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Executive Director

State of Florida  
**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS**  
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**Rick Scott**  
Governor  
**Pam Bondi**  
Attorney General  
**Jeff Atwater**  
Chief Financial Officer  
**Adam Putnam**  
Commissioner of Agriculture

DATE: July 21, 2015

TO: The Honorable Rick Scott  
The Honorable Pam Bondi  
The Honorable Jeff Atwater  
The Honorable Adam Putnam

FROM: Mike Prendergast  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Prendergast".

SUBJECT: Quarterly Report – Fourth Quarter 2014-2015

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The Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs submits this Quarterly Report for the Fourth Quarter of the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year, covering the period April 1 – June 30, 2015.

This Quarterly Report is submitted pursuant to the procedures authorized by Rules 55-1.003 and 55-2.010, Florida Administrative Code. The report will be placed on the agenda at a future meeting of the Governor and Cabinet.

If you have any questions regarding any matter covered by this report, please contact me, Deputy Executive Director Al Carter, at (727) 518-3202, or the Legislative Affairs Director Colleen Krepstekies, at (850) 487-1533.

CC: Senator Rene Garcia, Chairman, Health and Human Services Appropriations Committee  
Senator Thad Altman, Chairman, Military Affairs, Space and Domestic Security Committee  
Representative Kenneth L. Roberson, Chairman, Health Innovation Sub-Committee  
Representative Matt Hudson, Chairman, Health Care Appropriations Sub-Committee  
Representative Jimmie T. Smith, Chairman, Veterans and Military Affairs Sub-Committee  
Cynthia Kelly, Director, Governor's Office of Policy and Budget

Attachment 1: FDVA Quarterly Report

## ATTACHMENT 1

### FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS FOURTH QUARTER REPORT April 1 – June 30, 2015

This report covers the activities of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA) for the Fourth Quarter of the 2014-2015 Fiscal Year.

#### 1. **Administrative Highlights:**

##### a. **Current Issues/Concerns**

###### **Executive Direction:**

Executive Director Mike Prendergast continued his campaign of advocating with purpose and passion for Florida veterans and linking them to superior services, benefits, and support. Colonel Prendergast presented department overviews and updates on current federal and state legislative initiatives to veterans' groups, civic groups, and legislative committees. During this quarter he also met with local businesses and organizations to discuss outreach programs and projects to assist veterans. Colonel Prendergast delivered the Commencement address to Keiser University (Tampa campus), graduating class of 2015, and he also was the guest speaker at the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Department of Florida's 85th Annual Convention in Orlando. Executive Director Prendergast presented remarks at the Governor's Veterans' Service Award Presentation in St. Augustine, a total of 342 medals were issued to deserving veterans on Korean War Remembrance Day. Colonel Prendergast attended the opening ceremony for the North Florida Homeless Veterans Stand Down in Tallahassee. The stand down lasted for three days and there were over 300 volunteers, and 75 service providers/vendors/donors that helped make this a positive experience for over 241 homeless Veterans. He also attended the opening session of the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital Research Day Program. Colonel Prendergast attended the keynote address presented by Andrew V. Schally, Nobel Laureate and Professor of Pathology at the Miami Veterans Administration Medical Center. Colonel Prendergast participated in Honor Flight of West Central Florida's 22<sup>nd</sup> mission. Honor Flight transports WWII Veterans from their local community's to Washington D.C. to visit the WWII Memorial and other War Memorials in our nation's capital. Mission 22 consisted of 80 WWII veterans and 80 Honor Flight guardians, with Colonel Prendergast serving as the guardian for an 88 year old veteran of the U.S. Navy.

**New State Veterans' Nursing Home:** Veteran Nursing home care delivery has experienced a significant change in philosophy of care, complexity of care, levels of service, length of stay, architecture, demographics of populations served, and new generational cohorts of residents requiring care that can only be provided in nursing homes. This has resulted in an initiative to transform the culture of nursing home care in the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs from a medical model where the care is driven by the medical diagnosis to a person-centered model where the care is driven by the needs of the individual, as impacted by medical conditions. In personalizing the delivery of care, the transformation of the culture of nursing home care challenges care providers to deinstitutionalize care and workplace practices. The Ardie R. Copas State Veterans' Nursing Home in Port St. Lucie (St. Lucie County) is in the initial planning stages and will be the first FDVA home to be reflective

of these new changes. The 120-bed facility will offer skilled nursing care and will accommodate 60 residents with dementia/Alzheimer's disease.

