

Women's Health Newsletter

JANUARY 2025



My Fellow Veteran,

Welcome 2025! A time for new beginnings, new resolutions, new goals, as well as a time to look back on the special moments from the past year that we are the most thankful for. All of us here at the Women's Health Clinic are reminded how thankful we are for you and for allowing us to continue to serve you and your needs.

As I mentioned in last month's edition, we have a number of exciting events already in the planning stages for this upcoming year. Please be on the lookout for more focus group opportunities as well as public forums.

Also, if you have not been to the clinic of late, please stop by and take advantage of our newly added hospitality cart that is in our waiting area. It is stocked with many wonderful items available to you.

It certainly has been a freezing start to the winter season of late, so check out page 4 for information about our coat drive we are partnering with Center for Development and Center Engagement department of the VA.

As always thank you for your service to our great nation.

Respectfully,

Christine Goodwill

Women's Health Program Manager
Albany Stratton VA Medical Center



Whole Health Campaign.....	2
WH Gift Basket Donation.....	2
She Wears the Boots.....	3
Rose Bowl Parade.....	3
Coat Drive.	4
My HealthEvet.....	5
Remembering Dr. King	6
General Ann E. Dunwoody.....	7
Stress Management.....	8
Monthly Recipe.....	9
OPA-size Class.....	10



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs
Stratton VA Medical Center

WHOLE HEALTH

Women Veterans: What matters to you most? Your values, needs, and goals are unique—and they're central to your health. When you come to VA, you receive a personalized Whole Health approach to care that supports your physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. Your VA health care team gets to know you as a whole person, focusing on what matters to you, not what is the matter with you.

The Whole Health program offers resources for all the important areas of your life including relationships, mindfulness, nutrition, sleep, fitness, and personal development. A Whole Health approach can also help address and improve some health issues that affect women Veterans at a higher rate, such as posttraumatic stress disorder, chronic pain, and more. In fact, those who use Whole Health report better stress management, chronic pain management, and mental health.

Speak to your VA health care team about what is important to you and get connected to services such as yoga, tai chi, massage therapy, healthy cooking classes, art therapies, acupuncture, and much more. Don't wait until something is wrong to improve your well-being. Invest in yourself with VA's Whole Health services and resources!

Visit [VA Whole Health](#) for more information or call, text, and chat with the [Women Veterans Call Center](#) (1-855-VA-WOMEN) to speak to someone who can answer your questions.



Did you know that January is National Blood Donor Month?

NATIONAL DRESSUP YOUR PET DAY

January 14th is National Dress Up Your Pet Day – a **special day created by celebrity pet lifestyle expert Colleen Paige in 2009**. On this fashion-forward day, pet owners are encouraged to take time to have fun with their dogs, cats, and other animal friends, by dressing them up in cute AND safe pet costumes and outfits.



EXPECTING MOMS GIFT BASKETS

Mr. and Mrs. George Walker (pictured) presented members of the Women's Health Team, Courtney O'Keefe, BSN, RN, Maternity Care Coordinator, and Jamie Harrigan, Women's Health PSA, baskets for expecting Veteran moms.

Mr. Walker is a member/representative of the American Red Cross and received funding from them to make this lovely donation possible.

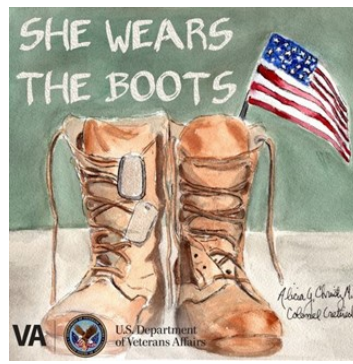
We are beyond grateful to the American Red Cross and Mr. and Mrs. Walker for their generosity and support of our female Veterans.



SHE WEARS THE BOOTS

[She Wears the Boots: A Podcast for Women Veterans](#) is an official VA sponsored podcast that focuses on topics relevant to Servicewomen and women Veterans. The goal of this podcast is to enhance the lives of women Veterans by sharing information on women's health care services offered through VA.

