



VA Menlo Park Welcome Center

VA Menlo Park Division
795 Willow Road
Menlo Park, CA 94025

October 10, 2014

It is with great enthusiasm and pride that I share with you our various programs and community partnerships that we have cultivated here within the beautiful Welcome Center.

Since June 2013, the Welcome Center has hosted a diverse collection of events in each of the six rooms for the benefits of the Veterans.

There has been high interest to host Veteran programs, commemorative ceremonies, meetings, and special events at the Welcome Center. Visitors often comment on the peaceful and positive energy they experience when they enter the building.

Recreation Therapy Service has been privileged to embark on a wonderful new journey embracing the opportunities that this building has provided to our Nation's Veterans!

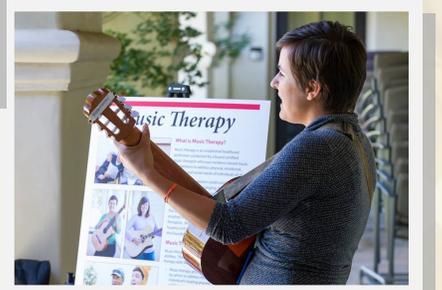
We are honored and committed to better serving those who have served.

I hope you'll enjoy the information and pictures throughout this newsletter that highlight some of the venues provided.

Caroline Wyman

Chief of Recreation Therapy
Service

Welcome Center Celebrates



1 Year Anniversary

Hours of Operation:

Monday—Thursday, 8:00 am—4:30 pm

Friday, 8:00 am—3:30 pm

Evenings, weekends and holiday schedules as scheduled.



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

SPOTLIGHT



*An Afternoon of
Music and Laughter
Friday, September 26th*

Pictured L to R: Michael Pritchard, Alisa Krinsky, RT Supervisor, Jeff Applebaum, and Tom Bird, founder of Walking Point Foundation.

For the second time this year, the Welcome Center hosted a comedy show showcasing the comedic talents of Michael Pritchard and Jeff Applebaum.

During this set, the comedians kept our Veterans and staff laughing, a perfect way to spend a Friday afternoon at the VA. One of the Veterans from WBRC remembered his previous visit this year and attended the event for a second time. One of the comics motivated the Veterans to continue to their best in their programs. "I am here to help serve you and to motivate you guys in your therapy."

The women of the TRP programs were also in attendance. It was an excellent opportunity to support each other thru their first comedy show experience. "They were able to take a risk and trust in each other, which for them, was a big deal."

The comedy shows are sponsored by the Walking Point Foundation. Walking Point Foundation (WPF) is a SF Bay Area 501C-3 not-for-profit organization that mentors injured Veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars through the arts to help them express themselves, connect with others and heal from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI). WPF provides professionals in the disciplines of theater, comedy, the visual arts, filmmaking, and writing—who are Veterans of their professions—to mentor the new Veterans as they master a new discipline. By helping individual Veterans to overcome the feelings of isolation after they return from combat, they can more easily adjust to civilian living.

COMMUNITY ROOM



Jasmina Bojic was born and raised in the former Yugoslavia. She attended law school in that country and soon thereafter became a well-known radio and television reporter.

At Stanford, Jasmina teaches documentary filmmaking with a focus on human rights issues. To that end, ten years ago, in 1997, she created the United Nations Association Film Festival. This festival is an all volunteer effort by Jasmina, its founder, executive director and the student members of the Stanford Film Society.

The Welcome Center is proud to host a series of documentaries that have been a part of the *United Nations Association Film Festival*.

The documentaries and the discussions have been able to bring Veterans from the different programs together to create a better sense of community on the Menlo Park Campus.

Documentaries Shown :

- ◇ *The Barber of Birmingham: Foot Soldier of the Civil Rights Movement*
(2012 nominee for Oscar Documentary Short)
- ◇ *The March of The Bonus Army*
- ◇ *New American Soldier Ghana/Mexico/Peru/ USA*



Veterans shared, "I can't believe they do this here?," "That documentary moved me to tears," and "That was very healing for me" after viewing some of the remarkable footage.

ART THERAPY

News in our VA artist community.

Our Veteran artist Gail Matthews has been selected as 2014 Therapeutic Arts Scholarship (TAS) winner! She is only one of three winners in the nation to receive an invitation to attend the upcoming *National Veterans Creative Arts Festival* in Milwaukee at the end of October!

