

# VETERANS GAZETTE

Quarterly Newsletter for Veterans and Visitors | Winter 2020

## National Salute To Veteran Patients

February 9-15, 2020





*Welcome to the Winter 2020 Edition  
of The Veterans Gazette.*

*Greetings and Happy New Year! We are looking forward to new initiatives and improving services to our Veterans for FY 2020. This includes improving access to specialty care through telehealth services, easier access to community care, if desired, and increased availability to urgent care. Whole Health continues to expand their programs and offer a variety of alternative therapies in adjunct to your current medical care. Talk to your provider to see which classes may be of most benefit. Our aim is to provide you with the best medical care, when and where you need it! Of course, we appreciate when you “Choose VA” for all your healthcare needs, as we feel we understand you best. By choosing VA, not only are you getting the best, comprehensive healthcare, you are amongst many fellow Veterans, which contributes to camaraderie and makes the environment less institutional and more like home.*

*We are excited to announce the Naming and Dedication Ceremony for Traverse City’s new Col. Demas T. Crow Community Based Outpatient Clinic on January 30, 2020. This not only brings the two separate clinics under one building, but is new and has more space to better serve our Veterans in the area.*

*Lastly, I want to remind everyone, it is still flu season. We are still administering the influenza vaccination if you haven’t received one. Contact your healthcare team for an appointment or simply walk in. Veterans may still go to local Walgreen’s and show their VA identification to receive the flu shot.*

*Thank you for your service and we are grateful to serve you for all your healthcare needs!*

***-Dr. Barbara Bates  
Medical Center Director***

***“Proudly Serving All Who Have Served”***

### **A Veteran's Smoke-Free Journey – Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center**

Even at the age of 70 with well over 30 years of smoking, Veteran Ed Haller decided to begin his smoke-free journey. He was informed he needed a medical procedure, and to be cleared for the procedure he would need to be nicotine free. Mr. Haller made the choice that it was time to quit smoking and was referred to Tobacco Cessation from his primary care provider and to our Board-Certified Whole Health Coach. The Whole Health Coach worked with Ed to assist him in further exploring his mission, aspirations, and purpose. Ed reaffirmed his health was more important than smoking, and on April 27, 2019, his voyage to becoming nicotine free began! Meeting with his Whole Health Coach once a week, she shared resources available through the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center to help with reaching his goal. Ed was referred to our Health Behavior Coordinator and he began attending the smoking cessation support group, as well as VA prescribed three-step nicotine patches to assist with weening off the nicotine. Utilizing all the resources and tools available to him, Mr. Haller's self-motivation and assistance from the VA staff, led him to reaching his goal. October 7, 2019, he celebrated 90 days nicotine free and 163 days cigarette free.

The journey to quitting smoking or other nicotine products seems to be rather straight forward but is very different for each person. There are literally thousands of ways to quit, and we all have heard the success and failure stories of each. Quitting smoking is more about cracking your individual quit code. Cracking your code is using all the tools you have heard about, having the right mindset, as well as motivation and timing. However, no tools will help unless you put in the work. Nicotine patches, gum, and lozenges can all be very helpful, but getting these and expecting them to just help you quit is like going to buy a hammer and then waiting for it to build you a house.

On October 1, 2019, the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center, Healthcare Annex, and our Community Based Outpatient Clinics became smoke-free! This national mandate has been instituted at all VA facilities to eliminate the harmful effects of smoking,

including exposure to second and third-hand smoke for our Veterans, visitors, and staff. If you are ready to quit smoking, the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center will assist you on your nicotine-free journey.

We are looking for motivated individuals who are willing to go on a similar journey as Mr. Haller and find their own desired nicotine-free destination. Ask your VA provider how to get started at your next visit. Together, we can do this!

Quitting smoking starts with day one. Pick a date today.



### **Dedication and Naming held at the new Col. Demas T. Crow VA Clinic in Traverse City, Michigan**

The Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center held a Dedication and Naming Ceremony of the newly built Col. Demas T. Crow VA Clinic on January 30, 2020 with an opening date of February 4, 2020.

