

# LIVING Better

A VA Butler Healthcare Quarterly Magazine

winter 2012



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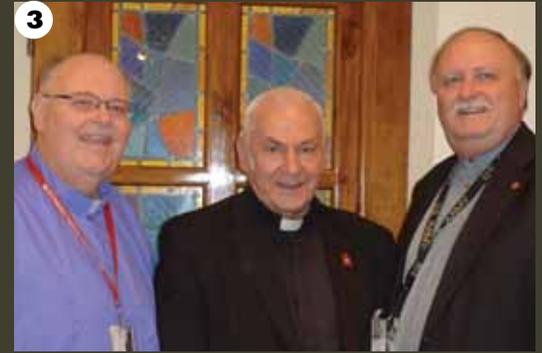
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# VA BUTLER HEALTHCARE'S WINTER HIGHLIGHTS



**1** Army Veteran Mark Daniels received Christmas presents and visited with Santa Claus at VA Butler as part of the annual Adopt-a-Veteran program.

**2** VA Butler Chef Rachelle Lyons provided a live, broadcasted demonstration of the *Nutrition Kitchen* to VA's Central Office, VISN 4 Chief Dietitians, and our local *MOVE!* Group.

**3** Veterans can now communicate with a VA Chaplain through My HealthVet's *Secure Messaging*. Rev. Gary Clise, Fr. Bill Ritzert, and Rev. Bob Smith bring spiritual support to VA Butler every day.

**4** Commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attacks on December 7, 1941, VA Butler held a Remembrance Ceremony in the newly constructed Community Living Center.

**5** We partnered with Armstrong Cable this winter to bring Veterans a new, monthly cable show – *Veteran Connection*. Check your local listings!

**6** VA Butler started a new monthly *PTSD Caregiver Support Group* to provide support and discussion among caregivers whose Veterans have PTSD.

**7** VA Butler celebrated the 34th National Salute to Veteran Patients Week February 12-18. Special guests visited and hundreds of Valentine cards addressed "Dear Veteran" were distributed to our residents.

**8** VA Butler's Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Program Committee organized a healthy living food drive to support our local homeless Veterans. Close to 900 items were collected.

**9** On February 3, we celebrated *National Wear Red Day* to raise awareness and educate individuals about heart disease in women and the need to protect heart health.

# C O N T E N T S

winter 2012

After his leg was removed, Army Veteran Harry Spiker was fitted with a prosthetic leg and came to VA Butler for rehabilitation.

## cover story



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## VA's Rehabilitation Family

VA Butler provides full service rehabilitation for enrolled Veterans, as well as prosthetics and sensory aids. Read about Army Veteran Harry Spiker's experience with our Rehabilitation Department, including what it's like having a prosthetic leg and learning to drive again...with your left foot!



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## Waking Up From A Terrible Nightmare

Veterans who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) often have difficulty sleeping because they are terrorized nightly by horrific dreams. VA Butler is here to help! Find out what treatment options are helping Army Veteran Anthony Kennedy.



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## Getting You Where You Need to Go

We understand traveling a long distance and not having the ability to drive yourself can make it hard to get to your VA appointment. Read about transportation resources available, including the daily shuttle from VA Butler to VA Pittsburgh.



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## Vet Chat

Hey Veterans! Vet Chat shares stories, news, and more from Veterans to Veterans. In this issue, read about Army Veteran Mark Murphy who comes to VA Butler for mental health treatment.



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## Health Tech, Tips & Tastes

What's new and interesting in the world of health technology? Find out! Also enjoy a health tip and a tasty, winter recipe.

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VA'S  
**REHABILITATION**  
FAMILY

Army Veteran Harry Spiker and his wife Carol (center) worked with a team of VA therapists – Marcy Huey, Dr. Katherine Flood, Suzanne Schaefers, Heather Weiland, and Sharon Bopp (left to right).

[www.prosthetics.va.gov](http://www.prosthetics.va.gov)

## Army Veteran Harry

Alton Spiker served during the Korean War as a machine gunner on the front line. After being wounded, he stayed in Korea, but worked on the railroad as a yard master. In the 1960s, he first came to VA with knee problems and has been treated here ever since.

In 2005, Harry had a knee replacement performed at VA Pittsburgh, followed by rehabilitation at VA Butler Healthcare. A few years later, an infection developed (unrelated to surgery/rehabilitation). After nine different surgeries to try and remove the infection, Harry's leg was removed.

