



## CAVHCS Loses Fire Chief, Colleague, Friend

Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System (CAVHCS) held a memorial service the morning of June 25 in the Tuskegee Campus' Bldg. 90 Theater to mark the passing of Fire Chief Jay S. Longerbeam. The 53- year old father of three passed away unexpectedly – on Father's Day.

Combining prayer and traditional firefighter observances, the CAVHCS Chaplain Service led memorial service provided an opportunity for CAVHCS staff and family to attempt to deal with the suddenness of their loss and remember their Fire Chief, colleague and friend.

Under Chief Longerbeam's leadership the CAVHCS Fire Department developed working relationships and professional improvement plans with six separate area fire departments. Following the solemn ringing of a Fire House bell, a long procession of area fire trucks drove throughout the Tuskegee campus.

An accomplished, passionate



A memorial service was held June 25 in the Tuskegee Campus' Bldg. 90 Theater to mark the passing of CAVHCS Fire Chief Jay Longerbeam. (Image - Robin Johnson)

leader, Chief Longerbeam joined CAVHCS in July of 2003, and worked for the Department of Veterans Affairs for more than 29 years.

Under his direction, the CAVHCS Fire Department received excellent marks during a recent National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and VHA triennial inspection. A leader by example, Chief Longerbeam was a certified healthcare safety professional and a life safety specialist. He worked

side-by-side with "His Guys," to reduce their drill response time to a record-setting 2.5 seconds.

For those who knew him well, Chief Longerbeam's passion and love of his calling was only surpassed by his love of family. However, there is no denying that the Chief was a firefighter at heart and lived by the Fireman's Prayer.

*When duty call's me oh Lord  
wherever flames may rage, give me the  
strength to save some life, whatever be its  
age.*

*Help me embrace a little child  
before it is too late or save an older person  
from the horror of that fate.  
Enable me to be alert, and oh Lord, guide  
my every move; for life is so precious,  
please don't let us loose.*

*I want to fill my calling and to  
give the best in me; to guard my every  
neighbor and protect their property.*

*And if according to thy will, that I  
must give my life; then with thy protecting  
hand my Lord, I pray thee, protect my  
children and my wife.*

*Amen*

## \$80 Million Available through VHA Innovation Initiative

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki recently announced the opening of the Industry Innovation Competition by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the most recent effort under the VA Innovation Initiative. With this competition, VA seeks the best ideas from the private sector to address the department's most important challenges.

"At VA, we are continually looking for new ways to improve the care and services we deliver," said Secretary Shinseki. "Engaging the private sector to tap its expertise and find ways to leverage private-sector innovations, we can improve the quality, access and transparency in service to our Nation's Veterans."

The VA Innovation Initiative (VAi2) is a department-wide program that brings the most promising innovations to VA's most important challenges by involving employees and the private sector in the creation of visionary solutions in service to Veterans.

"Innovation is more than simply a collection of ideas," said Jared Cohon, president of Carnegie Mellon University. "It requires close collaboration between academia, industry and government to produce solutions that make a meaningful impact on society. VAi2's programs bring about exactly that kind of fruitful collaboration."

"Creativity in the private sector generates a wealth of technology capability that can help drive VA forward," said Dr. Peter Levin, senior advisor to the secretary and VA's chief technology officer. "By targeting innovations that are nearing commercialization, the Industry Innovation Competition provides a bridge between creative ideas in the private sector and real-world deployments that improve the services we deliver."

Public and private companies, entrepreneurs, universities and non-profits are encouraged to participate in the competition, which targets advancements in:

- Innovative Housing Technology to Address Veteran Homelessness: Eliminating Veteran homelessness is a top VA priority. New design and construction techniques, materials and building technology can enable VA to use existing buildings and unused space to rapidly create highly functional, energy efficient and affordable housing.

- Telehealth: VA is a leader in telehealth implementation and currently serves many thousands of

Please see

**'Innovation Initiative'**

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## CAVHCS All-Stars

Please convey my thanks to the Director. I would like to express my appreciation for the staff that he has in the C&P clinic. Mr. Ray and the other staff members have always gone above and beyond their duties to ensure that I was taken care of in the best manner possible. Several times my files have been misplaced or I was not notified of an appointment or not scheduled altogether. I have felt that at times I was on the "back burner" with the VA. When these instances have occurred, the staff has bent over backward to offer their assistance and ensure that I was taken care of with the utmost respect in every manner. I have been on appeal for 7 ½ years to date and though I do not have a lot of confidence in the staff members of the VA and the appeals process I can say that I do truly appreciate the personnel at the Montgomery VA installation. -- *Sincerely, Mark E. O., Graceville, Fla.*

