The

BOISE FRONT

November 2019

The official newsletter of the Boise VA Medical Center

Local residents enjoy the first snow.

Hello's Goodbye's

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

Tracy Rhodes, Behavioral Health
Daniel Weyrick, FMS
Shemariae Bates, HAS
Logan Jensen, HAS
Allyson Nida, HAS
Brian Hannum, MIS
William Dittrich, MSO
Matthew Divietro, MSO
Molly Olsen, MSO
Shannon Young, Nursing
Lisa Aguilar, Nursing
Matthew Leasure, Nursing

Katherine Kristofik, Nursing
Nina Tong, Pharmacy
Deborah Jackson, PCS
Averi Jackson, COS
Desiree Murphy, HAS
Nytashia Allbritton, HAS
Jerri Mullinax, MSO
Margaret Grosvenor, N&FS
Pamela Garner, Nursing
Jan Drake, Nursing
Lisa Enriquez, VCS

Hello's Goodbye's

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

Jared Earl, MSO
Erica Grzenda, PALMS
Lisa Lewis, Prosthetics
James O'Donnell, FMS
Laura Leonard, FMS
Angela Johnson, VCS,
Daniel Weyrick, FMS

Thiago Alberto, Nursing
Michael Hughes, FMS
Kristopher Champie, SPS
James George, ITOPS
Jan Mahoney, VCS
Lora Vance, Nursing

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH **NOVEMBER**

Autumn Martin

Autumn Martin, PA-C continuously shows commitment to quality patient care on Orange and Silver Team. She always does what is best for the patient, even if it means staying late. It is common to find that Autumn has placed an order on behalf of a PCP while seeing a patient in episodic care, even if it is unrelated to the patient's chief complaint. Although, she has only been at the Boise VAMC for one year, she has quickly become a respected and greatly appreciated member of our primary care team. We value her passion for patient-centered care and the positive energy she brings to the clinic. We would like to acknowledge and share our gratitude for the effort Autumn gives daily. She makes the Orange and Silver Team a great place to work.

Tarl Smith

Mr. Tarl Smith is an exemplary employee as demonstrated by his third nomination for Employee of the Month. Mr. Smith shows integrity with the high level of standards he uses in the performance of his job from processing timecards to board actions. He ensure each area is completed within the regulation standards. Mr. Smith's high ethical work standard effects those frontline staff that take of the veterans. Staff know Mr. Smith will complete all the necessary requirements and track their compliance to the best of his ability free them up to focus on taking care of veterans. Mr. Smith is often put in the position of educating others, both in and outside of Nursing, on the rules and regulations of payroll, hiring, proficiencies etc. He shows each person appreciation for inquiring and will provide as much assistance as needed. Although some would say these are very positive attributes in an employee, this part of Mr. Smith's job requirement. This is a true statement with one exception, Mr. Smith is expected to perform in this exemplary fashion for about 100 staff but he works with more than 400 staff. And with the constant turnover of admin staff, Mr. Smith is the one constant staff are comfortable with and appreciate.

JoAnn Martin

Jo is our full time night time housekeeper in the Operating Room and since moving into this role we have had no discrepancies, only praise from the surgery nursing staff. She is always polite strives for excellence in any area of the hospital she takes on. This is very present in the OR area as the staff there continually communicates changes and issues with us constantly. Jo has had a couple small mistakes and points them out to me as soon as it happens, always striving for perfect setup of each operating room. Her dedication and customer service have followed her from one area to the next. Jo has far exceeded expectations while at the VA and more importantly in the highly key area of the Boise Surgery Suite.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

In 1966 the Army drafted me and I was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas (only son exemption). Spent a lot of time KPing during basic training and did stints at being a wireman, CO driver, MP and ended my two-year career mail clerking.

I spent my youthful years in Trona, California, a small town in the Mojavi Desert (75 miles from Death Valley Monument), and after high school attended Chaffey College. I remember going in to see the counselor and he asked me what I wanted to major in; I gave him a blank stare wondering what the heck he was talking about. I had five minutes to look over my major options and I decided electronics would be a good thing to specialize in. After the service, I returned to school and finished my AS degree at LA Trade Tech. Many years later I received a degree from Boise State University in computer sciences. Through the years I have had such a variety of jobs and experiences I became a "jack of all trades". During that time I had a daughter who has since provided me with four grandsons, ages 3 to 14. And for these last years I have been blessed with a much understanding girlfriend, Barbara.

