



On April 21, Eileen Twomey was presented with the Directors Coin and a Certificate of Recognition for her outstanding work on the Blue Team. Please congratulate her when you have the chance!



# COMMUTE OUTSIDE THE LINES

BIKE • WALK • BUS • CARPOOL • VANPOOL

Are you tired of dealing with longer commutes, increasingly congested roads and aggressive driving? Does saving your hard earned wages appeal to you? Wouldn't you like to join thousands of environmentally conscious citizens and make the air we breathe healthier? Is reducing stress in your life important to you? If you answered "yes" to any or all of these questions, it may be time to look at your options.

ACHD Commuteride, in partnership with Valley Regional Transit and Boise Green Bike request your participation in the 2017 May in Motion (MiM) Campaign.

## What is MiM?

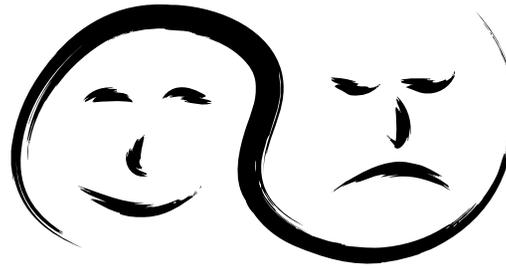
May in Motion is an annual campaign in which organizations join together and promote the use of smart commuting options, e.g., vanpool, carpool, transit, bike, and walking during the month of May. Smart commuting options provide financial, health, and environmental benefits to VA employees, employers and residents.

For many of us, going to and from work is like a job in itself. Fortunately, there are **Solutions for your work Commute**. During May we will be participating in a month long event that encourages us to "**commute outside the lines**". The advantages to driving less are many to include: saving money, decreasing stress and reducing your environmental impact by carpooling, vanpooling, taking the bus, walking, or biking.

Begin making a difference today! **Register to record your alternate commute, and enter drawings for prizes.** The Registration form will be sent out in an email from Kerry Panches. Fill out the form and mail it to HR mail stop 05. **Please have all forms in by June 2nd close of business.** A prize drawing will be held on June 5th for those participating in the program.

Pledge to **commute outside the lines** between  
**May 1<sup>st</sup> and May 30<sup>th</sup>** and you could win fabulous prizes!

# *Hello's*



# *Goodbye's*

The Boise VAMC would like to welcome our new employees who came aboard:

Erlinda Villegas, HAS  
Amber Turba, HAS  
Donald Krauser, N&FS  
Paul Dillon, N&FS  
Anna Davidson, N&FS  
Vernon Mullins, Nursing  
Nalani Thompson, Nursing  
Mollie Smith, Nursing  
Jordain O'Neill, SPS  
Sharon Rosen, Nursing  
John Johnson, MSO  
Alicia Carrasco, MSO  
Brady Penney, Nursing  
Yolanda Nino, Nursing  
Mario Gonzalez, Nursing  
Harvey Santos Beteta, Nursing  
Michelle Treece, Nursing

The Boise VAMC would like to say goodbye to the employees who left us:

Jill Sande, MSO  
Carrie Hesterberg, Nursing  
Sara Gibson, FMS  
Lisa Rendon, Surgery  
Anne Overesch, Nursing  
Toby Biery, FMS  
Theresa Schut, DIS

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



**CONNECT WITH VETERANS**



Connect with the Veterans you serve this Mental Health Awareness Month and encourage those who need support to take steps toward treatment and recovery. Visit [MakeTheConnection.net/Connect](http://MakeTheConnection.net/Connect) for simple ways you can honor your commitment to Veterans this month and all year long.

**MAKE THE  
CONNECTION**

*What's Happening in Mental Health -  
It's all about Hope and Recovery!*



May is *Mental Health Awareness Month* and your Boise VA Mental Health Department is inviting each of us to begin helping each of our veterans find *Recovery and Wellness* by reducing and eliminating the *Stigma*.

#### Recovery-Oriented Services

Recovery oriented care is guided by personal preferences and builds on an individual's strengths. It promotes self-determination and is collaborative and focuses on the whole person. Ultimately, it fosters hope that goals can be achieved.

