

Dear Friends,

We have news from the Department of Veterans Affairs about our loss in funding. We were told Monday, August 21, 2017, via conference call, that our contract with the VA was not picked up last year.

History: Re-Creation has maintained a contract with The Department of Veterans Affairs for the past 35 years. The contract would arrange for funding for one year and then have up to 4 'option' years which the VA could take or not.

Obviously, for the past 34 years, VA has taken those options. Last year they did not.

There was no clerical error, no mishap, no miscommunication.

It was an active decision to no longer fund Re-Creation. The department never told us of their decision. And apparently, they are not contractually required to do so.

One reason given was that the folks in charge needed to decide if they're spending their money on THERAPY or simply ENTERTAINMENT.

I contested that Re-Creation provides a very real therapy, but to no avail. The decision had been made (apparently a year ago) and will stand.

We are no longer supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Clarification: This does NOT mean we can't serve in VA Medical Centers, it just means we will receive no funding from VA.

We will, of course, NOT CANCEL any VA Medical Center we have already booked and will work to find a way to structure the tours as we always have. But this blow is severe, and frustrating.

We've already received, and you have read, through the years, letters of testimony from recreation therapists and voluntary service staff members nation-wide praising the therapeutic nature of Re-Creation's programming.

And trust me, the people in the field passionately want us to come back and visit their veterans! Read all the quotes in the newsletter and see just how fervently folks in the field want and need the Re-Creation brand of therapy!

How we will maintain remains to be seen. We have stalwart pledges from BVL, the Elks National Veterans Service Commission, the Florida State Elks Association...their support will NOT waiver. They are here for our vets!

And we will, of course, increase our commercial presence, the number of our church programs and investigate other avenues of funding and work diligently to get to everyone who wants a Re-Creation program...over 250 requests per year so far!

We will not abandon our post.

One suggestion offered in the conference call was to have the individual hospitals pay for the show. You know THAT is NOT the point of mission. These programs have always been gifts and need to remain gifts from a dedicated American people!

mmmmm, 'pay for it'...

Haven't our vets paid enough?

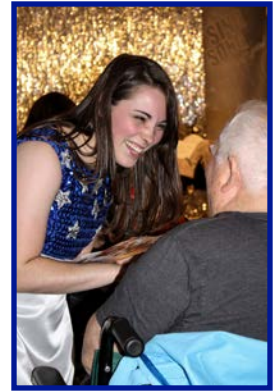
Stay with us.

Jay



## FROM REBECCA ACLIN (RC 37-39)

"Just a few months ago, I began my career as a recreation therapist in a dementia care unit (I like to say my job is to help people feel better by having fun!). Providing daily activities for people who have dementia can be difficult, so we use music often- no matter what their physical or mental state, many people can still respond to or be comforted by their favorite songs (this was true in RC as well). Not long after I began work, I decided to show a Re-Creation sacred DVD during a group session, and the reaction I saw from my patients was strikingly like what I saw as a performer. People who had limited speech began to sing along, and some could even name the hymns they remembered from years ago. Patients who normally had trouble sitting still for more than a few minutes could sit calmly and enjoy a few moments of peace. The secular DVDs I've shown since then had the same effect, especially the patriotic music. One dear Army veteran sang along with gusto to the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," and even requested to hear it on repeat! Now that I've had a chance to see Re-Creation's healing touch from another perspective, I'm more convinced than ever that Re-Creation fills a need that no one else can!"



## HIDDEN (or not) MESSAGE!

OK, this is so cool... Look at the picture of Re-Creation engaging the folks at a recent show. The big white letters you see in the background to the right are used as part of our program. The boys were *supposed* to put those behind the black fabric!



When I saw this photo I thought, "Shoot, I need to photoshop those out...they're distracting."

Then I realized! They spell "US."

US. As in YOU and me and Re-Creation cast members, and hundreds of dedicated, conscientious Americans who want this mission to continue!

Wow! Love when that happens!

Divine confirmation of commission and purpose!

