



'Bldg. 200H' time capsule opened on 10/10



Guests at Capt. James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center's third anniversary celebration of its integration look on as Commanding Officer and Deputy Director Capt. José Acosta removes items from a 53-year-old time capsule from the former Naval Hospital Great Lakes. The capsule was buried by Navy hospital staff in 1960. Bricks from the old hospital will be made into a monument by the Lovell FHCC Ambulatory Care Clinic courtyard. (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore)

Lovell FHCC celebrates third anniversary of integration with opening of former Naval Hospital time capsule

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

The Capt. James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) celebrated the third anniversary of its integration Oct. 10, 2013, by opening a 53-year-old time capsule from the former Naval Hospital Great Lakes that preceded it.

Lovell FHCC Director Patrick Sullivan and Commanding Officer and Deputy Director Capt. José Acosta lead the event. Acosta

priated open the shoe-box sized time capsule outside the East entrance of the Lovell FHCC Ambulatory Care Clinic, where a monument will be built out of bricks from "Building 200H," as the Naval hospital was known locally.

"As we look at this facility, the Lovell Federal Health Care Center, we see integration at its best, and it's going to get better," Acosta said. "Today is a day of celebration. We celebrate all the good things that happened at Building 200H; we celebrate the birthday of the Lovell Federal Health Care Center, and we look forward to some great days as

we work together on behalf of all of our patients."

On Oct. 1, 2010, the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs integrated medical services in the Great Lakes, Ill., area for Navy recruits, other active duty military and their dependents, and veterans, to create the first and only federal health care center in the nation.

The Naval hospital building overlooked Lake Michigan and stood as one of the tallest structures on the grounds of Naval Station Great Lakes until it

was demolished earlier this year. The hospital downsized and was renamed the Naval Health Clinic before it closed its doors for good when Lovell FHCC opened.

The time capsule – a 4-inch tall, 6-by-16-inch steel box – was buried by staff of Naval Hospital Great Lakes when the facility first opened.

Locked inside the time capsule was an invitation to the dedication ceremony of the then-new Naval Hospital Great Lakes.

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Leadership Commentary

FHCC's fourth year of existence will continue to bring change



By Patrick L. Sullivan
Lovell FHCC Director

Happy birthday to Lovell FHCC! This Oct. 10th marked the FHCC's third birthday, and at the same time, we opened the Building 200H time capsule. The capsule was from 1960, when what was then the new Naval Hospital at Great Lakes Naval Station had opened its doors, thus beginning more than four decades of compassionate medical care of military personnel and their families.

As we gingerly handled the yellowed newspapers and documents from the day the capsule was buried, I couldn't

help but make the association that every day at Lovell FHCC is one of change – change for the better.

Like Capt. Acosta likes to say, "We're good today, but tomorrow we'll be even better."

When we integrated Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities in North Chicago, we pledged to continue the proud tradition of the Naval Clinic as well as carry on the sacred mission of caring for Veterans in Northeast Illinois and Southeast Wisconsin. And to do so meant big changes for 3,000 employees: changes in office locations, in the technology used at work, in supervisory chains, in job duties, in pay procedures ... We did it, without missing a beat, with minimal disruptions in patient care.

Every day since then, we have had to be flexible, to follow new rules and procedures from each agency, to report to two "bosses," and to forge a new way forward whenever possible.

At any point in time here at the FHCC, something new is on the horizon – and sometimes the

changes come fast and furious. We were only one paycheck into VATAS, the new timekeeping system, when a lapse in appropriations caused the government shutdown. At the same time, the Affordable Care Act took effect, and in many cases, we've become the subject matter experts to our patients on what it means to them.

The results of our adaptability and ingenuity are many fold. Recent examples include the successful visit from the Navy Surgeon General; the Medical Inspector General's (MEDIG) low number of findings, which included the quote, "FHCC you are at the top of your game;" and the recent quarterly results of the VA Strategic Analysis for Improvement and Learning (SAIL) report, giving us four stars out of five for quality.

None of these things would be possible without the hard work and willingness of all of us to embrace change and improve ourselves and our work areas.

Individuals are taking School at Work (SAW) classes and participating in the Leadership

Effectiveness Accountability Development Program (LEAD). Work groups continue to go through Civility, Respect and Engagement in the Workplace (CREW) training – see the story in this issue about the housekeeping team that recently graduated from CREW.

Leaders are stepping up to head Lean Rapid Improvement Events. Most recently, the search is on to find candidates for the VISN 12 Leadership Development Program, another opportunity for professional development.

