Staff of the Boise VA Medical Center, Women’s Wellness Center show their support for women veterans with special new scrubs for ‘Wonder Woman Wednesday’
The Boise VAMC would like to welcome our new employees who came aboard:

Anna Van Dyke, FMS
Xaviar Trautwein, FMS
Howard Istre, FMS
Illaria Moore, HBPC
Ronald Lee, MSO
Margaret Farace, Nursing
Alexis Burlile, Nursing
Selah Worley, Nursing
Adeline Noack, Nursing
Larry Rightmeier, Nursing
Nathan Zahrt, Nursing
Eve Williams, Nursing
Brianna Thruston, Nursing
Gregg Pierce, Nursing
Nancy Mann, Nursing
Leslie Havrilak, Nursing
Ashley Gardner, Nursing

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

Kevin Lloyd, EMS
Cheryl Czarnecki, EMS
Karen McPeak, Psychiatry
Tyler Jue, Nursing
Teresa Elliott, Telehealth
Boise VAMC Employee Engagement

The Boise VAMC is participating as one of VISN 20 pilot sites for a national VHA Employee Engagement program. A site team with national and VISN 20 representatives will be “rounding” June 6-8 through the Boise facility, off-site locations, and the Twin Falls, Mountain Home and Caldwell CBOCs. Specifically, they are looking for ideas from frontline staff to improve your work through 8-12 week “Sprint Projects”. Click on this link to learn about this program at the Puget Sound VA Puget Sound Employee Engagement video.

Submitted ideas will be evaluated by the team and our Board of Champions. Once the final projects are selected a Kick-off for “Wave 1” projects will be held on July 12. Look for details in next month’s Boise Front.

If you do not have an opportunity to visit directly with the site team you are welcome to send your idea directly to BOIEmployeeEngagementIdeas@va.gov.
Thank you to all who participated and donated to this year’s VA2K and VA2K #2.

The Golden Throne Award for Largest Donation goes to the Building 52 Bombers. The Bombers brought in 408 rolls of toilet paper. Largest Team Award goes to PALMS with 11 participants. A total of 1,306 rolls of toilet paper were collected and 40 containers of detergent. We had 88 participants, up by three from last year. Golden Throne Awards to be presented soon. Thank you for supporting our homeless veterans.
What is FOIA?

Since 1967, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) has provided the public the right to request access to records from any federal agency. It is often described as the law that keeps citizens in the know about their government. A FOIA request can be made for any agency record; but don't worry; while we are required to disclose any information requested under the FOIA we don’t have to release it if it falls under one of nine exemptions which protect interests such as personal privacy, national security, and law enforcement. As the Privacy Officer and FOIA Officer I am responsible to make sure that we are protecting your rights while adhering to the FOIA.

The FOIA provides that when processing requests, we should withhold information only if we reasonably foresee that disclosure would harm an interest protected by an exemption, or if disclosure is prohibited by law.

So, what is your Role?

While I process the FOIA requests, I do not have access to all of the information requested. If I get a request and am looking for records, you will receive an email from me that states what exactly I am looking for and that it is a FOIA request. It is important to note that just because I am asking for the records; it doesn't mean that they will be released. The FOIA program has strict timelines that our agency must adhere to, so my requests will likely have a short amount of time for you to respond. Once I collect all the records I will begin reviewing them to determine if I will release them or not, and if redaction is required.

When it comes to FOIA, we strive to be as transparent as possible; working together applying the “presumption of openness” so that people can stay informed.
JUNE IS LGBT PRIDE MONTH

Boise VAMC celebrates LGBT PRIDE Month!!
Saturday, June 17, 2017, the Boise VAMC, along with AFGE and the Vet Center, will be participating in the Boise PRIDE Parade. Join us in celebrating and walking as a VA. We will be gathering at the Idaho State Capital at 11am for the annual Pride Rally, followed by the Pride Parade at 11:30am.

Learn more about what resources are available at the Boise VAMC and at the Vet Center. Visit the Boise VAMC Resource Table at Boise PRIDE, June 17, 2017, at Capitol City Park (across from the State Capitol) 11am-5pm.

LGBT Group:
LGBT Group is offered every Tuesday at the Boise VAMC.
To support and honor LGBT Veterans.
Tuesdays, 10am-11am
Contact: 422-1000 ext. 7047 for more information

For more information contact:
Susie Klepacki (208) 422-1000 ext. 7047
Travis Riggs (208) 422-1000

Please see the Boise VAMC website for more information regarding the LGBT Group. www.boise.va.gov

For more information regarding LGBT Veteran Care: http://go.va.gov/LGBTVCC
Recently Wendi helped a Veteran in the HUD VASH program to receive dental care that he has needed but hasn’t been able to get for a LONG time. Wendi has been working for many months to coordinate with the Delta Dental folks and she worked with them to set aside funds specifically for Veterans in the homeless programs, so that these high need Veterans can access dental resources that they cannot afford in the community and do not qualify for at the VA. Wendi recognized this gap in care and has gone to extremes to help Veterans have access to more services. This is not surprising because I’ve seen Wendi use her creativity to problem solve the most complicated issues that come up! She routinely handles the most complicated cases and she does it with professionalism and compassion day in and day out. Today I saw my Veteran for a routine visit, and he was wearing his dentures. He looked like an entirely different person! This is thanks to Wendi’s help. This Veteran had nothing but GREAT things to say about Wendi. She made such a difference for this person. And if that wasn’t enough, Wendi isn’t just helping this one Veteran, she’s making changes on a larger, programmatic level as this is now an awesome resource that we can offer to other Veterans. She didn’t just get this program set up and then bow out… in true Wendi fashion she sees the process through from start to finish. She helps the Veteran navigate the process of setting up the appointment and even takes them to the appointment if needed so that they’ll be successful. I could nominate Wendi for EOM for SO many reasons. She is an awesome team member, she’s enthusiastic and thinks outside the box, and she's daring and fierce. I should have nominated her a long time ago. Today, I will no longer take Wendi for granted! She is awesome and she makes SUCH a difference to so many. Seeing the smile glaring at me on this Veteran’s face today, wearing his dentures… I just can’t ignore it and I want to give Wendi the utmost credit because it is certainly overdue!
Interested in having fun work events at the Boise VA? Come join the VAEA and learn about our planned events and help us brainstorm new ones for the upcoming year.

