

VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

VA Connecticut's Veterans Day Ceremony was held at the West Haven campus on Nov. 7. Employees and guests gathered in the courtyard for the ceremony which included patriotic music from the West Haven High School Band and the National Anthem sung by Jackie Williams. VA Connecticut director, Roger Johnson, provided the opening remarks and Keynote Speaker and Korean War Veteran James Raynor gave a moving talk about Veterans Day and the sacrifices and contributions made by veterans. Refreshments made by the West Haven High School Culinary Class were served in the staff dining room following the program.

Veterans were also entertained in the T-3 Rec. Room with patriotic music sung by 4th grade students from the Bishop Woods School in New Haven. Music director Patricia Stone and her 4th grade class have performed this Veterans Day program for the last 12 years.



Fouth grade students from the Bishop Woods School in New Haven entertained veterans on T-3 with patriotic songs.

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Events

- **Newington -
Health Fair
Open Season
Nov. 24**

- **West Haven -
Red Cross
Blood Drive
Nov. 21 & 25**

For more information on these and other events please see *Good Morning VA Connecticut*.

Veterans Day



VETERANS' CREATIVE ARTS AWARDS



Silver medalist Ira Brandt played a Broadway medley at the Creative Arts Awards Ceremony on T-3.

VA Connecticut veterans who participated in the 2003 Veterans Creative Arts Competition were recognized at an awards program on Nov. 12 in the T-3 Rec. Room.

The program featured an art exhibit, poetry readings, songs and a Homefront Veteran's Theater video. Certificates of Achievement were presented to more than 50 veterans for their local and national participation.

VA Connecticut director **Roger Johnson, Penny Schuckers** and **Mary Lou Lauricella** presented medals to **Stephen Johns, Archie McCalop, Al Perreault** and **Richard Lynch**, winners of the national bronze medal in the category of Interpretive Performance - Original Drama for their roles in "Scenes from a Veteran's Life."

Penny Schuckers and **Bobbi Blake** presented the national silver medal to trumpet player **Ira Brandt** who played a medley of Broadway tunes in the Solo Instrumental category.

Congratulations to all our creative veterans and to the following Creative/Recreational Arts Therapists who made this program possible: Bobbi Blake (music), Cheryl Cresta (recreation), Martha Hae-seler (art), Mary Lou Lauricella (drama), Pam Moran (recreation), Stephanie O'Keefe (recreation) and Michael Rose (recreation).

ART FROM THE HEART



"Scenes from a Veteran's Life"



VA Connecticut veterans recently took advantage of the opportunity to showcase their creative talents to the public by participating in a "Veterans Art From the Heart" program at the Blackstone Library in Branford on the evening of Nov. 7.

Veterans exhibited their art, read their poetry and participated in a panel discussion with the audience. Veterans Al Perreault, Stephen Johns and Archie McCalop performed in The Homefront Veterans Theater production of "Scenes from a Veteran's Life".

The production, directed by Mary Lou Lauricella, won the Bronze Medal at the 2003 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival held Oct. 6-12 in Oklahoma City.

The Veterans Art from the Heart program was produced by the VA Connecticut Veterans Arts Council.

BREAST HEALTH FAIR



Linda Hackbarth, RN, Primary Care Firm A, does a blood pressure check on Lisa Frantsve, Ph.D., Health Psychology, at the Women's Health Center Breast Health Fair on Oct. 28 at the West Haven campus.



From the Network Director Nov. 18, 2003

Congratulations to all our employees in Network 1 for the successful completion of the recent Joint Commission surveys. The surveys are a comprehensive assessment of the clinical and administrative areas of our organization, and include acute, long-term care, ambulatory care, and special programs such as behavioral health, substance abuse and spinal cord. The preparation for this has been continuous and ongoing; we reviewed extensive standards and implemented the required changes to be consistent in meeting those standards. The process came to a close today with a very positive review by the lead surveyors of their experience in New England. In addition to constructive comments about areas for improvement, the surveyors pointed out numerous examples of how well we function.

The surveys provide us with an objective measure of the quality care that we provide for our patients. In New England, we have much to be proud of--the preliminary scores from the surveys are much higher than our last survey and with fewer Type One recommendations. In meeting these requirements, we demonstrate to our patients and their families how much we are invested in the appropriate management of their health. Our continued readiness now sets the stage for employees to continue their efforts in maintaining our high quality standards.

In meeting and excelling in these rigorous standards, we provide objective testament of our commitment and compassion to the 224,000 patients who come to us for care. I want to personally thank each of you for your dedication and excellent service to these veterans.

Sincerely,
Jeannette Chirico-Post, MD
Network Director

SPIRIT ONLINE

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