We visited the Pharmacy today regarding a medication which had not been mailed. We spoke with Debbie Wade, who was very nice, professional and helpful. May God bless her for what she does. You need more workers like her!  
-- *Respectfully, Andrew C. H., Montgomery, Ala.*

Brittany Borders is a very special lady. We are in the process of doing our Living wills and she made it very easy and comfortable for us to process. The VA needs more great people like this young lady, always concerned about the Veterans!  
-- *Vivian and Tom R., Millbrook, Ala.*

Please express my heartfelt thanks to Male Nurse Harris on the Yellow Team. He always goes above and beyond the call to help his patients. -- *Sincerely, Ramonia M., Montgomery, Ala.*

I was at your facility yesterday (June 2<sup>nd</sup>) for an evaluation in the Physical Therapy Department. I have been an outpatient there more than a few times and have never before felt like writing about any one person. This last visit however, changed that. I would like to tell you about Verdelle Chambliss in that department.

As a Health Care professional she is exemplary. She was compassionate, understanding and patient with this old man who is not always easy to deal with. You are very fortunate to have an employee like her. And by the way, I have always found everyone there to be friendly and helpful, but Mrs. Chambliss stood out as someone my wife and I won't forget.

-- *Respectfully, Robert J. S.*  
*1<sup>st</sup> Airborne Ranger Co., Korea, 1950-51*

Mr. Larry Ray was very helpful and very courteous with helping my husband – Billy P. with his case today. He announced all our questions and gave us helpful information regarding his treatment. He seems to be a good asset to this office and a good worker at the VA. Please convey our thanks to him.

-- *Sincerely, Billy and Frances P.*

Greetings Mrs. Brown;

This is Brad T. and I wanted to say thanks for helping me get a mental health appointment. I was seen the very next day with Dr. Soule. He is now my new doctor. He has given me a new medication and is helping me very much , I feel so much better.

-- *Thanks again, Brad T.*

### WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE



**Mother, daughter, sister, wife, partner ... veteran.**

**VA cares for the whole woman.**

- Primary care
- Reproductive care
- Mental health care
- Sensitive to women veterans' needs and experiences

VA's national network ensures that your medical history goes where you go.






★ *You served, you deserve the best care anywhere.* ★


Department of Veterans Affairs
www.publichealth.va.gov/womenhealthcare

### The CAVHCS Salute

The CAVHCS Salute is produced by the Central Alabama Veterans Health Care (CAVHCS) Public Affairs Office. CAVHCS Salute is an unofficial, internal communications publication.



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# Employees of the Month

**Ms. Minnie Robinson**  
*Engineering Services,  
Montgomery Campus*



Ms. Robinson is the Budget Analyst for Engineering Services. Since the retirement of another Budget Analyst more than three years ago, Ms. Robinson has taken on her duties and never complained. Instead of a normal work load she has taken on double the responsibilities in an expert manner. She has organized the duties of both positions so that she is never late with any suspense. During the last year even more demands have been placed on Ms. Robinson because of CAVHCS acquiring more fleet vehicles and the need for special funding to meet that need. Ms. Robinson works closely with Financial Management to make sure that costs are properly transferred between fund control points every month.

Financial Management employees applaud Ms. Robinson's meticulous attention to detail, because they understand without her, the task would be difficult to accomplish. Ms. Robinson kept up with our Fund Control balances to ensure we had enough money for the day-to-day operations of the facility. In the midst of all her duties she takes several phone calls a week assisting others with the same or similar job providing guidance and training without complaining about the interruptions to her job. Without her outstanding support we would not run smoothly.

## *Honoring Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry*

# New Scholarship for Children of Fallen Service Members

The children of military personnel who died in the line of duty since Sept. 11, 2001 can apply for an educational scholarship similar to the new Post-9/11 GI Bill. Benefits are retroactive to Aug. 1, 2009.

The scholarship, which is administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, are named after Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry, 28, a Texas native who died in Iraq in 2006 while disarming an explosive. He was survived by three young children.

"The Fry scholarship represents this nation's solemn commitment to care for children whose mothers and fathers paid the ultimate price for our country," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

VA begins accepting applications for the Fry scholarship on May 1, 2010. For more information or assistance applying, call toll-free 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551), or visit the VA GI Bill Website at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

VA estimates nearly 1,500 children will receive benefits under the Fry scholarship program in 2010. Recipients generally have 15 years to use their benefits, beginning on their 18th birthdays.



