



THE VALIANT



VETERANS AFFAIRS LOGISTICAL INFORMATION AND NEWS TODAY

JULY 2004

VA REGIONAL OFFICE

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

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A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



July 4th, America's birthday, marks the anniversary of American independence, hard won by this country's citizen-soldiers.

The Declaration of Independence is a statement of belief about equality, justice, and the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This is what we celebrate today.

The Declaration of Independence also reveals the depth of the commitment of those who led us to liberty. Knowing full well that victory in the fight for independence would require unrelenting dedication, the framers of the Declaration of Independence included these words in the last line of this remarkable document.

“And for the support of this declaration, with the firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.”

That commitment has been sustained for more than two centuries by brave Americans who have fought and died to defend the ideals embodied in our Declaration of Independence. Today, dedicated young Americans in military uniform continue to serve and are willing to die for freedom's sake.

On behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs, I join you in our 228th celebration of America's birthday and thank you for demonstrating your love of America and respect for our veterans as members of a VA family dedicated to fulfilling our Nation's most noble mission, caring for our veterans.

ANTHONY J. PRINCIPI

THE VA VINE

"The VA Vine" is for you to share news of special events or celebrations that involve you or a family member! Examples are: weddings, graduations, births, awards, completing a class, participating in an art fair, craft show, or fun run. Send news about what's happening at work or home to a newsletter member by phone or e-mail. Let's hear your news!

WELCOME BACK !

Jon Cregar joined the Michigan National Guard immediately upon his release from active duty, in 1995. Since then, he has traveled to Germany, Norway and Russia with the guard. He also spent 2 weeks at the Olympic Games in Atlanta, GA in 1996. Following the crash of flight 800 in New York, he was on bomb search detail, and was interviewed on CNN Talk Back Live. In 2001, he spent 6 months at Detroit Metro Airport on a security detail following 9-11. He was called back to active duty in October 2003, to prepare for a mission to Egypt. He will be returning from Egypt in July 2004. We can't wait to have him home. Jon is a very patriotic American, and I am proud to be his Mom.

Sandra Cregar, VSC

The following article was also submitted earlier by Sandra Cregar:

What kind of man would do this?

Jack Tilley, a Sergeant Major of the Army, was with a group of people who recently were visiting wounded soldiers at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, DC. He saw a Special Forces soldier who had lost his right hand and suffered severe wounds of his face and side of his body. Sgt. Tilley wanted to honor him and show him respect without offending, but what can you say or do in such a situation that will encourage and uplift? How do you shake the right hand of a soldier who has none?

He decided to act as though the hand was not missing and gripped the soldier's wrist while speaking words of comfort and encouragement to him. However, there was another man in the group who knew exactly what to do.

This man reverently took the soldier's stump of a hand in both of his hands, bowed at the bedside, and prayed for him. When he finished the prayer, he stood up, bent over the soldier, kissed him on the head and told him that he loved him.

Sgt. Tilley was awed by the powerful expression of love for one of our wounded heroes he was witnessing! "What a beautiful Christ-like example!" he thought, moved to tears. What kind of a man would do such a thing?

It was the wounded man's Commander-in-Chief, George W. Bush, President of the United States. This eyewitness account was told by Sergeant Major Jack Tilley at a Soldiers Breakfast at Red Stone Arsenal, AL, and recorded by Chaplain James Henderson, who was stationed there. Source: American Diabetes Association

During this Fourth of July Holiday, please keep all our servicemen and women in your thoughts and in your prayers. If you have a loved one in the service and would like to recognize him or her, please send your information to any of the newsletter committee members.

Newsletter Contributors:

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SUMMER FUN

GUESS WHO???

by Daniele Poleni

What time did you wake up today? 2:30am-old age!

What's the last movie you saw? At the show, it was the latest Harry Potter movie.

People would be surprised to find out that... I am actually quiet.

Who had the most influence on your life last week? My oldest daughter.

What was the last thing you read? The South Beach Diet.

What is your favorite color? Purple

What's the most important thing in life? My family

Is the glass half empty or half full? Half full!