I commend all of you for participating in these activities and so much more. Human nature being what it is, change can be difficult and stressful. But it is when we step out of our comfort zones and embrace it that we achieve amazing results. I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish during our fourth year of *Readying Warriors and Caring for Heroes*.

The Apollo

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Housekeeping team graduates from CREW

Instructors said they learned from high-performing 'T & L 541'

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

T & L 541, the Lovell FHCC housekeeping team that recently graduated from Civility, Respect, and Engagement in the Workplace (CREW), was already known as "high-performing."

"We wanted to see how much higher you could go," said Associate Director of Facility Support Marianne Semrad at the recent graduation ceremony.

CREW Instructor Monyca Fisher said work groups that want to strengthen how members communicate with each other are good candidates for CREW.

"We give them the tools to be more effective in their daily interactions, both within and external to their workgroups," Fisher said. "We like to brand it as an opportunity for the groups to go from 'good to great.'"

Fisher also praised T & L 541, saying, "Wow! What a fantastic crew! We learned from you."

The team's daily huddle was a great



T & L 541 CREW graduates, from left to right: Front row - Izell Leneau, Richard Moore, Reynaldo Peel, Terence Cannon, Earl Harlan, Instructor Eric Strong; Second row - Edward Carey, Jonathan Burton, Steven Hellner, Juan Torres, Edward Cole, Raymond Peoples, Instructor Monyca Fisher; Third row - Ricky Marks, King Cunningham, Michael Webb, Brian McCoy, John Pearce, Teresa Rademacher; Back row - Crandell Reese. Graduates not pictured: Phillip Conver, Chad Hershman, Tedarl Farrier, Gary Nelson, Maurice Owens, John Palmore, Tyree Shannon and Dianne Williams. (Photo by Jayna Legg)

example of how to adopt CREW principles, Semrad said. She also praised the group's decision to tackle one specific area a day to focus on.

CREW is a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) initiative launched in 2005 in response to employees' feedback that "low levels of civility" lowered their job satisfaction. The first CREW class started at Lovell FHCC in 2011.

Typically one or two classes are in session at any one time. It takes

about three months to complete. Work groups participating in CREW choose what areas they want to focus on for improvement. VA data shows the benefits of CREW are many, including decreased EEO complaints and sick time, and increased patient and employee satisfaction and retention.

Izell Leneau, supervisor of the T & L 541 group, said, "We want to take this and spread it throughout Lovell FHCC, and the VA, so we can work as a unified group."

Cornerstone to go to Naval Station Great Lakes Museum

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Other contents included a dedication newsletter, a directory of staff officers, a daily patient personnel report, an award certificate, a copy of the Dec. 9, 1960, "Chicago Daily Tribune," and a Dec. 7, 1960, edition of the "Chicago American" newspaper.

Sullivan said the ceremony was a time to appreciate the rich history of the Naval hospital as well as to celebrate the integration and creation of Lovell Federal Health Care Center.

"As we begin our fourth year of integration, it's important to reflect on the history of our facilities and the success of our integration," Sullivan continued. "Just like Building 200H, Lovell FHCC continues to ready our warriors and care for our heroes."

Sullivan was referring to the Lovell FHCC "promise kept" to provide comprehensive medical and dental care for every recruit entering the U.S. Navy, as well as to serve veteran patients.

A few dozen Lovell FHCC employees, including some who worked in Building 200H, waited expectantly to see what the dented box contained. Navy Commander (Ret.) and Nurse Eileen Knoble, who now works in the Lovell FHCC office of organizational performance improvement (OPI), worked in Building 200H from 1999 to 2002, and again in 2007.

"It was cool to see the newspapers; some things change, some things don't," Knoble said.



Lovell FHCC Commanding Officer and Deputy Director Capt. José Acosta removes items from a time capsule from the former Naval Hospital Great Lakes with help from (left to right) Capt. Rodney Worden, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Midwest; Lovell FHCC Executive Officer Capt. David Jones, and Naval Station Great Lakes Commanding Officer Capt. Bill Bulis. Below, FHCC employees Lacey Leitner and Reji John look at the items. (Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Darren M. Moore)

"The (Lovell) Federal Health Care Center was a great idea," Knoble said. "It was a long time coming, and it deserves a chance. I came back to work here because of that, so I'm very excited to be working here and making sure that the integration continues forward and is as successful as it can possibly be."

