

Women's Health Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2024



My Fellow Veteran,

It is so hard to believe that September is here and we are preparing to welcome Fall 2024. I hope your summer was filled with time spent with family and friends, making memories that will last a lifetime.

As I mentioned in my letter in August's newsletter, we are preparing for our 2nd Women's Health Public Forum to be held right in the Women's Wellness Center, 8D of the Albany Stratton VA Hospital. We will have numerous staff members here to greet you and give you a tour of not only our clinic, but our mammography suite, as well as other key areas of interest in the hospital. Light refreshments will also be provided. Please be sure to RSVP to our Women's Health Program Support Assistant, Jamie Harrigan, no later than Friday September 6, 2024. You can give Jamie a call at 518-626-7274 or send her an email to Jamie.Harrigan@va.gov. I hope to see you there.

Enjoy the end of summer, Labor Day, plans you may have for this upcoming weekend and please remember, if you have any ideas for future editions of our newsletter, please reach out to Jamie!

I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to continue to serve you and your needs. THANK YOU for your service to our nation.

Respectfully,

Christine Goodwill

Women's Health Program Manager
Albany Stratton VA Medical Center

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POLYCYSTIC OVARIAN SYNDROME (PCOS)

Are you experiencing irregular periods, unwanted hair growth, oily skin and acne, or trouble losing weight? These could be signs of polycystic ovary syndrome, better known as PCOS. PCOS is a common health concern that can affect your hormonal balance, fertility, and overall well-being—yet up to 70% of women with PCOS remain undiagnosed!

Don't let your symptoms go untreated. Early diagnosis and treatment may lower your risk for long-term complications, including diabetes and heart disease; untreated PCOS can also increase your risk for endometrial cancer (cancer of the lining of the uterus). VA can help! Schedule an appointment to speak with your VA primary care provider if you think you may have PCOS. If diagnosed, your VA primary care provider can help you navigate your PCOS symptoms and create a treatment plan that works for your unique needs.

Call the [Women Veterans Call Center](#) at 1-855-VA-WOMEN to connect to PCOS services and resources or visit the [Women's Health PCOS page](#) to learn more.

RECOGNIZE THESE PCOS SYMPTOMS?

70% of women with polycystic ovary syndrome remain undiagnosed

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

- Irregular or missed periods
- Acne and oily skin
- Obesity or trouble losing weight
- Excessive facial hair
- Thinning hair

Don't forget our next Public Forum is September 12th!

NATIONAL GOLD STAR MOTHER'S DAY

Gold Star Mother's Day I observed on the last Sunday in September which will be Sunday September 29, 2024. Gold Star Mother's Day is intended to recognize and honor those mothers who have lost a son or daughter in the service of the U.S Armed Forces.

Each year there are events and meetings to publicly express love, sorrow and reverence toward Gold Star Mothers and their families. Flags are also mandated to be displayed on government buildings on this day. Army.mil says Gold Star Mother's Day is intended "to recognize and honor those who have lost a son or daughter in the service of the U.S. Armed Forces".

Gold Star families have had a non-profit organization working on their behalf since 1928 with the establishment of an organization called [American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.](#)

Their mission includes education, remembrance, inspiring "true allegiance to the United States of America", and most importantly for many, offering "needful assistance to all Gold Star Mothers and, when possible, to their descendants."



LABOR DAY

Beginning in the late 19th century, as the trade union and labor movements grew, diverse groups of trade unionists chose a variety of days on which to celebrate labor. In the United States, a September holiday called Labor Day was first proposed in the early 1880s. Alternative accounts of the event's origin exist. Descendants of two men with similar last names claim their great-grandfather was the true father of the holiday.

According to one early history of Labor Day, the event originated in connection with a General Assembly of the Knights of Labor convened in New York City in September 1882. In connection with this clandestine Knights assembly, a public parade of various labor organizations was held on September 5 under the auspices of the Central Labor Union (CLU) of New York. Secretary of the CLU Matthew Maguire is credited for first proposing that a national Labor Day holiday subsequently be held on the first Monday of each September in the aftermath of this successful public demonstration.