Since deciding to collect social security at the ripe young age of 62, I have been keeping busy playing tennis, hiking the surrounding foothills, doing odd jobs and trying to stay in shape. Another fun thing I do is volunteer for hiking trail maintenance in which small groups spend from one day to a week in the wilderness cleaning trails of fallen trees, rock slides, or other debris. What's most impressive is the use of hand tools and saws only. No gas or electrically operated tools allowed.

Because of the excellent care I have received from the VA, about two years ago I decided it was important for me to show my appreciation for the services they provide. Since then I have been spending three days a week at what I would call an ambassador for the Rec Center's Move program that offers open-gym privileges to those who have been through the Go rehab program. Here at the VA I feel a connection to a outstanding group of people who care for each another. Wouldn't have it any other way.

BOISE is HIGHLY RELIABLE

HRO
PRINCIPLES & VALUES

November | National Safety Poster

Theme of the Month: It's About the Veteran

"I did not want to see any Veterans suffer any adverse events. That was my whole reason for [investigating the incomplete procedures]. I was really glad to help."

Amber Kishbaugh
Advanced Medical Support Assistant

Persistence Improves Patient Scheduling

Scenario/Context: Amber Kishbaugh, Advanced Medical Support Assistant at the Butler VAMC, had two patients waiting for cardiology consults. When Pittsburgh VA hospital staff called to ask for the Zio Patch heart monitoring results needed to schedule the consults, Amber realized that the Zio Patch appointments had never been scheduled. As Amber investigated these delays, she discovered many others.

Action: Amber pursued the issue and discovered that the secure electronic spreadsheet which tracked procedures was not triggering scheduling reminders, so appointments were not always being scheduled. A Quality Management review revealed that the scheduling issues extended to all Patient Care Aligned Teams (PACT) and cardiopulmonary orders (e.g., Zio Patch, Sleep Study), for a total of 1,945 orders over 18 months.

Results: A new tracking process was instituted, which includes a twice-daily report of open orders and medical record documentation of each step in the order scheduling process.

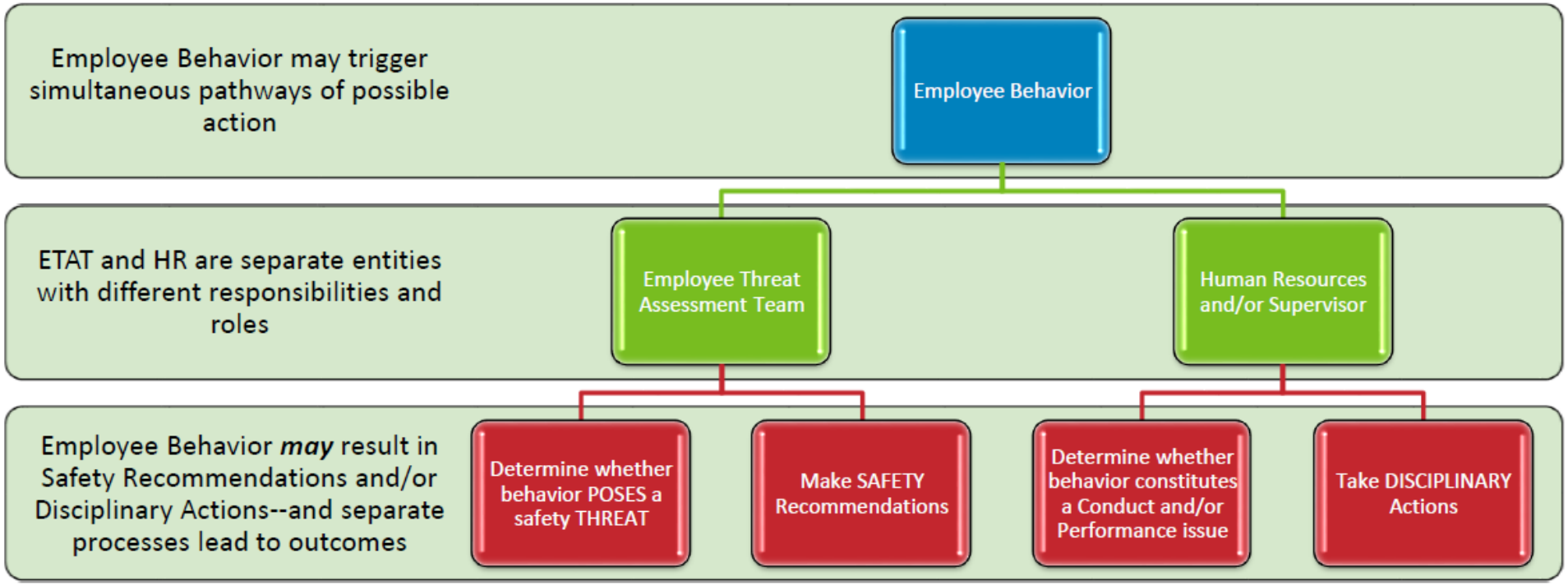
HRO Principle: It's About the Veteran. Amber took many actions to identify the cause of scheduling delays. Her persistence resulted in an improved process for all PACT teams. Amber is passionate about doing what's right for Veterans.