All episodes are created for Veterans but employees and family members of Veterans may benefit from listening as well. Each episode is around 15-20 minutes long so they can be digested in one sitting. New episodes come out about once a month. Several foundational episodes were recorded at the beginning of the series in 2020 while more recent topics focus on health care topics that might be of specific interest to women Veterans. Our most popular health focused topics to date are on [Military Exposures](#), [Musculoskeletal Health in Women](#), [Sexual Health](#), and [Menopause](#).



Did you know that a group of owls is called a parliament?

NEW YEARS EVE BALL DROP

The **Times Square Ball** is a time ball located in New York City's Times Square. Located on the roof of One Times Square, the ball is a prominent part of a New Year's Eve celebration in Times Square commonly referred to as **the ball drop**, where the ball descends down a specially designed flagpole, beginning at 11:59:00 p.m. ET, and resting at midnight to signal the start of the new year. In recent years, the ball drop has been preceded by live entertainment, including performances by musicians. Over 1,000,000 people from around the world attend.

The event was first organized by Adolph Ochs, owner of *The New York Times*, as a successor to a series of New Year's Eve fireworks displays he held at the building to promote its status as the new headquarters of the *Times*, while the ball itself was designed by Artkraft Strauss. First held on December 31, 1907, to welcome 1908, the ball drop has been held annually since, except in 1942 and 1943 in observance of wartime blackouts.

The ball's design has been updated four times to reflect improvements in lighting technology; the original ball was 5 feet (1.5 m) in diameter, constructed from wood and iron, and illuminated with 100 incandescent light bulbs. By contrast, the current ball is 12 feet (3.7 m) in diameter, and uses over 32,000 LED lamps. Since 1999–2000, the ball has featured an outer surface consisting of triangular panels manufactured by Waterford Crystal, which contain inscriptions representing a yearly theme.



ROSE BOWL PARADE

In 1890, Valley Hunt Club members, led by Charles Frederick Holder, sponsored the first Tournament of Roses. The abundance of flowers, even in the midst of winter, prompted the club to add a parade before the competition, where entrants would decorate carriages with hundreds of colorful blooms.

“In New York, people are buried in snow,” announced Professor Charles F. Holder at a Club meeting. “Here our flowers are blooming and our oranges are about to bear. Let’s hold a festival to tell the world about our paradise.”

More than a century later, the parade floats are a marvel of state of the art technology, all tucked away beneath flowers and other all-natural materials. Every New Year, visitors experience the beauty of the floral floats along with spirited marching bands and high-stepping equestrian units along the 5 1/2 mile route down Colorado Boulevard.



Women's Winter **Coats Available**

**Center for Development
&
Civic Engagement**

9th Floor D-Wing

For more information contact:

Jason Goman

518-626-550 or

Email: Jason.Goman@va.gov

VA

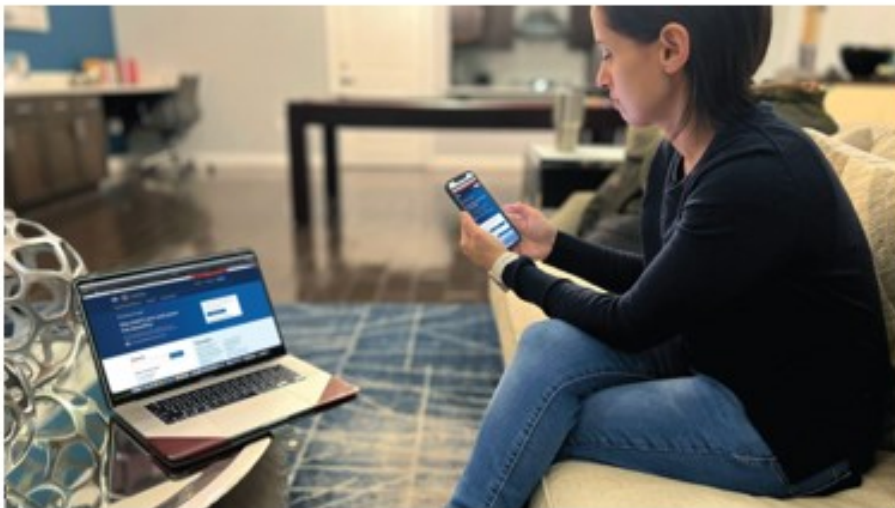


**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

VA



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Stratton VA Medical Center



Prepare for My HealtheVet sign-in changes

In 2025, you'll need to switch to using a **Login.gov** or **ID.me** account to sign in to all VA websites and apps — including My HealtheVet.