**Ardie R. Copas SVNH:** The Ardie R. Copas State Veterans Nursing Home is being built at the Port St. Lucie Community of Tradition (St. Lucie County) with a VA Grant of 65% federal matching funds. The Grant total of \$39.7 million (\$25.8 million from federal government; \$13.9 million from the State of Florida, using FDVA's Operations and Maintenance Trust Fund). We have reached many positive milestones this year during the planning and design of the Ardie R. Copas State Veterans Home. We have attained the property, secured approval of the Land Use Plan, and have completed the preliminary design.

**Safety Lifts System - Grant:** FDVA has received a grant in the amount of \$6.1 million dollars to install Safety Lift Systems in 6 of our State Veteran's Nursing Homes with a 65% federal match for the total project. The Grant total of \$6,158,173 (\$4 million from the federal government; and \$2.1 million from the State of Florida, using FDVA's Operation and Maintenance Trust Fund). The Safe Resident Lifts will allow the staff to lift and transfer our Veterans from bed to chair via the track system, substantially increasing the comfort of our Veterans and reducing the risk of injury to the staff. The employee injuries when moving patients should be reduced, thus cutting our workers compensation costs, lost work days, and increasing resident safety during medical movement.

#### **Division of Benefits and Assistance:**

**Bureau of Veterans' Claims:** Claims Services remain on par to maintain the same fast pace as the previous quarter. During the fourth quarter, the office advocated for 40,694 Veterans and their families, while 9,441 claims for disability benefits were reviewed and processed. 125 Veterans were represented before the Board of Veterans Appeals to uphold their appellate rights for Veterans' benefits. During this period, 151 Personal Hearings were scheduled with the VA Regional Office, of which Veterans' Claims Examiners were able to resolve 87 percent of the cases prior to the scheduled hearing. Additionally, the office in the VA Regional Office suffered a loss of three experienced Veterans' Claims Examiners and one Supervisor, which placed a heavier than anticipated burden on the remaining Veterans' Claims Examiners, many of whom are still within their probationary period. The bureau also sponsored a statutorily mandated certification course to allow for County Veterans' Service Officers and FDVA accreditation to assist Veterans, a semi-annual conference for more than 160 attendees, and trained the largest class ever, (210) of Post Service Officers.

**Bureau of Field Services:** Field Services provided 15 Veterans' Claim Examiners and 120 Man Hours to support 3 Governor's Veterans Service Award Ceremonies this Quarter. The Orlando zone assisted Osceola County Service Officers by providing a VCE to serve Veterans and their families while they were hiring new Service Officers. The Bay Pines zone provided a VCE for Lee County when their County Veteran Service Officer passed away. Field Services' John Rudy, Harry Rudy and Ernie Kuykendall provided training at the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Certification Course June 8-11. Field Services' assisted Claims Services by reviewing 430 Pension Claims and correcting over 10,000 blank claim lines. This quarter, Field Services attended 181 outreach events providing benefit information to 10,183 veterans and their families. Total Veterans served this quarter by Field Services is 66,770.

**The Bureau of State Approving for Veterans' Education and Training (or State Approving Agency/SAA):** State Approving Agency team members, Betsy Wickham and Katherine Snyder, were active providing legislative guidance again this quarter. Public Law 113-146, The Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014, Section 702, requires all public Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) to charge 'covered individuals' no more than the state resident rate for tuition and fees beginning July 2, 2015, or face disapproval of participation in Ch. 30 and Ch. 33 VA Education Benefits. Working closely with Florida Senate and House committee members, SB 7028 was put forward, passed through committees and Governor Scott signed the bill on May 21, 2015, amending FS 1009.26 and ensuring future availability of GI Bill benefits at all Florida public institutions. In addition, Katherine Snyder, Florida Program Specialist and Chair of the National Association of State Approving Agencies' (NASAA) Flight Committee also provided input for HR 476, The GI Bill Education Quality Enhancement Act of 2015, a bill which is being reviewed by Congress and which addresses the role of SAAs, approval criteria and IHLs that have contracted with flight schools. SAA members presented information and fielded questions pertaining to aforementioned bills at the Florida Advisory Council on Military Education conference at MacDill Air Force Base in May, and in June at the annual Florida VA School Certifying Official conference in St. Pete Beach, where 400 school officials were in attendance. Training was also provided by the SAA in June at the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Certification Course where two new SAA employees, Myrna Little and Jose Toro, were in attendance.