#### Stigma: A Barrier to Seeking Treatment

According to an article in the American Psychological Association's *Monitor on Psychology*, a major reason many service members (*an especially Veterans*) do not seek out treatment is the stigma associated with receiving mental health care.

#### What can you do to Combat Stigma?

How you think and what you say matters. Mental Health care should be thought of and discussed just like any other medical care with respect, dignity, and compassion.

*For more information, stop by the Mental Health information table in the Outpatient Clinic May 16 – 18 from 11 to 1 and ask our Peer Support Specialist.*



Submitted by Larry Buttel, Peer Support Specialist

# Safe Patient Handling

## Staff Leader in Injury Prevention (SLIP)

### *SLIP of the Quarter - Becca Hammon*

Becca is a Registered Nurse on the Med Surge unit and has worked diligently to ensure the safety of her co-workers and patients through education, training and role modeling

Safe Patient Handling practices. She volunteers every chance she gets to conduct staff trainings in other departments utilizing the SPHM Training Lab. Her efforts are greatly appreciated!



## What's §7332 Protected Information?

38 U.S.C. §7332 Protected Information is any information about an offer/referral for or treatment for drug and alcohol abuse and the testing and treatment for sickle cell anemia and HIV infection; including negative test results. (As of April 24, 2017 negative HIV test results are no longer covered under this statute and can be released without special authorization.)

This statute allows disclosure of the protected information **only** when specifically authorized by the patient or legal guardian; or a personal representative as authorized by the patient; or by the common disclosure provisions of this statute for each of the following circumstances:

- a. To medical personnel to the extent to meet a bona fide medical emergency;
- b. To qualified personnel for conducting scientific research, management audits, financial audits or program evaluations;
- c. To public health authority charged under federal or state law for protection of public health pursuant to a standing written request; or
- d. To a court of competent jurisdiction pursuant to a Court Order

Unless we have the authority to release the information according to one of the above circumstances, we must have a written consent specifically stating that we can release the §7332 Protected Information. VA Form 10-5345, is the ROI request form for releasing information to a third party. Included on this form is a §7332 Protected Information section that, if completed, gives us authorization to release the information. Below is an excerpt from that form:

<b>VETERAN'S REQUEST:</b> I request and authorize Department of Veterans Affairs to release the information specified below to the organization, or individual named on this request. I understand that the information to be released includes information regarding the following condition(s):			
<input type="checkbox"/> DRUG ABUSE	<input type="checkbox"/> ALCOHOLISM OR ALCOHOL ABUSE	<input type="checkbox"/> TESTING FOR OR INFECTION WITH HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (HIV)	<input type="checkbox"/> SICKLE CELL ANEMIA

**If you receive a request and you aren't sure if you have the authority to release §7332 Protected Information please contact the ROI department, or the Privacy Officer for further guidance.**



# Against Medical Advice Discharges (AMA)

By Yuri N. Walker, RN, JD, MPH

Director, Risk Management Program

Department of Veterans Affairs

Question -

What is an irregular discharge? What factors should be considered when a patient requests an against medical advice (AMA) discharge from a VA inpatient facility?

Answer -

Irregular discharge refers to the release of a competent patient from a VA or VA-authorized hospital, nursing home, or domiciliary care due to: refusal, neglect or obstruction of examination or treatment; leaving without the approval of the treating healthcare clinician; or disorderly conduct and discharge is the appropriate disciplinary action. An against medical advice (AMA) discharge falls in this category. Research studies in the private sector (primarily retrospective cohort studies) have identified the predictors of AMA discharge risk -

- Patient tends to be a younger age
- Male
- Lower socioeconomic status
- Medicaid or no insurance
- Current, or a history of, substance or alcohol abuse

AMA discharges continue to be a prevalent problem affecting health care quality, with studies showing they represent 2% of all hospital discharges. In addition, patients discharged AMA exposes the patient to the risks associated with an inadequately treated medical problem and greater subsequent risks for both morbidity and mortality. Veterans have the right to request an AMA discharge and requesting an AMA discharge does NOT affect their rights to future care. For Veterans desiring to leave AMA, the provider caring for the Veteran should engage in a thoughtful discussion with them. This discussion is a critical part of providing Veteran-centered care. Patients' comments, when providers are attuned to them, often give clues about the patients' underlying psychological state. Many patients request to leave the hospital for financial and personal reasons. Patients who decide to leave for "personal" reasons may be prioritizing financial concerns over health concerns, and while this may make the provider uneasy, if it is an informed decision, it should be respected.