Create your account now:
www.va.gov/sign-in-changes

REMEMBERING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR

Martin Luther King Jr. (born **Michael King Jr.**; January 15, 1929 – April 4, 1968) was an American Baptist minister, activist, and political philosopher who was one of the most prominent leaders in the civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968. King advanced civil rights for people of color in the United States through the use of nonviolent resistance and nonviolent civil disobedience against Jim Crow laws and other forms of legalized discrimination.

A black church leader, King participated in and led marches for the right to vote, desegregation, labor rights, and other civil rights. He oversaw the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott and later became the first president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). As president of the SCLC, he led the unsuccessful Albany Movement in Albany, Georgia, and helped organize some of the nonviolent 1963 protests in Birmingham, Alabama. King was one of the leaders of the 1963 March on Washington, where he delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, and helped organize two of the three Selma to Montgomery marches during the 1965 Selma voting rights movement. The civil rights movement achieved pivotal legislative gains in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968. There were several dramatic standoffs with segregationist authorities, who often responded violently.

King was jailed several times. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) director J. Edgar Hoover considered King a radical and made him an object of the FBI's COINTELPRO from 1963 forward. FBI agents investigated him for possible communist ties, spied on his personal life, and secretly recorded him. In 1964, the FBI mailed King a threatening anonymous letter, which he interpreted as an attempt to make him commit suicide. On October 14, 1964, King won the Nobel Peace Prize for combating racial inequality through nonviolent resistance. In his final years, he expanded his focus to include opposition towards poverty and the Vietnam War.

In 1968, King was planning a national occupation of Washington, D.C., to be called the Poor People's Campaign, when he was assassinated on April 4 in Memphis, Tennessee. James Earl Ray, a fugitive from the Missouri State Penitentiary, was convicted of the assassination, though the King family believes he was a scapegoat; the assassination remains the subject of conspiracy theories. King's death was followed by national mourning, as well as anger leading to riots in many U.S. cities. King was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2003. Martin Luther King Jr. Day was established as a holiday in cities and states throughout the United States beginning in 1971; the federal holiday was first observed in 1986. The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., was dedicated in 2011.



GENERAL ANN E. DUNWOODY

NATIONAL SPAGHETTI DAY

Pasta is essentially made with four ingredients — water, eggs, wheat, and salt. The first dish made from pasta was in Sicily, dating back to 1154. According to historians, this recipe was different from the pasta that we know today, which resembled lasagna more. Another significant difference was that it was cooked differently.

That being said, there is no evidence of pasta after this, up until the 14th century. Another element that baffles historians is the exact origin of modern pasta. It is believed to have originated in Italy, but many are of the consensus that Marco Polo was the one to bring it back from his adventures in China, thus making China the original creator of pasta.

Either way, after it made its way to Italy, the locals started making pasta from hard wheat shaped into elongated strands. This is where modern-day spaghetti comes from, although the original was closer to vermicelli in terms of texture.



Ann Elizabeth Dunwoody (born 14 January 1953)¹ is a retired general of the United States Army. She was the first woman in United States military and uniformed service history to achieve a four-star officer rank, receiving her fourth star on 14 November 2008.

In 2005 Dunwoody became the United States Army's top-ranking female when she received the promotion to lieutenant general (three stars) and became the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff, G-4 (logistics). She was nominated as Commanding General, United States Army Materiel Command, by President George W. Bush on 23 June 2008, and confirmed by the Senate one month later. She served in that capacity until 7 August 2012, and retired from the Army on 15 August 2012.

Dunwoody was born in 1953 at Fort Belvoir, Virginia to Elizabeth and Harold Dunwoody. Harold was a career U.S. Army officer who retired as a brigadier general, and Dunwoody's family followed him on assignment overseas. Ann lived in Germany and Belgium while growing up, graduating from Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) American High School in 1971.

