



VIM VOICE



**Greater Bluffton
Jasper County**
VOLUNTEERS IN MEDICINE

August 2026



Note from our Executive Director:

Time goes by so quickly it seems and we are just a few short months away from our Annual Volunteer Meeting on December 4th. Please put the date on your calendar. The meeting will once again be held at Downtown Deli with their great atmosphere and delicious food.

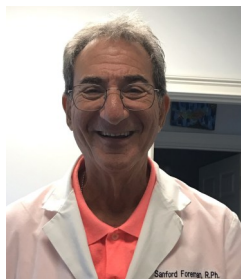
We will have so much to share as programs at the clinic have increased and expanded. Look forward to hearing about the wonderful work of our Community Health Workers, Road Map to Health Equity, Ridgeland Clinic successes, expanded dental health programs, collaborations with the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), new diabetic programs, new medical staff and so much more! Not to mention the ever fun and exciting initial ice breaker activity I know you all enjoy!!

Happy August! *Pam*

Our very own BJVIM pharmacist, Sandy Foreman, has made the decision to sell his home and move to Texas to be closer to his family. While we are sad to see him go, we are excited for him as he begins this new chapter. Please join us in wishing Sandy all the best on his next adventure!

The good news is that Sandy isn't leaving just yet—his home has only recently gone on the market, so we'll still have the pleasure of working alongside him for a while.

Although it will be impossible to truly replace him, we will be looking for another pharmacist to join our volunteer team. If you know a pharmacist who might be interested in serving with BJVIM, please encourage them to contact us.



Save the Date – October 22 Fundraising Event in Ridgeland!

On **October 22**, we'll be hosting a special fundraising event to benefit our **Ridgeland Clinic**. While this event will be smaller than our annual Bourbon & Bubbly fundraiser, it promises to be a fun evening while raising much-needed funds to support patient care.

Guests will enjoy:

- Fresh oysters and delicious BBQ catered by **Smokin' Valley Chef**
- Beer and wine served by **Lowcountry Taps**
- Live music
- A raffle featuring a fun weekend getaway to Charleston
- Opportunities to purchase beautiful gift baskets and premium bourbon

Additional event details will be shared soon.

We'd love your support! Whether you purchase a ticket or volunteer your time, every contribution helps make this event a success. We are looking for volunteers to assist with event setup, table decorations, and guest check-in.

If you'd like to volunteer, please sign up on the volunteer sheet located in **Barb's office**.

Exciting news for our Mental Health program:

We are excited to share that our new mental health provider, **Marielena DiMatteo**, is doing an outstanding job supporting our patients. Thanks to the generous support of the **Bluffton Rotary and the Long Cove Club Community Fund**, she is now able to see patients in our clinic one day each week, providing care to those with the greatest mental health needs.

Our mental health services will continue to expand as we partner with **MUSC** to launch a telemedicine collaboration through their Collaborative Care (CoCM) program. We are currently finalizing the referral process and will share additional details as they become available.

In the meantime, if you (the doctors) have a patient whom you believe would benefit from mental health services, please submit a referral using the **blue in-house referral form**. We appreciate your partnership in helping connect our patients with the care they need.



Annabel is an invaluable part of the BJVIM team, helping us communicate effectively with our patients who have limited English proficiency. However, this service is billed by the minute, and last month our interpreter costs increased by more than **150%**.

We need everyone's help to bring these costs back to a sustainable level. The simplest and most effective way to do this is to **end the interpreter call as soon as the patient encounter is complete**.

Please do not leave the interpreter on hold while beginning with another patient or completing other tasks. Even when on hold, the minutes continue to accumulate, increasing our costs.

By making this small change, we can significantly reduce expenses while continuing to provide excellent care for our patients.

Thank you for your attention and for working together to be good stewards of BJVIM's resources.

The doors of BJVIM are open four days a week because of the incredible dedication of our volunteers. Everything you do is truly appreciated, and we don't think of you as "just volunteers"—you are valued members of the BJVIM family.

As part of celebrating the amazing people who make BJVIM such a special place, we'd like to begin recognizing volunteer milestones and birthdays throughout the year.

To help us, would you please share your birthday with Barb? You can email her, give her a call, drop off a note, or simply tell her the next time you see her.

Thank you in advance for helping us celebrate the wonderful people who make BJVIM possible. We are grateful for all that you do and are honored to have you as part of our BJVIM family!

At our recent **Lunch & Learn** presented by **Lowcountry Legal Volunteers**, we learned about the valuable legal services available to our patients. Referrals can be made for assistance with issues such as divorce, domestic violence, birth certificate needs, alimony, wills, and other qualifying civil legal matters.

If you have a patient who could benefit from these services, please encourage them to meet with **Maribel**, who can assist them with the application process and help determine their eligibility for legal assistance.

70! That's the number of plastic water bottles we *didn't* use in the Bluffton clinic in just **two weeks!**

Our new water bottle filling station is a great success—the water is cold, filtered, and refreshing. Best of all, every refill helps reduce plastic waste.

Thank you for doing your part and supporting BJVIM's commitment to protecting our environment. Together, we're making a difference—one refill at a time!

August

August is the eighth month of the year, originally named *Sextilis* (Latin for "sixth") by the Romans. It was later renamed to honor Emperor Augustus Caesar, who extended the month to 31 days so it would equal the length of July.

Peridot and Meteorites: August is uniquely special because it has three birthstones: sardonyx, spinel, and the vibrant olive-green peridot. Peridot is one of the only gems that can be found both formed in the earth's mantle (expelled by volcanoes) and inside fallen meteorites.

August-Born Babies: People born in August fall under the signs of **Leo** (July 23–August 22) and **Virgo** (August 23–September 22). Studies show that babies born during summer months like August tend to be taller and heavier at birth.

The Starry Skies: It is a peak time for stargazing. The annual Perseid meteor shower, one of the brightest and most prolific of the year, usually peaks between August 11 and 13.

· **Uniquely Calendered:** In standard years, August never starts on the same day of the week as any other month. However, in leap years, it starts on the exact same day as February

The "Dog Days" Connection: The term "Dog Days of Summer" refers to the hottest, muggy days of the month. It traces back to the ancient Romans and Greeks, who linked the stifling temperatures to the rising of Sirius, the "Dog Star".

