



# ~After the Badge~



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## ~ Before, During, and After the Badge ~

The following story is about Michael Dowd who, on a fall day in 1969, was brutally shot 4 to 6 times in the abdomen and legs. This story appeared in the March 29, 2017 edition of the Denver news and was written by Andrew Kenny. Here is Michael Dowd's story:

Michael's death certificate said cause of death was "diabetes" but his partner, Steve Metros, knew that was not the true cause of death and he set out on a mission to get Michael's story known and get his name on the Police Memorial. Steve Metros spent much of his final years parked in a wheelchair at his desk in Littleton. He was in his 80s, a retiree since 1996 and a widower since 1981. For



hours and days, he wrote letters in his careful hand to some of the most influential people in Denver.

He knew that he didn't have much time left. He'd had a storied career at the Denver Police Department, having led the city's SWAT team, headed up Internal Affairs, commanded District 3 and overhauled the city's crime lab.

Now the captain had one last case to close.

Cont. on p3

## Message from the Board

- The April Dinner was at the White Fence Farm. Once again the restaurant was a crowd favorite with a large turnout, good friends, good food, and good times.
- On March 17, 2017 the Police Museum hosted a dinner at the PPA Event center. 17 officers were given awards and were honored for their service during the 1973 Crusade for Justice bombing and shootout. Many officers were injured with some of the officers being shot; it's about time they received the recognition they deserved.
- Roster Books have been mailed! Please let us know if you have not received your book. You can send us an email at: [Denver@dpra.info](mailto:Denver@dpra.info) or contact one of the board members.
- The next dinner is May 17<sup>th</sup> at Piccolos Restaurant. ..Italian and Mexican food!
- The Police Memorial will be held May 18<sup>th</sup>, details are posted on the DPRA web site.
- Remember to check the DPRA website frequently for the most current information on upcoming events: <http://www.dpra.info>



## How the Denver Police Widows' Association Got Started

By Debi Libonati

In the Spring of 1972, the President of the Denver Police Pension Association, (D.P.P.A.), Gene Covello, along with the Secretary of that organization, Jerry Mangan, contacted the following Denver Police Widows and asked them to form an organization for the widows of Denver Police Officers: Nellye Carver, Lena Crews, Ann Heath, Jeanne McCoy, and Kathryn Woodard.

*The Widows Association is a great way to meet new people and make friends!*

They met and composed a letter to be sent to every Denver Police Widow living in the metropolitan area, notifying them of the proposed organization and of the first meeting to be held at Lena Crews' home in June. There were 25 women who attended the meeting. It was explained to those present that the D.P.P.A. Board had suggested that the widows form their own group, while still being a part of the D.P.P.A.

*The Widows Association is a great way to meet new people and make friends!*

Even though nothing much developed from that first meeting, the above ladies decided to try again and held a second meeting in August; this time with an added volunteer, Dorothy Drumeller. Jerry Mangan was also in attendance and assisted with the discussion. It was decided to conduct a survey by telephone, and all 164 widows in the metro area were called.

The survey revealed that there was enough interest in forming such an association, so the first social function was organized. In October, 25 widows enjoyed a Sunday matinee at the Colorado Music Hall. Due to the winter weather, however, the group did not meet again until March 25, 1973. This was the Association's first meeting, with 36 widows present. An election of officers was conducted, and Jeanne McCoy was elected as President; Lena Crews, Vice President; LaVerne O'Brien, Secretary; and Ann Potts, Treasurer. Maxene LeGrand volunteered to arrange rides for those who needed them, so she was given the title of Transportation Chairman.

At subsequent meetings, other issues such as the name of the organization, eligibility for membership, dues, and By-Laws were discussed and voted upon. Pursuant to those discussions, it was decided that the organization would be known as the Denver Police Widows' Association (D.P.W.A.); eligibility would be reserved for any woman who was a widow of a Denver Police Officer, still bearing his name and receiving a widow's pension from the City and County of Denver; dues would be \$2.50 per year; and Lena Crews was appointed to draft a set of By-Laws from the Robert's Rules of Order. In addition, it was later determined that a Chaplain was needed, and Agnes O'Donnell was elected to fill that position.

During the first year of operation, the D.P.P.A. contributed the amount of \$100.00 to assist the new organization. Jeanne McCoy and LaVerne O'Brien wrote and published the initial monthly newsletters, which were sent to all dues paying members. The newsletters were also mailed to widows who had not yet joined the Association, which generated a considerable amount of new memberships. The newsletters were friendly and humorous, and helped to solidify the close feelings that were developing within the group. By the start of the second year, there were 97 dues paying members, with an average attendance of 33 members at the monthly luncheons.

In retrospect, The Denver Police Widows' Association has provided its members with the opportunity to make many wonderful friends. We all feel close, because we have lived our lives with a common thread; experiencing the fears and worries of a policeman's life, and the dangers that beset him and his family. For all of this, Denver Police Widows share a rapport that is unique only to them.