Informed consent for patients deciding to leave AMA is one of the most important elements of care for their decision-making. An informed decision means that the patient arrived at their decision in consultation with their provider without being coerced and with a full understanding and appreciation of the risks, benefits, and alternatives of the decision. Examples of questions that





should be considered in the evaluation of patients that wish to leave AMA include:

- Does the patient understand and appreciate the admission diagnosis, its prognosis, as well as the risks and benefits associated with leaving the hospital?
- Is the patient aware of the alternatives to treatment in the hospital and the associated risks and benefits?
- Can the patient communicate their concerns/reasons for wanting to leave AMA?

Medical record documentation should include -

- Discussion between the provider and Veteran regarding risks of leaving AMA
- Any known factors or rationale expressed by the Veteran for discharging AMA and actions taken by the VAMC to address the concerns. Example; Veteran has no support at home to care for an ailing spouse or pet
- Veteran's signature on a form indicating their intent to be discharged AMA, if provided, or annotation that no signature was obtained at the Veteran's request. A signature is not required for a Veteran to be discharged AMA.
- Full discharge instructions/plans provided to the Veteran as standard for a regular discharge process
- Information provided related to follow up contacts and/or clinic appointments

Reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that the patient clearly understands the terminology and language used in the discharge discussion. Even in ideal settings, patients can be confused about discharge medications and plans. Therefore, providing clear instructions during these untimely discharges is even more important.

References -

VHA Handbook 1601B.05, Beneficiary Travel, dated July 21, 2010

VHA Handbook 1004.01, Informed Consent for Clinical Treatments and Procedures, dated August 14, 2009,

VHA Directive 2007-015, Inter-facility Transfer Policy dated May 7, 2007

Alfrandre, MD, David, "I'm Going Home": Discharges Against Medical Advice, Mayo Clin Proc. 2009 Mar; 84(3): 255-260

# Billie Anderson

Volunteer of the Month  
April 2017

Billie Anderson was born in Phoenix, AZ and she and her husband Robert, moved to Nampa, ID in February 2003 to be closer to daughter, Loucendy, son-in-law, Mike and grandchildren, Crystal and Robert.

Billie has close family members that served in the military, one of which is her son, Dan, a 20 year veteran. He served in Desert Storms and 2 tours in Iraq.

Billie volunteers at the Boise VA Hospital making lap quilts for the veterans. She makes 100 quilts a year and she also makes the tote bags to use as laundry bags or for miscellaneous items to be transported to and from the hospital and has been doing that for five (5) years.

Billie volunteers at Ten Mile Christian Church during the Sunday dinner, crochets, and plays pinnacle. Most days you will find her at her sewing machine making quilts for veterans. Although she is very busy she loves every minute of it.





## Asking the 5 Whys

One of the most important steps in process improvement is a clear understanding the problem and its cause. It is often the most overlooked step that ultimately leads to poor outcomes and wasted effort. Understanding the primary, underlying, or “**root cause**” of the problem is critical. This is especially true in healthcare.

A long, formal process is not needed for every process improvement project. A simple, but easy tool to use to determine the root cause is the **5 Whys**. It is helpful to have multiple people (your entire project team) involved with this activity for broad insights.

### *The 5 Why's Method*

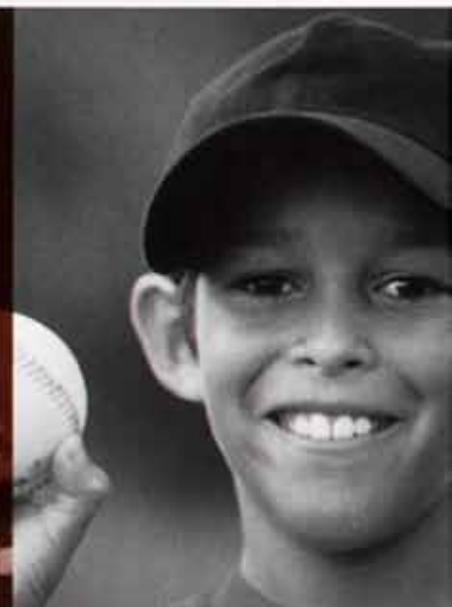
- 1. Write down the specific problem and describe it completely.*
- 2. Ask why the problem happens (direct cause) and write the answer below the problem.*
- 3. Ask why that problem (the direct cause) happens and write that answer below the direct cause.*
- 4. Continue to ask why about each subsequent answer until you determine the root (primary) cause.*