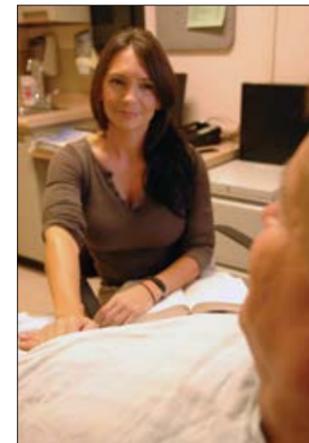
Lt. Cmdr. Karen M. Suftko, Lovell FHCC's project coordinator, organized the event and also served as master of ceremonies. She said the cornerstone from Building 200H will be donated to the Naval Station Great Lakes Museum.



FHCC volunteers ensure 'No Veteran Dies Alone'

By Jayna Legg
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

It takes a very special person to be with a Veteran making his or her last journey, and Lovell FHCC hopes to find many such volunteers to join the "No Veteran Dies Alone" (NVDA) initiative.



Volunteer Dana Hatwig sits at a patient's bedside. (Photo by Mary Waterman)

"This is about good conversation, positive interaction, spiritual support, reminiscing, life review, therapeutic touch, and providing an overall sense of connectedness and closure," said Navy Officer Candidate Under Instruction 2nd Class (OCUI2) Dana Hatwig, training coordinator for hospice volunteers at Lovell Federal Health Care Center. "It may mean reading from the Bible, helping to write letters and talking about old friends."

Hatwig, a volunteer herself, worked with Sean Gartland, supervisor of recreation therapy at Lovell FHCC, to create a new training program for hospice volunteers that began this fall.

"The time commitment is flexible but I hope volunteers can commit to two-hour increments," Hatwig said.

Much like the promise in the "Warrior Ethos" to never leave fallen comrades behind, the sacred vow of the Department of Veterans Affairs NVDA initiative is to hold the hands

of Veterans in their final hours. Hatwig said volunteers who "are old enough to have experienced palliative care and death of a loved one are going to quickly make a big impact ... they know what it feels like to hold the hand of someone who is slowly dying."

Trained hospice volunteers work alongside providers and hospice professionals at Lovell FHCC. Companion volunteers assist in providing patients with a dignified and comforted death by talking, reading or quietly sitting with Veterans whenever family and friends are unable to be there, or for Veterans who may not otherwise have loved ones to comfort them. NVDA helps ensure that no Veteran should have to face the challenge of death alone.

To volunteer for NVDA," contact OCUI2 Dana Hatwig at vetveneration@gmail.com. For information on how to volunteer in other capacities at the FHCC, contact Voluntary Services at 224-610-3714.

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Lovell FHCC's Lean voyage has begun!

Every FHCC employee has a key mission this fall: Log on to TMS, open "Lean Six Sigma Apollo Launch," and sign up for the one-hour "All Hands Lean Awareness" class. Classes run Tues. and Thurs.

Healing: Recovery in their own words ...

By Marine Corps Veteran Aaron Watkins



(Editor's Note: "Healing" is a series written first-person by Veterans and military members who have experienced significant medical recovery in their lives and are willing to share their stories.)

Name: Aaron Watkins

Branch of Service: U.S. Marine Corps

Dates of Service: August, 1978 – February, 1981

After I left high school, I worked at various jobs, none more than a year or so at a time. I began drinking a lot. I was drinking so much that I began to have seizures. I remember waking up in the hospital with tubes coming out of my nose.

After a couple of years of this, I found myself hanging on the street corners all the time, getting high mostly by drinking and using marijuana. I told myself there had to be something better. All five of my older brothers had joined the Army, and I wanted to do something different, so I joined the Marine Corps when I was 25 years old.

My history

I am the youngest of 10 children, born and raised in the Inglewood neighborhood of Chicago. We didn't have much but my Mom always provided food, clothing, and shelter. If we all wanted bikes for Christmas, my Mom could only afford to pay for one and we all shared it. My Mother was a strict disciplinarian. She would give you that look and we learned

to do what she said; but she loved us. My Dad was a factory worker. He would bring home the money, and Mom took care of everything else.

While in the service, I was first stationed in Okinawa, Japan. This was when my drinking really escalated. I would go to the USO and just drink. Then I went to Korea. I just remember it as being cold as h---. I was on perimeter guard duty in the foxholes, and I never had the chance to warm up.

After Korea, I was stationed at Quantico, Va. I was 26 and found myself not getting along with all the other 19-year-olds on base. I began to get into fights, continued to drink a lot, found myself restricted to base, and at one point went AWOL. I voluntarily returned to base but did spend time in jail. I was honorably discharged in 1981, and I returned back to the old neighborhood, old habits, and my old ways. Besides using alcohol and weed, I now began to snort cocaine. I was not working, and a girlfriend turned me on to smoking cocaine. I once spent \$1,000 a day for my drug but my average was about \$300. I did everything and anything to get the money for my drugs.