**Mr. Henry Wilson**  
*Environmental Maintenance Service,  
Tuskegee Campus*



Mr. Wilson has consistently demonstrated qualities of a dedicated and conscientious employee. The Business Office area basement Building 4G has been clean and well stocked since he was assigned to this area. I have noted him offering directional assistance to Veterans who were trying to find the location of their appointment and or following up with Business Office functions.

Even when not assigned to an area if there is a need for supplies, mopping of a flooded area and buckets, etc., Mr. Wilson is courteous and prompt in his follow through response.

I've noted that Business Office employees are not the only employees who look to see where he is working when there is an emergent need. He is always pleasant no matter the circumstances. These are the qualities that are often overlooked in staff and I feel need to be recognized. I highly recommend him for Employee of the Month consideration. Nominated by Sue Chan, RHIT



Eligible children attending institutions of higher learning may receive payments to cover their tuition and fees up to the highest amounts charged to public, in-state students at undergraduate institutions in each state. A monthly housing allowance and stipend for books and supplies are also paid under this program.

VA will begin paying benefits under the Fry scholarships on Aug. 1, 2010. Eligible participants may receive benefits retroactively to August 1, 2009, the same day the Post-9/11 GI Bill took effect.

Eligible children may be married. Recipients are entitled to 36 months of benefits at the 100 percent level.

When dependents also serve in the military, the reserves or are Veterans in their own right, eligible for education benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill for Active Duty, the Montgomery GI Bill for Selected Reserves or the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP), then they would relinquish their eligibility under those programs to receive benefits under a Fry scholarship

# CAVHCS Photo Gallery

The CAVHCS Community Living Center and Recreational Therapy Services recently held their annual Senior Prom.

*Images by Eric Johnson*



# Change to Medication Co-pays for Some Vets

As previously announced on January 7, 2010, the Department of Veterans Affairs froze prescription copayment increases for six months. Veterans who generally have higher income and no service-connected disabilities - referred to as Priority Groups 7 and 8 Veterans - will now pay an additional \$1 for each 30-day supply of outpatient medications. Taking effect July 1, the increase to \$9 from \$8 is the first change in VA's medication co-pay since Jan. 1, 2006.

"Because of the harsh economic reality facing many Veterans, we delayed the change," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "We're now ensuring the Veterans most in need of VA care are those least affected. Yet, even with this increase, VA medication co-pays are lower than much of the private sector."

This change does not impact Veterans in Priority Groups 2 through 6 who will continue to pay \$8 for each 30-day supply of medications for their non-service connected conditions unless otherwise exempted. These Veterans will also continue to have their out-of-pocket expenses for VA outpatient medications capped at \$960 per calendar year.

Veterans who have an injury or illness connected with their military service resulting in a disability rated 50 percent or greater - who are known as Priority Group 1 Veterans - are exempt from the co-pay. VA generally sets its outpatient medication co-pay rate based upon a regulation that ties the rate to the Medical Consumer Price Index for prescription drugs.

Veterans who have difficulty paying copayments for outpatient medications should discuss the matter with their local VA enrollment coordinator. Veterans may also contact VA at 1-877-222 VETS (8387) or visit VA's health eligibility Web site at [www.va.gov/healtheligibility](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility).

## Improved Application Process

Veterans will find it easier and faster to apply for their health care benefits now that the Department of Veterans Affairs has updated its online Form 10-10EZ, "Application for Health Benefits."

"VA is committed to tapping into the best that technology has to offer to ensure Veterans receive the benefits they have earned," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "We continue to look for new ways to improve access to care and benefits."

This revised online application provides enhanced navigation features that make it easier and faster for Veterans to apply for their health care benefits.

The most significant enhancement allows Veterans to save their application to their local desktop and return to the application at any time without having to start over. Previously, Veterans had to complete the form in a single session.

Veterans may complete or download the 10-10EZ form at the VA health eligibility website at <https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez>. Veterans may also contact VA at 1 (877) 222-8387 (VETS) or visit the VA health eligibility website at [www.va.gov/healtheligibility](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility).

## 'Innovation Initiative'

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Veterans with solutions such as home health monitoring. Potential applications for telehealth solutions are broad and varied and department officials are interested in pursuing integrated solutions that improve their ability to provide the right treatment at the right place and at the right time.