"They did absolutely everything they could to save that leg," said Harry's wife of 55 years Carol. "There wasn't anything else they could do."

After each of his knee surgeries, Harry came to VA Butler for rehabilitation. With all the surgeries, he was in rehabilitation for well over a year and a half. "The therapists became more like extended family, more like friends to us," said Carol. "The people here are so dedicated – the compassion, the empathy. You can't say enough good about the people who work here."

After his leg was removed, they fitted Harry with a prosthetic leg and he continued rehabilitation at VA Butler, finishing up in the spring of 2010. "The medical care has been the most helpful for me," said Harry. "I wouldn't be functioning without it!" With his new leg, and rehabilitation, he is able to be independent in his own home again.

So, what's it like having a new leg? "It's different," said wife Carol. Harry uses crutches with his new leg, but gets around pretty well and is even driving again...with his left foot! VA Butler Kinesiotherapist Jill Umstead helped Harry through the Driving Rehabilitation Program. Since Harry has prosthesis on his right leg, he was trained on a left foot accelerator.

The Driving Rehabilitation Program assists Veterans if there are any special modifications needed to successfully operate their vehicle. After an evaluation, Veterans get behind the wheel of a virtual automobile to safely learn how to use any special adaptive equipment they might need. After that, they transfer their simulated driving into reality with a specially-adapted training vehicle.

Harry's truck was furnished with special equipment so he could drive with his left foot.

In addition, VA provided much needed changes to Harry's house, including a chair lift going up the stairs and several ramps, both inside and out. He also received a custom wheelchair, walker, crutches, and a cane. "If rehab thought he needed it, they supplied it. They have been excellent," said Carol. "There wasn't anything he needed they didn't provide for us."

For Carol, the best thing throughout all of this has been the attitude of the VA employees. "There isn't one person who, if I asked a question, hasn't tried to give me an answer that I can understand. If I needed to know something, they would tell me straight out. I appreciate that more than anything," she said.

In addition, VA helped Carol learn new skills needed to care for her husband. "He needs to have dressings changed every three days. They've taught me how to do it, given me the materials I need, and made it as easy as they possibly could," said Carol. "The biggest thing though is there is always

someone at the end of the phone if I have a question."

VA Butler provides full service rehabilitation for enrolled Veterans. Services range from artificial limb training and joint replacement therapies to hand therapy and stroke recovery. A multidisciplinary team of physicians, nurses, social workers, and rehabilitative staff work together to return Veterans to the optimal independence in daily living while promoting and restoring their health.

We also provide prosthetics and sensory aids. Although the term "prosthetic device" may suggest images of artificial limbs, it actually refers to any device that supports or replaces a body part or function. VA provides crutches, braces, eyeglasses, hearing aids, artificial limbs, oxygen bottles, wheelchairs, hospital beds, pacemakers, stents, dental implants, money for clothes, automobile modifications, home adaptations and much more. For more information, call 724.477.5048. ★

# WAKING UP

## FROM A TERRIBLE NIGHTMARE

**Sleep. It leaves** us feeling refreshed like nothing else. It can be occasionally elusive, almost always comforting, and absolutely crucial to our health. Even though we spend a third of our lives asleep, we hardly give it a moment's notice...until we *can't* sleep.

Veterans who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) often have difficulty sleeping because they are terrorized by horrific dreams. These dreams can be frightening, intrusive, and even dangerous. A Veteran may try to hurt themselves or their spouse, later waking up gasping for air or screaming.

When Anthony Kennedy came home from his first tour in Iraq, he had a nightmare incident that was both intrusive and physical. "I knew guys were coming home with issues, but in 2005 no one was really talking about PTSD like they are now. But, I knew I was having issues and something had to be done," he said. That's when Anthony first came to VA Butler Healthcare.

Captain Anthony Kennedy served two tours of duty in Iraq as a Platoon Leader and a Night Battle Captain as an officer in the United States Army. After enlisting in the U.S. Navy Reserve in 1992, Anthony served as a Fireman on both the USS Antrim and USS Moinester. He enlisted in the Oregon Army National Guard three years later and earned his commission through Officer Candidate School in 2004. Kennedy held various officer jobs including platoon leader, state equipment management officer, and chemical officer. He earned awards throughout his military career including a Bronze Star, the Army Meritorious Service Medal and two Army Commendation Medals.

