

Public Affairs Office
113 Comanche Road
Ft. Meade, SD 57741
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Jill Broecher, Public Affairs Officer
Jill.Broecher@va.gov
605.720-7451 (Daytime)
605.490.5074 (Cell)

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 2, 2013

VA BHHCS Celebrates Volunteers

April 21 through 27 was National Volunteer Week and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Black Hills Health Care System (BHHCS) used the opportunity to thank more than 300 volunteers who gave back to Veterans every day at VA medical facilities within the system.

VA BHHCS recognized these volunteers for the more than 40,000 hours they contributed toward caring for Veterans, driving, directing, sitting, serving, comforting and counseling on a regular basis.

“There are as many reasons as there are volunteers as to why they give so selflessly of their time,” Lead Voluntary Service Officer Cheryl Rieniets said. “Many enter our doors seeking experience for a resume, something to do after retirement, a way to keep up with fellow Veterans, or simply wanting to say ‘thank you’ to a defender of their freedom. However, most stay because giving their time and service to these former service members gives them a purpose, opens a passion, and introduces them to the person they have always wanted to be.”

Volunteers at VA BHHCS perform many remarkable functions. For instance, the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) volunteer van drivers transport an average of 800 Veterans to and from VA appointments each month, and drive an average of 35,000 miles each month. In 2012, they donated four vans to VA BHHCS valued at \$104,160.

VA BHHCS hosted several luncheons during National Volunteer Week to recognize volunteers. Community members have the chance to show their appreciation to Veterans all year by volunteering their time or donating to VA medical facilities. No medical experience is necessary and volunteers are encouraged to share ideas how they would like to give back using their unique skills. To find opportunities, contact Cheryl Rieniets at 347-7206 or Scott Schumacher at 745-2865.

###