

Working Together

Issue 24

Fall 2006



A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

Director's Fall Message	2
Major Construction Project Update	4
New Eye Clinic Opened	8

A Message from the Director



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www.va.gov/pittsburgh

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On the Cover:

The University Drive Parking Garage will have
nine levels and accommodate 1,500 vehicles.
WARREN PARK PHOTO

Dear Fellow Employees, Volunteers, Veterans and Friends of the VAPHS,

As part of our five-year, \$200 million construction campaign, we awarded a \$34 million construction contract to P.J. Dick Incorporated of Pittsburgh in October. Approximately 152,000 square feet of new buildings will be constructed at our Heinz Division, including the two-story administration building and the 98-bed residential living villas. A formal groundbreaking will be held in late 2006. P.J. Dick, Inc. is also constructing the parking garage at University Drive, which is 40% complete and scheduled to open in fall 2007.

I am proud and excited to say that over the past two years, VAPHS has awarded over \$100 million in construction contracts to local architectural and construction firms located in Western Pennsylvania.

The new residential living villas represent a new environment to care for veterans in a community setting. The supervised living environment prepares veterans for transitioning into the community and ensures that veterans continue to receive world class health care that sets the standard for care, in facilities that are designed to ensure patient and employee safety and satisfaction.

As progress keeps moving on our major construction project, we are constantly reminded of the primary goal of the project—to bring the future into the present for our nation's heroes. These 500,000 square feet of new, state-of-the-art facilities will create world class standards in health care design and patient care for the veterans of Pittsburgh and surrounding areas.

As the principle architect, Pittsburgh-based Astorino, Inc. has been working directly with veterans and staff to ensure that the final design best responds to veterans' specific health care needs. The results of these efforts are allowing Astorino, Inc. and VAPHS to achieve a sustainable, healing environment that will best serve the needs of patients, families and staff while enhancing the daily operational efficiency of the facility.

This Fall issue of *Working Together* for 2006 features an update and photographs of the progress of the major construction project, including the opening of our new, state-of-the-art eye clinic, as well as architectural renderings of some of our new buildings. This issue also showcases the many outstanding achievements and milestones of our staff.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Moreland
Director, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System



Michael Moreland, VAPHS Director, and Clifford Rowe, Jr., CEO of P.J. Dick Incorporated, tour and inspect the University Drive parking garage construction site.

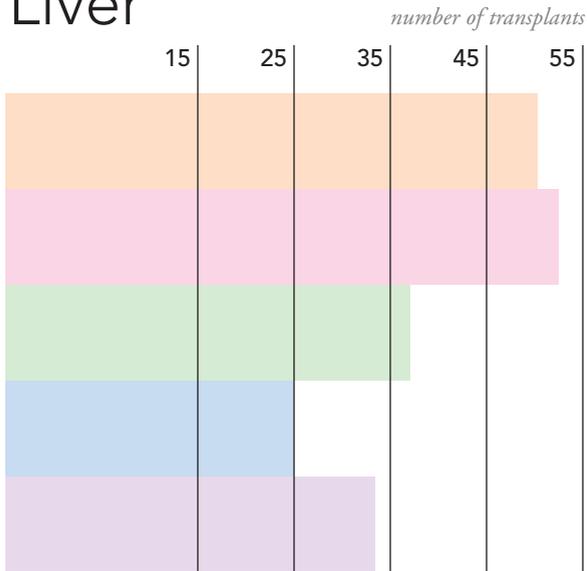
WARREN PARK PHOTO



Vital Signs

Transplants

Liver



Kidney

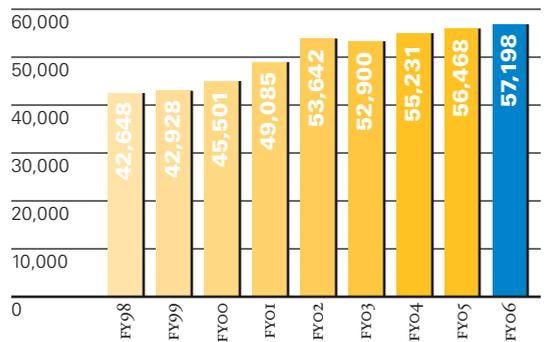


For more information on organ donation:
<http://www.donatelife-pa.org/>
www.core.org
 800-DONORS-7