VHA'S JOURNEY TO HIGH RELIABILITY
Your Care is Our Mission.

COMING SOON **EMPLOYEE THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM**

In early 2018, the International Association of Healthcare Security and Safety (IAHSS) established a new standard for violence prevention in healthcare facilities: "Healthcare Facilities should establish a process and multi-disciplinary team to identify, assess, validate, mitigate and respond to threats of violence or other behaviors of concern" (IAHSS, 2018). Soon thereafter, in July 2018, the VHA Workplace Violence Prevention Program put forth a memorandum from the Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management requiring that each VA facility establish an Employee Threat Assessment Team and that each VISN attest to a 90 percent or better VISN implementation rate by January 15, 2019 for each of the previous two quarters.

Employee Threat Assessment Teams (ETAT) within VHA are interdisciplinary and multi-departmental teams whose specially trained members are appointed by, responsible to, and offer advice to the Chief of Staff and Facility Director. The ETAT addresses matters in which there is concern about possible workplace aggression or violence involving employees, trainees, or volunteers. The mission of the ETAT is to assess whether the employee, trainee or volunteer



ETAT Continued...

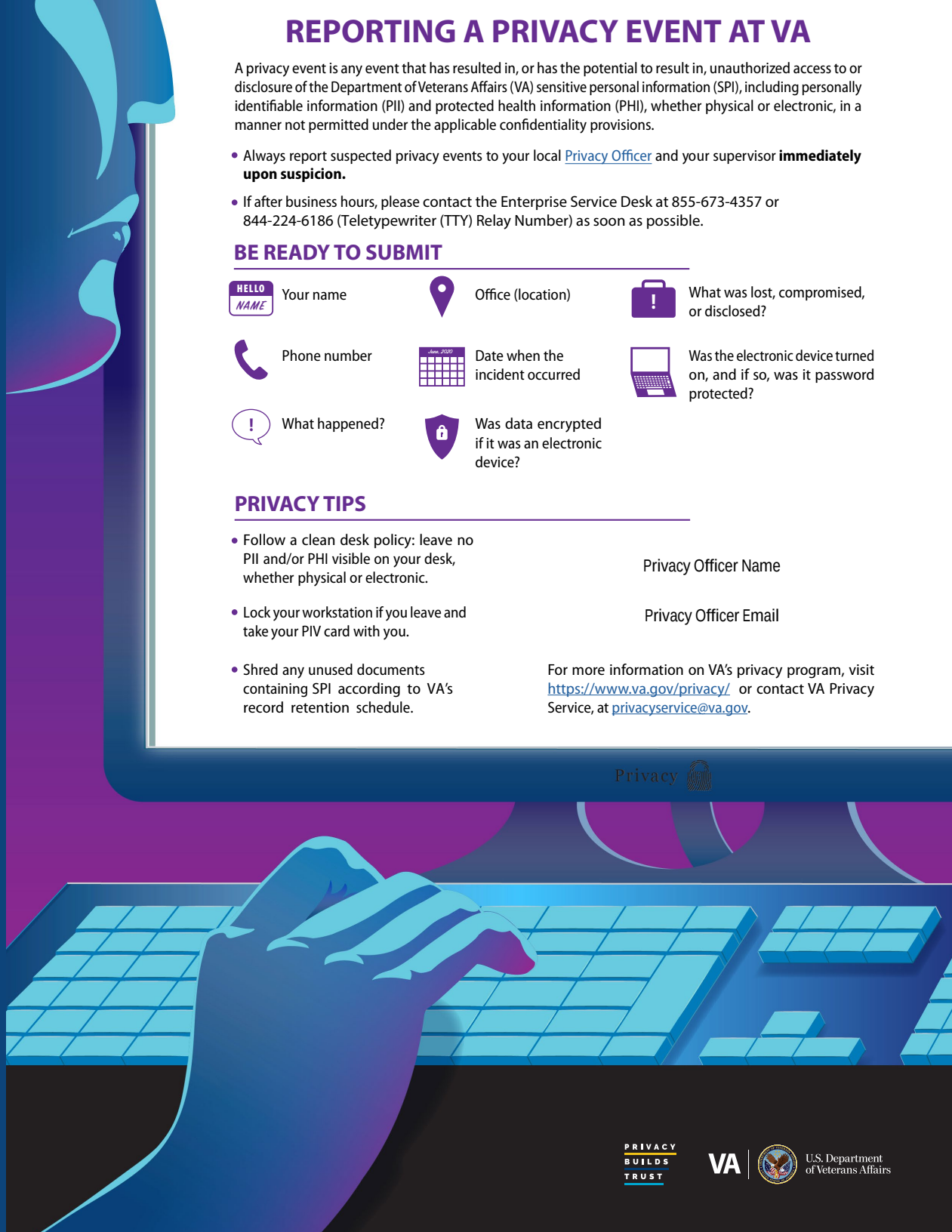
poses a safety threat currently, in the near future, or in the distant future and to develop recommendations for reducing the risk of violence to all employees. The ETAT does not make disciplinary recommendations, rather our focus is to assess and mitigate risk for violence. Assessments will most often be completed through interviews with various employees involved in and/or witnessing the reported aggressive, threatening or violent behaviors. Protecting the dignity and privacy of all employees, trainees, and volunteers is top priority for the team.