The popularity of the event spread across the country. In 1887, Oregon became the first state of the United States to make Labor Day an official public holiday. By 1894, thirty U.S. states were already officially celebrating Labor Day. In that year, Congress passed a bill recognizing the first Monday of September as Labor Day and making it an official federal holiday. President Grover Cleveland signed the bill into law on June 28.^{[14][4]} The federal law, however, only made it a holiday for federal workers. As late as the 1930s, unions were encouraging workers to strike to make sure they got the day off.^[15] All U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and the United States territories have subsequently made Labor Day a statutory holiday.^[16] Labor Day became a federal holiday shortly after the Pullman Strike.

SEPTEMBER IS SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

Women Veterans: Suicide is Preventable and Support is Available .

Suicide has no single cause and no one approach can end it—but [prevention](#) is possible, especially when women Veterans find support before a crisis happens. Women Veterans may have unique experiences related to military service, health and wellbeing, or trauma that can increase the risk of suicide. Some also face medical and social issues that affect relationships and quality of life. Military service can lead to readjustment issues, [posttraumatic stress disorder \(PTSD\)](#), trouble sleeping, or even physical injury. Additionally, [reproductive health conditions](#) that women Veterans sometimes face may take a toll on their mental health.

VA is committed to offering a growing range of resources and a network of support for all women Veterans, including those who do not, and may never, seek care within the VA health care system. Whether it's [mental health care](#) or treatment for [chronic pain or other health concerns](#), VA can provide personalized, gender-tailored care to help women Veterans. Each VA medical center also has a [Suicide Prevention Coordinator](#) to connect women Veterans to counseling and services.

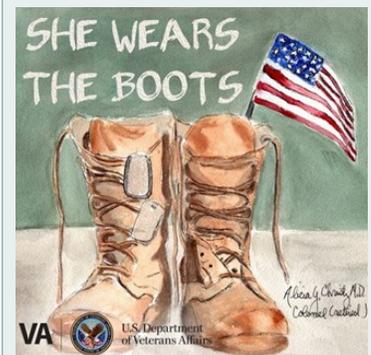
Additionally, creating a safety plan now, by identifying coping strategies and sources of support, can help give suicidal thoughts time to decrease and become more manageable in a future crisis. Download [the VA Safety Plan app](#) or [create one together](#) with your VA health care team.

The Veterans Crisis Line is free, confidential, and available 24/7. You don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to connect. Veterans, family, and friends can reach out. Dial 988 and press 1, text 828255, or [chat online](#). Visit the [VA Women's Health suicide prevention](#) page for more resources.

Call 1-855-VA-WOMEN (1-855-829-6636) to speak to a real person and connect to VA women's health care.

SHE WEARS THE BOOTS

Listen to our latest She Wears the Boots episode where we hear from Dr. Andrea Hekler, a VA clinician, on how pregnancy loss may impact you or your partner and how VA can provide support: <https://www.spreaker.com/episode/pregnancy-loss--60340506>.



 **Veterans
Crisis Line**
DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**

**24/7, confidential crisis support
for all Veterans and their
loved ones**



PUBLIC FORUM

The Albany Stratton VA Hospital Women's Health Clinic invites you to join us for our next Public Forum. Please consider joining us as we provide tours of the clinic, our mammography suite, and special "hot spots" in the hospital. Hope to see you then!

WOMEN'S HEALTH PUBLIC FORUM

Members of the Women's
Health Clinic invite you to the
Stratton VA Hospital

SEPTEMBER 12TH

4:30 – 6 PM

Meet with staff and tour
the clinic & the hospital.
Light refreshments will be
available.