Watercolorist Michael Rogan, who was selected to go next level in the competition, placed 2nd nationally for his work!!! Many of you may know Michael as he volunteers his time at the Creative Arts Workshop and is a leader in our Veteran artist community.



The 5th Annual Art Therapy Show Visions of Connection and Healing

Thursday, October 16th & Friday, October 17th

The 5th annual art therapy Visions of Connection and Healing exhibit was highly attended this year and included 45 Veterans artists and over 125 art submissions. Veterans in the Art Therapy groups for PTSD, Anger & PTSD, and for Women courageously shared works made in treatment with accompanying statements that gave voice to their experience and how art therapy has supported them in coping with symptoms, developing skills, and in relating to others.



Join us every Thursday from 3-5pm for Open Art Studio.

Unleash your creativity!

MUSIC THERAPY

“Beth Hardy, MT-BC, and I wanted to share with you the rewarding success that we have experienced so far in providing several Veterans the opportunity to take free guitar lessons and to attend open studios each week.

Thus far, four Veterans have earned their very own guitars (generously donated by Gryphon Stringed Instruments), after having attended the required number of lessons and practice times that Beth and I determined would show enough dedication to earning an instrument.

Each of them was extremely excited about having his own guitar, and about picking out which one he wanted to choose from our nice selection! Both the lessons and the open studios have been filled with smiles, which is a great feeling for us.

Also want to give a big shout-out to Eric Chin, who has been great about motivating Veterans from HVRP to take advantage of these opportunities! So far, all of our guitar-earners have been from his program! “

Kristin Grillo, MT-BC



Testimonials



“Thank you for the inspiring, motivating guitar lessons with Professor Larry at the VA. Music is a wonderful therapy. I occupy myself by playing my guitar in an effective way to produce a calm mental state of tranquility. There is still a glimmer of hope. Your room to play in is awesome. Thank you again.”

- Valente V. Carrasco

“I can’t thank everyone enough for the time and effort everyone has put into Guitars for Vets. In my time of despair, it was nice to have a little fun and get away from the program I’m in and learn to play the guitar.

I also was able to get a free guitar and I would like to thank Gryphon Stringed Instruments who donated the guitars to us vets; we so appreciate it! Bless you!!”

- Rick Cordiero



“I was very depressed and angry before I started the Guitars for Vets program. These people have made my stay at the Homeless Veterans Rehabilitation Program (HVRP) a joy. I have also received a free guitar which I play daily. I don’t think there is anything more or less that these people could possibly do. I will never forget all the time, love, and kindness these people have shown me. Long live rock!”

- Lorne “Lucky” McKendry

For more information about Heroes' Voices, visit

www.heroesvoices.org.

CANINE CORNER

Happy Birthday Cavit!



“We are so thankful to have you in our pack. You have impacted the lives of hundreds of recovering Warriors in your first year!”

Warrior Canine Corner open house every Wednesday from 3pm-4pm



Pool Party anyone?



Meet Eugene, our newest Warrior Trainer Volunteer and Marine Corps Veteran.



“Flash Back photo from our One year Warrior Canine Connection Anniversary.

Don't miss our 2nd Warrior Canine Connection Anniversary!

Save the date November 8th!





Check out the article written in TIME magazine “That Dog Saved My Life”
October 16, 2014



“Now I’m taking what I’ve learned and showing veterans how to train service dogs for physically disabled veterans who truly need them—teaching them how to turn lights on and off, retrieve dropped keys or cell phones, and open doors.”

-as told to *Olivia B. Waxman*

To continue reading about “That Dog Saved My Life” please visit

<http://time.com/3490187/veterans-service-dogs/#3462111/veterans-the-homecoming-project/>

Meet Ovidio!



Our newest five month
Paws for Purple Hearts
Puppy



Paws for Purple Hearts open house every Monday from 10:30-11:30 and Friday from 2pm-3pm

FITNESS AND WELLNESS

“Your class has been so helpful to me during my treatment. Not just the physician aspect, but allowing myself to become more comfortable with a male instructor. Thank you for helping me to become a healthier person inside and out”.

- Veteran



Cross Fit Classes are open to all Veterans with a self-directed fitness card.