The team consists of representatives from Behavioral Health, Human Resources, Nursing Service, the Executive Office, Labor Partner/Union, VA Police, Safety Office, and Legal Counsel (ad hoc). Reports can be submitted through the Disruptive Behavior Reporting System (DBRS) starting in November 2019. The DBRS can be found under Intranet on the Program Manager/ Application Manager. It is important to note that making a report via DBRS does not take

the place of reporting violence or threats to the VA Police. The ETAT will take every report related to workplace violence seriously and will conduct a thorough, evidence-based assessment of the incident. If the incident involves a specific individual impacted by workplace violence, follow-up steps may include: Developing a safety and security plan, restrictions and disciplinary procedures as determined by a Supervisor and/or Human Resources, VA and/or community law enforcement involvement and investigation, and/or Employee Assistance Program (EAP). If the report causes general or specific concern for immediate safety or security, then administrative actions may be implemented and prevention will be the focus of law enforcement.

Please feel free to contact, Keri Barbero, LCSW, at extension 7152, Josh Bode, LCSW, at 208-863-5828, or Adam Mundy, MA, Employee and Labor Relations Manager, at extension 1213, for more information.

REPORT PRIVACY EVENTS



REPORTING A PRIVACY EVENT AT VA

A privacy event is any event that has resulted in, or has the potential to result in, unauthorized access to or disclosure of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) sensitive personal information (SPI), including personally identifiable information (PII) and protected health information (PHI), whether physical or electronic, in a manner not permitted under the applicable confidentiality provisions.

- Always report suspected privacy events to your local Privacy Officer and your supervisor **immediately upon suspicion.**
- If after business hours, please contact the Enterprise Service Desk at 855-673-4357 or 844-224-6186 (Teletypewriter (TTY) Relay Number) as soon as possible.

BE READY TO SUBMIT

- Your name
- Office (location)
- What was lost, compromised, or disclosed?
- Phone number
- Date when the incident occurred
- Was the electronic device turned on, and if so, was it password protected?
- What happened?
- Was data encrypted if it was an electronic device?

PRIVACY TIPS

- Follow a clean desk policy: leave no PII and/or PHI visible on your desk, whether physical or electronic.
- Lock your workstation if you leave and take your PIV card with you.
- Shred any unused documents containing SPI according to VA's record retention schedule.

Privacy Officer Name

Privacy Officer Email

For more information on VA's privacy program, visit https://www.va.gov/privacy/ or contact VA Privacy Service, at privacyservice@va.gov.

PRIVACY BUILDS TRUST

VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

The mission of the VA Caregiver Support Program is
"to promote the health and well-being of family Caregivers
who care for our nation's Veterans, through education,
resources, support and services"

National Family Caregivers *Month*

November

Boise VAMC Caregiver Support:
208-422-1000 x 7438

LEAVE **NO VETERAN BEHIND** THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

**This offer is made possible thru the Community Brotherhoood of Veterans 501(c)(3)*

If you are, or know of a veteran who needs help this holiday season please stop by the Information Desk at the Boise VA Medical Center to fill out a request form.