At age 5, Dunwoody decided she wanted to become a doctor or nurse. Although she came from a family with a strong tradition of military service, she initially had very little interest in serving in the military. After high school Dunwoody attended State University of New York College at Cortland. During her junior year of college, Dunwoody attended a four-week Army introductory program that could be continued, if interested, with an eleven-week Women's Officer Orientation Course, which then led to a two-year commitment. In 1975 she committed, became a second lieutenant in the Quartermaster Corps and attended the United States Army Airborne School. It was then that she realized the Army was "an organization that was as values-based as the family I came out of, and to find probably my real passion was soldiering. I just didn't know it because I had never experienced it".



STRESS MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A 10-WEEK EDUCATIONAL GROUP



- Understand the impact of stress on health and wellbeing
- Identify stress triggers and reactions
- Learn effective stress management practices

WHEN: Fridays at 9:00-10:00AM | Starting January 10, 2025

WHERE: In-Person (Albany VAMC; Room 603 Core) &
Videoconference

If interested, speak to your provider or contact:

Tom D'Agostino, PhD

Primary Care Mental Health Integration (PCMHI)

(518) 626-6497

BEEF STROGANOFF SOUP

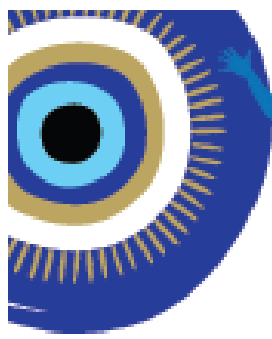
INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
- 1 pound beef sirloin, trimmed of fat, thinly sliced into short strips
- 1/4 cup cooking wine or sherry (optional)
- 8 ounces thinly sliced crimini mushrooms
- 1 small onion diced
- 3 cloves garlic minced
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 4 cups low-sodium beef stock
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon mushroom or beef bouillon (such as Better than Bouillon), optional
- 4 fresh thyme stems or 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 6 ounces dried egg noodles
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup heavy cream (optional, but lovely)
- chopped fresh parsley for garnish
- salt and freshly ground black pepper & additional sour cream for garnish



DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat oil In a large soup pot or Dutch oven over medium until the oil shimmers on the surface.
2. Lightly season the beef with salt and pepper. Add to the pot and let brown, stirring frequently to sear all sides of the strips (about 3 to 4 minutes). Transfer the beef to a bowl and set aside.
3. Deglaze the pot with cooking wine/sherry or beef broth, scrapping up any stuck-on bits into the liquids.
4. Add mushrooms, onion, & garlic to the pot; sauté until the vegetables have softened, about 8 minutes.
5. Scootch the vegetables to the side & add in the tomato paste. Stir until fragrant.
6. Add a splash of the broth to the vegetables & spoon the mustard & flour over them. Stirring thoroughly—it might become a bit pasty; that's ok for a minute or so to cook off the rawness of the flour.
7. Pour in the beef stock, Worcestershire sauce & bouillon (if using) & add the thyme. Increase the heat to medium-high & bring to a light boil.
8. Add egg noodles & reduce heat for an active simmer and cook for 7-10 minutes.
9. In a mixing bowl combine the sour cream & heavy cream. Whisk in a ladle of the hot soup until well combined. Pour mixture into the soup and stir well.
10. If using fresh thyme stems remove as the leaves should've dislodged from the stems into the soup.
11. Add the meat and any collected juices back to the pot and cook for 5 more minutes to cook through.
12. Serve in individual bowls, topped with fresh parsley.



Come Join the FUN!



Weekly Greek Dance & Exercise Class

Wed.'s at 6:30pm

St Sophia Greek Orthodox Church Hall
440 Whitehall Road, Albany, NY

Session Starts Jan. 8th, 2025

NO Experience or RSVP required

\$7 per week

50% of proceeds will be donated to

WOMEN'S HEALTH PROGRAM AT

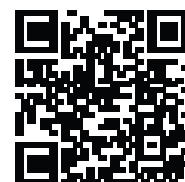
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We donated \$2,600 in 2024!



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