Scott R. Isaacks, FACHE
Medical Center Director

Veterans Day Parade
Sat., Nov. 7 | 10:30 a.m.
Downtown Charleston
Join us in celebration of our honored Veterans! Parade route begins at Concord and Market Street.

Sculpture Dedication Ceremony
Tues., Nov. 10 | 10:00 a.m.
Charleston VAMC Front Courtyard
Honoring our Veterans through a donation from artist and Vietnam Veteran Dr. Edward Bryd and featuring a Keynote Address by the Honorable Sloan D. Gibson, Deputy Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs. Refreshments to follow. All are invited to attend.

Fisher House Charleston Veterans Day Gala
Wed., Nov. 11 | 6:30 - 10:30 p.m.
Charleston Marriott, 170 Lockwood Blvd., Charleston S.C.
Fisher House Charleston hosts its 2nd Annual Charleston Veterans Day Celebration to raise funds to build the Charleston Fisher House. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit: www.fisherhousecharleston.org

In 2015, an estimated 231,840 new cases of invasive breast cancer and some 60,290 new cases of non-invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed in women in the United States, making it the most commonly diagnosed type of cancer in American women. Breast cancer is also expected to claim the lives of approximately 40,290 women in the U.S. this year alone. There will also be about 2,350 cases diagnosed in American men this year. The truth is, almost all of us have been directly impacted by breast cancer. Some of us are survivors. Some have lost mothers, sisters, daughters or male family members or friends. And some have loved ones now fighting a very brave fight to overcome this disease.

Currently, there are more than 2.8 million American women with a history of breast cancer. While the good news is death rates have been decreasing since 1989 thanks to treatment advances, earlier detection through screening, and increased awareness, there is still more to be done to combat this disease. As we approach 10,000 women who receive their care here at our VA, it is increasingly important for us all to focus on women's health and to understand the importance of breast care.

Some of the risk factors associated with breast cancer – being a woman, growing older, and genetics – can't be changed. But there are many things you can do to lower the risk for yourself and your loved ones. Managing your weight, exercising regularly, choosing not to smoke, eating a healthy diet, and limiting alcohol can all reduce your breast cancer risk.

As we observe Breast Cancer Awareness month this October, I encourage each of our Veterans to learn more about breast cancer, risk factors, and treatment options. You can also help us raise awareness by wearing pink on Fridays in October. If you happen to have an appointment on a Friday, don your pink duds. It's a great way to get the conversation started to educate those around us and possibly save a life. This October and every day, let's all Think Pink!

VA | Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center
109 Bee Street | Charleston, SC 29401
1 (888) 878-6884
www.charleston.va.gov

Artist rendering of the new Savannah VA Outpatient Clinic

STAND DOWN AGAINST HOMELESSNESS

Charleston Stand Down Against Veteran Homelessness

Here at our VA, we honor the service of each of our Veteran patients and we believe that every Veteran deserves a safe and reliable place to call home. That's why our Homeless Team works tirelessly in all the communities we serve to make that dream a reality for Veterans experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless. Our housing first initiative provides a safe place to stay while working through recovery, job retraining, and the myriad of issues that need to be addressed. Our Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team provides primary and mental health care, and our new Community Resource and Referral Center, located at 2424 City Hall Lane in North Charleston, includes a wealth of resources and community partners to help Veterans get back on their feet. This year, to feature this new facility and invaluable Veteran resource, we have decided to hold our Charleston Stand Down Against Veteran Homelessness at the CRRC to ensure that Veterans know where to go any time they need help securing housing or other related VA and community services. This Veteran-focused Stand Down event will provide attendees with food, clothing, VA medical screenings, housing assistance, employment training, legal counseling, haircuts and more. The event takes place on October 30 from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. If you or your organization is interested in volunteering or supporting Stand Down, please contact Voluntary Service at vhachavavs@va.gov.

New Savannah VA Outpatient Clinic Construction Update

Earlier this year we officially broke ground on our replacement VA outpatient clinic in Savannah, Georgia. I am thrilled to report that construction on the new facility is moving along nicely. The foundation has been poured and the steel beams that will serve as the skeleton of the building have started going up. This long-awaited 69,000-square-foot clinic will nearly double the space occupied by the current 39,000-square-foot facility and will help us better serve the burgeoning Veteran population in the Savannah area. When complete, the new facility will have 15 primary care teams and will include additional services in the areas of telehealth, general radiology, CT scans, compensation and pension exams and prosthetics. On Tuesday, October 19, we had the distinct pleasure of sharing the progress on the Savannah clinic with Congressman Buddy Carter during a very positive visit he made to the nearby Hinesville VA Outpatient Clinic in Hinesville, Georgia. Congressman Carter was excited to learn of the headway we've made and we are equally excited to see this project completed and in use in late 2016.

Free Flu Shots

for Veterans at Walgreens

Keeping our Veterans healthy is a top priority here at our VA. As the flu season gets underway, it is important that we all take the proper precautions to protect ourselves from the flu – and this means getting the flu shot. While you can receive an immunization at your request here at the facility, you may find it more convenient to utilize our no-cost flu shot program through a partnership with Walgreens. Flu vaccines will be available at your local Walgreens from August 1, 2015 through March 1, 2016. If you wish to get your free shot at a Walgreens, simply tell the pharmacist that you receive your care at the Charleston VAMC. Present your VA identification card and a photo ID and use **Group Code # 5933XBAYV** to verify your eligibility. Once you receive your flu shot, Walgreens staff can electronically update your VA immunization record in your VA Electronic Health Record.