After Anthony's second tour in Iraq, things really started to fall apart. For one thing, he began self-medicating with alcohol. Although not actually driving, he was sitting in his vehicle one day and was almost charged with a DUI. For him, this was the turning point. "It changed me, I made the decision to stop," Anthony said.

Anthony has undergone a range of treatment for PTSD (and continues to do so), including one-on-one counseling, medication,

and group therapy. "With group therapy, I'm not the only guy there. I'm not isolated anymore," Anthony said. "My treatment team never lets me go. You can tell the true character of the individuals working with you; I see a bunch of caring people."

In December 2011, Anthony received a service dog from America's VetDogs® - The Veteran's K-9 Corps®, a not-for-profit organization founded by the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind that serves the needs of disabled Veterans and active duty personnel. The lab and golden retriever mix named Floorm primarily helps him with PTSD. For example, she helps with anxiety, interactions, and helps him with nightmare interruption by licking his face to wake him up. "I take her everywhere with me," Anthony said. "I have anxiety issues, so

she helps me interact with people better."

When Veterans first come to VA Butler's Center for Behavioral Health, they are evaluated. If diagnosed with PTSD, they are referred to the PTSD Treatment Team, led by Dr. Mary Jane Niebauer. "Often times the first step is assigning what we call a case manager, someone to meet with the Veteran and help them decide what the most appropriate form of treatment is at the time."

VA Butler offers a range of treatment including a PTSD Basic Training Class, individual therapy, group therapy, a combination of both, etc. To learn more about PTSD and treatment options or to request to be seen by VA Butler's Center for Behavioral Health, call 800.362.8262, ext. 5039. ★



Army Veteran Anthony Kennedy takes his service dog Floorm with him everywhere he goes, primarily to help him with PTSD.





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Air Force Veteran Stan McCollough (5th from left) with VA Butler's drivers – Robert Bemben, Barry Payung, Andy Larimore, Doug Nemeth, James Sikorski and Robert Wilhite (left to right).

# GETTING

YOU WHERE YOU NEED TO GO

**About 3.3 million** Veterans enrolled in the VA Healthcare System (about 41 percent of the total Veterans enrolled) live in rural or highly rural areas of the country. VA Butler Healthcare is located in a rural setting, and has been working harder than ever to make health care more accessible through telehealth programs, expanded VA Outpatient Clinics, and online communication tools such as My HealtheVet's *Secure Messaging* and social media. We're available more often and in more places than ever before.

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We serve a five county area – Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Clarion, Lawrence, and Mercer. Veterans that live farthest away from a VA Outpatient Clinic can be defined as rural. A recent study conducted at VA Butler revealed that a lack of transportation was a major problem for our more rural Veterans. In fact, those who missed their VA appointments often did so because of a lack of transportation, be that not having a car available, insufficient travel funds, or the inability to drive due to poor health.

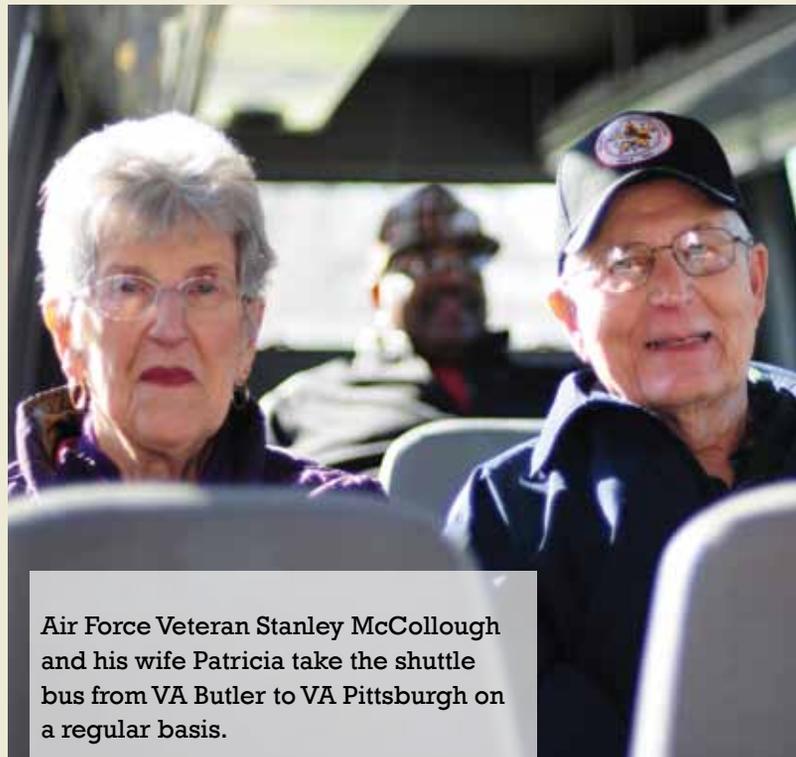
We understand traveling a long distance and not having the ability to drive yourself can make it hard to get here. **How can we help?** Here are just a few of the ways:

