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Inside



Special Dedication
Playroom to help military families.....Pg. 3



Never Forget
Walter Reed remembers 9/11.....Pg. 4



Admiral Calls
Commander meets face-to-face with staffPg. 6



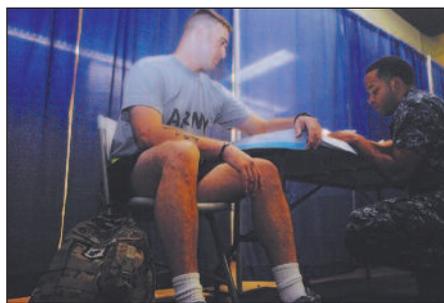
Dose of Laughter
Humor Tour makes patients, staff smile....Pg. 8

'Tis the Season - Flu Shots Available

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class John K. Hamilton
Journal staff writer

Just in time for the flu season, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center's (WRNMMC) Immunizations clinic is busy providing influenza vaccinations for military members, their families and the staff throughout the hospital.

"Like last year's flu shot, this year's cocktail protects against H1N1, influenza-B, which is the most standard flu virus, and H3N3, the avian flu," said Hospitalman Devon Cordova, Immunizations clinic corpsman. "It's important for military members' families to receive the flu shot because it not only



(photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class John K. Hamilton)

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class (FMF) Travis Hendy explains the vaccination procedure to Army 1st Sgt. John Huff during his visit to the Immunizations tent.

maximizes readiness for the staff member, but also protects the family from

the flu virus," he added.

For the Immunizations clinic, when it comes to the flu, the goal is prevention as they continue to support mission readiness.

"We go up to the wards and administer the shots to the new mothers, so they don't transfer the flu to their child. Likewise, at 5 Center, or the inpatient wards, we make sure the patients don't [contract] the virus from any staff member," said Cordova.

The flu vaccine is administered in two ways, subcutaneous injection (needle), or flu mist, which is administered through the nostrils. Both ways are safe and are the most effective ways to prevent the flu virus, he said.

See FLU page 7

WRB Receives Two Adaptive Driving Vehicles

By Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Dion Dawson
Journal staff writer

The Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC), at Bethesda, comprehensive rehabilitation driver program, received two modified automobiles Tuesday that will help recovering service members relearn how to drive.

"For the last several months, we have been working on the process of procuring these vehicles, so I am happy because I have a lot of patients waiting for me to open my doors again," said Army Capt. Tammy Phipps, a certified driving rehabilitation specialist and occupational therapist. "When we transitioned to Bethesda, we retired the vehicle we had at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and looked toward the future."

Phipps said she is excited and grateful to all those who donate to the wounded war-



(photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Dion Dawson)

Cpl. Joshua Kerns, a patient at the Walter Reed National Military Center, starts the engine of one of two adaptive vehicle donated to the hospital this week.

riors in such an amazing way.

"Tuesday, we received a handicap-accessible van with a drop down ramp and

a sedan donated by four different organizations that will allow us to be fully functional by the end of the week," Phipps added. "With

the variety of adaptive equipment installed in these two vehicles, we will

See VEHICLES page 11

Austin's Playroom Opens, Lends a Hand to Military Families

By Bernard S. Little
Journal staff writer

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held Sept. 7 for the new 2,000 sq. ft. playroom for children of wounded warriors and their families at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC).

To officially celebrate the opening of Austin's Playroom, The Mario Lemieux Foundation, founded by the retired National Hockey League great and current principal owner of his former NHL team, the Pittsburgh Penguins, Mario Lemieux and wife, Nathalie, accompanied by their son Austin cut the ribbon.

Austin's playroom, located on Naval Support Activity Bethesda in Tranquility Hall, is an initiative of The Lemieux Project established by Nathalie and Mario in 2000, following their personal experiences while caring for Austin, born prematurely in 1996, weighing just two pounds. The Lemieux family already had two young daughters, and found it difficult to manage the family's time together while in the hospital. It was then that they dreamed of someday helping future families who find themselves in similar situations. Today, Austin is a healthy 15-year-old.

Vice Adm. John M. Mateczun, commander of the Joint Task Force National Capital Region Medical, and Rear Adm. Matthew Nathan, commander, Navy Medicine National



(photo by Sharon Renee Taylor)

Nancy Angus, executive director of The Mario Lemieux Foundation, far left, Rear Adm. Matthew Nathan, commander of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC), along with Nathalie, Austin and Mario Lemieux, cut a ribbon Sept. 7, dedicating the new Austin's Playroom in Tranquility Hall at WRNMMC.

