

NEWSLETTER CHARLOTTE HALL VETERANS HOME

FEATURED DEPARTMENT



Meet the CHVH Activity Team! They encompass life enrichment for our skilled nursing, assisted living, and memory care residents. They assess a person wholly. Taking that time to understand the individuals' physical, spiritual, and psychosocial needs and preferences, activities of choice, routine, and history results in meaningful programming.



The COVID pandemic impacted nursing homes across the country, which caused many regulation changes. The team had to get creative with activity practices. Providing bingo games on individual units, themed carts to bring joy to each resident, lots of snacks and refreshments, providing one-to-one programming in rooms and the bedside, and launching a video call program to keep residents and loved ones connected.



The team is also responsible for all facility outings. Our Activity Directors, Bonnie Pelletier and Brandi Tanner, coordinate with community partners to provide excursions to specialty dinners, shopping, casinos, sporting events, fishing, boat rides, and country drives around scenic southern Maryland. Led by Recreational Director Sandie Johnson, the proud team works daily to support a high quality of life at CHVH!



PARTNERS IN THE COMMUNITY



US Marine Corps Veteran Bernard Zempolich was ready to pass along his carved decoy collection. He wanted to share it with the residents of CHVH. The flock includes well over thirty birds!

Mr. Zempolich is the historian for American Legion Post 136 in Greenbelt, MD, and works earnestly to create the newsletter publication for the post.

We are grateful for his generosity! An excellent example of veterans serving fellow veterans!

LET US ALL WELCOME Michelle Cariaso, Director of Charlotte Hall Veterans Home

Michelle Cariaso joined the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs in August 2018 as its Quality Assurance Manager. Before this role, Michelle worked at Hackensack Meridian Health in New Jersey in various nurse leadership positions. She accepted the position of Director for CHVH in September 2021, serving as the Contract Compliance Manager for the State of Maryland Veterans Home Program. The day-to-day operation of the Home is the responsibility of the on-site management contractor through a management contract approved by the Board of Public Works.



As Director, Michelle oversees resident care, fiscal management, support services and ensures contract compliance with Federal & State regulations. She is responsible for preparing and administering the Home's annual operating budget and capital improvement projects. Michelle serves as the on-site advocate for residents and responds to inquiries by residents, family, and elected officials. Actively involved in the Home's marketing, she maintains liaisons with veteran and community organizations locally and statewide to promote the awareness of Charlotte Hall Veterans Home and the services it provides.

A resident of Leonardtown, Michelle has a Bachelor's Degree in both Nursing and Physical Therapy. She holds a compact RN license, a Dementia Capable Care, And Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Certification. She serves as a Quality Enhancement Committee member with the National Association of State Veterans Homes (NASVH) and is completing her Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality accreditation. She is blessed with 4 children.

Michelle strives to continually work with the healthcare delivery team to uplift the quality of life of the veteran residents of Charlotte Hall Veterans Home.

FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



With Fall upon us, we are looking forward to continuing our combat against COVID-19. The past 18 months have proved to be an unprecedented time in our 37-year history.

While the realities the global pandemic has presented us with have been challenging, we remain enamored by the tenacity and dedication of our staff. Direct caregivers and ancillary staff continue to go above and beyond to sustain our mission of "Serving those who served."

As we battle the Delta variant within CHVH, please remember that your best protection remains getting vaccinated and that there are plenty of vaccines available. If you are currently unvaccinated, we urge you to consider getting protected.

As always, stay safe.

-Zenae Merchant, MHA, LNHA

VETERAN SPOTLIGHT

I want to express my appreciation to the management and staff at Charlotte Hall. My father, Ralph Lee, an assisted living resident at Charlotte Hall, passed away on 7 August.

I suppose many, if not most, of your residents, were reluctant to move into assisted living, and my father, who was fiercely independent, tried very hard to convince himself that it was a temporary arrangement "until I get my strength back." Over time, he came to accept that he would never return to independent living. Part of that acceptance was based on his recognizing and appreciation for the care he received from the staff at Charlotte Hall.

I want to thank all the staff, aides, nurses, and PA's who provide to the residents at Charlotte Hall, but I especially want to thank those most directly involved in providing support and assistance to my late father; Teresa Farr, Donna Flaherty, Jennifer Knode, Ambrea Pressley, Debbie Russell, Sheila West, and my daughter, Pam Grzyb.

Because of the COVID pandemic, these are trying times for everyone, including those involved in healthcare, but especially those in nursing homes and community-based environments. In view of that, we wanted to thank all of the staff and employees at Charlotte Hall, but especially those named above. All of these employees are to be commended for their dedication to their responsibilities and the residents at Charlotte Hall under unusually trying and stressful circumstances.

I want to convey my sincere appreciation to you and those at Charlotte Hall who provide caring support to our veterans, especially during these difficult times.

- Karen L. Elliott, Daughter of Mr. Ralph Lee, USN

BLAST FROM THE PAST

We've turned the clock back in time to take a look at some Halloween memories!



This monthly newsletter is a joint effort of the MDVA & HMR Maryland for the whole CHVH community. For articles ideas and contributions, email Ashley Radano at aradano@charhall.org.



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