The new clinic is located at 701 U.S. 31 South, Traverse City, MI 49685. Hours of Operation are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Services include Primary Care, Mental Health, Physical Therapy, Telehealth, Laboratory Services, Home Based Primary Care, Women's Health and Whole Health.

## **Saginaw Fire Department Civilian Meritorious Service Awarded to Aleda E. Lutz VAMC Staff, Saginaw, Michigan**

On October 8, 2019, five employees from the Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center were recognized by the Saginaw Fire Department and awarded with the Civilian Meritorious Service Award. An Awards and Memorial Ceremony were held during Fire Prevention Week; this year's theme was "not every hero wears a cape."

The award read, On April 8, 2019, a man went into cardiac arrest in his vehicle, near the Aleda E. Lutz VAMC. A group of employees from the hospital were in the vicinity and noticed the man slumped over in his vehicle. They immediately removed him from the vehicle, placed him on the ground, and initiated CPR. Crews from the Saginaw Fire Department and MMR arrived and continued patient care by attaching an AED and performing CPR. The man was transferred to Covenant Hospital where he regained consciousness and recovered from his cardiac arrest. "This was an eye-opening experience to see how emergency responders seamlessly come together in this type of situation. It was exhilarating to be part of a team helping save a life," stated Kim Evans, LPN.

The Saginaw Fire Department proudly presented the Civilian Meritorious Service Award thanking the staff for their quick and unselfish actions in coming to the aid of a fellow citizen, which ultimately resulted in saving the man's life. The Aleda E. Lutz Medical Center's leadership is proud of the valiant efforts the staff made to save this man's life, without hesitation.

## **On The Front Cover**

National Salute to Veteran Patients is recognized during the week that includes February 14 each year and is an opportunity to say thank you to a special group of men and women, the more than nine million Veterans of the U.S. armed services, who are cared for in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers, outpatient clinics, domiciliaries, and nursing homes.

The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC will be hosting it's 10th Annual National Salute to Veterans Sweetheart Dinner Dance on Friday, February 14, 2020. There will also be other events scheduled throughout the week to honor and thank our Veteran patients.

This week also provides an opportunity for the community to become acquainted with the much-needed volunteer opportunities within the medical center.

For more information on any activities scheduled for this week, or for volunteer opportunities, please contact Voluntary Service at 989-497-2500, Extensions 13360 or 13369.

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## **Aleda E. Lutz Announces New VHA LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator**

The Aleda E. Lutz VAMC is proud to announce participation in the VHA LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator (VCC) Program at our facility. Meet the LGBT VCC: Renee Haley , Human Resources Assistant, LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator, 989-497-2500, Extension 13979.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**THE BLUE  
WATER NAVY  
VIETNAM VETERANS  
ACT BEGAN ON  
JANUARY 1, 2020**

**LEARN MORE AT VA.GOV**  
Search for "Blue Water Navy"

The graphic features a collage of diverse veterans' faces in the bottom right corner.

The Blue Water Navy (BWN) Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019 ([PL 116-23](#)) extended the presumption of herbicide exposure, such as Agent Orange, to Veterans who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2020, Veterans who served as far as 12 nautical miles from the shore of Vietnam, or who had service in the Korean Demilitarized Zone, are presumed to have been exposed to herbicides, such as Agent Orange, and may be entitled to service connection for any of the [14 conditions related to herbicide exposure](#).

To learn more, go to [va.gov](#) and search for "Blue Water Navy."

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### **Audiology Hearing Tests Available in Alpena**

The VA is now offering Hearing Testing through telehealth at the Clement C. VanWagoner VA CBOC in Alpena. Veterans are encouraged to contact Audiology at 989-497-2500, Extension 11400, to find out if telehealth is an option.

### **National Policy for Eligibility for Hearing Aids and Eyeglasses Updated**

Effective January 1, 2020, the National Policy for eligibility of hearing aids and eyeglasses were updated. All Veterans are still eligible for both services. The orders are only filled from VA providers or VA pre-authorized exams. Eligibility is *not* based on service connection or age/date of last issued device. If you are no longer eligible for these devices, you can get a copy of the hearing evaluation or eyeglass prescription to help reduce costs for seeking replacement.