Those veterans/families will be contacted to be connected with sponsors, donations and other forms of support during the holiday season.

For more information contact the Boise VA Volunteer Services at (208) 422-1176

The Boise VA Medical Foster Home Program

Cindy Bahora, LCSW CCM
Boise VA MFH Coordinator

The Boise VA Medical Foster Home Program (MFH) finds dedicated, experienced caregivers in the community willing to open their home and take in Veterans who are unable to care for themselves and are facing long term care in a facility. The homes undergo an application process with references, screenings, and inspections by 5 different VA staff including, Safety, Social Work, Nursing, Physical Therapy, and Dietician. The caregiver agreement includes maintaining VA standards, working with the HBPC team, accepting pop-in visits by the Coordinator, and attending 2 full day education sessions each year arranged by the MFH Coordinator. The picture above was taken during a recent MFH caregiver training in October. The goal is for the caregivers to provide care to these Veterans for the rest of their lives. The MFH program is not a standalone program but works in conjunction with HBPC program. Each Veteran admitted to a MFH is also enrolled in the HBPC program. The multidisciplinary in-home approach is integral to making sure needs of the Veteran and caregiver are met. The MFH coordinator is also mandated to drop in unannounced at least one time each month to check in and make sure there are no concerns.

The VA does not pay for the Veteran to be in the Medical Foster Home. The Veteran pays the caregiver instead of paying a facility. MFH costs are less expensive than long term care and the MFH Coordinator can work with the pension office to assist those Veterans eligible for the Aide and Attendance pensions to obtain this benefit which helps with the cost. The program also saves the VA money. Highly service connected (P1A) Veterans who chose to pay for a MFH instead of going to a contract nursing home (CNH) at VA's expense, save the facility the cost of that care. The same for Veterans in a MFH that choose to stay in the home on Hospice at the end of life. It is estimated, using the National MFH equations and our local CNH average costs, that the Boise MFH Program has now saved the facility over 1.5 Million dollars since it began admitting Veterans in 2015.

There are currently 10 homes certified as Medical Foster Homes and 10 Veterans currently reside in those homes. The homes are spread throughout the area that HBPC provides care. The homes are in Boise, Meridian, Nampa, Caldwell, Kuna, Sand Hollow, Wilder, and Weiser. The Boise VA MFH Program was consistently in the top 40% in the nation for number of

Veterans in the MFHs, top 26% for number of P1A Veterans in homes, and is currently 4th in the nation for number of rural homes. These rankings are from FY19 national MFH monthly reports and include all MFH programs within VA facilities across the nation, large and small.

The Veterans and caregivers also seem to really enjoy the program and their care. Some of the Veteran's responses from the annual satisfaction survey are: "They treat me wonderful here. They treat me like family", "I love this place. It is so clean I could eat off the floor". The Caregivers have responded "This is an awesome program and I love being a part of it", "This is the best support we have ever received as caregivers", "Love the whole program". The caregiver's passion for the program shows in the care they provide.

There are current MFH openings waiting for the right Veteran. The Veteran has to be someone that can be cared for by a single person, and not need 24-hour awake supervision. The current openings include one each in Boise, Kuna, Sand Hollow, Wilder, and Weiser. The coordinator will meet with any Veteran interested by phone, home visits, or even meeting at the clinic. The coordinator will educate, assess, and see if the Veteran is interested and may be appropriate for the program. The next step is to have the HBPC team review and have the veteran meet with the caregiver. If all goes well, the Coordinator then works to make the Veteran's transition to the home a reality.

If you have a Veteran who you think may be interested, you can reach the MFH Coordinator, Cindy Bahora, LCSW, CCM, at 208-780-6253, by email, sign her into a note, or place a Medical Foster Home Consult. You can also call Wendy McPherson, the MFH PSA at 208-780-6256. We are available to meet with you individually or attend meetings if you would like more information about the program. Just let us know how we can help you get the information to the Veterans who could benefit from knowing about the option of the MFH program.

The CLC staff received a big thank you from the family of Ralph, a Marine Corps veteran living in the hospice unit of our CLC. With the help of CLC staff and a generous donation from Albertsons, Ralph was able to enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner early with his friends and family. Ralph's family commented the dinner was a very special memory that they will cherish forever. **Great job CLC staff!**