- **Mileage Reimbursement**  
If finances are a barrier for you, VA pays you gas money. To learn more about this or to find out about your eligibility, contact your health care team.
- **Special Mode Transportation**  
If you have a handicap or disability, VA can provide special mode transportation such as a wheelchair van. Talk to your primary care team about your concerns and in some cases we can prearrange to have a ride come right to your door.
- **Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Vans**  
The DAV operates a nationwide transportation network with volunteer drivers to help sick and disabled Veterans get to and from VA Butler for needed treatment.
- **Community Transportation**  
There are transportation services available in each county that can bring Veterans to the VA, and we can help refer those services.

“If you’re having trouble with a ride, it’s nothing to be shy about,” said VA Butler social worker Jaime Brewer who is the team lead for the Access to Care Systems Redesign Team. “We have a lot of Veterans in that situation, and we have the resources to help you. We want to help get you to your VA appointment.”

VA Butler Healthcare also offers a shuttle to VA Pittsburgh twice daily for Veterans who have appointments in Pittsburgh.

The first shuttle bus left from VA Butler to VA Pittsburgh in 1995 and was driven by Robert Wilhite, a Navy Veteran who has worked for the VA for 32 years and now serves as VA Butler’s Grounds & Transportation Work Leader. “The shuttle is a nice service for our Veterans. Our drivers help lead Veterans where they need to go and really do care about them,” he said. “It is a great experience for our drivers too. It’s interesting to hear the Veteran’s stories on the drive to and from Pittsburgh.”



Air Force Veteran Stanley McCollough and his wife Patricia take the shuttle bus from VA Butler to VA Pittsburgh on a regular basis.

Stanley McCollough, an 86-year-old Air Force Veteran, has been taking the shuttle bus from VA Butler to VA Pittsburgh regularly for about a year now with his wife Patricia. “The drivers are always really great, they’re very courteous,” said Stan. “I don’t have a lot of patience waiting in traffic...they do a great job!”

Without the shuttle bus, Stan, who is legally blind and unable to drive himself would have to rely on his wife to get him to and from VA Pittsburgh, which is about a two-hour drive from their house. “It [the shuttle] is a great source. People who don’t know about it – they’re really missing out!” Stan said.

Stan also uses community resources to get around, specifically the Butler Area Rural Transit, known as BART. BART is a shared ride program that provides transportation in Butler County. “I think we’re lucky here in Butler – a good transportation system and a great VA,” said Stan.

To learn more about VA transportation resources, talk to your health care team or call 800.362.8262. ★

## VA Butler Goes **RED** for Heart Health

On February 3, VA Butler Healthcare joined *The Heart Truth* campaign's *National Wear Red Day* to help spread the message that "Heart Disease Doesn't Care What You Wear, It's the #1 Killer of Women®."

Although significant progress has been made to increase awareness among women that heart disease is their #1 killer, most women fail to make the connection between heart disease risk factors and their personal risk of developing the disease. This disease is largely preventable, but kills more women than all forms of cancer combined.

While heart disease risk begins to rise in middle age, heart disease develops over time and can start at a young age, even in the teen years. It's never too early, or too late, to take action.

Eighty percent of cardiac events in women could be prevented if women made the right choices for their heart including diet, exercise and abstinence from smoking. Talk to VA Butler's Women Veterans Program Manager for information or visit [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).



VA Butler's employees wore red on February 3 to help raise awareness of heart disease in women Veterans.