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### **Release of Information (ROI)**

Veterans can use any kiosk throughout the hospital, as well as at the CBOCs, to initiate a request for medical records. Forms to have records released to other agencies are available in the front lobby volunteer desk or by speaking with a clerk at the Annex or CBOCs. They should then be faxed to 989-321-4955, if no one is available in the ROI office, located in the Welcome Center. ROI staff have 20 days to process a routine request. If an urgent request for documents within 24-48 hours is required, Veterans may request to see an ROI clerk for records to be expedited.

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### **Photography/Recording on VA Property**

Family members and visitors may take photography/recordings with their own personal recording device of their own family members who are patients with the patient's verbal consent. However, photography/recordings cannot violate the privacy of other patients, visitors and staff, disclose proprietary or physical security information, are strictly prohibited in non-public areas intended to provide complete privacy (such as restrooms), may not interfere with patient care, and may not involve active administration of treatment.

The physician, nurse or other health care provider has the authority to instruct family members and visitors that any recording be discontinued.



## Choose VA

To enroll for healthcare, we encourage you to visit [www.vets.gov](http://www.vets.gov), visiting any one of our VA facilities, or calling Eligibility at 989-497-2500, Extension 13120 or 13121.

Contact your Primary Care Provider to get your Flu Vaccination. Or visit your local Walgreens until March, 2020.



VA encourages Veterans and employees to respect each other while receiving care!



### Whole Health Presents:

#### Self Healing Touch Walk-In Classes

No order necessary. Call the Whole Health Hotline (989) 321-4555 for dates & times of walk-in class and any updates to schedule.

#### Drop-In Yoga Classes

Veterans enrolled for care at the VA may drop in to the Yoga class on Thursdays. Please call the Whole Health Hotline (989) 321-4555 for schedule updates or cancellations.

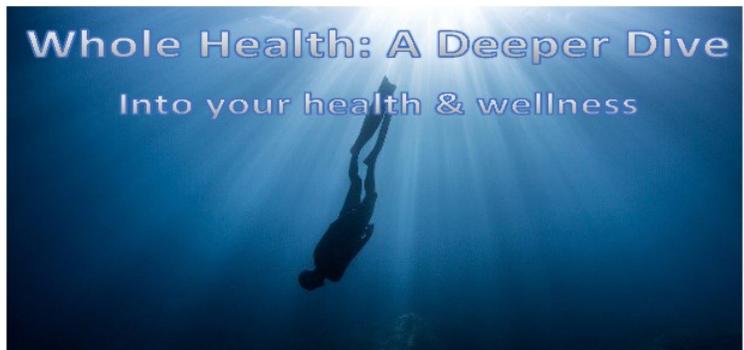
### Smoking Cessation Available

# SMOKE-FREE

## MAKE THE COMMITMENT

Better health starts today.

Talk with your VA provider or healthcare team, as well as contacting Dr. Trevor Grice, for Smoking Cessation Classes at 989-497-2500, Extension 12454.



Join us for a monthly class to learn more about improving different areas of your health and well-being, such as physical activity, personal development, nutrition, recharge, mindful awareness and more. Get introduced to goal setting with a Whole Health Coach. For more information or to schedule, call 989-497-2500, Extension 11744 or 11703.

### Connect Your Docs



Veterans Health Information Exchange (VHIE) is a program that securely shares certain parts of your VA health record with community care providers.

To learn more about the 'OPT-OUT' model of electronic health information sharing or to sign up, visit: [www.va.gov/VLER](http://www.va.gov/VLER).

## Employee Wellness Health Fair



## 4th Quarter Simply Sensational Winner



## Process Improvements—Yellow Belt Student Report Outs & Root Cause Analysis Team Award



## Employee of the Month 2019 October/November/December



## Sgt. Major Kenneth V. Rice Pavilion



## Suicide Prevention

If you know a Veteran who may experience thoughts of suicide, getting them the assistance they need, as quickly as possible, is crucial. The “BeThere” campaign offers information on how you can help.