10 WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE SERVICES THAT MAY SURPRISE YOU!

1. Women's Mental Health Services
2. Breast/Chestfeeding Supplies & Lactation Support
3. Sexual Health Evaluation & Treatment
4. Post Mastectomy Prosthetics
5. Telehealth Appointments
6. Yoga, Tai Chi, & Acupuncture
7. Recreation & Art Therapy
8. Pelvic Floor Therapy for Pain, Urinary Issues, & Constipation
9. Healthy Cooking Classes
10. Treatment for Sleep Issues



TOUR OUR CLINIC

- Gynecology ✓
- Primary Care ✓
- Lactation Rooms ✓
- Mammography Suite ✓
- Hospital Hot Spots ✓

RSVP by

September 6th

Jamie.Harrigan@va.gov 

113 Holland Avenue Albany

8TH FLOOR D-wing 

WOMEN'S WELLNESS CLINIC

VA



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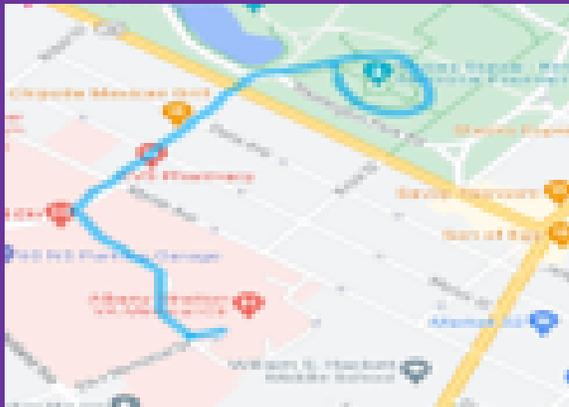


SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS WALK



**Wednesday, September 4th, 2024
at 12:30PM**

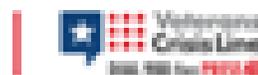
September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month! Please join the Suicide Prevention Team on this short walk to reflect and focusing on the importance of our work with Veterans and their families.



If you are unable to join us at this time, please consider walking on your own time!

**Meet at the front circle and we will proceed to
Washington Park and back**

New number, same support.
Dial 988 then Press 1.



VA



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COLONEL EILEEN COLLINS

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH & FITNESS DAY

SEPTEMBER 25, 2024

National Women's Health and Fitness Day is celebrated every year on the last Wednesday of September, falling on September 25 this year. It's a special day to celebrate every year, courtesy of the Health Information Resource Center, a national clearinghouse for consumer health information professionals. The day was established in 2002 to promote physical fitness and health awareness among women of all ages. promote the importance of health awareness and fitness for all women. Though healthy living is important for both men and women, this day acknowledges that each gender has specific needs when it comes to health.

In the 1930s, women were encouraged to work out at home because sweating in public was considered unseemly. However, a decade later, women took to the gyms. You'll never believe what female gyms were called — reducing salons! They were so-called because, at the time, it was more important to lose weight than to keep fit.

Thanks to movements such as the body positivity movement and the women's health movement, which began in the 1800s, the world of women's health and fitness has taken giant strides towards becoming more accurate and inclusive.



HAPPY
WOMEN'S
HEALTH &
FITNESS DAY
OF CELEBRATION DAY

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Born November 19, 1956, in Elmira, NY, she is a retired NASA astronaut and United States Air Force colonel. She is a former flight instructor and test pilot, Collins was the first woman to pilot the Space Shuttle and the first to command a Space Shuttle mission.

Collins was commissioned as an officer in the USAF through Syracuse's Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps program. She was one of four women chosen for Undergraduate Pilot Training at Vance Air Force Base, Oklahoma. After earning her pilot wings, she stayed on at Vance for three years as a T-38 Talon instructor pilot before transitioning to the C-141 Starlifter at Travis Air Force Base, California. During the American invasion of Grenada in October 1983, her aircraft flew troops of the 82nd Airborne Division from Pope Air Force Base in North Carolina to Grenada, and took thirty-six medical students back. From 1986 to 1989, she was an assistant professor in mathematics and a T-41 instructor pilot at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado. She earned a Master of Science degree in operations research from Stanford University in 1986, and a Master of Arts degree in space systems management from Webster University in 1989. That year, she became the second woman pilot to attend the USAF Test Pilot School, graduating with class 89B.