## OEF/OIF/OND Veterans – Get Evaluated Today

Rabies is an infectious disease caused by a virus. It is transmitted from infected animals to people through bites and exposure to saliva. While rabies is rare in the United States (two to three affected patients annually), it remains a significant problem in developing areas of the world and causes approximately 55,000 deaths annually.

OEF/OIF/OND Veterans who were deployed in the previous 18 months, and were bitten or had contact with the saliva from a warm-blooded animal such as a dog, cat, bat, fox, skunk, raccoon, mongoose or jackal, or had a bat in their sleeping quarters could be at risk for rabies. Sometimes it is impossible to know if the animal you had contact with had rabies, so Veterans should contact their health care team at VA Butler and be evaluated as soon as possible.



## Veteran Outreach

### Q&A with VA Butler's Veteran Outreach Coordinator

#### Q: What is Veterans Outreach?

A: Outreach is VA's way of reaching out to Veterans in their neighborhoods and communities – and close to home. VA Butler does this by planning events and taking VA information into the community to educate Veterans, family members and the public about eligibility, enrollment, and VA programs and services available to Veterans. It's our way of reaching out to you.

#### Q: Why is Veteran Outreach important?

A: Access to health care is vital to VA's mission of providing exceptional health care to Veterans. Veteran outreach is one of the ways we diversify our methods of care – and it ensures that all Veterans are receiving the health care they earned through their military service to our country.

#### Q: How do you provide Veterans Outreach?

A: We provide outreach in several ways:

- Small question/answer sessions to private groups or Veteran Service Organizations like the VFW, American Legion, and DAV, etc.
- Health fairs at your location with various health screenings, including blood pressure screening, diabetic blood screening, body mass index, etc.
- Information stations at community events with staff to answer questions about VA programs and services such as behavioral health, My HealtheVet, etc.

#### Q: How can I schedule a Veteran Outreach Event or Health Fair?

A: Individuals or groups who are interested in hosting an outreach event or health fair may call VA Butler's Veteran Outreach Coordinator at 724.285.2778 or email [Louella.McKee@va.gov](mailto:Louella.McKee@va.gov).

## Tele-Speech Now Available!

Speech therapy is now available as part of VA Butler's Telehealth program. *What does this mean?*

Veterans now have the opportunity to receive speech therapy services at their local VA Outpatient Clinic instead of having the cost and inconvenience of traveling to the main facility in Butler.

A speech therapist and Veteran can "meet" and interact through videoconferencing. For more information, talk to your health care team or call VA Butler Telehealth Coordinator at 724.477.5037.

[www.butler.va.gov/giving](http://www.butler.va.gov/giving)

### Dear Veteran,

VA Butler celebrated the 34th National Salute to Veteran Patients Week February 12-18. During this week, we offered more than good medicine – we offered our patients a genuine connection with family, friends and community. Hundreds of Valentine cards and letters from people of all ages



addressed *Dear Veteran* were distributed to our Veteran residents and local celebrities and community members visited our Veterans all week long to say "hello" and "thank-you."

Personal contributions of time and expressions of care are the National Salute's hallmark and the foundation of VA Voluntary Service (VAVS). VA volunteers epitomize the one-to-one sharing and caring that is a core value of our Nation. Last year, for example, close to 87,000 VA volunteers gladly gave more than 12 million hours of service to Veterans.

Everyone has the opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of Veterans receiving care at VA Butler Healthcare during the annual National Salute – and all year long.

For more information about volunteering opportunities or making a donation to VA Butler, contact the Voluntary Service Office at 724.285.2575.

SHARING  
STORIES  
AND NEWS  
FROM  
VETERANS  
TO  
VETERANS

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# Vet Chat



**Mark Murphy, Army Veteran**

On October 23, 1983 in Beirut, Lebanon, a suicide bomber crashed through a checkpoint and drove directly into an American Marines barracks killing 241 American servicemen, the deadliest single-day death toll for the U.S. military since the first day of the Tet Offensive during the Vietnam War.

Mark Murphy served in the U.S. Army from 1978-1985.

He was stationed in Frankfurt, Germany at the 97 General Hospital during the Beirut barracks bombing. His unit was assigned to morgue detail and given the task of helping to identify the soldiers killed on that fateful day. After the September 11 attacks in 2001,

Mark began experiencing horrible, vivid dreams about the Beirut bombing incident.