b. **Audits**

- No internal or external audits were finalized this quarter.

c. **Consultants**

- No new consultants were contracted, nor were any existing agreements changed this quarter.

d. **Contracts**

- Sims SVNH "Chiller Removal and Replacement" contract, with DMS as Project Agent, executed on 8/13/14. DMS activated "architect/engineering services", with McGinnis & Fleming Inc., on 9/26/14. DMS activated "construction services", with Shine & Co. on 4/17/15. Project underway; expected completion date TBD as of 6/30/15.
- Lopez SVNH "Chiller Removal and Replacement" contract, with DMS as Project Agent, executed on 6/20/14. DMS activated "architect/engineering services" with TLC Engineering Inc. on 8/1/14. DMS activated "construction services" with Tappouni Mechanical Services, Inc. on 3/26/15. Project underway; expected completion date TBD as of 6/30/15.
- Jenkins SVDH "Chiller Removal and Replacement" contract, with Grau Mechanical Enterprises, Inc., executed on 4/22/15. Project underway, anticipated completion date 10/19/15.
- Lopez SVNH "2 new pavilions" (gazebos) contract, with DMS as Project Agent, executed on 3/5/15. DMS activation of "architect/engineering services" and "construction services" firms pending as of 6/30/15.
- Jenkins SVDH "Treasury Services" contract, with First Federal Bank of Florida, executed on 5/22/15. 3 year contact, plus 3 annual options to renew.

- Bennett SVNH “Nurse Call System” contract Change Order No. 6, with JSC Systems, executed on 4/16/15; extended contract completion date to 6/30/15 (due to required AHCA approvals).
- Bennett SVNH “Nurse Call System” contract, with JSC Systems, Inc., completed on 5/4/15 (on budget). AHCA approval received 6/24/15; contract close-out on or about 7/9/15.
- FDVA “New Copas State Veterans’ Nursing Home” legislative appropriation provided on 7/1/14, with DMS as Project Agent. DMS “architect/engineering services” contract with Rogers, Lovelock, & Fritz Inc. executed on 10/20/14. DMS “construction services” contract with OHL-Arellano Construction Co. executed on 1/30/15. FDVA receipt of USDVA funding letter, as well as FDVA receipt and execution of USDVA Memorandum of Agreement pending as of 6/30/15 (ETA October 2015).
- FDVA “Veterans Benefits Information System” contract, with DataSpec Inc. (VetraSpec system), executed on 6/9/15. FDVA receipt and execution of USDVA Data Transfer Agreement (DTA/MOU) pending as of 6/30/15.
- FDVA original “Medicare/Medicaid Cost Reporting Services” contract, with Moore Stephens Lovelace P.A., terminated for convenience on 6/12/15.
- FDVA new “Medicare/Medicaid Cost Reporting Services” contract, with Moore Stephens Lovelace P.A., executed on 6/12/15 (contract commences on 7/1/15).
- Sims SVNH “Nurse Station Counter Tops” solicitation (ITB), received Respondent bids 6/23/15. Anticipated intent to award decision pending as of 6/30/15.
- Issued contract expiration letter to Crisis Center of Tampa Bay (Veterans’ Healthcare Referral Services) on 5/15/15. Contract expired on 6/30/15; contract close-out on or about 7/7/15.
- Issued contract expiration letter to Sachs Media Group (Media Services) on 5/15/15. Contract expired on 6/30/15; contract close-out on or about 7/8/15.
- FDVA “Pharmacy Services” annual contract renewal Amendment No. 5, with USDVA/VISN-8 (for Bennett, Lopez, Lassen, Jacobson, and Nininger SVNH’s), pending execution as of 6/30/15. Renewal term period of 9/1/15 through 8/31/16.
- FDVA “Pharmacy Services” annual contract renewal Amendment No. 4, with USDVA/VISN-16 (for Sims SVNH), executed on 6/2/15. Renewal term period of 10/1/15 through 9/30/16.
- FDVA “Time Clock System” contract renewal Amendment No. 2, with ITCS/Web-Clock, executed on 5/19/15. Renewal term period of 6/25/15 through 6/24/18.
- FDVA “Health Information Technology System” contract Amendment No. 4, with MDIA/Matrix-Care, pending as of 6/30/15 (providing for future, potential training sessions).
- FDVA “Resident Safety Lift and Transfer System” solicitation (ITN) pending stakeholder and BOD approvals, committee member appointments and approval, procurement timeline approval, USDVA vendor list, and as-built drawings; as of 6/30/15.
- Court decision regarding FTC lawsuit challenging Sysco/US Food merger pending as of 6/30/15. There has been no disruption to provision of services.
- All contract related invoicing audited and fully approved with no unresolved CFO, FACTS, DFS, or FDVA invoicing issues; as of 6/30/15.
- Reporting to CFO/FACTS is current and fully compliant with all required entries and document uploads; as of 6/30/15.

