



Dr. Robert C. Allen

Glaucoma Specialist Earns Recognition for Achievement

Dr. Robert C. Allen, MCV Hospitals and Physicians' Chairman of Ophthalmology, recently became only the second ophthalmologist in Virginia to receive the Senior Achievement Award from the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Allen, who has been with MCVH as professor and chairman since 1994, also is chief of the Ophthalmology Section at the Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Administration Medical Center. The award recognizes his contributions for excellence and leadership in research, education, and the practice of ophthalmology.

In addition to representing Virginia ophthalmologists for six years as councillor to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, Allen chaired the academy's Committee on Drugs and

served on the Ophthalmic Advisory Panel of the Food and Drug Administration. A glaucoma specialist, Allen is both a nationally and internationally regarded expert on glaucoma diagnosis and treatment. He is co-author of a new textbook, *Principles and Management of Glaucoma Medical Therapy*, published by the academy.

Allen is currently leading a team of VCU researchers—including Drs. Daniel McGrath, Eydie Miller, and Amy Sporn—in the study of a new glaucoma drug, Memantine. MCVH is one of just 28 centers nationwide to initiate study of this new treatment approach called “neuroprotection.”

Santa Poses with Your Pets To Benefit Paws for Health

Santa is making a special stop this month to benefit MCVH's Paws for Health pet visitation program. This Saturday, December 16, pet lovers are invited to bring their furry—and feathered—friends to visit Santa at The Shops at Willow Lawn, where two-legged and four-legged friends alike can have their picture taken in the company of Ol' St. Nick.

From 9 a.m. to 12 noon, Jamie Hayes The Art of Photography will be on

hand to snap a digital image of your pet with Santa and, after making sure no whiskers are out of place, will present you with a print to take home.

This Christmas marks the second season for this three-way partnership between The Shops at Willow Lawn, Jamie Hayes The Art of Photography, and the non-profit Paws for Health program. Paws for Health currently features about 22 specially screened dogs who volunteer to visit children in the hospital, wagging their tails in waiting areas and even in patients' rooms. For kids, the dogs' visits help alleviate stress and anxiety, and give them something to look forward to during their hospital stays. The physical, social, and emotional benefits greatly impact the healing process.

“Last year at Willow Lawn turned out to be one of our biggest fundraisers of the year,” says Lexi Aman, Paws for Health coordinator and a member of MCVH's Child Life team. “This isn't just for dogs. We saw all kinds of pets last year. One family brought its four parrots, and another brought a litter of kittens.”

Each 5-by-7 photo is \$10. Packages also are available. All proceeds benefit Paws for Health. If you'd like to learn more about this fundraiser or the Paws for Health program, please call 828-3415.