Today Mark is undergoing mental health treatment at VA Butler Healthcare. "I know treatment is an ongoing process, and I've dedicated

myself to treatment because I can see results," said Mark. VA Butler offers a wide range of mental health services. Some of the most common we treat include depression,

substance abuse, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

"The access is great – being able to get in here and get an appointment,

especially in mental health," said Mark. "I know if I'm not doing well I can come here and they'll see me. I really need that sometimes." Get help now – call 800.362.8262, ext. 5039 or visit [www.mentalhealth.va.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov) for more information.

“The access is great – being able to get in here and get an appointment, especially in mental health. I know if I'm not doing well I can come here and they'll see me.”

**Mark Murphy**  
*Army Veteran*

## Veterans Serving Veterans

VA operates one of the **largest health care systems in the United States**. VA employs highly trained professionals who are dedicated to providing top quality health care to Veterans, and many are Veterans themselves!

“I love working for the VA because it gives me the opportunity to give back to Veterans. The VA has provided me, as well as my fellow Veterans with excellent health care and benefits.”

**Army Veteran  
and VA Employee  
Patty Wilson**



# Health Quiz: ear care

Are you cleaning your ears correctly or listening to your music too loud? Test your knowledge with our ear health quiz to learn more about maintaining healthy ears and protecting your hearing.

## 1. How do you clean your ears?

- A Wash my outer ear only
- B Wash my outer ear, and remove wax from the rim of the ear canal with a cotton swab
- C Wash my outer ear, and remove wax from deep inside the ear canal with a cotton swab

## 2. How loud do you think a noise has to be before it starts to damage your hearing?

- A Extremely loud – when it starts to hurt my ears
- B Very loud – when I can't hear even though someone is shouting at me
- C Slightly loud – when I have to shout to be heard by others

## 3. Do you wear earplugs or ear muffs while using equipment such as lawnmowers or power tools?

- A Sometimes
- B Always
- C Never

## 4. When listening to music, do you like to have the volume loud enough to drown out all other sounds?

- A Of course, that's the best way to listen to music
- B Sometimes, like if I'm hosting a party
- C Never, I prefer it to be more background noise

## 5. Are you frequently in noisy environments such as workplaces with machinery, NASCAR races, or rock concerts?

- A Occasionally or never
- B Sometimes
- C All the time

## 6. Head injuries can sometimes cause hearing loss – how safety-conscious are you?

- A I always wear my seatbelt, a helmet on bikes/motorcycles, and use protective equipment when playing sports
- B I usually take safety precautions, but there are occasions when I don't have time for it or don't want to
- C I never bother with seatbelts on short car trips and I never bother to wear protective equipment

Calculate your score and see your results below.

- 1 A = 3 pts B = 2 pts C = 1 pt
- 2 C = 3 pts B = 2 pts A = 1 pt
- 3 B = 3 pts A = 2 pts C = 1 pt
- 4 C = 3 pts B = 2 pts A = 1 pt
- 5 A = 3 pts B = 2 pts C = 1 pt
- 6 A = 3 pts B = 2 pts C = 1 pt

Hey Veterans! Share your stories with us in Vet Chat. Email [amanda.wilczynski@va.gov](mailto:amanda.wilczynski@va.gov) or [lauren.heiger@va.gov](mailto:lauren.heiger@va.gov). We'd love to hear from you!

## Who's Who?

CALVIN WILSON, DMD

### Healthy Hearing

There are three types of hearing loss: 1) **Sensor neural or "nerve" loss** can be caused by noise exposure as well as trauma, drugs, and heredity. 2) **Conductive loss** occurs when there is a mechanical loss of energy in the hearing system like a ruptured eardrum or scar tissue on the ear drum. 3) **Mixed loss** is a combination of sensor neural and conductive losses.

Your hearing typically decreases with age, but if you reduce the amount of noise your hearing system is exposed to, you will help reduce the amount of hearing loss you may develop. There are several hearing protective devices you can obtain that may help with this too.

If you feel you have difficulty hearing or have a constant "ringing" in your ears (called tinnitus), talk to your VA Butler health care team today.

Calvin Wilson, DMD, is an Audiologist at VA Butler Healthcare. To learn more about VA Audiology Care, talk to your health care team.