e. **Leases**

- FDVA made no additions, alterations, or modifications to leased space this quarter.

f. **Lawsuits/Claims in Litigation or Settled this Quarter**

- **2 General Liability Claims** (0 new this quarter): 0 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 2 pending
- **3 Employment Liability Claims** (2 new this quarter): 1 won, 0 settled, 0 lost, 2 pending

g. **Donations**

Cash Donations by State Veterans' Home

<b>FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015</b>	<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>	<b>SECOND QUARTER</b>	<b>THIRD QUARTER</b>	<b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>	<b>Total, Year to Date</b>
<b>Jenkins SVDH, Lake City</b>	\$1,014.27	\$521.01	0.00	\$1,110.00	\$2,645.28
<b>Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach</b>	\$9,227.06	\$15,657.00	\$5,129.42	\$1,921.96	\$31,935.44
<b>Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes</b>	\$1,000.00	\$20.00	\$1,900.00	\$997.43	\$3,917.43
<b>Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines</b>	\$1,000.00	\$299.00	\$410.00	0.00	\$1,709.00
<b>Sims SVNH, Panama City</b>	\$1,000.00	\$200.62	\$585.00	\$450.00	\$2,235.62
<b>Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte</b>	\$1,000.00	\$225.00	\$12.51	\$100.00	\$1,337.51
<b>Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine</b>	\$1,000.00	\$275.00	\$1,375.00	\$300.00	\$2,950.00

Non-Cash Donations:

Jenkins State Domiciliary – Lake City

No reported Donations this quarter

Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home – Daytona Beach

No reported Donations this quarter

Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home – Land O Lakes

No reported Donations this quarter

Nininger State Veterans' Nursing Home – Pembroke Pines

No reported Donations this quarter

Sims State Veterans' Nursing Home – Springfield

(4) Manual wheelchairs w/leg rests

Jacobson State Veterans' Nursing Home – Port Charlotte

Front lobby furniture (Jacobson Fund):

(4) shaker laminate top tables	\$161.00 ea	\$644.00
(1) shaker laminate coffee table	\$189.00	\$189.00
(1) shaker laminate sofa table	\$206.00	\$206.00
(3) Portland love seats	\$807.00	\$2,421.00

Lassen State Veterans' Nursing Home – St Augustine

No reported Donations this quarter

h. **Memberships paid to professional organizations:**

Homes Admin	50-10-07	Activity Connect	\$114.72
Lake City	50-40-70	Activity Connect	\$114.72
Daytona Beach	50-50-70	Activity Connect	\$114.72
Land O Lakes	50-60-70	Activity Connect	\$114.72
Pembroke Pines	50-70-70	Activity Connect	\$114.72
Panama City	50-80-70	Activity Connect	\$114.72
Port Charlotte	50-90-70	Activity Connect	\$114.72
St. Augustine	50-95-70	Activity Connect	\$114.72
General Counsel	50-10-30	Florida Bar	\$265.00

2. **Division of Benefits and Assistance: Statistics**

- Summary of veterans' benefits derived vs. cost of the benefits staff: \$121:1 (ROI).

a. **Bureau of Veterans' Claims**

<b><i>EVENT 2014-2015</i></b>	<b><i>FIRST QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>SECOND QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>THIRD QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>FOURTH QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>FY 2014-15</i></b>	<b><i>PREVIOUS FY to this Qtr.</i></b>
<b>Retroactive compensation</b>	\$36,770,963	\$29,067,865	\$39,184,611	\$29,609,575	\$134,633,014	\$35,901,263
<b>Largest single retro. benefit</b>	\$292,897	\$502,803	\$204,354	\$296,438	\$502,803	\$314,083
<b>Debt relief</b>	\$77,113	\$133,494	\$36,163	\$12,724	\$259,494	\$93,270
<b>Notices of Disagreement</b>	526	575	658	625	2,384	406
<b>Statements of Argument in Appeals Cases*</b>	179	241	415	256	1,091	268
<b>Act as Representative at Hearings*</b>	82	102	27	20	231	46
<b>Veterans' Appeals Hearings*</b>	55	111	237	125	528	77
<b>Ratings Reviewed</b>	10,039	8,500	8,116	9,441	36,096	9,684

