It’s a busy time for Lovell FHCC

As you know, Dr. David Shulkin was promoted from under secretary for health and named the new secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the acting Secretary of the Navy is Mr. Sean Stakley.

Leadership at Lovell FHCC remains the same. Director Dr. Stephen Holt and Deputy Director Navy Capt. Bradford Smith continue to promote our mission of “Readying Warriors and Caring for Heroes.”

We do that in various ways, including the welcome news that direct scheduling is now available for audiology and optometry appointments. That means patients don’t have to go through their primary care doctors to get those types of appointments, which saves time and hassle.

The FHCC also now offers same-day scheduling in most cases. If a patient can’t get an appointment, he or she will at least have the opportunity to talk to a medical professional on the same day.

Another exciting announcement is that a guest wireless network now is available in patient waiting areas in Building 133EF (the Ambulatory Care Clinic), and in our East campus clinics!

The network is named “JALFHCC Guest” and is provided through a contractor. Therefore, technical support is available only by calling 855-546-5946. Guest Wi-Fi will be rolled out to other patient areas in future phases.

This summer, our volunteers are providing wonderful activities for our veterans, everything from the 68th Annual Patient Carnival, the 13th Annual Car Show for Veterans, to picnics and baseball games.

Thank you in advance!

Kenny List
Chief, Community Affairs

FHCC Volunteer Spotlight: Longtime FHCC volunteers Ed Danahy and Ralph Salle have been an integral part of the hospital since before it was known as Lovell FHCC. Ed has been volunteering for eight years, while Ralph has been volunteering for 15, and together they distribute books and magazines to the residents. Their 30-stop maze of a route is tiring but they still enjoy it. Their favorite part of the process is getting to know all of the people along their route, and their reading preferences. Ed and Ralph work hard to scope out reading materials for readers’ specific interests in the library and drop them off personally. Thank you Ed and Ralph for all of your tremendous work!
Giving Back: Former patients ‘clown’ for therapy

An unusual sight greeted patients, staff and volunteers in the Community Living Center, Green House homes and Building 7 Jan. 27: visitors in clown costumes, many of them veterans. Most of the “clowns” who visited were coming “home,” said Dr. Mark Kane, who explained many of the veteran clowns are graduates of the FHCC’s Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder treatment program. “I’ve been referring veterans from Michigan to the program at FHCC for years,” said Kane, a Michigan psychologist who led the clown visit on behalf of the Gesundheit! Institute (GI). “This is where it all started.”

The institute was founded by Illinois Dr. Patch Adams, the real man behind the 1998 Robin Williams movie, “Patch Adams.”

“Patch says clowning is a tool to get love close,” said GI’s Charlotte Huggins, who represented Patch during the visit. “It’s all about caring and connection.”

Huggins told the FHCC expressive arts therapy group GI is piloting a program to see if Adams’ idea of “friendship medicine” can help veterans get close to other people as part of their therapy and recovery from health issues such as PTSD.

News Briefs

Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon
Please note, there will be a volunteer luncheon this year. However, due to issues beyond our control, we are still in the process of planning the event. We will send out the information to you when the luncheon location and date is confirmed. We thank you for your patience!

Volunteer sign-in temporary change
Nationwide, new Voluntary Service software was rolled out, and a kiosk was installed at the Patriot Store entrance. However, the entire nationwide system currently has a glitch. We ask that you please either log your hours with the volunteers at the desk by the Patriot Store, or call hours in to 224-610-3133 or 224-610-3714, until the problem is fixed. Please give us your code AND name.

Veterans Panel
Kudos to retired Col. Christopher O’Donnell, who helps lead the FHCC Patient Stakeholders Committee, for organizing a well-received Veterans Panel at Rosalind Franklin University with medical students. O’Donnell said the panel was so successful, it will be incorporated into a new elective course at Rosalind Franklin about military medicine.

Good work and thank you to the veterans who participated on the panel!
FHCC Community Spirit Snapshots

We had a enjoyable holiday season in December as well as a fun National Salute to Veterans week in February, and festive St. Patrick’s Day in March - thanks to our volunteers!