What's under your bed? God only knows!

If you were a superhero, what would your superpower be? I'd want Batman's intelligence, he's my favorite.

Do you floss every day? Yes.

How many brothers and sisters do you have? One brother and four sisters.

How often do you change your sheets? Once a week

What's the name of the person who gave you your first kiss? Ronnie

What is your favorite thing about your job? My co-workers.

How long have you worked at the VA? About 19 years.

Where were you born? Detroit

What is your favorite smell? Lavender.

What was your first car? A Chevy Spectrum

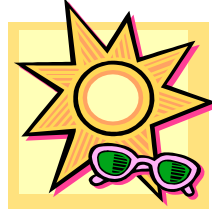
Boxers or briefs? Neither.

Can you guess who???

Answer's on the last page!

FUN STUFF

by Latessa



About growing older:

- Eventually you reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.
- The older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.
- Some people turn back their odometers. Not me, I want people to know why I look this way. I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved.
- When you are dissatisfied and would like to go back to youth, think of algebra.
- You know you are getting old when everything either dries up or leaks.
- I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.
- One of the many things no one tells you about aging is that it is such a nice change from being young.
- One must wait until evening to see how splendid the day has been.
- Being young is beautiful, but being old is comfortable.
- Long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today it's called golf.
- And finally, if you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you are old.

A man was passing a house where a sign was posted: "BEWARE OF THE CANARY!" The homeowner, outside watering the lawn, was asked by a passerby, "Why should anyone beware of a canary?" Without looking up, the homeowner replied, "This one whistles for the dog."

(The above items were submitted to the Macomb edition of Senior Living, June 2004 issue, by some of their readers.)

JULY 4TH ACTIVITIES

USA FLAG QUIZ

Let's see if you remember a little something from history class. :)

Q: What are the colors of the United States Flag?

A: Red, white and blue

Q: What do the colors represent?

A: Red stands for courage, white for truth and blue for justice

Q: How many stripes are on the United States Flag?

A: 13

Q: Why 13?

A: Each stripe represents one of the 13 original states

Q: How many stars are there on the flag?

A: There are 50 stars, each represents one of the present 50 states of the United States of America.

Q: What is the 4th of July?

A: Independence Day!

Q: Independence from whom?

A: Britain (England)

PATRIOTIC RECIPES

Show your allegiance to great taste! Adorn your 4th of July table with this decorative candy flag.

What you'll need:

- Large cookie sheet
- Aluminum foil
- Double-stick tape
- 1 bag DOVE® PROMISES® Milk Chocolate Miniatures
- 1 bag DOVE® PROMISES® Dark Chocolate Miniatures
- 1 bag 3 MUSKETEERS® Brand Miniatures

What to do:

Cover a large cookie sheet with aluminum foil. Cover the top of the cookie sheet with double-stick tape. Adhere red and blue DOVE® PROMISES® Milk and Dark Chocolate Miniatures and 3 MUSKETEERS® Brand Miniatures® in the design of the American flag.

Makes 1 flag tray.

USA FLAG DESSERT PIZZA

1 1/2 to 2 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 envelope (1/4 ounce or 2 1/4 tsp)
FLEISCHMANN'S RapidRise Yeast
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup water
1/4 cup butter or margarine
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Cream Cheese Topping (recipe below)
Granola
Blueberries, Sliced Strawberries
Miniature marshmallows

In a large bowl, combine 2/3 cup flour, sugar, undissolved yeast, and salt. Heat water and butter until very warm (120 to 130 F). Gradually add to flour mixture. Beat 2 minutes at medium speed with electric mixer, scraping bowl occasionally. Stir in vanilla and enough remaining flour to make a soft dough. Knead on lightly floured surface until smooth and elastic, about 6 to 8 minutes. Cover; let rest 10 minutes.