What is the VAEA? The Veteran Affairs Employee Association (VAEA) is an employee volunteer group whose goal is to make the Boise VA one of the best places to work. We need your help to make this happen! Let’s work together so that we can have activities that make our employees happy and our Veterans glad to be a part of this VA!

Some of the event ideas we have been discussing include but are not limited to,

* Food trucks
* Easter Egg Hunt (2018) for the employee’s children/grandchildren
* Outdoor movie night complete with popcorn, candy and soda
* BBQ on the lawn;
* Summer Hawaiian days (dress in favorite island attire and enjoy shaved ice)
* Trunk or Treat
* Halloween Costume Contest.

In order to provide fund activities for employees we need your help when we fundraise. So you will be seeing a lot of fundraising going on to help fund these events. Fundraisers like our Krispy Kreme fundraiser in March. Please share the fundraising with fellow employees, friends, and family!!

We would love to hear from you. Share your thoughts about what you would like to see your Boise VAEA do to make things fun. Let’s get excited to be the place others wish they could have! We hold the keys to make our work place more enjoyable!

Email Us @ Email Group Name: “BOI Employee Assoc”
BOIEMployeeAssoc@va.gov
Jacqueline Howe – MSA (MEDICAL SUPPORT ASSISTANT) was selected as the HAS Employee of the Quarter.

She was nominated by Arlena Blick, RN, BSN, OPD Nurse Manager who stated, “Jackie is an outstanding member of the TF CBOC team. Since her first day, she has made it clear that her mission is to serve and honor our Veterans. She always greets them with a smile and sets a positive tone for their visit. She goes above and beyond to answer any questions that the Vet or their families may have. If she does not have the answer, she will find someone who does. She has a positive attitude and great work ethic. Jackie has demonstrated flexibility and reliability. She often covers clerical needs for the smaller CBOCs when needed. She has taken on special assignments to help with AUDs/coverage for other specialty clinics at the BVA. She goes above and beyond in all she does. She is able to work efficiently, with little supervision when at the annex. Although, the staff and patients really miss her when she isn’t at the clinic!

Jackie sets a great example of what a PACT team clerk should be. She communicates well and is reliable. When she says she will do something, she does it. She stays up to date on any changes and ensures other staff are aware as well. I have heard many comments from nursing staff about how much they enjoy working with Jackie. When she is here, patients will flock to her counter because they enjoy her positive attitude and efficiency.

Jackie very rarely complains and always tries to be part of the solution. I needed at least 5 people to volunteer to pilot an online version of the Yellow Belt LEAN training. Jackie volunteered for this 8 week course and has just submitted her A3 and passed the test to obtain her Yellow Belt Certification. She and a group of nurses came up with a project to increase access through different pre appointment scrubbing methods! This is something we hope to implement here in TF and if effective, share with other clinics/teams.

Jackie is truly a role model for us all. She enjoys her work and is great at it. If I could, I'd clone her!”
Every year, we help the Idaho Food Bank by collecting non-perishable food items throughout the summer. Over the years, your donated food has fed thousands of families facing tough economic times throughout the Treasure Valley. You, our Boise VAMC family, have always stepped up to help others less fortunate with your wonderful generosity.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is proud to participate in the 2017 Feds Feed Families Food Drive, and has established a goal of "beating our previous best." VA achieved 323,961 pounds of non-perishable goods for the 2016 campaign.

This year, the Feds Feed Families Food Drive starts June 1st and ends August 31st.

You will see those big Idaho Food Bank barrels all around the facility. Please load them up with canned goods or any other non-perishable food items you want to donate. There is a list of Most Needed Items: Canned Proteins, Canned Vegetables, Canned Fruits, Grains, Multigrain Cereals, Canned or Dry Beans, Soups, Peanut Butter and Jelly, and 100% Juice.

Please contact Idalia Gonzalez (ext. 7667) with any questions.

Thank you for your continued support with this very important service to our community.
On May 17th, the Boise VA Research Department, with the help of the Idaho Veterans Research & Education Foundation (IVREF), celebrated National VA Research Week 2017.

The department hosted guest and keynote speaker Dr. Holly Krull, a Merit Review Program Manager for the VA Office of Research Development. The day featured both individual morning conferences with Boise VA clinicians and current scientific staff, as well as multiple break-out sessions in the afternoon with SCRD, RRD, HSRD and BLRD. The focuses were on merit review funding opportunities and current merit review submissions. The lunch session began with Mr. Wood, VAMC Director, welcoming Dr. Krull and the seminar attendants followed by Dr. Stevens, as the Acting Chief of Staff for Research, introducing the keynote speaker and presenting her with a Certification of Recognition for her efforts coming to the Boise VA. John Huffman, VA Program Specialist, received a desktop Research Innovation Recognition for his outstanding efforts creating Research Office System Application (ROSA), a compliance program used by the Research Department at the Boise VA as well as three other VAs currently.

The day was a great success. The attendance was greater than anticipated, and the participants were outwardly appreciative of the information gleaned from the seminar.