



**Captain James A. Lovell
Federal Health Care Center**

3001 Green Bay Road • North Chicago, Illinois 60064

lovellfhcc.media@va.gov

224-610-3132

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Media Contact: Jayna Legg, 224-610-3132 or Jayna.legg@va.gov

Retired astronaut Capt. Lovell, leaders open new courtyard for patients at Lovell Federal Health Care Center

Courtyard for Community Living Center residents made possible, in part, by donations from The Grainger Foundation, AMVETS

NORTH CHICAGO, Ill. – Retired Navy Captain and former NASA astronaut James A. Lovell joined Lovell FHCC leaders, Lovell FHCC Community Living Center residents and staff, and project donors – The Grainger Foundation and AMVETS Wheeling Post 66 – to cut the ribbon on a new courtyard May 30.

More than 200 people in the audience, including leaders from Great Lakes Naval Station and Veteran Service Organizations affiliated with Lovell FHCC, gathered with contractor representatives to celebrate the completion of the project, several years in the making.

The new courtyard is anchored by an expansive four-season room with walls of windows, designed to seamlessly connect CLC indoor and outdoor living spaces. The courtyard has therapeutic, homelike amenities including multiple flower gardens, trees and shrubs, a water feature, a gazebo for small performances and activities, paths, seating areas and wheelchair-accessible flower beds.

The Grainger Foundation and AMVETS donated funds to help pay for the project, which symbolizes the culture change in the way the Department of Veterans Affairs provides health care for long-term residents (Veterans and service members) of what typically were referred to as nursing homes. CLC residents at Lovell FHCC - some who reside in new group homes on the grounds of Lovell FHCC in North Chicago - can now take advantage of many home-like spaces both indoors and out.

Navy Captain José Acosta, deputy director and commanding officer of Lovell FHCC, said, “I’ll use the residents of our newly renovated units in Freedom Square as an example, their unit has been outfitted with multiple living rooms, a dining room and full kitchen. Now they are able to walk right out their kitchen door into their own backyard.”

Lovell, namesake of Lovell FHCC, said he and his wife, Marilyn Lovell, were “happy and honored to participate in the ceremony.” He praised the ongoing and “extraordinary efforts” of so many Lovell FHCC Navy and Veterans Affairs leaders and staff who continue to work to make the FHCC

successful. Lovell FHCC is the nation's first and only integrated federal health care center. It was created in 2010 as part of a five-year demonstration project between the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide health care for Great Lakes Naval Station recruits and sailors serving in the region, military families, and Veterans and military retirees in Northeast Illinois and Southeast Wisconsin.

"I think we should all be proud," Lovell said during his remarks. "This integration is not an easy job and everyone here is continuing to do their best to provide the very best service to patients."

Lovell FHCC Director Patrick Sullivan explained that the design for the courtyard came about as the result of many focus groups with Veteran patients and their families, and also was collaboration with the University of Madison School of Architecture and the Institute on Aging & Environment.

"I would like to personally thank the Veteran residents who gave their input," Sullivan said. "This project, like so many others here at the nation's first federal health care center, represents what can be accomplished when we work together as one team for the benefit of our patients and their families."

About the Lovell FHCC: The Lovell FHCC was established Oct. 1, 2010, as the nation's first and only fully integrated Department of Veterans Affairs/Department of Defense federal health care center. The center has a dual mission of caring for Veterans and ensuring the medical and dental readiness of U.S. Navy recruits and sailors serving in the region. Lovell FHCC, which is located in North Chicago, operates four Great Lakes Naval Station clinics and three community based outpatient clinics in McHenry and Evanston, Ill. and Kenosha, Wis. The facility also serves military families and military retirees.



From left to right, Ms. Goria Sinclair from The Grainger Foundation (project donor); Mr. Patrick Sullivan, Director; Mr. John Howard, The Grainger Foundation; Community Living Center resident Mr. James Frohnapfel; Capt. James A. Lovell in the center holding the scissors; CLC resident Mr. Ralph Barzowski; Mr. Tony Altieri,

Wheeling AMVETS Post 66 (project donor); Capt. José Acosta; and Ms. Joyce Wadlington, Associate Chief Nurse for the CLC, cut the ribbon for the new courtyard. (Photo by Trevor Seela, Lovell FHCC Communications)



Former astronaut and Retired Navy Captain James A. Lovell, on the left, and Navy Captain José Acosta, Lovell FHCC Deputy Director/Commanding Officer, share a light moment during the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new courtyard for the Community Living Center. (Photo by Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Kylee Thompson, Lovell FHCC Communications)



Captain James Lovell, former astronaut and retired Navy officer, talks to Lovell FHCC Community Living Center resident and Veteran Ralph Barzwoski, who resides in Heroes Hall on the Lovell FHCC main campus in North Chicago, Ill. Barzwoski participated in the ribbon cutting on the CLC courtyard. (Photo by Trevor Seela, Lovell FHCC Communications)