Tuesdays

7:30am-8:30am Men’s group

8:30am-9:30am Women’s only

Thursdays

7:30am-8:30am Women’s Only

8:30am-9:30am Men’s group



“Mike is the owner of Advance(d) Sport Performance and Fitness. His Crossfit style classes at the VA are guaranteed to burn fat, build tone, muscle and increase overall body strength and control. His workouts focus on paced circuit training combined with metabolic conditioning adapted to your current fitness level.

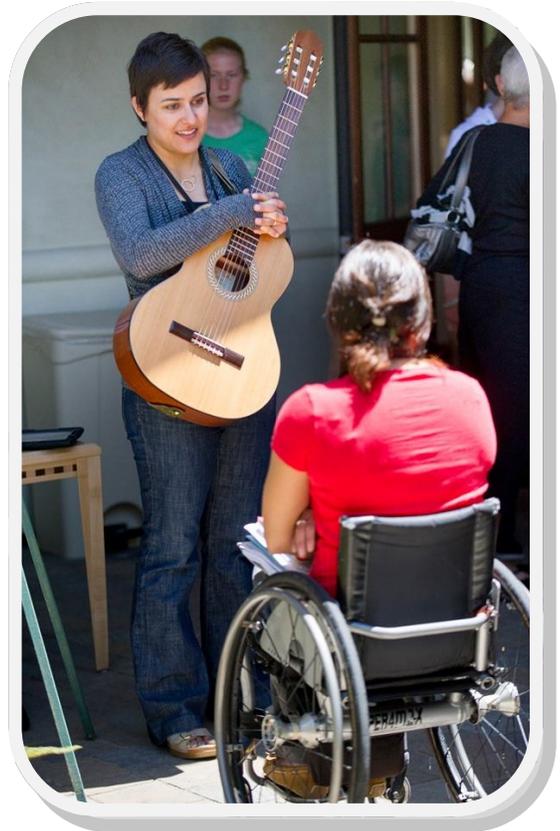
Mike received his B.A. from U.C. Davis with a double major in Psychology and Communications. He received 1st team Associated Press All American Middle Linebacker at U.C. Davis and was then signed on with the Seattle Seahawks for their first mini camp. He also did private workouts with the 49ers and San Jose Sabercats.

Mike actively competes in Crossfit competitions advancing to the Northern California Regionals the past two years. “

WELCOME CENTER

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:30-8:30a Work out of the day WOD Consult based	7:30-8:30a Cross Fit- Men's group	10:15-11:15 Mind and Body Boot Camp- IMPACT	7:30-8:30a Cross Fit-Women only	7:30-8:30a Work out of the day WOD Consult based
10:30 - 11:30a Canine Corner Open House- PPH	8:30-9:30a Cross fit-Women only	11-12:30 Wrap Class	8:30-9:30a Cross fit- Men's group	10:30-11:30am Nutrition & Social Skills- MHICM & VRC
12-1p Sculpt and Tone-Employee	11-12p 5 Rhythm dance-FOR	11:00-1:30p NEW(VRC)	10-11:30am MTRP	10:30-12:0am Creative Writing Group
1:30-3p Art Tx -PTSD	1-3pm Womens Fly-tying- PTSD	12-1:00p Sculpt & Tone-employee	10-12A.M Guitar Corps (1st & 3rd Thursday of every month)	12-1:30p Sculpt and Tone-employees
	3- 4:30 p Fly Tying- Every other Tuesday	1-2p Aftercare-FOR	1-2:30p Art Therapy- WPOEC	2-3pm Canine Corner Open House-PPH
	3-4pm Rhythm Dance- 1st step	1-2:30p Art Therapy-PCT	3-5pm Open Art Studio	
	4-5P Core Fitness- Consult based	2:30-4 Art Tx- Anger/PTSD	4-4:45p Core Fitness- Consult Based	Saturday
		3pm-4pm Canine Corner Open House-WCC		9-10a Core Fitness Every other week
		3:30-4:15p Strength & Conditioning-1st Step		10:30-12pm Heroes Voices
		4-5P Guitar Open Studio		
		4:15-5P Core Fitness- Consult Based		
		6-7P Active Mat Yoga-Referral only		

Welcome Center One Year Anniversary Event



Welcome Center Newsletter Team:

Questions or Comments?

If you have any questions or topics that you would like to read in a future Welcome Center newsletter, feel free to contact

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Jocelyn Reyes-Pagsolingan (650) 493-5000, ext. 66861