In 1983 I got a job at Chicago Police Headquarters as a senior clerk. Before computers, when a cop stopped you and took your license, he would call back to headquarters, and I would run the background checks. The job was stressful as we had to check out so many people with the same name. I was making mistakes, so I quit.

How I came to Lovell FHCC

When I left my last job, I received \$4,500 in my retirement account. They gave it all to me at one time. That's the worst thing you can do to a drug addict; give him money. I spent it all on drugs and had nowhere to turn. I was living dangerously, getting into bad situations; having guns pulled on me. I called my Mom and asked if I could come home. For the first time, my Mom, who was now 67 years old, said, "I

can't help you, Honey." I was devastated, with nowhere to go, and very depressed. I bought some rat poison and thought about just killing myself. One of my older brothers had been to the North Chicago VA for treatment. When he returned home, he had nice clothes, money in his pocket, and had help finding a job. So, I had been getting high for 20 years, and thought I would come here for help.

My recovery

I came here Feb. 13, 1989. There was a Detox Unit then, and I first spent 10 days there getting all of the junk out of my system. Then I went to the Alcohol Rehabilitation Unit for 35 days because you had to do that to get into the DOM (homeless domiciliary). I spent the next nine months in the homeless program, and that turned my life around. Building 66 put structure, discipline, and love back into my life. The staff were people who truly cared about me. They gave me back my self respect and the morals my Mom had instilled in me. I became a model resident.

I had been through the work program and saved some money but I was a little scared to leave my controlled environment. I knew that I had to stay away from the old people, places, and habits. I had found a girlfriend who was living in the local area so I went to stay with her after I left Building 66. I began to volunteer in the File Room at the hospital, and with the support of two staff, was hired permanently in 1989.

I married my girlfriend, but that lasted only four years. I've been married to my second wife for 19 years. I now have a nice house, just paid off my great car, and have a 15-year-old son. I have received my 25-year pin, which I always wear on my uniform. I tell other Veterans to find help and let the organization help you. Embrace what they give you, and you will be in a better place for it. Be determined, and if you use one-tenth of the energy you used to get high, and turn it into a positive, you will be 200 percent better.

Lovell FHCC community clinics expand Telehealth options

By Stephanie McCrobie
Lovell FHCC Public Affairs

Lovell FHCC's Kenosha, Wis., and Evanston and McHenry, Ill., Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOC) are expanding clinical video Telehealth clinics to offer teleaudiology, teleretinal imaging, post-traumatic stress disorder support groups and care, nutrition counseling and many other services.

As Veterans learn about their expanding health care options under the Affordable Care Act, it is important they understand the Department of Veterans Affairs is committed to providing high-quality, comprehensive and convenient health care. Lovell FHCC leads the way by providing clinical video Telehealth services at each of its CBOCs.

Clinical video Telehealth uses video-conferencing technology to securely and quickly link health care providers with patients in convenient locations. The technology allows providers who work at the North Chicago, Ill. hospital the ability to connect with patients at any of the CBOCs. Telehealth technology provides a safe, reliable and accurate way for providers to assess patients and manage treatment.

Patients appreciate the convenience and ease of the Telehealth clinics, said audiologist Dr. Darrin Worthington, who is based at the North Chicago hospital. "Telehealth clinics are the

perfect marriage of technology and patient convenience, provide a high-level of patient interaction, and are surprisingly intimate," Worthington said recently after treating a Marengo, Ill., Veteran who traveled to the McHenry CBOC for his appointment.

Worthington continued, "I only say surprisingly because I think the perception of talking to, and caring for, someone through a video monitor might strike some people as less intimate than an in-person consultation. I think once most of our patients try Telehealth services, they will find that it fits their needs."

Worthington's patient, Veteran David Schultz, said it was easier to get to his teleaudiology appointment in McHenry, and he didn't notice a difference in his care.

"It didn't feel different than an in-person appointment," said Schultz, who added he would "definitely take advantage of it again."



LPN Paula Mantas uses a video otoscope on Veteran David Schultz at the McHenry clinic. Schultz's audiologist, Dr. Darrin Worthington, speaks with the patient through the clinical video teleconference equipment. (Photo by Stephanie McCrobie)

For Schultz's appointment, McHenry CBOC staff set up special equipment including a video otoscope. With the help of a CBOC nurse, Dr. Worthington was then able to conduct his usual audiology exam from his North Chicago office.

Lovell FHCC is committed to offering Veterans high-quality, comprehensive care. Telehealth services fulfill that mission by bringing care to patients in a more convenient location. For more information on Telehealth services and clinics, visit: www.lovell.fhcc.va.gov.