These months were filled with exciting events for our patients, including parties, concerts, and VIP visits, such as Congressman Brad Schneider (IL-10), who handed out Valentines with the Milburn Clovers 4-H Club at a Saturday bingo. The American Legion Ladies Auxiliary continued to host many activities, including the annual holiday shop and the annual Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Operation Christmas Cheer was organized by local VFW posts, and for St. Patrick’s Day, the Lake Bluff Women’s Club held a party, and the Abbott and AbbVie Jazz Band gave a free concert! We’re sorry we can’t name every group and volunteer here! Thank you to all!

Midwest Veterans Closet Founder Mary Carmody visits with Ms. Adrienne Burke during National Salute to Veterans Week. Ms. Carmody visited many areas of the FHCC to hand out homemade cards received by the organization.

The Lake Bluff Middle School Encore choir sings at the Quarterdeck. They, as well as Lake Bluff Elementary fifth-graders, performed holiday concerts in Bourke Hall in 2016 like they have annually for more than 10 years.

The Georgia Ray Family Band visited in December. They frequently give free concerts at the FHCC. We hope to see them again this summer at our Community Living Center neighborhood block party.

Lovell FHCC long-time volunteer Nick Angelopulos dances with Women Veterans Program Manager Janice Muhammed during a cardio dance class in February.

Navy League’s Rick Morbidoni organized a showing of “Sacrifice at Sea” to mark the ultimate sacrifice made by four chaplains in 1943 on the U.S.A.T. Dorchester. The Navy Band Brass Ambassadors, RTC choir and City of North Chicago helped.
**Community Meetings: We Value Your Input!**

Would you like to learn more about FHCC programs and provide feedback to our leaders? The FHCC’s community meetings are forums created for that purpose. Two are coming soon: 2-5 p.m., June 15, at our North Chicago facility, held in conjunction with our annual open house; and 5:30-7 p.m., June 29, at Oakton Community College’s Skokie campus, to increase awareness of services available at our Evanston Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC).

Our last community meeting was Feb. 23 in the basement of Bldg. 133EF, with the theme of Women’s Heart Health. Congressman Brad Schneider attended, as well as Veterans Integrated Service Network 12 Director Ms. Renee Oshinski.

We all learned about some challenges facing some of our women patients, particularly those in our PTSD residential treatment program. And we heard compliments about our Women’s Health Clinic and the expert care provided to one particular Navy veteran with a complex heart condition.

We hope you’ll to attend. We need feedback to continue improving customer service.

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**Volunteers, we need you!**

Donations and support are needed for the following programs:

**Escort Volunteers** – Volunteers are needed to help inpatient veterans get to and from the wards to their appointments.

**No Veteran Dies Alone** – Volunteers are needed to sit with, and provide companionship to veterans who are in their final days and who may or may not have family to be with them. Training will be provided.

**Volunteers** are also needed for the **Hydration Team**, and to be **greeters** at the front entrance.

This is just a sampling of the available volunteer opportunities. To become a volunteer in any of these areas, or for more information about volunteering, please contact the Voluntary Services office at: 224-610-3714, 3145 or 3139.

**Gift cards** to restaurants, such as Golden Corral, Denny’s, Culver’s, McDonald’s and Cracker Barrel, are always welcome.

**Veterans Wheelchair Games.** Funds are needed to sponsor the Lovell Legends team members who will compete in this year’s national games in Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Women Veterans.** Funds are needed to help support the needs of women veterans, including individual feminine items, undergarments, clothing and funds for their luncheon.

**Military Sexual Trauma Program.** The MST Program provides services to veterans who experienced sexual trauma while in the military. The program’s supplies are available through Amazon. They can use Amazon gift cards, which can be purchased at Jewel and Walmart.

**Patient Carnival.** Funds are needed to help support this annual event June 20.

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Volunteers provide lasting benefits to our Veterans and to our Lovell FHCC community through their service.