# The Easiest Way to Save a Life!

Sign Up Now to Donate

Boise VA Blood Drive  
Mountain Cove gym  
911 Mountain Cove Rd.  
Boise 83702



Thursday - May 25, 2017 9AM-2:00PM

You can **SCHEDULE ONLINE**

[www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) use sponsor code BVA

Info call Jay Bartram 429-2213 or Mary Black  
919-8621 for appointment.

# THIS IS HOW WE ROLL

Join us May 17 from 1100 to 1300 on the parade grounds for VA's annual VA2K, a national event promoting employee wellness and awareness of VA's Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) program. Employees and veterans are invited to walk 1.2 miles and participate in a toilet paper and detergent drive (laundry and dish) benefiting veterans enrolled in the homeless program. Mr. Wood has approved a 59 minute lunch break for participants (with supervisor approval). Now you have no excuses. Join us for some fun in the sun. There will be a bagpipe kick-off at 1100, thumping jams and props to make silly photos with your friends and teammates.

Last year the Golden Throne Award went to the Building 54 Bombers for the largest donation, 662 items. This year there will be two Golden Throne Awards one for biggest donation and another for most participants from a team or department. Donations are not required for participation, but it is nice. Donations will be collected at the event. Formal team participation is not required. Just gather your co-workers and get out there. Spread some happiness and health on Wednesday, May 17th. Walk those winter blues away. We look forward to seeing you there.

Contact Wendi at ext. 3501 or Kristen at ext. 7342 for more information or details.



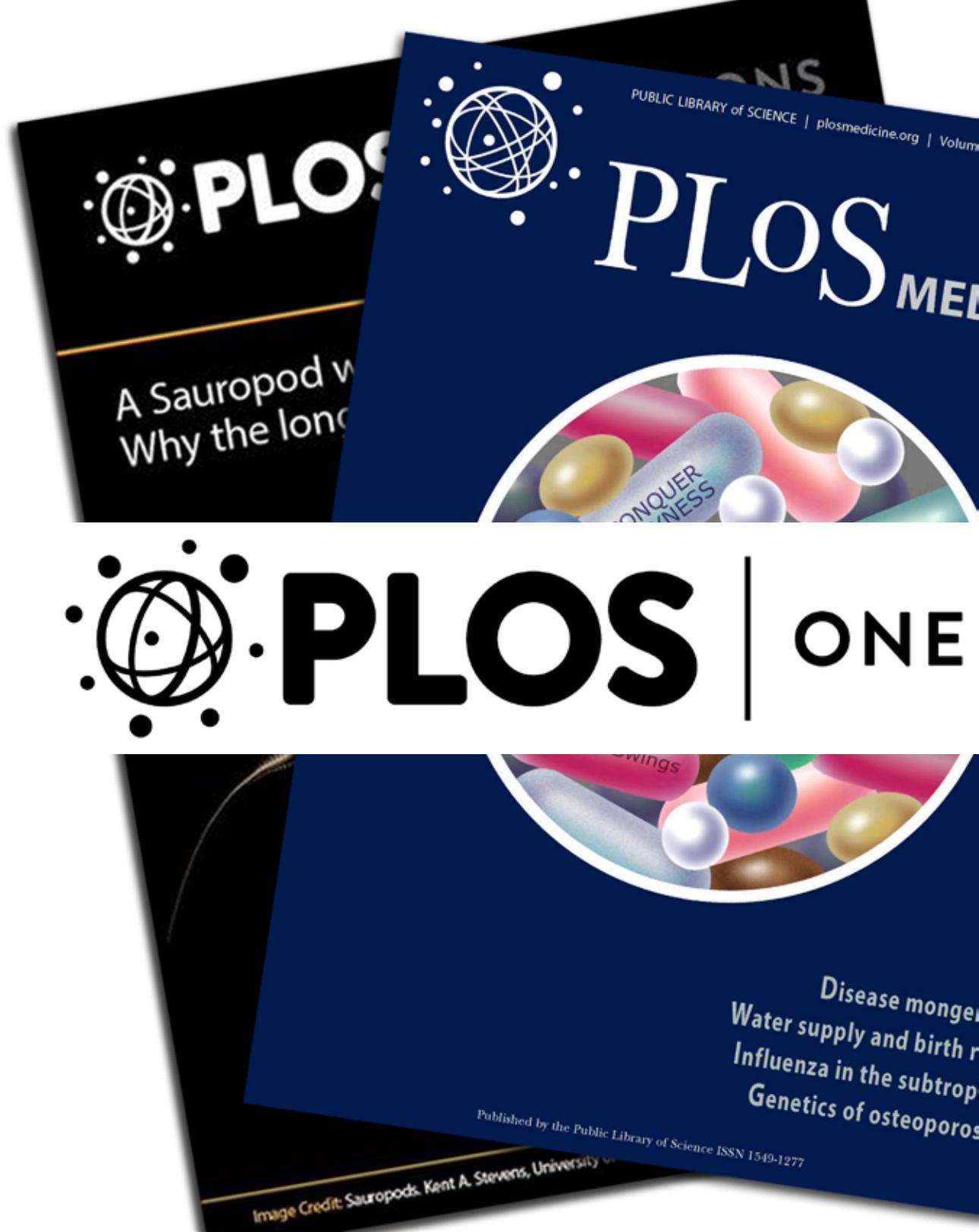
## VA Researcher Dr. Amy Bryant Published in PLOS One