Roll dough to 12 x 10-inch rectangle; place on greased baking sheet. Prick surface of dough randomly with fork; let rest 10 minutes. Bake at 425 F for 12 to 15 minutes or until golden. Remove from sheet; cool on wire rack. When completely cooled, spread Cream Cheese Topping onto crust to within 1/2 inch of edge; sprinkle with granola. Arrange fruits and marshmallows over top to resemble the U.S. flag. Serve promptly after topping. Refrigerate leftovers.

Cream Cheese Topping: In a small bowl, combine 1 (3-ounce) package cream cheese, softened; 1/4 cup sour cream, 1/4 cup sugar, and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract. Stir until smooth.

Yield 1 (12 x 10-inch) pizza

Nutrition Information Serving size: 1/12: Calories: 100 Total fat: 11g Saturated fat: 6g Cholesterol 30mg Sodium: 190mg Carbohydrates: 34g Sugars: 17g Dietary fiber: 2g Protein: 4g Source: Fleischmann's Yeast, a division of Burns Philp Food, Inc.

Julie Tucker RVS

SAFETY PAGE

by Julie Tucker

July is Eye Injury Prevention Month!!

Accidental eye injury is one of the leading causes of visual impairment in the United States. About one million eye injuries occur each year in the United States. Ninety percent of injuries are preventable and at least fifty percent occur in the home. More than 2,000 eye injuries occur each year due to fireworks. Leave fireworks to the professionals, and attend local public fireworks displays. In addition to the proper safety eyewear, early detection and treatment of eye conditions and diseases are essential to maintaining good vision at every stage of life.

The American Academy of Ophthalmology, AAO, recommends children with a family history of childhood vision problems be screened for common childhood eye problems before the age of five. Most young adults have healthy vision but, if eye problems such as visual changes, pain, flashes of light, seeing spots, excessive tearing, and excessive dryness occur, they should see an eye doctor. Adults between the ages of 40 to 65 should have an eye exam every two to four years. Adults over the age of 65 should have an eye exam at least every one to two years.

Ultimately, the key to preventing eye injuries is to take a more proactive approach to sustaining healthy vision. Here are some important facts and safety tips:

- About 40,000 sports eye injuries occur each year, with many resulting in permanent vision loss. See an eye care professional for protective eye wear appropriate to your sport.
- Children have sustained serious eye injuries from air bags deploying in car accidents. Infants and children should always travel in the rear seat.
- Nylon line lawn trimmers, or weed whackers, are an increasingly frequent source of eye injury. One recent study labeled lawn trimmers as the fifth leading cause of penetrating ocular trauma. Before using, check for rocks and other debris, and wear your goggles. Also, keep bystanders away while you work. Flying debris and broken nylon fragments can injure their eyes as well.
- Keep a pair of goggles in your car's trunk. Battery acid, sparks and debris flying from damaged or improperly jump-started auto batteries can severely damage the eyes.

fluids, detergents and ammonia can burn the eye's delicate tissues. Always read the instructions, work in well-ventilated areas and wear your goggles.

- Glitter make-up has caused eye injuries. Use with caution, or not at all.
- Though rare, fishhook injuries can cause devastating damage to the eyes. Most of the victims are young men, make sure they are adequately supervised.
- Recoiling bungee cords have caused serious eye injuries, which commonly require medical and surgical treatments to manage.
- Ultraviolet light from the sun and UV light emitted from welding arcs and tanning beds can damage your eyes. Excessive exposure to sunlight reflected off sand, water or pavement can burn the eye's surface. Also, some studies suggest that UV light might contribute to age-related macular degeneration and cataracts.
- Over 8,500 fireworks-related injuries occur with more than 2,000 injuries each year. Almost one in 20 victims lose all useful vision or require removal of an injured eye. An estimated 10 percent of children injured by fireworks suffer permanent damage, such as a loss of an eye, finger or hand.

Prevention is the first and most important step in avoiding serious eye injuries. Be sure you and your family are protected.

References: American Academy of Ophthalmology, The National Eye Institute

RESOURCES FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY:
You can print a home safety check sheet from the Prevent Blindness website listed below:

<http://www.preventblindness.org/safety/homecheck.htm>

You can obtain a very informative eye brochure by going to the following website

<http://www.vahealth.org/diabetes/EYECARE.pdf>

Who's On Second?