Capital Area and WRNMMC, joined the Lemieux family for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

"We in military medicine spend our lives serving those who serve our country, and you are helping to serve

those people who serve our country with this contribution," Mateczun said in thanking the Lemieux, their foundation and its contributors who made the playroom possible. "We're extraordinarily appreciative for this

gift," he said, and that appreciation will best be reflected in the use of the facility by "the sons and daughters of [JUMP]America, and their sons and

See **PLAYROOM** page 5

Celebrating the Legacy of Maj. Walter Reed

By Bernard Little
Journal staff writer

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) at Bethesda celebrated the birth and legacy of its namesake Tuesday with a lecture and cake-cutting ceremony in Memorial Auditorium.

Walter Reed, the U.S. Army physician who in 1900 led the team that proved yellow fever is transmitted by a particular mosquito species, was born Sept. 13, 1851. His legacy was one of "service before self," "[putting the] patient before self," and "[putting] country before self," explained Rear Adm. Matthew L. Nathan, commander of Navy Medicine, National Capital Area and WRNMMC.

Nathan said infectious disease, malaria, is the number one killer in the world today, and it will probably be with contributions from the military, as in the legacy of Walter Reed, "a vaccine will be born" for treatment. He added the embodiment of Walter Reed's legacy are the people who stand between diseases and the devastation they can cause if not re-

searched and treated.

Nathan continued by stating the integration of Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the National Naval Medical Center to form WRNMMC also continues the legacy of Walter Reed, creating "the most unstoppable medical force in the history of the military" and an "institution of hope and health."

Col. (Dr.) John R. Pierce, guest lecturer for the celebration, the medical inspector for the Veterans Health Administration and co-author of the book "Yellow Jack: How Yellow Fever Ravaged America and Walter Reed Discovered Its Deadly Secrets," said in a short period of time, Reed and his team made a number of accomplishments.

"They proved the mosquito transmission of yellow fever; they did the first demonstration of a viral disease in man in blood that was filtered; and they were the first to use informed consent," Pierce said. The team's work is credited with giving impetus to what was then the new fields of epidemiology and biomedicine.

Despite his work, Pierce said if



(photo by Bernard Little)

Following tradition, the two youngest Navy and Army infectious diseases doctors at WRNMMC, Lt. Ashley Jackson and Capt. Leyi Lin, cut a cake to commemorate the 160th anniversary of Maj. Walter Reed's birthday on Tuesday.

the Walter Reed hospital hadn't been in existence for the last 100 years, people probably wouldn't know who Walter Reed is and his contribution to medicine. "He is known because of the hospital," he said.

"[The name] is now here [in Bethesda], and so [Walter Reed] will continue to be known for the next 100 years because of the work you do at this institution," Pierce added. "The Walter Reed hospital is what made Walter Reed the man famous."

Ceremony Remembers 9/11

By Bernard S. Little
Journal staff writer

Like most people old enough to remember, Judy A. Logeman recalls the events of 9/11 like they happened yesterday rather than 10 years ago.

The retired Navy captain was the keynote speaker at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, at Bethesda (WRNMMC) 9/11 Day of Remembrance observance Sept. 9 in the Memorial Auditorium.

Commanding Officer for Naval Support Activity Bethesda, Michael Malanoski, led the event by stating, "In all of our lives, there are certain events that no matter how much time passes, [you'll remember] them," said Malanoski. "For most Americans, 9/11 is one of those days."

He added, the great sense of loss and emotions are seared in the memories of most people.

"How we reacted that day defines us as individuals, a community and as a nation," he said.

Rear Adm. Matthew Nathan, commander, Navy Medicine, National Capital Area and WRNMMC, went on to say, it's fitting to pause and remember the events of 9/11, stating, those events will be etched in the memories of generations not unlike those of Pearl Harbor. The difference though, he explained, is that because of technology, millions of people were able to watch live much of the tragedy of 9/11 as it unfolded.

Logeman, who was an active duty nurse at the time, followed by reflecting on that "bright, clear-blue" morning 10 years ago, that she was stationed at the Navy Annex near the Pentagon and among the first health care providers to treat casualties of the attack on the Pentagon.

"I am just an ordinary American who was there at the time, at my place of duty doing what the Navy trained me to do," she said. "It's not about the rich and famous, but ordinary people who went to work that day [and] then became part of the most horrific event in American history."

On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, Logeman recalled being in her Navy Annex office and receiving a telephone call from her husband informing her that a plane had hit one of the towers of the World Trade Center. Minutes later, she received another call from her husband when the second plane struck the South Tower, and like many of her co-workers, she looked for a television to see what was happening. As Logeman and her co-workers watched live the events of 9/11 in New York, she remembers a television reporter saying, "America, say a prayer."

She then remembered the sound and rumble of the earth (not unlike the recent earthquake which hit the Washington, D.C., area a few weeks ago), darkness, and the evacuation of her building at the Navy Annex. She said she felt the fear of the unknown, vulnerable and not knowing what would come next. Once outside, she saw the "beautiful blue sky" marred by the fireball at the Pentagon.

Acting on impulse, Logeman triaged and gave first-aid to victims of the Pentagon attack in an area set up near the Navy Annex.