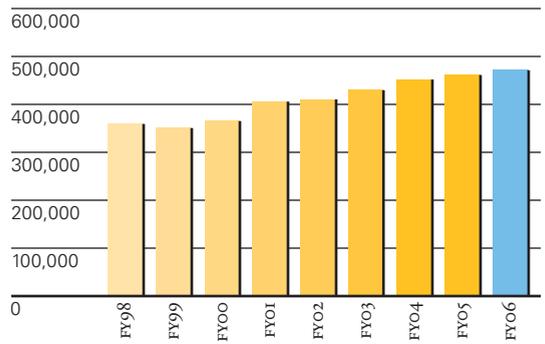


A Donate Life Organization

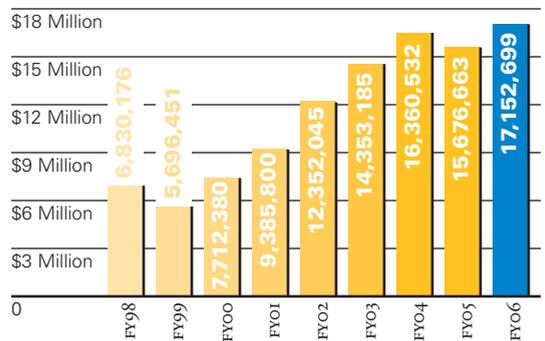
UNIQUE PATIENTS



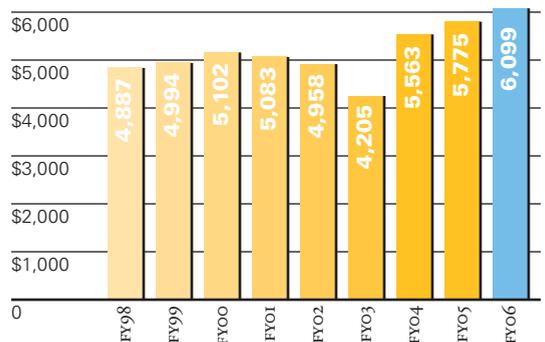
OUTPATIENT VISITS



MEDICAL CARE COST RECOVERY



OBLIGATIONS/UNIQUE PATIENT



VAPHS Major Construction Project; ON SCHEDULE

► **Early Site Infrastructure at Heinz Division** – This project provides the underground utility, central plant upgrades, storm water management, roadway, and parking changes that are needed to support all of the new buildings. Included is a central plant HVAC upgrade, three new parking lots, increases to two existing parking areas, modifications to the existing storm water pond, new site lighting, and a new main entrance boulevard. R.A. Glancy received a \$5.3 million contract to do this work. Astorino, Inc. designed this project. Construction began in August 2006 and is scheduled to be completed in spring 2007.

WARREN PARK PHOTO



Final Site Plan of Heinz Division – Construction of new buildings will consist of 264,000 square feet of new space, including an ambulatory care building, an administration building, residential living villas, and an engineering support building. Demolition and an early site infrastructure project have also been included in the construction work at Heinz. ►

Final Architectural Rendering of University Drive Behavioral Health Pavilion – Design is being completed by Astorino, Inc. and is 65% complete. The construction contract for this \$55 million building will be awarded in 2007. Construction is scheduled to begin in fall 2007 and be completed in spring 2010. ▼





Final Architectural Rendering of Residential Living Central Villa – The residential living villas were designed by Astorino, Inc. and are under construction by P.J. Dick, Inc. The central villa includes dining and career training as well as 24 beds of residential living program. The entire complex is scheduled to be completed in summer 2008. ▼

▲ **Final Architectural Rendering of Heinz Administration Building** – This two-story office/administrative building was designed by Astorino, Inc. and is under construction by P.J. Dick, Inc. and scheduled to be completed in summer 2008.

Community Input – Congresswoman Melissa Hart and VAPHS Director Michael Moreland tour and discuss the major construction project in just one of many community briefings conducted in efforts to involve and inform the community. ▼



▲ **Final Architectural Rendering of Residential Living Villas** – This 98-bed residential living facility totals 152,000 square feet. It represents a new environment to care for veterans in a community setting. The supervised living environment prepares veterans for transitioning into the community in facilities that are designed to ensure patient and employee safety and satisfaction.

WARREN PARK PHOTO

Gene Dandrea

M.Ed., RD, LDN

GENE DANDREA WAS RECENTLY APPOINTED AS THE PROGRAM MANAGER OF NUTRITION AND FOOD SERVICE. In this position he is responsible for planning, organizing, directing, administering and evaluating the management of clinical nutrition, food service, human resource and budget resource programs. He coordinates Nutrition and Food Service functions with other healthcare system activities and serves as a staff advisor to VAPHS management on matters pertaining to Nutrition and Food Service.