L-carnitine is in second place for heart health according to Lynn Hinderliter, CN, LDN. Who's on first? Well, that would be last month's supplement, coenzyme Q10. So what is L-carnitine? The prefix 'L' might make you think that it is an amino acid. Structurally, it is similar to amino acids but is more closely related to the B vitamins. It plays no role in protein structures and is considered a nonessential nutrient, in that, the body can produce it from other nutrients within the body. It is, however, highly essential in its actions. In the diet, it is found mostly in muscle meats, that's where the name comes from - the Latin root for meat is 'carnis' - as in carnivore and carnitine. It is rare for an actual clinical deficiency to exist, yet suboptimal levels can lead to conditions such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, liver disease and many others.

Earl Mindell's Vitamin Bible calls L-carnitine a potential life extender. He continues that its primary job is to provide heart and skeletal muscles with energy. It also plays an important role in converting stored body fat into energy, therefore, it is used by athletes to enable longer periods of intense workouts. Mindell cautions to stick to only the L form of carnitine, not D-carnitine, as D-carnitine can be toxic. He also advises to check with your physician before using it if you have a heart condition.

Michael T. Murray, N.D. explains that carnitine is essential in the transport of fatty acids into the mitochondria (energy producing units) of the cells, it then stimulates the breakdown of these fatty acids so they can be used as energy. A deficiency in carnitine would result in a reduced concentration of fatty acids in the mitochondria and subsequent reduced energy production. You with me? For clarity, Dr. Murray likens a deficiency of carnitine in the heart to trying to run a car without a fuel pump. There may be plenty of gas in the tank, but there is no way to get the fuel to the engine.

Fatty acids (fats) supply the fuel and carnitine is the fuel pump (makes the fuel usable). The normal heart stores more carnitine than it needs (from meat and dairy consumption) but if the heart does not have a good supply of oxygen (this is how COQ10 and carnitine work together synergistically, COQ10 supplies oxygen to the mitochondria), carnitine levels quickly decrease. This leads to decreased energy production and an increased risk for angina, heart disease, and other maladies.

Robert Crayhon MS, CN (I've seen this guy several times in lecture and he's a trip, passionate, brilliant, and very funny - no snoozers in his seminars) states in his book "The Carnitine Miracle" that almost one third of all deaths related to heart disease are due to arrhythmias. Carnitine is very valuable for the control of arrhythmias, along with fish oils, taurine, and magnesium. This combination he states, has eliminated every case of arrhythmia he's seen in his practice.

There is also another form of carnitine called acetyl L-carnitine which is worth looking into. It is more expensive, yet better assimilated, and has been shown to pass the blood/brain barrier more efficiently. When energy is expended and fat is burned, lactic acid can build up, which can have repercussions on brain function. Acetyl L-carnitine is very effective at addressing this because of its efficient ability to pass the blood/brain barrier. This is quite exciting as lactic acid buildup in the brain is being studied as a causative factor in Alzheimer's disease. Acetyl L-carnitine also has other benefits for the brain, vision, and mood.

In conclusion, research carnitine for yourself and discuss it with your healthcare provider if you like what you read. Be proactive in your healthcare, and as always, be well!

By Latessa, RVSR

Let's Talk About Pets

You may recall I wrote about my cats last month. This month, Charles Moore was kind enough to share a couple memorable stories about his dogs. Charles says he had quite a few dogs when he was a child but there are two dogs with a special place in his heart and mind for two very different reasons.

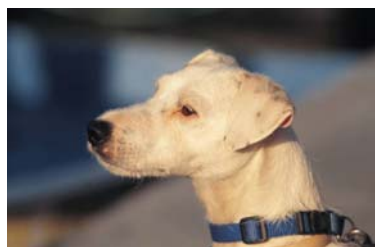


Charles had pit bulls as a child and shared a little background with me about them that I did not know. A Pit Bull is the result of breeding a Staffordshire Terrier with a Bull Dog. The Pit Bull gets its "game" from the terrier side.

