS Chief of Staff, Dr. Gebhart, offering a few words before lead program officials took over!



Now it's time to exercise, eat right and shed some pounds. Remember, it's not a diet, it's a lifestyle change.

Sheridan VAMC:



Using fishing to heal

For longtime guide and fly-tier Gordon Rose, the sport of fly-fishing has been a both a career and a lifelong passion. For military veterans like Nathan Hansen, the opportunity to tie flies and catch fish in the Bighorn Mountains is a form of therapy that helps take their minds off their wartime experiences.

In a conference room at Sheridan VA Medical Center on Monday night, nine Veterans quietly listened as Rose patiently explained the steps involved in tying an elk hair caddis fly. Using an overhead screen, Rose described how to create simulated wings from elk hair and to use fluffs of cotton to build the body of the insect, which is a popular meal for trout living in Wyoming waters.

Many in the room had served in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, and none had any fly fishing experience. They carefully watched Rose as he explained the detailed technique involved in fly tying. Each veteran was equipped with his own materials donated by Rose and a vise. Several matched Rose step by step as he delivered instructions on technique. Others waited until the demonstration was finished, getting individualized assistance from Rose and other volunteers from the Little Bighorn Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

The veterans are participating in a program Rose launched earlier this month called Sheridan WYO Healing Waters, a local offshoot of a national nonprofit program called Project Healing Waters dedicated to helping disabled military veterans through fly-fishing.

Rose's program is the first of its kind in Wyoming and serves as a form of recreation therapy for veterans struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder. "It's about helping veterans live a fulfilling and contented life

outside of combat," Rose said. "It's really neat working with these guys and seeing what they're dealing with."



Gordon Rose (left) checks out a fly that Nathan Hansen made Monday evening at Sheridan VA Medical Center.

A lifelong fly-fishing enthusiast and Sheridan resident who sells custom-tied trout flies through his business, Quill Gordon Fly Fishers, Rose learned about Project Healing Waters from a national news story. Realizing Sheridan would be an ideal location to launch a local program chapter, he contacted recreational therapists at the VA and coordinators with the national office of the Healing Waters program.

Spending his own money on supplies and materials, Rose launched the program three weeks ago and is pleased by the early results. "I didn't know if any of them would be back for the second class," Rose admitted. "But they were all back, plus a couple more, and they made dramatic improvement on their second fly. I think it's such a terrific diversion that they dive right into it."

Nine military veterans are participating in a program Gordon Rose launched this month called Sheridan WYO Healing Waters, part of a national nonprofit program called Project Healing Waters that uses fly-fishing to help disabled veterans.

For more on Project Healing Waters at the Sheridan VAMC go to www.sheridan.va.gov.



Cesar Melgar (left) views the fly he just tied Monday evening at Sheridan VA Medical Center.

Cheyenne VAMC:



More than just an emblem, the Cheyenne VAMC's logo includes a statement that says, "Visions of the Future... in Remembrance of the Past."

This declaration helps define the identity and character of the employees at the Cheyenne VAMC and helps frame the attitude from which Cheyenne VA employees provide care and services to all of the veterans whom we serve at the main facility as well as at the 8 other outpatient clinic locations. Several activities and achievements occurred in the last month at the Cheyenne VAMC that clearly reflects the relevance and commitment to this motto.



History came alive at the Cheyenne campus when a group of local historians set up their annual "World War II Living History Display." Historical re-enactors, known locally as the 6th infantry, 20th Regiment, Company "A," set up camp for three days, beginning April 27th through the 29th, giving the community an opportunity to see and hear about the military experience during the 1939-1945 war.

The living history camp provided tours to over 300 local 5 and 6th graders, providing an opportunity for the students and the general public to see and hear about the military equipment, weapons and people during the 1939 – 1945 war.

An update on the forward progress of the Cheyenne VAMC is seen in the two new surgical suites built with ARRA (American Recovery & Reinvestment Act), w funds. This project was completed and officially opened in April 2011. The two new, state of the art rooms, represent the future of the outpatient surgical program at this campus. Surgical programs provided at this

campus include: general surgeries, orthopedic procedures, eye surgeries, urology, podiatry and ENT (ear, nose and throat) procedures.

As we look forward to May, the Women Veterans Clinic has a special program planned for Mother's Day. The Women Veterans Program, working with a local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, will hold the first annual baby shower May 7, 2011. The baby shower will be held to honor female Veterans who are pregnant or who have recently delivered their baby.

Each Veteran will receive a gift basket filled with goodies for both mom and baby to enjoy. The Cheyenne VA Women Veterans Program will also use this opportunity to educate Veterans on VA's maternity benefits and newborn care.

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