\* The appeals representation process includes formal filing of the appeal application, and paralegal representation with the veteran at the Regional Office and in teleconferences with the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA).

b. Bureau of State Approving for Veterans' Training (SAA)

<b><i>EVENT 2014-2015</i></b>	<b><i>FIRST QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>SECOND QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>THIRD QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>FOURTH QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>FY 2014-15</i></b>	<b><i>PREVIOUS FY to this Qtr.</i></b>
<b>SAA Programs Approved</b>	3,671	2,551	1,467	1,206	8,895	1,949
<b>Other Approval</b>	778	649	594	591	2,618	508
<b>Compliance Visits</b>	40	28	29	35	132	24
<b>Inspection Visits</b>	12	13	6	16	47	7
<b>Outreach Activities*</b>	185	204	155	205	749	172
<b>Liaison Activities**</b>	183	142	248	239	812	157
<b>Technical Assistance***</b>	1,050	857	1,054	1,032	3,993	904

\* Outreach Activities are any activity designed to inform or encourage those with entitlement to use it.

\*\* Liaison activities are those that foster education about the SAA with other education and training professionals, which promote and encourage the exchange of information and support to raise awareness of the professional nature of the SAA approval function.

\*\*\* Technical assistance is any interaction designed to assist an individual or a facility with any aspect of the approval function.

c. Bureau of Veteran Field Services

<b><i>EVENT 2014-2015</i></b>	<b><i>FIRST QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>SECOND QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>THIRD QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>FOURTH QUARTER</i></b>	<b><i>FY 2014-15</i></b>	<b><i>PREVIOUS FY to this Qtr.</i></b>
<b>Issue Resolution</b>	5,304	4,790	6,132	5,720	21,946	5,246
<b>Total Amount</b>	\$14,627,699	\$14,284,148	\$16,435,695	\$16,878,549	\$62,226,091	\$14,568,372
<b>Outreach Visits</b>	198	180	182	181	742	233
<b>Veterans Served at Outreach</b>	15,365	13,153	9,522	10,183	48,223	19,899
<b>Bedside Interviews</b>	3,138	3,049	2,867	2,980	12,034	3,685
<b>Walk-ins/ Counseling</b>	33,060	31,164	34,929	34,758	133,911	35,942
<b>Claims</b>	8,310	7,685	8,044	8,635	32,674	7,854
<b>Voter Regis/ Pref forms</b>	3,060	2,893	2,551	4,304	12,808	2,826
<b>Homeless Walk In</b>	933	543	403	375	2,254	369
<b>Ratings Reviewed Orlando/W Palm</b>	260	146	81	513	1,000	381



d. Outreach\*

<b>EVENT 2014-2015</b>	<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>	<b>SECOND QUARTER</b>	<b>THIRD QUARTER</b>	<b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>	<b>FY 2014-15</b>	<b>PREVIOUS FY to this Qtr.</b>
Reintegration and Pre-Deployment Events for Guard and Reserve units	4	3	4	4	15	4
Homeless Veteran Stand Down Events	7	7	4	7	25	8
Medical Center Welcome Home events	0	0	1	1	2	1
Congressional Open House events	9	8	6	3	26	5
National Conferences	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Patient Orientation	67	35	30	44	176	79
Transition Assistance Briefings	10	8	11	9	38	12
Other	102	180	123	109	450	124

\* Supervisors and VCEs throughout the Division of Veterans' Benefits and Assistance provide presentation, orientations, and briefings on state, federal, and local veterans' laws and benefits.