The terrier is a hunter and very intelligent. Bull Dogs are basically pretty docile but when provoked they do have the physical strength to fight back. The combination of the two results in a strong, smart, feisty – Pit Bull Terrier.

Gangster's claim to fame was eating the bark off of a tree on command. Gangster is a brindle pit bull. Charles says people loved to watch Gangster wait for the command to "whatever" and off he would go tearing up the tree until he was told to stop. He destroyed whatever he could. Some adjectives that Charles uses to describe Gangster are: loco, unruly, temperamental, fierce. He eventually was sold by Charles' father due to safety concerns for the family as this particular animal could not be trusted. Gangster's pet trick does create a picture in one's mind though when you think about a dog eating the bark off a tree.

Daisy was Charles' heart. She was a fawn pit bull that belonged to him, personally.



She was the total opposite of Gangster. She was trained, loving, affectionate, protective, and very intelligent. While most of the dogs that his family had while he was growing up were outside dogs, Daisy, was an inside dog that loved to stay in Charles' bed to watch over and protect him.

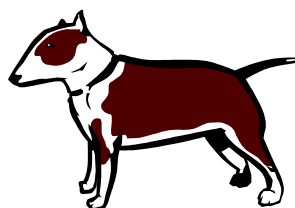
Charles says that she was so loyal to him that his mother had to put Daisy outside in order to "whip" (Charles word) him because the dog would not allow his parents to "discipline" (my word) him when she was around. As smart as Daisy was she ended up drinking water out of a pail that had chemicals in it for cleaning. That was the unfortunate premature end of Daisy's life.

Do you have any pet stories you would like to share? *Please let me know.* I know there are some people in the regional office that have some great pet stories to tell so... "Let's talk about pets!" and give me a call-3604. It only takes about 10 minutes to talk. I will do the writing but I need your input for the stories.

We welcome pictures too! It does not have to be about pets you currently have. It could be a story about a pet you had as a kid or a friend's animal that had or has a special place in your heart, or has an interesting story.

Give me a call at (313) 471-3604 or E-mail me at dirppass@vba.va.gov. Let's talk about pets.

-- Penny Passenger



"Dogs are not our whole lives, but they make our lives whole." Roger Carras

NBA Championship - The Lakers will beat the Pistons in 5 or 6 Games!

Nobody can beat the Lakers. Over the past 5 years they built a pretty impressive dynasty. I believe they had about 4 championships in the past 5 years. They would coast through the regular season, who cares what place they were in, it didn't matter. Once the playoffs started, they simply blew teams away. They did get tripped up last year by San Antonio, but that was a fluke, bad officiating, they protected Tim Duncan. They will not let that happen again.

The Lakers had one of the best starting lineups ever. Four players who would not only make it into the Hall of Fame, but players who gifts and talents made them close to being the best at their position ever. All of the national sportswriters, newspapers, television sports programs and radio talk shows told us that not only were the Lakers the best team, but any one of the top 4 or 5 teams in the West would win the NBA championship. The best 8 teams in order were the Lakers, Spurs, Timberwolves, Kings, Mavericks (all Western Division Teams) Pacers, Pistons and Nets (Eastern Division Teams). Once the playoffs started I had to listen to everyone's opinion, but it didn't matter. I knew the Lakers were going to be in the Finals and that's what I told them. What were they thinking? The Lakers were going to represent the West.

Now don't get me wrong, the Lakers are NOT my favorite team, the Pistons are, but face it, we were in trouble. We fired our coach before the season started, why? The Indiana Pacers picked up our coach and ended up in first place. This was payback time. In the playoffs, you need a go-to-guy to score points against the high power Western Conference teams and the Pistons did not have one. This was the playoffs and the Pistons couldn't score a lot of points.

Remember last year and the New Jersey Nets? They swept us and now we had to go through them again and first place INDIANA!!!