"We learned a lot that day," she said, most importantly, to "train, train, train for real," and stay vigilant.

Logeman added that a "national attitude of unity" prevailed in the days following the attacks of 9/11.

"During this incredible stressful time, there was incredible bonding," she said.

Remembering 9/11 also means recalling "the lives left un-lived," and reflecting on the sacrifices of



(photo by Bernard Little)

Judy A. Logeman, a retired Navy captain, recalls her experience of working as a nurse on Sept. 11, 2001, during a remembrance ceremony on Friday at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. At the time, Logeman was on active duty, stationed at the Navy Annex near the Pentagon.

first responders and others. Logeman continued, those lives included not only the nearly 3,000 people who died in the towers of the World Trade Center, at the Pentagon and on United Airlines Flight 93 that crashed into a field near Shanksville, Pa., but also firefighters, emergency workers, service members and others. "Everyday people in everyday America," she said.

She added her memories of the Pentagon tragedy not only include images "of our country being charred, but the one I hope to hang on to, [and that] is of the American flag being unfurled at the site of the Pentagon."

Nathan explained how that spirit continues to prevail.

"For those of us in free countries around the world, [9/11] hit us because one, you don't expect that sort of thing in a country that has the national defense and awareness we do, and two, you don't expect people to cowardly murder thousands of defenseless citizens simply because they have great differences in how you choose to live your life," Nathan said. "That is hard for us to reconcile."

America is forced to respond in kind to acts such as those on 9/11, Nathan added.

"[When] you push us on the chest too hard, we don't just push you back on the chest, we knock you flat off your feet, and we will continue to do that," he said. "As you walk through the halls of this medical center, you'll see that Soldier, Marine, Sailor or Airman being wheeled by their spouse, child or [other] family [member], perhaps missing a leg or both legs, or arms, or [with] severe traumatic brain injury. That is what we are seeing now as a result of the planes hitting the twin towers, the Pentagon and the ground in Pennsylvania."

"The spirit that was mounted by the folks of [United Airlines Flight 93] to keep that plane from hitting the Capitol and [putting] it into the ground, is the spirit that is renewed and refreshed every day since then. It tells anybody who will come after us, there are still men and women, our most precious resource we have in this country and who hold the rest of the world in awe when they see America and other free-loving countries like us, who are willing to protect our freedom and go after those who challenge us," he said. "We don't shrink away from those fights. We cry over them, we agonize over them, but we send people to them. If you want to fight with us,

we're going to take the fight to you. If you want to damage us, if you want to break us, if you want to weaken us, we will surround those who you have broken and damaged, and we will renew them. We will get their lives back. We will put them back with their families, and there are more where they came from. We don't quit until freedom and liberty have been established."

Logeman concluded the remembrance observance by stating, "Remembering Sept. 11, 2001, is ever present with each meeting with one of our wounded service members, men and women, young adults whose dreams and goals may have been altered, but who do not regret their choice to fight to ensure our freedom endures," she said.

PLAYROOM

Continued from 3

America, and their sons and daughters," he added.

Mateczun said the country has invested \$2.8 billion in hospitals in the National Capital Region "to make sure we're fulfilling our covenant with America's sons and daughters who come back from war." He said WRNMMC and the new Fort Belvoir Community Hospital in northern Virginia, make up the largest infrastructure investment ever made in the military health system, but "it's all about taking care of our patients and being able to serve those who have served." This include not only providing the best primary care, but also the best in housing, lodging and other services, such as family care assistance.

Nathan went on to say, "This, in essence, changes lives," adding his thanks to the Lemieux foundation and its donors for the Austin playroom. "It helps change lives that have been dramatically changed."

Nathan explained the Austin's Playroom is a place dedicated to the welfare and happiness of children of wounded warriors and their families. It can provide a pleasant distraction, and an environment where they can understand a little bit more about what is happening with their dad, mom, uncle, aunt, brother or sister. This room is bright, cheerful, full of life, hope and help.

"We are charged with taking care of the most precious resource of our country — the men and women who go in harm's way, sacrifice and give so much to make a difference," Nathan added. "All we are about is giving back to them. All [they] want to do is get back in society and do

what they do best, which is hanging with their families and buddies, and if they can, get back to their units and keep making a difference. They want to do it with their families around them, and they want to do it as a team. You've helped allow that."

Nancy Angus, executive director of The Mario Lemieux Foundation later added. "Austin's Warrior Playroom marks a new initiative in the Austin's Playroom Project," she added. "The Mario Lemieux Foundation is proud to join forces with the U.S. military to establish an Austin's Playroom in the new medical center to bring joy and happiness in what otherwise will be a very difficult and stressful situation. We hope this playroom provides comfort, warmth and love for these very special families."

Angus said with the opening of the playroom at WRNMMC, there are now 23 Austin's Playrooms with more in the works. The facility at WRNMMC was built with donations from private individuals and corporations, and is the first established by the Lemieux foundation outside of Pennsylvania and on a military installation.

