

## BRIGHTER DAYS

U.S. Air Force Veteran David Cavanaugh has volunteered at VA Butler Healthcare for almost eight years and has given 2,072 hours. With his positive attitude, charming personality, and multitude of bad jokes, he finds ways to spread cheer to VA Butler's Veterans during the holiday season – and all year long.

After coming to VA Butler Healthcare for his own health care, David began volunteering. He started with one day a week, and is now at the facility volunteering three to four days a week, mostly visiting with Veterans in VA Butler's Community Living Center (CLC).

"The first part of my day, I like to go visit the CLC Veterans. I spend

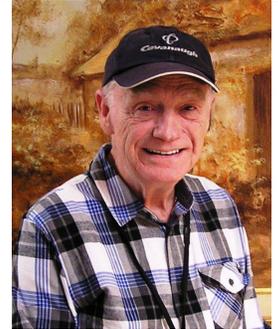
time with them just talking and telling my bad jokes. If I can make their days a little bit brighter, I try to do that," said David. "My time spent with Veterans volunteering is probably more rewarding for me because it makes me feel good to make them feel good."

David has brightened the days of many Veterans at VA Butler Healthcare—from swapping baseball stories to dancing the jitterbug. He's served as an escort volunteer, helped out at numerous VA Butler events, and even dressed up for St. Patrick's Day as a leprechaun to hand out green carnations to Veteran residents.

"They [Veterans] gave everything they had for us—we owe them. Everywhere I go, I tell people what

I do and encourage them to visit Veterans too. It doesn't have to be a lot of time, just stopping in to say 'hi' and seeing how they are doing makes a difference."

Looking for something rewarding to do this holiday season? Have some extra time? Do something worthwhile – volunteer. Sign up today to become a volunteer for VA Butler Healthcare and give back to our nation's heroes. For more information, contact VA Butler's Voluntary Services Office at 800.362.8262, ext. 2575 or visit [www.butler.va.gov/giving](http://www.butler.va.gov/giving).



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—U.S. Air Force Veteran David Cavanaugh

## THIS MONTH IN HISTORY...DECEMBER

- 1 President Abraham Lincoln gives the State of the Union address to the 37th Congress (1862)
- 3 Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev announce the official end to the Cold War at a meeting in Malta (1989)
- 6 Thomas Edison makes the first sound recording when he recites "Mary Had a Little Lamb" into his phonograph machine (1877)
- 7 The U.S. Navy launches USS *New Jersey*, the largest battleship ever built (1942)
- 14 The Labor Conference in Pittsburgh ends with a "declaration of war" on U.S. Steel (1909)
- 19 Reputed to be the last Civil War Veteran, Walter Williams, dies at 117 in Houston (1959)
- 20 U.S. invades Panama [Operation Just Cause] (1989)
- 23 The B-1 bomber makes its first successful test flight (1974)



## HOLIDAY GIVING

'Tis the Season...to volunteer! VA Butler welcomes the generosity of our community friends during the holiday season to provide comfort and friendship to our Veterans. If interested in making a donation, volunteering, and/or providing entertainment, contact VA Butler's Voluntary Services Office by calling 800.362.8262, ext. 2575.



## NEW VA DENTAL INSURANCE PROGRAM

VA has partnered with Delta Dental and MetLife to allow eligible Veterans, plus family members receiving care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA), to purchase affordable dental insurance. This three-year pilot program has been designed for Veterans with no dental coverage, or those eligible for VA dental care who would like to purchase additional coverage. Participation will not affect entitlement to VA dental services and treatment.

There are no eligibility

limitations based on service-connected disability rating or enrollment priority assignment. People interested in participating may complete an application online through either Delta Dental, [www.deltadentalvadip.org](http://www.deltadentalvadip.org), or MetLife, [www.metlife.com/vadip](http://www.metlife.com/vadip). Coverage for this new dental insurance will begin January 1, 2014.

For more information, visit [www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vadip](http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/vadip), or contact Delta Dental at 1.855.370.3303 or MetLife at 1.888.310.1681.



## VETERANS CRISIS LINE

The holiday season is often a time of celebration, but some Veterans may be struggling with anxiety, depression, or other hardships. Their family members and friends may be coping with transitioning from military life or other stressful life events. The Veterans Crisis Line offers free, confidential support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year to Veterans, Service members, and their loved ones. Dial 1.800.273.8255 then press 1 or visit <http://veteranscrisisline.net/>.

## HAVE A HAPPY, SAFE & HEALTHY HOLIDAY!



Michael Gagich, WWII POW and Army Veteran, helps to get VA Butler's Community Living Center decorated for the holidays with Director John Gennaro and Recreation Therapist Barb Taylor.

As we gather to celebrate this holiday season, let us remember the men and women who sacrifice so much for our freedom, privileges, comforts, safety, and well-being.

Our Veterans have selflessly given us the gifts we enjoy this holiday season. Best wishes for a blessed and joyous holiday to all our serving military, our Veterans, their families, and the survivors of the fallen from VA Butler Healthcare. We are grateful for your service and are honored to serve you this holiday season and always.

We want to hear from you! Email [amanda.kurtz2@va.gov](mailto:amanda.kurtz2@va.gov) or [lauren.heiger@va.gov](mailto:lauren.heiger@va.gov) to share your story with us!

## EVENTS

What's going on at VA Butler Healthcare? Keep up-to-date with the latest news, events, and more by visiting our website, [www.butler.va.gov](http://www.butler.va.gov), and checking out the VA Butler calendar –[www.butler.va.gov/calendar.asp](http://www.butler.va.gov/calendar.asp). Also, remember to “like” or follow us on our social media pages to stay connected. Happy Holidays! We look forward to serving you in the New Year!



800.362.8262  
724.287.4781

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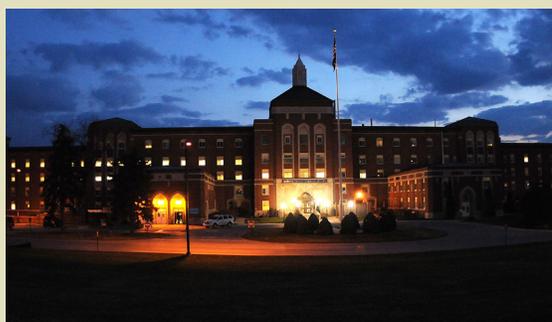
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