Now I'm old school and you got to understand the playoffs. There is a conspiracy out there and you just have to find which one is going on in the playoffs. Usually it's with the referees. The referees will protect the All Star players, those are the rules. They do not like physical play, especially from newer playoff teams like the Pistons. They protected Bird, Magic and Michael, so you have to expect them to do the same thing. The Pistons did not have any All Stars, so they will have to pay their dues a few years before we get our respect. Like they say in sports: "IT IS WHAT IT IS".

You all know the story and as far as the Pistons are concerned, they all lived happier ever after. The End. I'm still somewhat stunned. Luckily, I taped most of the games because I still don't quite understand it. The Lakers were supposed to win, the Lakers were the better team. They kept telling me all year and I believed them, but I think I was brainwashed. I feel cheated, because I didn't have a lot of faith in the Pistons. What happened???

--A backdoor Piston Fan.

For more on the Pistons...see our VA Voice page...



THANK YOU'S AND MORE....

by Penny Passenger

Donna Cooper, Customer Service Director at the Employment Service Agency for the State of Michigan, Department of Labor & Economic Growth, sent a letter to **Mr. John Scram** thanking him for a presentation on May 7 in Traverse City. The letter reads:

“On behalf of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, Employment Service Agency, I want to thank you for your presentation at the first annual Russell A. Jones Veterans’ Training Meeting on May 7 in Traverse City. With your help, this meeting was the most successful ever! The conference provided an excellent opportunity for you to share your knowledge and experience on new ways to prepare and improve the workforce of today and tomorrow. I hope you enjoyed participating in our training. Your willingness to share your time and information is very much appreciated. Thank you again.”

Six Detroit VARO employees received special recognition from the Veterans of Foreign Wars State Convention in Dearborn on Friday, June 25, 2004. The following six employees were singled out by the VFW:

**Ed West Nancy Delcimmuto Ron D’Aoust
Gina Rowe Larry Gibson Joyce McGhee**

Nancy Delcimmuto received a thank you letter on behalf of **Julia McLeod** and **Harold Ingram** for their participation in a Town Hall meeting from Congressman Sander Levin. The letter reads:

“Thank you very much for your help with my recent Veterans Legislative Town Hall Meeting & Services Fair. I very much appreciated the time and effort you put into preparing materials and answering questions for my constituents who attended the meeting. The event was a success, and it would not have been possible without your help and that of the other organizations that provided information for the Services Fair. Progress on legislative issues is often slow and difficult, which makes it all the more important to help veterans get the help they need

from currently available resources whenever possible. Many of those who attended the event were able to get the answers to pressing questions or learn about resources they needed but did not know existed. I hope I can call on you for help with similar events in the future. Thank you again for your help. I look forward to continuing to work with you. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my office if we can be of assistance in the important work you do in our community.”



Speaking of thank you's...here's something to think about...
submitted by
Judy Bilicki:

I am thankful for...

- The mess to clean up after a party because it means I have been surrounded by friends.
- The taxes I pay because it means I am employed.
- A lawn that needs mowing, windows that need washing, and gutters that need cleaning because it means I have a home.
- My shadow who watches me work because it means I am out in the sunshine.
- The spot I find at the far end of the parking lot because it means I am capable of walking.
- All the complaining about our government because it means we have freedom of speech.
- My large heating bill because it means I am warm.
- The lady behind me in church who sings off-key because it means that I can hear.
- The alarm that goes off early in the morning because it means I am alive.
- The piles of laundry and ironing because it means my loved ones are nearby.
- Weariness and aching muscles at the end of the day because it means I have been productive.

Source: Unknown, taken from Wellness At Work newsletter, May 2004

VA BONDING AT IT'S BEST!

By Suzanne Drag RN

This started to be a story about male bonding and sports. Why do men get so involved in sports? While I was contemplating this article, a funny thing happened here at the Detroit VA.

THE PISTONS WON!

We all experienced the thrill of the Pistons winning the championship! Men and Women! What a time we had. Whether we stayed up late to watch the games or found out the score first thing in the morning before work, we had one thing on our minds, "The Piston's had to win". The Piston games were a common denominator for everyone here at the VA, and not only for the men. As I walked around the department, it seemed everyone was talking about the Pistons. People knew the players names, their statistics, what team they came from, how long they were with the Pistons and much more. I overheard people, with excitement in their voices, talk about game strategy, the weak points of the Lakers and again more statistics.