"Our playrooms provide a calming, comfortable educational environment," Angus said. "They are simply not just play spaces, but rather places where kids can grow emotionally, physically and mentally. We're very conscientious about the way we design our spaces." She explained the playroom at WRNMMC has areas for imaginative and interactive play, as well as toys to enhance children's reading and fine-motor skills. "In addition, we have table-top medical equipment for children to see what their parents are going through. There is also a lovely outdoor play area, which is a complement for children's experiences inside the playroom."

Angus added, "We couldn't have picked a better location to have this room. Helping warriors and their families is directly in line with our mission, and we're thrilled to be here. We believe that a positive hospital experience for a child and the parent is an essential complement to their medical and physical overall healing process."

Tom Grealish, president of the Mario Lemieux foundation, concluded the ceremony by stating, "During [Nathalie's] time in the hospital [following Austin's birth], she realized there was a need to support families who were experiencing medical emergencies in ways that had not been thought of before," Grealish said. "From day one, she has made this effort about the entire family experience. To all wounded warriors and their families, this room is dedicated expressly for you."

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the Washington, D.C. area visit

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Bethesda Commander Meets Face-to-Face with Staff

By Sarah Fortney
Journal staff writer

The commander of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) Rear Adm. Matthew Nathan hosted a series of "Admiral's Calls" last week, opening the floor to address staff concerns.

All staff members were invited to attend the six calls held Tuesday through Thursday in the hospital's Laurel Clark Memorial Auditorium. The commander began the hour-long calls by briefing staff about parking and integration before taking questions about getting around base, carpooling, IT, phones, and furniture.

"You're here today to tell me things we need to be doing, [and] that we need to think about," Nathan said.

Nathan explained that this BRAC project, unlike others in the military, did not cut or relocate any federal or military employees; therefore, the command has had to re-evaluate parking on base. He went on to explain the new parking system, implemented Sept. 8, was developed in part to help alleviate traffic in the region and to encourage commuters to use public transportation. The plan delegates parking spaces to tenants on base based on their percentage of staff compared to the overall base population, giving priority to patients, care providers, wounded warriors, emergency services, handicapped, lodging and carpool spaces.

The commander went on to assure staff that

leadership continues to seek alternate parking opportunities. Short term plans involve leasing off-base parking, and then creating a shuttle service to transport staff back and forth, he said. Meanwhile, long term plans include adding more parking spaces.

Staff members are also encouraged to consider public transportation or carpooling. A carpool, which must consist of at least two staff members, and carpool groups must park in designated spaces. With a recent growth in the program, there are now 250 spaces available, up from 100.

To help free up parking and cut down on traffic on base, Nathan added supervisors are also encouraged to look at telecommuting. He went on to note that leadership recognizes the growing pains staff members are going through.

"I want to thank you for putting up with some of these inconveniences ... I know of no other crew in the world then this one that could pull this off the way you have," he said.

Staff addressed transporting patients around base, especially those in wheelchairs. Nathan said ramps and sidewalks on base are ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant; however, to further enhance safety for all patients and staff, he said, "We're trying to increase the number of transport personnel."

In addition, the hospital is looking to implement "people movers," such as those used in airports, he said. There is also a wayfinding system in place to help patients and personnel better

identify areas of the hospital and locate services.

Fortunately, Nathan added, there is also a spirit that exists where staff members are constantly reaching out to help one another. "Our attitude has been, 'how can I help you?'" he said. He also noted, "The Blue Jacket [staff] have been amazing," standing by to make sure patients, visitors and new staff get to where they need to go. "Over the coming weeks, you'll get to know this place like the back of your hand."

For those who have recently moved into new and/or renovated spaces, Nathan explained that the IT department is ensuring all areas up and running, especially those areas directly working with patients.

"IT has been working around the clock," said Nathan. IT has also added extra staff to provide support during this time of transition.

In addition to phones and computers, he said, leadership is making sure all spaces are equipped with furniture and supplies. Leaders will be walking through the hospital to ensure all needs are met.

"What you're doing right now, this is us recalibrating," he said. While there may be hiccups, he added, "The patients are being taken care of safely, so I thank you for this."

He went on to say that the command continues to welcome feedback, especially during this time of transition.

Among those who attended the calls, Army [JUMP]Sgt. Christopher Reed, a student in the

See **COMMANDER** page 6

COMMANDER

Continued from 6

Sgt. Christopher Reed, a student in the dialysis tech course at WRNMMC, said he appreciated the opportunity to meet face-to-face with the commander, not only so staff could raise concerns but also to offer any suggestions.

"It's important for morale so people can feel their voice is heard," said Reed. "That helps the organization as a whole."

Navy Lt. Cmdr. John McGlorthan, who works in Orthopedics, shared the same stance. He said he was particularly interested in hearing the commander's perspective on parking.