The Denver Police Widows' Association is a great group of ladies who meet once a month for lunch at various restaurants in the Denver-metro area. It is also a tremendous outreach program for new police widows and an ongoing support resource. If you are a Denver Police Widow and would be interested in attending a luncheon or if you have any questions regarding the Association, please contact **Debi Libonati at 303-537-7890**. You can be sure that you will be welcomed with open arms.



(Cont. from p1)

Metros' mission: Convince the department to acknowledge that Michael Dowd, his long-time friend, had been killed in the line of duty. He had for years campaigned to have Dowd's name inscribed on the memorial in front of police headquarters. And he wasn't getting anywhere.

The trouble was that so much time had passed. Dowd had died in 1997, "diabetes" listed as the cause, but Metros was convinced that his partner's death truly began decades earlier.

### **This story really starts in 1969.**

It was November 28, to be exact — a date that would redefine both detectives' lives.

Dowd and Metros were partners back then. They were off duty and had left Denver's City Hall just before noon. Driving West Colfax Avenue in their unmarked cruiser, they spotted a familiar face: a recently released felon in a tan Thunderbird coupe. They went to call in the license plate, but the car suddenly took off.

The ensuing chase took the detectives into an alley near The Denver Post's building in downtown Denver. The cars stopped and Metros was approaching the Thunderbird, gun drawn, when a middle-aged man leaped from the car and fled.

Dowd, still wearing a suit and tie from a court appearance, chased the man toward California Street, shouting, "Halt! Stay right where you're at!"

Catching up, Dowd "jumped him from behind," he later told a newspaper reporter. "He threw me off and went for his gun, and I drew mine."

Then, according to press accounts, the fleeing man grabbed Dowd, drew a .38 caliber pistol and fired four to six rounds into the police officer's abdomen, legs, arm and shoulder. As he was struck, Dowd drew his own service revolver and shot his assailant, both men slumping to the sidewalk.

The suspect died almost immediately. Later, police would identify him as James "Mad Dog" Sherbondy, a killer who had escaped a prison camp nearly two months earlier. In his bag, investigators found pipe bombs filled with dynamite and black

powder. A map plotted an escape route from the Meadowlark Hills Shopping Center in Lakewood. Dowd later would receive the police versions of the Purple Heart and Medal of Honor for his actions.

### **The detective barely survived.**

He was held up as a hero in the newspapers, which ran photos of his visit with the mayor and the chief and even chronicled his return to the hospital as his injuries persisted.

Dowd would suffer for years to come. The initial surgeries to stop his hemorrhaging forced the removal of part of his pancreas and liver. A bullet was removed in surgery nearly three years later. His pancreas was fully removed in 1974; he developed diabetes and subsequently had both legs amputated.

The front page of The Rocky Mountain News on Nov. 29, 1969. (Andrew Kenney/Denverite)



"His life changed," said his son, Tom Dowd. "He had five sons, and that kind of put him on the shelf from being able to do a lot of things."

He stayed with the police department, but he was unable to stay on active patrol. Instead, he became the director of the Police Activities League, where he worked with hundreds of poor kids in sports leagues.

"This was his love. Since he couldn't work the streets the way he did, he knew he could deliver with this," Metros said of his partner.

"He was, in his prior life, very athletic himself," said



(Cont. from p3)

### *~After The Badge~*

Christy Metros Bougie, daughter of Steve Metros. “And I think he took a lot of ownership of mentoring a lot of people through that program.”

Dowd died in 1997, a stroke having left him half-paralyzed and mute at age 62. His obituary ran with his photos in the newspapers, recalling his role in stopping a violent man on Denver’s streets. Even then, his family connected his decades of suffering to his sacrifice that day in 1969 — but that’s where his story seemed to end.

#### **Years later, Metros faced his own illness.**

Late in his life, the retired captain had developed spinal stenosis.

“As his own body started to fail him, he became wheelchair bound, probably for the last five years of his life,” Michael Metros said. “It was during that time, he really had time to think about the past.”

The Metros and Dowd families had stayed close. “My father watched him suffer, and they had kept in touch for years,” Metros said.

An idea began to ferment. “In talking with me, we decided that this was actually an honest and true event — that Mike Dowd really did die that day,” he continued.

The younger Metros, a physician specializing in palliative care, developed his own theory of the case. He believed that the bullet that shredded Dowd’s pancreas had resulted in severe Type I diabetes, which is extremely unusual in adults.

Over the decades, he theorized, this led to vascular disease that limited his circulation, ultimately leading to the stroke that preceded Dowd’s death.

#### **What Metros wanted was simple, but it wasn’t easy.**

Metros wanted to see Dowd’s name on the memorial to fallen officers. He saw a direct line between the 1969 shootout and his friend’s untimely death. Yet his son recalls that they encountered obstacle after obstacle.