- **New Models of Dialysis and Renal Disease Prevention:** VA currently provides dialysis for more than 10,000 Veterans annually, at both VA and community-based medical facilities. Alternative treatment strategies and dialysis technology can extend and improve our ability to provide quality care in a patient-preferred setting.
- **Improvement of Polytrauma Care:** VA provides comprehensive, inter-disciplinary rehabilitation care to Veterans and returning service members with multiple injuries, or polytrauma. Solutions in areas such as the application of dynamic treatment algorithms, home monitoring of diverse and complex symptoms and assistive technologies can help the broad advancement of polytrauma care.
- **Reduction of Adverse Drug Events:** The development and deployment of strategies to prevent patient harm from adverse drug events is an on-going priority at VA. Tools that can integrate with VA records and systems and provide an increased ability to continuously monitor for at-risk situations can enhance dramatically the quality and safety of care provided by VA.
- **Integrated Business Accelerator:** A wide array of services and benefits are available to assist Veterans, and Service Disabled Veterans in particular, in starting and sustaining new businesses. However, an integrated, long-term approach that assists Veterans in accessing existing resources and provides services that aid in the launch and maintenance of startup businesses can help insure the long-term success of Veteran-owned businesses.

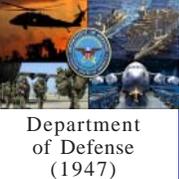
VAi2 identifies, funds, tests and deploys new efforts that significantly improve the access, quality, performance and cost of VA services. For more about VAI2 please visit [www.va.gov/vai2](http://www.va.gov/vai2). Please go to [www.FedBizOpps.gov](http://www.FedBizOpps.gov) to learn more about federal opportunities for businesses.



CAVHCS Fire Department's engine prepares to lead a procession comprised of several area fire departments following the memorial service held recently on the Tuskegee Campus to mark the passing of CAVHCS Fire Chief Jay Longerbeam. (Image by Robin Johnson)



# July

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Bioterrorism/Disaster Education and Awareness Month</b> <a href="http://www.ppsinc.org">www.ppsinc.org</a> <b>Eye Injury Prevention Month</b> <a href="http://www.aao.org">www.aao.org</a> <b>Hemochromatosis Screening Awareness Month</b> <a href="http://www.hemochromatosis.org">www.hemochromatosis.org</a> <b>International Group B Strep Awareness Month</b> <a href="http://www.thejessecause.org">www.thejessecause.org</a> <b>UV Safety Month</b> <a href="http://www.aao.org">www.aao.org</a>			1	2	3	
	<b>Independence Day</b> (observed)		 <b>National Veterans Wheelchair Games</b> July 4-9			10
<b>11 National Therapeutic Recreation Week</b> <a href="http://www.nrpa.org">www.nrpa.org</a>	<b>12 Meet &amp; Greet</b> Door Prizes/ Popcorn Tuskegee's Bldg. 90 Room A107 11-12:30 pm	<b>13 Lunch w/your Therapist Games</b> Tuskegee's Bldg. 120 Plaze 11-12:30 pm	<b>14 Speaker and Display</b> Dress for Success Tuskegee's Bldg. 90 Room A107 10 am	<b>15 Talent Show</b> "CAVHCS Got Talent" Tuskegee's Bldg. 90 Theater 1 - 2:20 pm	<b>16 Friday's Food w/fund</b> Burgers, chips,sodas Tuskegee's Bldg. 120 Plaza 1- 3:30 pm	17
18	19	20	 <b>VA Created (1930)</b>	22	 <b>Hang Ten</b> All that need measure Veterans can answer YES to ALL of these questions if we want to Hang Ten on the next Patient Survey	24
25	 <b>Department of Defense (1947)</b>	 <b>Korean War Armistice (1953)</b>	28	29	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Would you recommend CAVHCS to others?</li> <li>2. Would rate the quality your overall care a 10?</li> <li>3. Was the treatment area or room quiet?</li> <li>4. Was the treatment area or room clean?</li> <li>5. Was pertinent information provided when you were discharged?</li> <li>6. Did staff communicate well with you about medicines?</li> <li>7. Did staff help you manage pain?</li> <li>8. Was staff responsive to your needs.</li> <li>9. Did doctors communicate well with you?</li> <li>10. Did nurses communicate well you?</li> </ol>	31

The CAVHCS Community Calendar is not intended to be an all-inclusive, official calendar. It is intended rather to provide a medium for CAVHCS Salute to share upcoming events.

If you would like to add a CAVHCS event please email details directly to alan.bloom@va.gov. Submissions are not guaranteed to be published. Editorial considerations will be made for propriety, promptness and print space.