"The admiral is a very good motivational speaker," said McGlorthan. "He offers good direction for the staff."

Nathan expressed his gratitude for all staff, their patience, and efforts to ensure a seamless transition during integration between the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) and Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC).

"I have never seen a military civilian team as cohesive and as unified, and as dependent on one another. The respect that I've seen between the military and civilian workforce here is an example to be followed by the rest," he said. "People are watching us because they want to do what we've done. They want to take what we're doing and they want to export it across the military health care system. You are the leaders."

He added that he recognizes the challenges that all staff members have overcome. For those formerly working at WRAMC, it is painful to leave an institution that's been in existence for 102 years, he said, not unlike those who have worked at Bethesda for 30 years, or 50 years, and now realize the hospital is no longer NNMC.

"Everybody has given and taken during this [integration]," he said. "You do your job, [and] you make it happen. You're not going to let anybody who comes here for care suffer, whether you do clinical work or administrative work. America needed and asked for the best when they built this place, and they got it. You're an amazing group of individuals, and the country's lucky to have you. We owe you the best, that's why we're here, to figure out how we can make it better for you. My job is to make it easier for you to do your job, because your job is so important. We are one team, we are one fight, [and] we are now the most prestigious medical center in the history of the military."

FLU

Continued from 1

"Possible normal complications from the flu vaccine include sore arm and swelling. With the flu mist, there have been reports of feeling flu like symptoms, but it is not the actual flu just a completely normal reaction to the vaccine," said Cordova.

"This is my third year doing this, and I absolutely love it. I volunteered to come down here where I'm able to see more patients in a day. I can just take them in, give them a vaccine, explain it to them and watch them leave happy," he said. He added, "I feel that the vaccines do a good job of supporting mission readiness. Last year, we had 95 percent readiness through the flu season, so we try to make sure every service member gets their shots taken care of in a timely manner."

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Torreon Clarke, of Dermatology, also volunteered to help out his fellow shipmates, and encourages the rest of his colleagues to do the same, even if it is just to keep your corpsman skills fresh.

"I'm getting ready to transfer out of my clinic, so I volunteered to help with readiness," said Clarke. "It's a good service they have here, and it's good that they can get it for free, all while they are here handling other appointments, as sort of a one-stop shop. It might not have been on their mind at the time, but they walk by and see the blue tent, and stop by," he added.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that people get their seasonal flu vaccine as soon as vaccines are available in their community. It's best to get vaccinated before December, since this timing ensures protective antibodies are in place before flu activity is typically at its highest.

"The flu shot helps build the immunity to the flu virus, H1N1. If you're elderly and you get the flu, you'll have a harder time fighting it off. Since [this population is] more susceptible to the virus, it is only right that we help them build up their immune system because their immune system has weakened over the years," said Clarke.

The seasonal influenza vaccine is being administered on the first floor in Building 10, near the Wedge, every day from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. until October 7, and is mandatory for all active duty and civilian staff working directly with patients as defined by NAT-NAVMEDECINST 6200.2. For more information, call Immunizations at 301-295-5798.

'Humor Tour' Stops at Walter Reed

By Sarah Fortney
Journal staff writer

The Navy Medicine Operational Stress Control's (OSC) "Humor Tour" not only brought smiles to patients and staff at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) on Friday, but also helped raise awareness about the importance of mitigating stress.

As part of the OSC's efforts to protect service members from operational stress, and to help them become more psychologically resilient, the tour included four nationally renowned cartoonists from the National Cartoonist Society along with the director of the Humor Project, Dr. Joel Goodman. Volunteering their time, the group showed their appreciation for service members and care givers.

Touched by the wounded warriors and providers he has met along the way, Goodman said, "I really do believe in the Navy Operational Stress Control Program. I'm really delighted to be a part of this tour, to really say thank you, and to really give the gift of humor."

Goodman explained the origin of his Humor Project was not so funny. After his father suffered an aneurism, humor helped lighten the stress and got his family through the difficult situation. He then started the project to help encourage others to take humor seriously and to use it in everyday situations to alleviate stress. Over the years, he has presented at the Navy and Marine Corps Combat and Operational Stress Control Conference, written eight books and received the International Lifetime of Laughter Achievement Award. He is also one of just two professional speakers in the world to have presented on all seven continents and in all 50 states.

During his presentation, "Humor, Hope and Healing," in the Laurel Clark Memorial Auditorium, Goodman told staff humor can be used in many ways to help alleviate tension in stressful situations.

"Humor is a great way of bringing us into the here and now ... Humor's a wonderful gift we can give ourselves. Life

has a way of giving us pop quizzes when we least want them, or need them, or expect them," he said. "Certainly some of your patients may have been not only on the receiving end of the pop quiz, but a major test, and how do we take the test that life tosses in our path?"