This fall, Re-Creation will serve in over 43 VA Medical Centers and State Veterans Homes! And they will give sincere honor, tribute and restoration to our veterans! And YOU will be providing that healing, that therapy.

### THANKS FROM A VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:

***"Once again, Re-Creation put on a wonderful performance for our residents. We had the house packed full and people who rarely come out of their rooms always want to come to see Re-Creation!!! They LOVE the energy of the young folks, the fact that they come out into the crowd to interact with our residents and that they help staff gather the residents and transport them to and from the program. They converse with them as they transport them and make them feel "HAPPY" as the show itself was billed. Thank you for brightening our residents days."***

THANK YOU to those of you who have responded dramatically! The "Stand in the Gap Fund" has reached \$48,000.

Of course, we know now that we will have to raise the lion's share of the funding for the future.

A future of service and mission!

We need you...stay with "US!"

<http://re-creationusa.org/contact-donate/>

# FROM THE MISSION FIELD

*“Dear Re-Creation,*

*Thank you for the two wonderful performances you were able to provide to the residents at Nottingham Village on August 23, 2017. Truthfully, “thank you” is much less than you all deserve. I cannot fully express in words how valuable you all are to the individuals at Nottingham Village and others across the country.*

*It hurts me to know that the funding for your program has been compromised. If the people making such impactful decisions could personally witness the results of what you do, I truly believe they would all regret their decision. While it took me four years of higher education and a certification exam to hold credentials as a therapist, in my opinion you have all earned the title of “therapist” through the service you provide. There have been times when I have watched staff members working for months with an individual gaining limited social or emotional response from that person, and yet you enter our facility and have an outstanding impact on that person. Smiles, tears, laughter, speech! You provide an emotional and therapeutic experience that even experienced medical professionals cannot give.*

*Please do not let changes in your program’s funding change your passion for what you stand for and what you do. Once more, and still never enough, thank you.*

*With Sincere Gratitude and Respect,”*

Kristie Koch, CTRS  
Director of Nursing Center Activities & Volunteer Services

*“What can I do?” is a question we get a lot. And that’s nice...means people are interested and concerned! And actually, you can do a great deal! Here are some very easy suggestions to take on yourself or share!*

- DONATE online at [www.re-creationusa.org](http://www.re-creationusa.org) and share web address with everyone!
- GET Re-Creation to sing for your church! One hour presentation. Free-will offering. Meal.
- HOST Re-Creation Variety Show for your group! Show lengths and prices vary. Reasonable.
- INVITE folks to public RC events and introduce them, first-hand, to the mission! Effective.
- ASK people to join F.O.R-C.E.S. and help enable your young ambassadors as they travel!
- FOLLOW our Facebook page and cut and paste the link to your contacts and friends! Network.
- WRITE emails of thanks to BVL, The Elks, The Fl. Elks! We’ll give you addresses, just ask!
- ENGAGE American Legion, VFW, DAV and other groups and lead them to the web-site!
- JOIN F.O.R-C.E.S., or prompt your group, job, union or church committee to join.
- COME see Re-Creation at the fairs, banquets, conventions and churches...or even a vets home!
- DIRECT local groups looking for entertainment to our web-site. Add your personal review!

# SOWING INTO THE FIELD



"AMERICA'S AMBASSADORS TO HOSPITALIZED VETERANS"

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# RE-CREATION®

## OUR PLEDGE:

*"We will continue to serve our nation's hospitalized veterans with aplomb and verve as we carry on despite the loss of funding from the Department of Veterans Affairs.*

*Re-Creation will serve diligently and sincerely in our mission to give honor, restoration and tribute to the men and women who have given us our Freedom!*

*We will not abandon our post!"*

Read on to learn more about:

- **The Stand-in-the-Gap Fund**
- **Re-Creation's 40-year service to Veterans!**
- **Your ability to help enable the mission!**
- **The real therapeutic impact of an RC visit!**
- **Re-Creation performing for your group!**

[www.re-creationusa.org](http://www.re-creationusa.org)