In 1990, Collins was selected to be a pilot astronaut with NASA Astronaut Group 13. She flew the Space Shuttle as the pilot of the 1995 STS-63 mission, which involved a space rendezvous between Space Shuttle *Discovery* and the Russian space station *Mir*. She was also the pilot for STS-84 in 1997. She became the first woman to command a US spacecraft with STS-93, which launched in July 1999 and deployed the Chandra X-Ray Observatory. In 2005 she commanded STS-114, NASA's "return to flight" mission after the Space Shuttle *Columbia* disaster, to test safety improvements and resupply the International Space Station (ISS). During this mission she became the first astronaut to fly the Space Shuttle orbiter through a complete 360-degree pitch maneuver so astronauts aboard the ISS could take photographs of its belly to ensure there was no threat from debris-related damage during re-entry. She retired from the USAF in January 2005 with the rank of colonel, and from NASA in May 2006.



PATRIOT DAY REMEMBERING 9/11

By presidential proclamation, **Patriot Day** is observed in the United States on September 11, or 9/11, in memory of the thousands who lost their lives as a result of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the United States that involved four hijacked planes. The observance also honors those who came to aid in the aftermath. Each year on Patriot Day, the U.S. flag is flown at half-staff. Citizens are asked to observe a moment of silence, usually at 8:46 a.m. EDT (when the first hijacked plane struck the World Trade Center in New York City), and are encouraged to devote the day and year to serving their neighbors and communities.



Did you know that there are more pop & classic songs with “September” in the title than any other month?

NATIONAL VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS DAY

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (V.F.W.) organization was created in 1913. During a historic convention in Pittsburgh. The organization was formed through a merger of three war-veteran associations, which had been founded in 1899 after the Spanish-American War. The American Veterans of Foreign Service, which had two chapters, was based in Ohio & Pennsylvania while The Colorado Society of the Army of the Philippines was located in Colorado and Pennsylvania.

Though the merger took place in 1913, the V.F.W. recognizes 1899 as its founding date. Headquartered in Kansas, Missouri, the organization’s mission, according to its website, is to “foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts. To serve our veterans, the military, and our communities. To advocate on behalf of all veterans.”

The history of V.F.W. Day can be traced to the genesis of the organization itself. The day was created to commemorate the historic establishment of the V.F.W. on September 29, 1899, when a group of Spanish-American war veterans banded together in a bid to share their experiences and support one another. 120 years later, the V.F.W. is still going strong with a membership of over 1.5 million people, with 6,000 Posts spread across all 50 states of the country, as well as in the Asia-Pacific region and Europe.

In order to obtain membership of the organization, candidates must be U.S. citizens or nationals, former or current members of the armed forces, and must have served in a war, campaign, or expedition on foreign soil, airspace, or hostile waters.

National V.F.W. Day
September 29th



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HAPPY BIRTHDAY US AIR FORCE

The U.S. Air Force was officially founded on 18 September 1947, and in the decades since it has established itself as an air force second-to-none. Yet the Air Force's history and heritage goes back the turn of the twentieth century.

Between 1909 -- when that the US military purchased its first aircraft -- and 1947, the U.S. Air Force did not exist as a separate and independent military service organization. It went through a series of designations: Aeronautical Section, Signal Corps (1909); Aviation Section, Signal Corps (1914); United States Army Air Service (1918); United States Army Air Corps (1926), and United States Army Air Forces (1941).

WWII illustrated the value of airpower, and the need to change the basic organization of the US Military Forces. The result was the creation of a single Department of Defense with a strong Joint Chiefs of Staff with Army, Navy, and Air Force chiefs. In 1947 President Truman signed the National Security Act which established this new defense organization, and along with it the creation of the US Air Force as an independent service, equal to the U.S. Army and U.S. Navy. The official Air Force birthday is Sept. 18, 1947.

CHAPLAIN (MAJOR GENERAL) LORRAINE K. POTTER



Maj. Gen. Lorraine Potter

On September 26, 1973, then, Capt. Lorraine Potter, an American Baptist Minister, became the first woman U.S. Air Force chaplain. Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Lorraine Potter is Chief, Air Force Chaplain Service, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. As a member of the special staff of the Chief of Staff, she advises on all matters pertaining to the religious and moral welfare of Air Force people. Also, she is responsible for establishing an effective total chaplain program to meet the religious needs of all members of the Air Force. As chief, she is the senior pastor for a combined active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian force of more than 850,000 people who serve at approximately 1,300 locations in the United States and overseas. She leads an Air Force Chaplain Service of approximately 2,200 chaplains and enlisted support people from the active and Air Reserve components. As Chairperson of the Armed Forces Chaplains Board, she and other members advise the Secretary of Defense and Joint Chiefs of Staff on religion, and ethical and quality-of-life concerns.