Mr. Dandrea began working at VAPHS on January 9, 1994, as an administrative dietitian. He was promoted to food service coordinator in 1996, and served in this capacity until becoming program manager of Nutrition and Food Service

on April 30, 2006. Prior to his VA career, he worked for three years as a clinical dietitian and assistant food service director at Woodhaven Care Center in Monroeville.

Gene received an A.S. in Dietetics from Community College of Allegheny County, a B.S. in Dietetics from Saint Vincent College and an M.Ed. in Health Education from the Pennsylvania State University.

Mr. Dandrea was born, raised, and spent most of his life in McKeesport and graduated from McKeesport Senior High School. He currently resides in Murrysville with his wife Abby, son Mario, stepdaughter Carrie, stepson Andrew, and a Border Collie named Buddy. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with family, cycling, downhill skiing, traveling, and reading.



GLENN HANGARD PHOTO

VA

Mailbox

Dear Mr. Moreland,

I have been a patient in the VA system for a couple of years and have never needed much more than primary care. Recently, however, I had to undergo major surgery. Over the years I have become aware of the uneven quality of medical personnel at the VA, both within departments and especially between departments and I was, frankly, very anxious about the surgery.

I'm writing today to express my gratitude to the post-surgery nurses on 4-West who cared for me the week after the surgery and the following week when I had to return to have a surgery-related complication taken care of. Because I was sedated much of the time, I can't remember all of their names but I wanted to especially thank Colley, Sue and Doug for their sympathetic and professional care.

I know that throughout the health care industry the difficult work that nurses and nursing assistants do is underappreciated, so I wanted to show my personal appreciation by formally bringing to your attention the great work of your nursing staff on 4-West. I would ask that you express my gratitude to them all.

Sincerely,

—RPJ

Dear Ms. Ford,

This letter is one of enthusiastic commendation for Jennifer Rochkind, social worker on 2B at the H.J. Heinz facility. I recently spent four action-packed days in Pittsburgh, finding a nursing home for my aunt, PM (then a patient at H.J. Heinz) and trying to manage the myriad of details that finding a home and arranging to move my aunt entailed. I couldn't have done it without Jennifer.

She is a consummate professional. She had answers for all of my questions, she answered questions I didn't even know enough to ask, and she brought to bear all of her expertise to ensuring that my aunt's transition to the nursing home went smoothly. And she did all this calmly, effectively, and with genuine kindness and good humor. I interrupted her lunch hours, came in and out of her office, brought her lists of questions and requests daily, and she always had answers, suggestions, and a demeanor that made me feel that everything would get done—and it did.

Thank you for hiring her. She does the VA proud.

Sincerely,

—JMB

Dear Mr. Moreland,

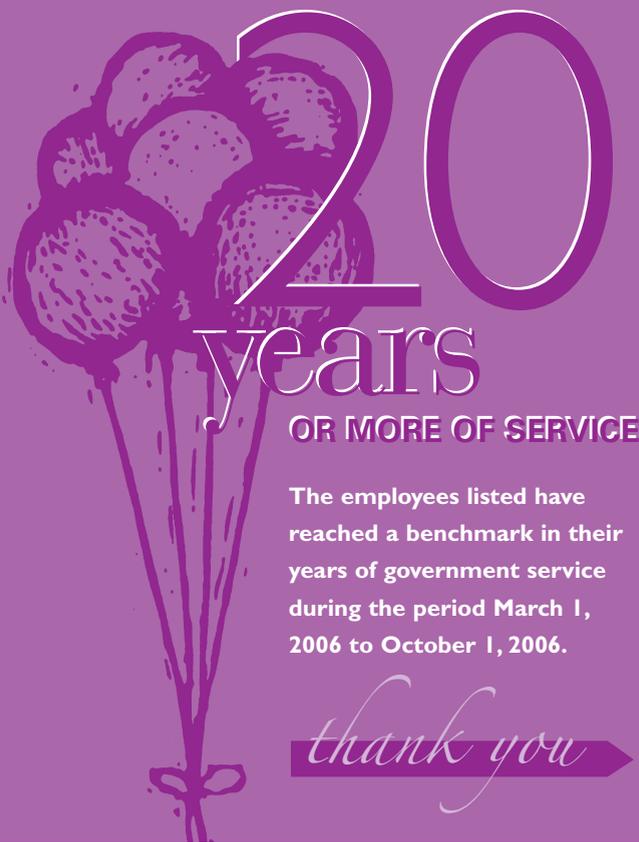
I am a resident neurologist at the University of Göttingen and research associate at the Max-Planck Institute of Experimental Medicine, Göttingen, Germany.