The answer - humor, he said. The next time stress becomes overwhelming, he encouraged staff to "call a mental time out, hold up a mirror to your reality, and come up with a playful definition of your job that mirrors reality. Humor is really an attitude. It's a perspective. It's a way of dancing with life."

He went on to offer tips for care providers to help them introduce humor, in a tasteful way and when the timing is right. For one, care givers can create "humor carts" filled with humor "stimuli," cartoons or props. Host an annual, or monthly, "staff laugh," to help bring joy into the workplace. He also suggested having patients create a humor scrapbook, flipping through magazines to find funny images or phrases.

It's important to be serious about humor, he said, "for the health of it." Studies have indicated laughter can help reduce stress hormones and activate the immune system. The power of laughter and creativity can go a long way, he added, because a smile is the shortest distance between two people.

"Humor is really an attitude. It's a perspective. It's a way of dancing with life, [and] a way of rolling with punches that life inevitably throws us, or our patients," he said. "Humor can help us stay young at heart and spirit."

During the tour, the cartoonists - Jeff Bacon, Paul Fell, Bruce Higdon, and Mason Mastroianni - sketched caricatures and cartoons for patients, their families and staff on the wards and in Tranquility Hall. The artists also expressed their satisfaction in bringing laughter to troops and providers.

Bacon, who joined the Navy in 1979 and still serves on active duty, began drawing for the Navy Time's cartoon, "Broadside," in 1986. Having toured the globe, he has had the opportunity to cross paths with several troops on more than one occasion, and is always impressed to see the progress of a

wounded warrior. He enjoys seeing them succeed, and bringing smiles to their faces. He's also amazed at the amount of support wounded warriors receive, which he believes is especially helpful in their transition.

"The support structure they have is unbelievable," said Bacon. He added that those in uniform have sacrificed for others, and he appreciates the chance to help bring them a sense of home, bring them humor and help them deal with operational stress. "We admire them more than they admire us. What we want is to tell them we appreciate their service."

Admiring his caricature, Army Specialist Sergio Cano, said, "I think it's awesome. I like it."

In June, Cano was injured in Afghanistan. He said he was grateful for the cartoonists' support, adding that it's one thing for others to say "thank you," but coming in, taking their time to sit and talk, shows their appreciation. He said, "It's always good to see fresh faces around here. I think it's nice to see the support."

Bruce Higdon, who retired from the Army in 1993 and has drawn for Army Times, and the Stars and Stripes, said he could relate to the service members. He has been touring the globe, sketching for service members for about six years.

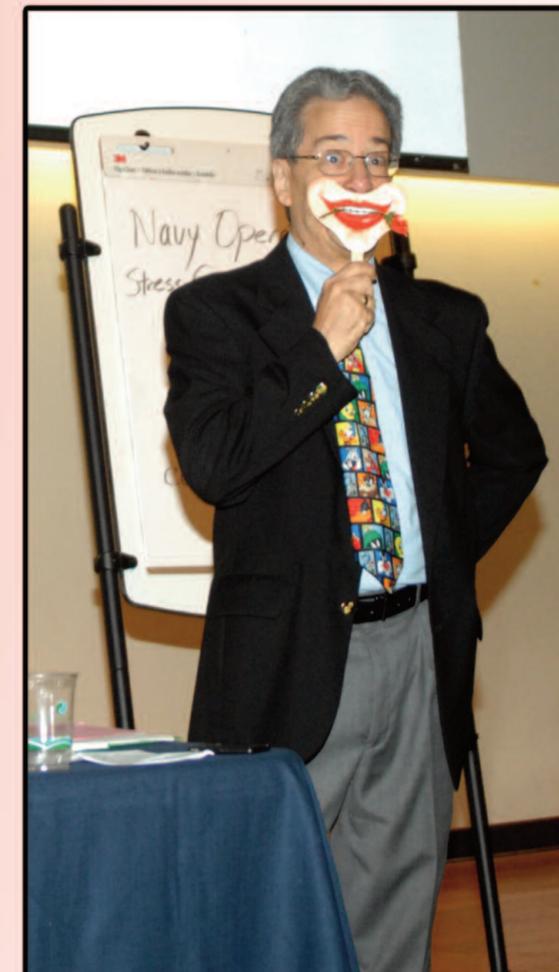
"I've been in places that are uncomfortable, places that are lonely and situations that are difficult, and I remember those times when people took time out of their life to come make me laugh, or say thank you, and so I [want to] pay it back," said Higdon. "I understand how I felt when I was away from home, and when I was in the hospital. It's good to see a friendly face."

For more information about the OSC program and the Humor Tour, visit <http://navynavstress.com>. For more information about the humor project, visit www.humorproject.com. Also, if you would like a copy of Mr. Goodman's book, "Affirmations," please stop by the Office of Media Relations in Building 1 on the 11th floor.



(photo by Sharon Renee Taylor)

Cartoonist Bruce Higdon sketches a caricature for 1st Lt. James Dudley.