The chaplain was raised in Warwick, R.I., and is an ordained minister of the American Baptist Churches USA. Since her commissioning in 1973 she has served at every installation and command level within the Department of Defense -- wing, major command, Headquarters U.S. Air Force and Secretary of Defense. She is the senior chaplain in the Department of Defense.



EQUINE-ASSISTED RETREAT



VETERAN RETREAT

FREE Full Day Equine-Assisted Retreat for Veterans of All Eras
SPONSORED BY: HVCC VETERANS RESOURCE & OUTREACH CENTER



SEP 8 Posttraumatic Growth
& Resilience
SEP 29 COUPLES
OCT 6 Family Day!
OCT 20 Anxiety &
Depression



HIGHER GROUND FARM, 374 TATE ROAD, HOOSICK FALLS, NY 12090

Calling all veterans! Find inner peace, reconnect with nature and fellow vets, and rejuvenate your mind and body at our exclusive retreat. Learn to connect with yourself and others through equine-assisted activities, guided meditation, and mindfulness techniques. Lunch is provided and it's completely free! Sign up now!

For more information SCAN the QR Code or Contact: Cat Capowski
catlynch39@gmail.com

VA



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CREAMY CHICKEN CUTLETS WITH CREAMT SPINACH & ROASTED RED PEPPER SAUCE

INGREDIENTS:

- ◆ 1 pound chicken cutlets
- ◆ 1/4 tsp salt, divided
- ◆ 1 TBSP extra-virgin olive oil
- ◆ 1 cup chopped fresh spinach
- ◆ 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- ◆ 1/2 cup roasted red peppers thinly sliced
- ◆ 1/3 cup sun-dried tomato halves, thinly sliced (optional)
- ◆ 1/2 cup dry cooking wine



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Sprinkle chicken with 1/8 tsp each salt & pepper. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook, turning once until cooked through, 6 to 8 minutes. Transfer to a plate.
2. Add spinach, onion, roasted red peppers and sun-dried tomatoes to the pan. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Increase heat to high and add wine. Cook, scraping up any browned bits, until the liquid is mostly evaporated, about 2 minutes. Reduce heat to medium and stir in sour cream, any accumulated chicken juices and the remaining 1/8 teaspoon each salt and pepper; simmer, stirring, for 2 minutes. Return the chicken to the pan and turn to coat. Serve the chicken topped with the sauce.

NUTRITIONAL FACTS:

Servings Per Recipe 4 Serving Size 1 cutlet & 1/4 cup sauce Calories 305

TOTAL CARBOHYDRATE 10g4%

DIETARY FIBER 1g5%

TOTAL SUGARS 4g

PROTEIN 28g56%

TOTAL FAT 14g17%

SATURATED FAT 5g24%

CHOLESTEROL 104mg35%

VITAMIN A 1440IU29%

VITAMIN C 9mg10%

FOLATE 20mcg5%

SODIUM 338mg15%

CALCIUM 74mg6%

IRON 2mg9%

MAGNESIUM 59mg14%

POTASSIUM 630mg13%



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Veterans wanted for a research study!

We need your help developing a new screening test for Alzheimer's disease.

MAY I PARTICIPATE?

Yes! if you are:

- A Veteran;
- 40–80 years old;
- Healthy OR have mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease.

WHAT WILL I DO?

- One visit, ~2 hours
- Provide a blood sample
- Provide a saliva sample
- Complete some questionnaires and health assessments



For information, please contact:

- **Leahruth Saavedra**
- Research Coordinator
- Phone: 518-626-6447
- Email: Leahruth.Saavedra@va.gov

**Studies are conducted at the
Stratton VA Medical Center.**

**You will be reimbursed \$25 for your
travel expenses.**

Recruitment Flyer v.2, 08/01/2024; Protocol: Screening for AD using Raman spectroscopy; PI: James J. S. Norton, Ph.D.

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