My father, VPS, is being cared for at the VA in Fox Chapel under supervision of Dr. Emily Jaffe. Together with her team, Dr. Jaffe is offering a level of care (medical and nursing) which is, frankly spoken, outstanding compared with other medical institutions worldwide. I write this letter in strong support for the Geriatric Palliative Care Unit which is helping our dad to cope with his multiple medical (geriatric) disorders every day!

We believe that our father is enjoying the best medical care imaginable and feel deeply indebted to Dr. Jaffe and the VA. The unit deserves every support possible.

—MWS





The employees listed have reached a benchmark in their years of government service during the period March 1, 2006 to October 1, 2006.

thank you

Dear Mr. Moreland,

As a recent transplant to the area, having just moved here from Denver, Colorado, I had the misfortune of having to visit your ER this past Thursday, February 2nd. Please don't misunderstand me, the misfortune was due to the reason that brought me to the emergency room in the first place, and not due to the treatment I received; quite the contrary, in fact, hence the reason for my letter.

I realize that too often in this day and age of dissatisfaction, a majority of people are quick to write a letter to complain, and very unlikely to write a letter praising the quality of care they receive. Coming from a medical background myself, (having served as a Hospital Corpsman in the Navy for a period of eight years) I know too well the importance of making a patient feel comfortable in an emergency situation, particularly when that patient is faced with the double difficulty of being faced with a new primary care facility. I can honestly say that the treatment and care I received at your facility on Thursday far exceeded my expectation, and, in fact, turned what could have been a difficult situation into something far less.

Everyone, from Mark, the clerk at the eligibility counter, to Kim Heck, the triage nurse on duty that day, truly went above and beyond to make sure my visit went as smoothly as possible. They also made every effort to make me feel comfortable and important. Most notable was the care I received once in the emergency room, from Dr. Stacey Shaffer, and her subsequent follow-up. Also worth mentioning is the attention received from the ER nurse, Marcie Baker, who was responsible for collecting the necessary blood work, etc. All these individuals went above and beyond to make what could have been a rather unpleasant experience not only pleasant, but also somewhat enjoyable, if such a thing is possible when faced with a visit to the ER. I felt it was extremely important to let you know. Please make sure that all these individuals receive the proper recognition. And please feel free to contact me for more information or to let me know of the actions taken as a result of this letter.

Most Sincerely,

—MWS

45 years

Frank Santucci
Behavioral Health Service Line

40 years

Leslie Salzman
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

35 years

Darryl K. DeAngelis
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

Charlotte Foster
Patient Care Services

William E. Killgallon, Jr.
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

Donald H. Remy, Jr.
Police and Security Service

Ruth Young
Surgical Specialty Service Line

30 years

Stephen C. Baker
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

Robert Baur
Patient Care Services

Wendy Sue Bishop
Patient Care Services

Sandra Brookings
Clinical Support Service Line

Susan Laughlin
Community Based Care Service Line

Nathana Marunich
Clinical Support Service Line

Patrick McNeilly
Clinical Support Service Line

Dennis E. Orcutt
Patient Care Services

Victoria Phillips
Business Service Line

Dennis Soltrick
Clinical Support

Linda Stotts
Critical Care Service Line

Ann Trageser
Clinical Support Service Line

Kathleen Tucci
Business Service Line

Harry M. Weiss
Community Based Care Service Line

25 years

Ronald Barker
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

Karen Colbert
Business Service Line

Richard Croft
Patient Care Services

Suzanne Edkins
Behavioral Health Service Line

Arthur Giles
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

Kenneth Jenkins
Nutrition and Food Services

Rhonda Johnson
Clinical Support Service Line

George Klingensmith
Patient Care Services

Richard Lees
Behavioral Health Service Line

Gloria Moore
Nutrition and Food Services

Richard Ristway
Surgical Specialty Service Line

Grant Scott
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

Robert Tomlinson
Clinical Support Service Line

Cheryl Vespa
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

Matthew Wilson
Clinical Support Service Line

20 years

John A. Ankeny
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

Sherry Banks
Information Resource Mgmt.