Dr. Bryant and others were published in PLOS One titled: 'Effects of delayed NSAID administration after experimental eccentric contraction injury - A cellular and proteomics study'

Veterans Disability and Rehabilitation Research Channel features articles on a wide range of topics relevant to veteran disability and rehabilitation research. The Channel Editors aim to showcase the most up to date research to assist veterans and all adults around the world with chronic illness and disability.

The Veterans Disability and Rehabilitation Research Channel was developed with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Rehabilitation Research and Development Service as a new home for the community previously served by the Journal of Rehabilitation Research & Development (JRRD).

We congratulate Dr. Bryant for this recognition!!!



~Save the Date~

## Boise VAMC Research Day - May 17, 2017

We invite you to attend a presentation and workshop on pursuing research at the VA

**Special Guest Dr. Holly Krull, PhD**  
**Merit Review Program Manager**  
**VA Office of Research and Development**

**Wednesday May 17, 2017**

**Building 117 Conference Room**

**11:30 am Feature presentation**

**12:30 pm Lunch (provided by IVREF)**

**1:00-3:00 pm Breakout sessions and individual meetings with Dr. Krull**

**Interested in Research? Come learn about VA grant opportunities, how to apply, and how research can fit into your current position.**

**RSVP to Carrie Melvin at [Carolyn.Melvin2@va.gov](mailto:Carolyn.Melvin2@va.gov).**



L2R: Dr. Mary Cloud Ammons, PhD - BVAMC;  
Dr. Michael Aldape, PhD - BVAMC

L2R: Dr. Daniel Merrick, MD - DVAMC;  
Dr. Dennis Stevens, MD - BVAMC



### TREASURE VALLEY RESEARCH SERIES:

DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR LECTURESHIP, April 20th, 2017 - *A great success!*