(photo by Sarah Fortney)

Dr. Joel Goodman encouraged staff to use humor to help cope with stress.



(photo by Sharon Renee Taylor)

Mason Mastroianni, one of the four cartoonists on the Humor Tour, sketches a cartoon for a patient.



(photo by Sharon Renee Taylor)

Paul Fell, far left, sketches a caricature for Sgt. 1st Class James Jones, a platoon sergeant with the WTB, while Jeff Bacon, center, sketches a cartoon for another staff member.



(photo by Sarah Fortney)

During a presentation at WRNMMC on Friday, Dr. Joel Goodman, founder of the Humor Project, asked staff to do an exercise, demonstrating humor can help tackle stress.

Occupational Therapists Collaborate on Functional Challenges of TBI



(photo by Sarah Fortney)

Dr. Leonard Matheson offers a presentation during a conference, "Occupational Implications of Combat-Exposed mTBI: Evaluation and Treatment of Executive Dysfunction," at the National Intrepid of Excellence (NICoE) on Tuesday. The conference, hosted Tuesday and Wednesday by The Directorate of Surgical Services Occupational Therapy department, sought to learn ways to address the functional deficits presented by mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI). In attendance were more than 70 occupational therapists, of various disciplines, from across the country. The conference also brought subject matter experts from Washington University School of Medicine's Program in occupational therapy together with active duty and civilian TBI care providers, and addressed the needs of wounded warriors.




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VEHICLES

Continued from 1

be able to serve virtually every physical disability, allowing our continuing effort to offer great services to our wounded warriors."

"More than \$130,000 has been donated and put into these two vehicles to be outfitted for adaptive use," said Lt. j.g. Andrew Neville, a division officer for Emergency Management. "The therapy and training offered with the two vehicles is breathtaking. It feels great to help facilitate the operation of this program. Our wounded warriors have given so much, so we will continue to support and help them."

The vehicles were purchased with donations from the American Red Cross, BAE Systems, Semper Fi Fund and Ride-Away Corporation.

"This new equipment will make a big difference in the lives of those who are recovering," said Sherri Brown, senior vice president, Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces. "I want to thank both BAE Systems and Ride-Away Corporation for their generous contributions. Wonderful gifts like these allow us to provide timely support where it's needed most."

"BAE Systems is proud to support an organization that works hand-in-hand with military hospitals and wounded warrior units, providing the necessary assistance that is vital to the comfort and recovery of these heroes," said Maj. General Julian Burns, USA, Retired, also a military advisor for the BAE Systems Land & Armaments sector.

WRNMMC Commander Rear Adm. Matthew Nathan thanked the donors during Tuesday's ceremony in the Occupational Therapy clinic. He then led a group of wounded warriors and staff outside where the vehicles were parked, presented the keys to Cpl. Joshua Kerns and Sgt. Maj. Ray Mackey, and said to the wounded warriors, "Gentlemen, start your engines!"

Phipps added that it's important for wounded warriors to return to independence in driving ability, and they can do so by getting behind the wheel and actually driving.

"It makes a big difference in their personal lives," she said. "They can travel to therapy by themselves, shop or any other activity without assistance. Self confidence is crucial to their success. There is no rush. We will go at the speed that is needed to get them back to their old selves. With the proper knowledge and assistance, they can be certified to drive again."

Those who think the program is one-dimensional are in for a surprise.

"Rehab is not all we do," she said. "We also help the patients with understanding their benefits on how to get vehicle modifications and adaptations if necessary. After a clinical evaluation of their abilities, we conduct a behind the wheel assessment in a vehicle to determine what adaptive equipment is needed. We look at different adaptive equipment such as hand controls, left foot accelerators and wheelchair ramps."

Veterans Affairs provides Automobile and Special Adaptive Equipment Grants for service members or veterans who have certain disabilities, such as the loss of a hand or foot, or certain vision loss, and as of Oct. 1, burn victims. This one-time grant - up to \$11,000 until the end of the month, and up to \$18,900 beginning Oct. 1. - is paid directly to the seller of the vehicle. Other funds are then available to pay for optional equipment from the manufacturer, to include power steering and windows, push-button controls and modifications that will enable the injured service member to drive independently.

"No matter how long it takes, we will help them every step of the way," Phipps said.

For more information on the driver program and driving benefits, contact the occupational therapy department at 301-295-8383.

A Success: Families Settle in at New WRNMMC

By Sharon Renee Taylor
Journal staff writer

On Aug. 24, facing his fourteenth surgery at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC), Sgt. Thomas Shepard's biggest concern wasn't his health — it was the well-being of his family.

The following day, Aug. 25, Shepard's mother Mary Ann, father Ron, wife Brandy and three-year-old daughter Jade were scheduled to move from a hotel in Silver Spring where the family stayed for the last month, to the Navy Lodge at Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB).