Visit [www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/BeThere](http://www.VeteransCrisisLine.net/BeThere)

**Veterans Crisis Line:**  
**1-800-273-8255 Press 1**

## Introduction to Whole Health Classes

*Take control of your health and wellbeing.*

Mondays at 9:30 a.m. in the Sgt. Major Rice VA Pavilion

Contact: Michael Ritchings 989-306-1306



**Are you a caregiver of a Veteran and need assistance? Call the Caregiver Support Line at 1-855-260-3274**

**National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention**

Learn more at [www.prevention.va.gov](http://www.prevention.va.gov)

## Community Care

Learn about Community Care and the Mission Act by visiting:

[www.va.gov/communitycare](http://www.va.gov/communitycare)



## VEText

### Text Message Appointment Reminders

**New Feature Alert**—for Veterans waiting greater than 30 days for an appointment. VEText will offer sooner appointments when available. Make sure your current cell phone # and address is listed in our records.

## VA Transportation

1. They transport Veterans FROM the Aleda E. Lutz VA in Saginaw TO Ann Arbor and Detroit VA Medical Center's. Call 989-497-2500, Extension 13108 to schedule a ride.
2. They transport Veterans FROM Gaylord, Grayling, West Branch, and Standish to Saginaw, Ann Arbor, and Detroit. Call 989-497-2500, Extension 13125 to schedule a ride.

## Construction Project Update

**The Urgent Care Ambulance Bay is now in service. Building 1 renovations are near completion, while new water bottle/water fountains are being installed near the elevator entrances.**

# Special Program Contacts

**Suicide Prevention Coordinator**

989-497-2500, Extension 11778

**Caregiver Support Coordinator**

989-497-2500, Extension 11686

**Former Prisoner of War Advocate**

989-497-2500, Extension 11798

**Homeless Veteran Program**

989-497-2500, Extension 11773

**LGBT Veteran Care Coordinator**

989-497-2500, Extension 11783

**Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator**

989-497-2500, Extension 15713

**Multiple Sclerosis Coordinator**

989-497-2500, Extension 11440

**Patient Advocate**

989-497-2500, Extension 13012

**Spinal Cord Injury Coordinator**

989-497-2500, Extension 11783

**Transition Care Management**

989-497-2500, Extension 11794

**Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinators**

989-497-2500, Extension 11916 or Extension 11694

**Women Veterans Program Manager**

989-497-2500, Extension 11560

**Whole Health**

989-497-2500, Extension 13313



**VET Centers**

Readjustment Counseling Services

**Saginaw**—5360 Hampton Place,  
Phone (989) 321-4650

**Traverse City**—3766 N. US 31 South,  
Phone (231) 935-0051

**Office of Inspector General**—1-800-409-9926

**Joint Commission**—1-800-994-6610



# Contact Us

## Community Based Outpatient Clinics:

**Lt. Col. Clement C. Van Wagoner VA  
Alpena** 180 N. State Avenue  
989-356-8720

**Bad Axe** 1142 S. Van Dyke Rd, Ste. 100  
989-497-2500, Ext. 15602

**Cadillac** 1909 N. Mitchell Street  
231-775-4401, Ext. 11410

**Cheboygan County (Mackinaw)**  
14540 Mackinaw Highway  
231-436-5176

**Clare** 11775 N. Isabella Road  
989-386-8113, Ext. 13530

**Gaylord** 806 S. Otsego  
989-732-7525, Ext. 13520

**Grayling** 1680 Hartwick Pines  
989-344-2002

**Oscoda** 5671 Skeel Avenue, Ste. 4  
989-747-0026, Ext. 11411

**Col. Demas T. Crow VA Clinic  
Traverse City** 701 U.S. 31 South  
800-406-5143, Ext. 11412

**Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center**  
1500 Weiss Street, Saginaw,  
MI

**VA Healthcare Annex**  
4241 Barnard Road,  
Saginaw, MI

**800-406-5143**  
**Call Center, Extension 11230**

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VASaginaw](https://www.facebook.com/VASaginaw)

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