Everyone had something to say, something to add, something to repeat, an opinion to voice. You could feel the excitement in the air here. There was a common bond between us. The championship was the one thing that brought us all together, to bond with each other and I am just not talking male bonding. Everyone wanted the Pistons to win. Almost everyone. The few VA employees that wanted the Lakers to win, have been busy removing the tar and feathers that were bestowed upon them. What makes these games such a common ground for us? I for one, do not know anything about sport. Most of the time, I don't even pretend to be interested in sports. But during these games, I found myself repeating facts I overheard here at work. I was asking questions, passing on new found information.

I too felt like I knew the Pistons.

These basketball players do what very few of us could achieve, professional status as basketball players. Many of these players had to overcome adversity to be able to show us their integrity, their good character and most of all team spirit. In return, we showered them with adulation and followed their every move. We knew more about them than the people we sit next to everyday.

At games, you see people from all levels of society, every race and age cheering for them. Then, at the parade afterwards, there were people and kids everywhere. What a time this was for these kids to remember! It brought back memories for me when the Detroit Tigers won the World Series in 1968. Just a year after the 1967 riots, we were all again reunited! The Tigers won the 1968 World Series. It made us all winners! I can clearly remember that sunny day in October 1968, walking down Seven Mile road in Detroit with friends, listening to a transistor radio. People were driving by in cars, honking horns, waving, cheering, and yelling. We waved back, we cheered, we yelled. We all were ecstatic! Could the Tigers ever lose another game after that? Well, back to the Pistons.

I think, that on a very basic level, we want to belong to a team. Whether we talk to each other in the safe confines of sports statistics, or wear caps and shirts with our favorite team logos to show our support, we want to belong, to bond. And bonding is important to everyone. Being a part of a winning team is a great feeling!

GO PISTONS! GO VARO DETROIT!

See the next page for some highlights from the PISTONS PARADE!

EVERYONE LOVES A PARADE!

Some quotes heard by co-workers on Parade Day:

- “I am very proud of the Piston team and glad to see the city come together in celebration”.
- “We need to bottle the Piston’s team spirit and send it around the country to our schools. We need to show our kids what it is all about, not the individual fame and fortune, but team spirit. I am very adamant about this”.
- “Also, team work for us here at the VA too, to pull together as ONE VA”
- “Team work is a good idea to get the work completed here. The team concept is the way to go. It takes a team to accomplish things and better serve the veterans.

Pat – RVS

- “I was on the people mover with Bettie. I was amazed at all the people downtown, in Hart Plaza and by Cobo. All I could see was red, white and blue. I had never seen anything like that here before.”
- “I am a Piston’s fanatic and am sorry that it is all over. I think now I might start to watch the WNBA.”

Lorraine - VSR

- It was hot!

William - Assistant Coach

- “I got pictures of some of the players”.
- “Ben Wallace was hugging his trophy, like it was his wife”. “I ran up to his car, saying Ben! Ben! Ben! He looked at me. I didn’t know what else to say, so again, I just said ‘Ben!’”
- “Tayshaun Prince had really long arms. Really long! He was giving high fives to every one, just reaching out with those long arms, giving high fives.”
- “Rasheed’s car passed us going fast, about 40 mph. Then, just as he was passing us, he bent down to pick up something off the floor of the car”.
- “Corliss Williamson looks much better in person than on TV. Much better.”
- “Richard Hamilton had his car heavily surrounded by police as they came down Jefferson. But you could see him peaking out between the officers, waving to everyone.”

Catherine - VSR

- “It was crowded down there, but I was still able to get some pictures. I had to finally tell

a woman in front of me to stop waving her arms”.

James - IT

- “All the people down there. I never seen so many people in one place and I have been all over the world”.

James - VSR

- “Wow! ... It was great!

Dan - RVS

Did you guess the Guess Who?
The answer is: Bettie Belcher!