"At first, [my concern] was making sure my family was going to get moved over," he said.

More than a month earlier, Brandy had rushed from their Fort Drum, N. Y., home and her in-laws soon followed from Weatherford, Okla., to help care for the couple's toddler and spend time at Sgt. Shepard's bedside. A call from Army Capt. Steve Scuba, a nurse case manager with the Warrior Transition Brigade (WTB) assured Brandy the family would receive help for the move to Bethesda. Scuba would help the rest of the family move to Bethesda while Brandy remained at the hospital to provide her husband support after his surgery.

"We definitely would've had a hard time with this," MaryAnn Shepard said. "This is a blessing."

Scuba added that a social worker alerted him of the family's need, a part of the Army's multi-disciplinary, patient-centered approach to support wounded, ill and injured Soldiers in the recovery process.

Now, two weeks later after moving into their Navy Lodge accommodations, Ron Shepard said it's more convenient being on post to support his son, who continues to recover as an inpatient.

"We can walk to the hospital and back. It's a nice facility. I can walk anywhere in about 10 minutes," he said. "We're really happy with the services."

Integration plan includes families

"The families are of critical importance," said Terry L. Lewis, who began working as BRAC Integration Director for the WTB more than two years ago and was involved in the early planning stages of transitioning outpatients from WRAMC to Bethesda. "We look at the family and the warrior as a family unit or a system. We view them as a single unit," Lewis said. "The family is a part of their transition, their care and their recovery — they are of paramount importance."

The transition plan was developed to always incorporate families, said Lt. Col. Larry Guenther, executive officer for the WTB at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC), at Bethesda. Guenther said during the process, warriors and their families had an opportunity to ask questions at a series of town halls with WTB senior leadership, one-on-one meetings with



(photo by Sharon Renee Taylor)

Sgt. Thomas Shepard spends time with his three-year-old daughter Jade and wife Brandy at Walter Reed Army Medical Center shortly before the family moved to their new accommodations at the Navy Lodge in Bethesda, Md., on Aug. 25.

company commanders and daily interaction with squad leaders.

"I was involved in my part of the move from the beginning to make sure we had the families concerns in focus and to assure that the move would be a positive one for all," said Linda Rasnake, Family Readiness Support Assistant for the WTB at WRNMMC and Fort Belvoir Community Hospital.

A move on steroids

Guenther called the massive, two-stage move of 164 WRAMC outpatients, 17 inpatients and their families to Bethesda a "PCS [Permanent Change of Station] move on steroids," involving staffers at both hospitals, WTB cadre, moving professionals and volunteers.

The first move packed up the 164 outpatients and their 69 families on Aug. 19, and moved them to WRNMMC over the next two days after each individual warrior and their family met with a transportation counselor to determine how much they had to move and paperwork to be completed. Professional movers were available to help them pack and unpack, coach buses transported families to check in to their new lodging and shuttles took them back to retrieve their personal vehicles at WRAMC. "That took a lot of pressure off the families," Guenther said.

Rasnake said the Yellow Ribbon Fund, Operation Homefront, USO and Red Cross worked together to provide baskets filled with fruit and snacks as well as a cart filled with laundry soap, kitchen and cleaning supplies welcomed families to their new accommodations. "It was wonderful," Rasnake said. "The warriors and families were so excited to see that they were not leaving what they have known to be home [at] WRAMC, but that they are coming to a new home."

Throughout the process, WTB cadre assisted seven families, including the Shepards, who chose to move to Bethesda. Guenther reported a total of 121 warriors who lived off-base prior to the immense move from WRAMC and

were not involved in the change of accommodations. Marines, Sailors and Soldiers combined forces for the seamless transition from WRAMC to Bethesda. Several Navy-based groups housed in WRNMMC's Building 62 also assisted in the move under the direction of the Warrior Family Coordination Cell.

"This was definitely a joint effort," Lewis added. He credits the integration of the WTB, Naval Support Activity

Bethesda, Deputy Commander for Integration (WRAMC), National Naval Medical Center and the Joint Task Force CapMed. "These organizations who assisted in the transition process were fully aware this tremendously difficult move was not business as usual. All involved consistently remained sensitive to the needs of the wounded warriors and their family members."

Smooth move

First Lt. James Dudley, an infantry officer injured in Afghanistan moved Aug. 20 from the Mologne House at Walter Reed with his wife Catelyn and 12-week-old son Jameson to new accommodations in Building 62 at Bethesda, which houses outpatient wounded warriors and their non-medical attendants.

"That's as best a military action as I've seen executed. [It was] almost flawless," Dudley said. "The move was easy — as good as a move for a family."

Nearly a month later, Catelyn maintains the move to Bethesda has been a good one for her family. She said their new accommodations in Building 62 allow her husband to be more independent, and she has enjoyed the convenience of all the services and resources available in the same building they live in. She found the hospital easy to navigate and staffers welcoming to their entire family.

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