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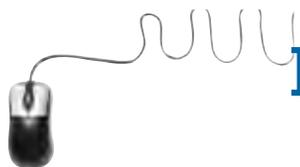
## Hearing Quiz Results

**Score 6 to 10:** You may be in danger of some serious hearing damage. Talk to your health care team at VA Butler Healthcare today to learn more about protecting your hearing and making healthier choices.

**Score 11 to 14:** You have a general understanding of hearing safety, but there are some lifestyle choices you may want to consider so you're not putting your hearing at risk. Talk to your VA doctor about any questions/concerns you have.

**Score 15 to 18:** Congratulations, you are making healthy lifestyle choices that are reducing your risk of hearing loss. Keep it up!

Source: Better Health Channel



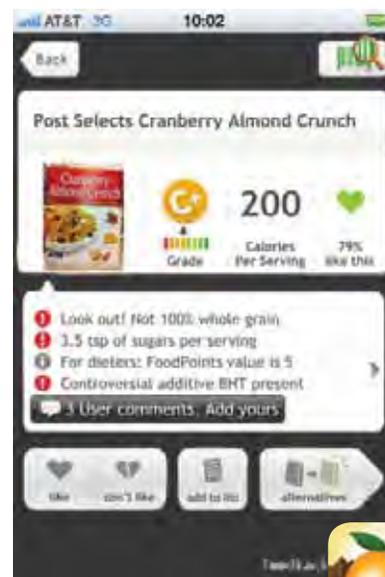
**There are 1,440** minutes in every day, schedule 30 of them for physical activity. Need help? There's an app for it! Try one of the many health and fitness apps available on your smart phone.

Downloading one or multiple health apps can help you become more knowledgeable about the foods you eat, how you exercise, and how to get and keep your body in great shape!

These five free apps are just some of the tools available to you:

- **Lose It!**

Stay on track each day by recording your food and exercise and staying within your calorie budget



fooducate



[www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)

- **Heart Fitness**

Measure your heart rate with a built-in camera and monitor your physical fitness

- **Nike Training Club**

Get lean, toned, and strong with more than 85 custom-built workouts

- **Calorie Counter & Diet Tracker**

Lose weight with the largest food database of any calorie counter

- **Fooducate**

Scan and choose healthy groceries to start eating better

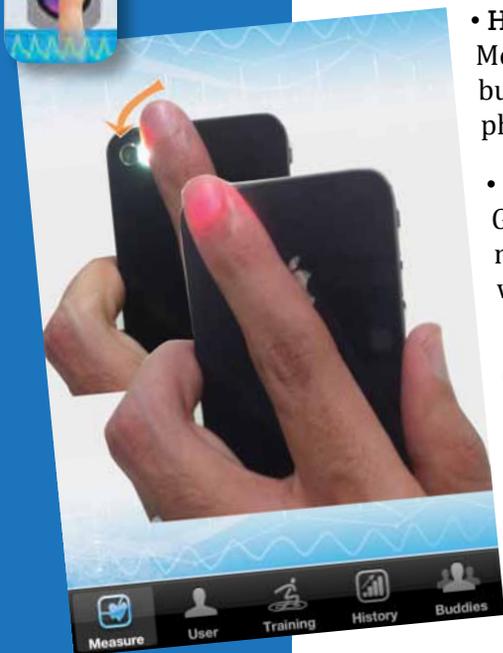
Use VA's My HealthVet national website ([www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)) to complement any or all of these healthy apps. Keep food and activity journals, research health, chart or graph your personal health information, and more! Call 800.362.8262, ext. 2595 for more information.

Want to go a more traditional route? Try *MOVE!*, the national VA program to help Veterans lose weight, keep it off and improve their health. Veterans interested in a *MOVE!* Program may contact their health care team for a referral or call the *MOVE!* Program Office for more information, 800.362.8262, ext. 5504.

Did you know VA has a mobile site and PTSD app? Learn more and check out other government apps at: <http://apps.usa.gov/>.



heart fitness



## Cheesy Red Pepper Pizza



### Ingredients

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 14 ounce package refrigerated pizza dough
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup sliced roasted red and/or yellow sweet peppers
- 2 medium roma tomatoes, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons shredded fresh spinach (optional)
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese (4 ounces)
- 1/4 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons snipped fresh basil

Calories: 182 ★ Total Fat: 6g ★ Cholesterol: 9mg ★ Carbohydrates: 25g

### Directions

Preheat oven to 425° F. Coat a 12-inch pizza pan with nonstick spray. Press refrigerated dough into prepared pan, building up edges. Brush with olive oil. Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes, and then remove. Arrange sweet pepper, tomato slices, and, if using, spinach on the crust. Sprinkle with cheese and black pepper. Bake in preheated oven for 5-10 minutes more or until cheese is bubbly. Sprinkle with basil.