Shrina L. Bell
Patient Care Services

Richard V. Brown
Geriatrics & Extended Care Service Line

Odies Bryant
Community Support Service Line

Robert D. Calcagno
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

Robert Carroll
Nutrition and Food Services

Leslie Chrisp
Clinical Support Service Line

Chioko Crespo
Human Resource Mgmt.

William Crossey
Clinical Support Service Line

Linda Faulkner
Clinical Support Service Line

Chester Good
Primary Care Service Line

George Herbinko
Nutrition and Food Services

Karlyn Johnson
Business Service Line

Stephen Kedzuf
Surgical Specialty Service Line

Ira W. Kelly
Geriatrics & Extended Care Service Line

Carl Kemp
Business Service Line

Laura Lee
Patient Care Services

Lawrence McCracken
Facilities Mgmt. Service Line

Glenn R. McWilliams
Patient Care Services

Mona Melhem
Clinical Support Service Line

Mary Rumbach
Behavioral Health Service Line

Beverly C. Stallworth
Medical Specialty Care Service Line

Mark Sutton
Business Service Line

Peter Talento
Clinical Support Service Line

Jessica Wimbush
Primary Care Service Line

Mary Kay Winkleman
Medical Specialty Service Line

Ruth A. Young
Patient Care Services

CONGRATULATIONS!



▼ New, state-of-the-art eye clinic at the University Drive Division opened on September 18, 2006

Approximately 10,700 square feet was completely renovated. The project involved architectural finishes, demolition, HVAC replacement, electrical and plumbing work. The area is now a modern, efficient eye clinic with nine exam rooms, three laser rooms, a minor procedure room and support space. This project will also create a lobby to act as an entrance from the future parking garage. This construction also moved the eye clinic closer to the entrance to make it easier for visually impaired veterans to locate.

Construction began in November 2005 and was completed in August 2006 at a cost of \$2,204,426.00. It was designed by Radelet McCarthy Architects and Interior Designers and built by James Construction, both local companies.

This project is part of the \$200 million major construction project in progress at VAPHS.

WARREN PARK PHOTO



WARREN PARK PHOTO



▼ VAPHS Outstanding Physicians of the Year

National Doctors' Day is celebrated each year to show appreciation to America's physicians for caring for the sick, promoting health, and advancing medical knowledge. A special celebration was held at VAPHS on March 30 to honor all of our physicians for their special skills and dedication to the medical profession and for making a difference in the lives of others.

The VAPHS is very proud of all of our physicians. Two physicians, Erika Hoffman, M.D., and Richard Bjerke, M.D., were given special recognition for their outstanding contributions:

WARREN PARK PHOTO



Erika Hoffman, M.D., was recognized as the VAPHS Outstanding Primary Care Physician of the Year. She was honored for her dedication to excellence in patient care, medical education, and leadership, as well as her exemplary character and competence as a front line physician. Dr. Hoffman has greatly contributed to the successful expansion of primary care services at the VAPHS and was commended for her exemplary leadership skills.

VAPHS has received numerous letters from patients and families commenting on her outstanding care. This includes both outstanding technical skill in diagnosing and treating patients with multiple complex medical conditions but equally important, an empathic approach that demonstrates consistent kindness and patience.

Dr. Hoffman is an outstanding educator who receives uniformly high marks from her learners, whose lives are likely strongly influenced by her as a role model. Under her leadership primary care has grown at University Drive and has received excellent marks in prevention and other performance measures.

Richard Bjerke, M.D., was recognized as the VAPHS Outstanding Specialty Care Physician of the Year. Dr. Bjerke was recognized for his dedication to excellence in patient care and for his outstanding contributions to education, performance improvement, and innovations in health care. Dr. Bjerke facilitated the development of several state-of-the-art clinical programs that have improved the quality and safety of health care delivery for our veterans at the VAPHS.

Dr. Bjerke's knowledge regarding cardiac and liver transplant anesthesiology is unparalleled. Dr. Bjerke is not only highly respected by his physician colleagues; he is also highly valued by his patients. He is genuine and compassionate in his interactions with them and takes time to answer their questions.

Dr. Bjerke supports the education portion of the VAPHS mission through his daily work with anesthesia residents. Residents and medical students are highly complimentary of the experiences created for them by Dr. Bjerke.

Congratulations to Dr. Hoffman and Dr. Bjerke for their outstanding leadership at the VAPHS and for their commitment to "Putting Veterans First!"

WARREN PARK PHOTO