**3. State Veterans' Homes Program**

State Veterans' Homes Census

<b>FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015</b>	<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>	<b>SECOND QUARTER</b>	<b>THIRD QUARTER</b>	<b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>	<b>FY 2014-15</b>	<b>PREVIOUS FY, same Qtr.</b>
Jenkins SVDH, Lake City	97.24%	97.72%	97.54%	98.31%	97.54%	95.9%
Bennett SVNH, Daytona Beach	99.65%	98.70%	97.75%	98.16%	98.56%	97.8%
Lopez SVNH, Land O' Lakes	99.76%	99.63%	99.60%	99.32%	99.58%	99.8%
Nininger SVNH, Pembroke Pines	98.33%	97.45%	97.92%	97.80%	97.88%	98.9%
Sims SVNH, Panama City	99.76%	99.88%	97.87%	99.49%	99.75%	99.9%
Jacobson SVNH, Port Charlotte	99.53%	98.70%	99.11%	98.69%	99.96%	98.5%
Lassen SVNH, St. Augustine	99.73%	99.90%	99.93%	99.69%	99.81%	99.5%

a. Quality of Care:

The State Veterans' Homes Program provides comprehensive, high-quality health care on a cost-effective basis to eligible veterans in need of either long-term skilled nursing care or assisted living services. Care is provided to veterans with qualifying war or peacetime service, who are residents of Florida, and who require skilled care as certified by a USDVA physician. Admission criteria are based on the need to maintain a safe environment for all residents. The skilled nursing and assisted living homes only admit those persons whose needs can be met within the accommodations and services it provides with consideration for all residents.

Skilled nursing home care provides full-service, long-term residential nursing care to eligible veterans in the six State Veterans' Nursing Homes. The homes are supervised 24-hours daily by registered and licensed nurses. Five of the six skilled nursing home facilities operated by FDVA have dementia-specific wings. FDVA operates nursing homes in Daytona Beach, Land O' Lakes, Pembroke Pines, Panama City, Port Charlotte, and St. Augustine.

Assisted Living level care is provided at the Robert H. Jenkins State Veterans' Domiciliary Home in Lake City, and includes rehabilitative assistance and other therapeutic measures to eligible ambulatory veterans who are not in need of hospitalization or skilled nursing services. The focus of care in the Domiciliary Home is preparing veterans to function at their highest level of independence. A multidisciplinary approach is followed with the veterans participating in the established care plan.

Comprehensive services and a deep concern for all veterans go hand in hand at our FDVA nursing homes. Around-the-clock medical and nursing care is provided by a full-time staff of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and certified nursing assistants. Rehabilitative services, such as occupational and physical therapies, speech therapy, and recreational activities are provided under the direct supervision of licensed therapists. A variety of on- and off-site recreational and social activities are provided to encourage active minds, bodies, and spirits, and slow the process of physical and mental decline. A wide range of other medical services are also offered. These include dental, podiatric, and dermatological care. In spacious dining rooms, residents are provided with wholesome meals prepared under the supervision of licensed dietitians. The State Veterans' Home Program has a proud tradition of concern and commitment to the veterans. We remain at the forefront in ensuring that the level of care and services provided to our veterans meets or exceeds the highest standards in an environment that enhances the quality of life of each veteran.

b. Occupancy Trends:

The fourth quarter data confirms that census occupancy levels are greater than 98% for FDVA skilled nursing homes. There are 680 nursing homes in Florida, representing 83,229 beds with roughly 87% occupancy of private nursing homes compared to the FDVA occupancy rate of greater than 98%. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, by 2026, the population of Americans ages 65 and older will double to 71.5 million. The U.S. Census Bureau data indicates that based on population figures, Florida has the highest number of elderly residents. This segment of the population will continue to increase because people born during the baby boom generation are beginning to retire. This trend of occupancy for FDVA nursing homes will likely continue as the State of Florida has a rapidly growing veteran population and the third largest population of disabled veterans in the nation. (Data provided by FHCA/ U.S. Census Bureau).

c. Volunteer Services:

There are a number of registered volunteers in the State Veterans' Homes that provide invaluable services for our veteran residents. The multitude of hours that are contributed add to the quality of life for the residents as well as allow the skilled employees to attend to more complicated, professional level tasks associated with resident care.



The Veterans Task Force celebrated Mother's Day with a Mother's Day luncheon for the Sims Home ladies. Each veteran enjoyed person pan pizzas, flowers, candy and homemade pies (left). The ladies don their Red Hats for the occasion.

The Veterans at Clyde Lassen SVNH enjoy a clown performance by Turning Point at Calvary's Clown Ministry (right).