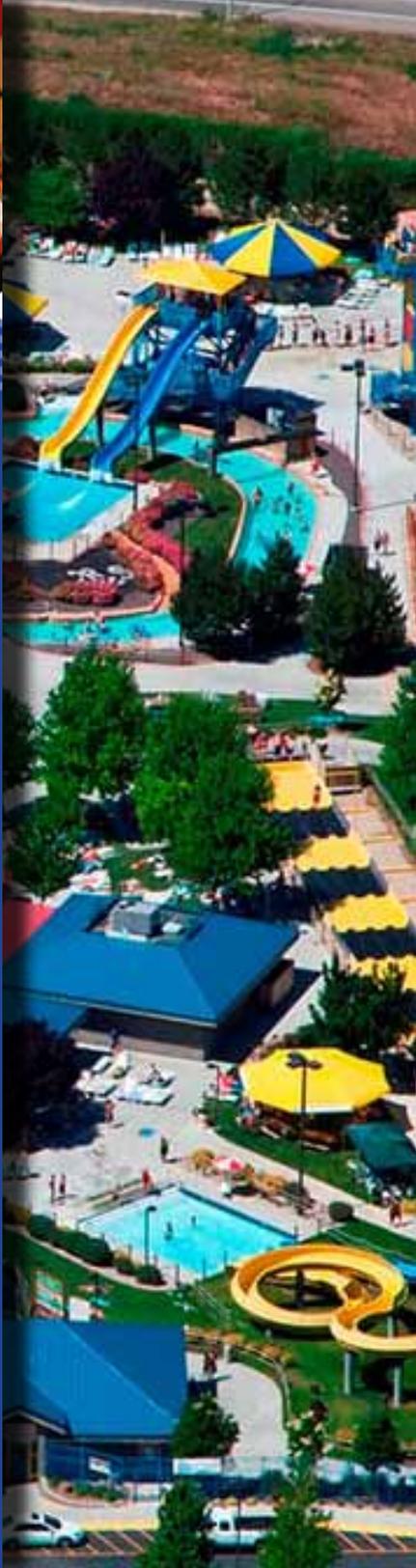
Hosted by the Idaho Veterans Research and Education Foundation (IVREF), the Boise VA's Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) in Infectious Diseases, and in collaboration with the IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE)

Presented by: Dr. Daniel T. Merrick, MD - Associate Professor, University of Colorado Denver; Anatomical & Clinical Pathologist, Department of Pathology, Denver VAMC. Presentation: *Identification of cellular pathways that underlie progression of bronchial dysplasia to invasive squamous cell carcinoma of the lung*

Join us at the next installment in series, TBA for August 2017. Questions? Contact: [Szilvia.rideg@va.gov](mailto:Szilvia.rideg@va.gov)



NEW! INDOOR ADVENTURE PARK



# SAVE ON ROARING SPRINGS, WAHOOZ & TRIPLE THE FUN TICKETS

## \$7 off with Online Discount Club

<b>Roaring Springs</b> Full Day Ticket (3 & under FREE)	<b>\$24.99<sup>+tax</sup> (\$7 off)</b>
<b>Triple the Fun</b> Roaring Springs/Wahooz Combo Ticket	<b>\$54.99<sup>+tax</sup> (\$5 off)</b>
<b>Wahooz</b> Ultimate Unlimited Fun Pass	<b>\$36.99<sup>+tax</sup> (\$7 off)</b>
<b>Wahooz Jr</b> Ultimate Unlimited Fun Pass	<b>\$31.49<sup>+tax</sup> (\$5.50 off)</b>

<p>Buy <b>Roaring Springs</b> tickets at</p> <p><a href="http://www.roaringsprings.com">www.roaringsprings.com</a></p> <p>Click on Roaring Springs, then <b>Groups &gt; Discount Club &gt; Buy Now</b></p> <p>Group Name: <b>vamedical</b> Password: <b>time2play</b> (all lower case)</p> <p>Print confirmation (or show on phone).</p> <p>Take to turn stile &amp; enter waterpark.</p>	<p>Buy <b>Wahooz</b> tickets at</p> <p><a href="http://www.wahoozfunzone.com">www.wahoozfunzone.com</a></p> <p>Click on Wahooz, then <b>Groups &gt; Discount Club &gt; Buy Now</b></p> <p>Group Name: <b>vamedical</b> Password: <b>time2play</b> (all lower case)</p> <p>Print confirmation (or show on phone).</p> <p>Take to Wahooz ticket counter.</p>
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For more information please visit [www.roaringsprings.com](http://www.roaringsprings.com) or [www.wahoozfunzone.com](http://www.wahoozfunzone.com)