Source: *Heart Healthy Living*

<http://my.hearthealthyonline.com/recipe/pizza/cheesy-red-pepper-pizza/>

## Crossword

### Stay Mentally Active

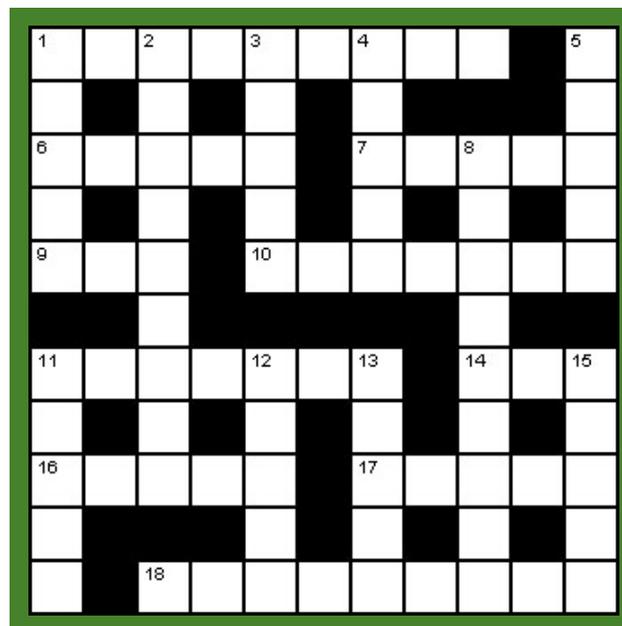
Crossword puzzles help many people improve mental health by maintaining an active mind. Research has found that keeping the brain active seems to increase its vitality and may build its reserves of brain cells and connections. You could even generate new brain cells! Working crossword puzzles regularly may also help you with daily activities, like balancing your checkbook or reading instructions.

#### ACROSS

- Perspicacious
- Egg-shaped object
- Vacuous
- The night before
- Display of bad temper
- Get
- Large antelope
- Musical drama
- Melodies
- Rife

#### DOWN

- Range
- Monstrous
- Trainee
- Vegetable
- Cherished desire
- Hubris
- Fragrance
- Picture
- Minor actor in a crowd scene
- Distressed



## HEALTH

# tip

### DESTRESS WITH MEDITATION

Bad weather, the seasonal pace, work: if this time of year has your stress level rising, close your eyes, breathe, and be repetitive. Banish thoughts, focus on your breathing, and repeat a single word or phrase. These simple techniques fire up your body's natural relaxation response.

And meditation can do more than soothe away stress. Research shows it may help lower blood pressure, boost immunity, reduce PMS symptoms, and even aid in fertility.

Source: *WebMD*





Making Lives Better® ★ [butler.va.gov](http://butler.va.gov)

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#### ARMSTRONG COUNTY VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Klingensmith Building  
313 Ford Street, Suite 2B  
Ford City, PA 16226  
724.763.4090

#### CLARION COUNTY VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC

AC Valley Medical Center  
855 Route 58, Suite One  
Parker, PA 16049  
724.659.5601

#### CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Freedom Square  
1183 Freedom Road, Suite A101  
Cranberry Township, PA 16066  
724.741.3131

#### LAWRENCE COUNTY VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Ridgewood Professional Centre  
1750 New Butler Road  
New Castle, PA 16101  
724.598.6080

#### MICHAEL A. MARZANO VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC

295 North Kerrwood Drive, Suite 110  
Hermitage, PA 16148  
724.346.1569

VA Butler Healthcare, located in Butler County, Pennsylvania has been attending to each Veteran's total care since 1937. With more than 600 employees, we are the health care choice for over 18,000 Veterans throughout Western Pennsylvania and parts of Ohio, and are a member of VA Healthcare VISN 4 under the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. VA Butler Healthcare provides comprehensive Veteran care including primary, specialty and mental health care – as well as health maintenance plans, management of chronic conditions, preventive medicine needs and social support services to our nation's Veterans.

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