“You wouldn’t believe it,” Michael Metros said.

First, they found that the doctors who treated Dowd had died, and that his medical records at the hospital had long since been destroyed. (Ironically, a far more complete case exists for Sherbondy, the escaped convict.) So Metros conscripted Dowd’s son and his own to start building the case.

“He’d always get on me: You’ve got to get your ass in gear. You’re dropping the ball on this. He just kept pushing and pushing to do this,” said Tom Dowd, a high-school teacher and basketball coach.

There was also the bureaucracy, Michael Metros said. His father, despite his stature, was rebuffed twice by the department. They said that they just didn’t have the evidence to put Dowd on the wall, though they’d recently added officers who had died years after injuries sustained in, respectively, the early 1900s and in 1980.

Metros figured that the new police administration simply didn’t understand what Dowd’s actions meant or how many lives he might have saved that day. “I think for the prior police chiefs, et cetera, this has been a legendary story for a long time,” he said. But the initial response from the department was “out of hand rejection.”

But the department had a reason to be skeptical, according to Sgt. Dean Christopherson. When he’s not on graveyard patrols, Christopherson is one of the department’s historians and a founder of the Denver Police Museum project. He had researched nine historical deaths of officers and knew the wall of valor perhaps more intimately than anyone.

He also knew that one of the officers on that wall later turned out to have been murdered by a romantic partner following accusations of infidelity — not exactly a death in the line of duty, he said. Not to say that he thought Dowd and Metros’ families were lying, but there’s a certain significance to the wall and the lives it commemorates.

“No one should die and be forgotten by their community for enforcing the law and protecting his community,” Christopherson said. But to maintain the integrity of that honor, he said, “We have to have the corroboration.”





In Dowd's case, Christopherson simply couldn't find a conclusive link between the gunshot and the death, and he advised rejection of the application. When Metros asked again — and when Chief Robert White started getting letters too — Christopherson made his own search for records and documents, he said.

Still, no progress.

"I reviewed it three times at the request of the police department," he said. "We didn't have anything to show the medical, causal link."

#### **An answer arrived just in time.**

Dr. James Caruso had seen plenty of unusual cases before he became Denver's chief medical examiner in 2014, including countless autopsies of American soldiers and examinations of the astronauts who died in the Space Shuttle Columbia crash of 2003.

Still, the handwritten letter from Steve Metros caught his attention — as did the follow-up phone call and the in-person visit. (Metros really was persistent.)

Caruso started following the same leads, and he sensed the same pattern of facts that the Metros and Dowd families had been arguing now for years. He also encountered the same gaps in the record.

"Any of the physicians who took care of Officer Dowd had long since died. I had no personal accounts from the medical practitioners. I had no medical records," he said.

And when he got Dowd's death certificate from Jefferson County, it listed the cause of death as "diabetes."

The medical examiner, however, had a power that no one else did: Caruso is a trained pathologist with the power to reassess the original coroner's finding.

"In my mind, if I could make a link between the injuries he sustained ... and his death, and could conclude that it was a homicide, I think that would provide Capt. Metros with the kind of motivation and assistance that he needed to move the case forward," he said.

So Caruso pulled in the scraps of information from

Dowd's police file, along with testimony from his family and newspaper clippings. Metros, meanwhile, had secured a letter from two former police chiefs urging that Dowd's name be inscribed on the memorial, and he was in touch with former mayors of Denver too.

#### **This is what the medical examiner found:**

"When he died, he had all the complications that come along with having diabetes for years and years. The question is, how does that diabetes originate?" Caruso said.

"In reviewing everything that was provided to me, I felt fairly confident that if it weren't for the injuries to his abdomen from the gunshot wounds, it would be more reasonable than not to conclude that Officer Dowd may have never developed diabetes."

Specifically, one of the bullets had shredded Dowd's pancreas, impairing his ability to produce insulin and likely causing his Type 1 diabetes, which is rare in adults and for which Dowd's family had no history, Caruso said.

Diabetes, in turn, is a significant contributing factor for the vascular problems that led to Dowd's amputations and likely contributed to the stroke just before the end of his life, Caruso said.

To double-check his work, Caruso asked medical examiners in Chicago, Milwaukee and Arapahoe County. All agreed with his same conclusions, he said.

"With the information available to me at this time, the manner of death, in my opinion, is homicide," Caruso wrote in his report. And with that, he was able to issue Dowd a new death certificate, this one from Denver County, where he'd been shot so many years earlier.

"He's the person who, for my dad, was the real hero in all of this," Michael Metros said of Caruso. "... It was finally having somebody in a position of authority who could come to the same medical conclusions that I did. That was the breakthrough that made this happen."

(Cont. on p6)



**Everything changed from there.**

With the new death certificate in hand, Christopherson could justify Dowd's inclusion on the department's wall.

Time was running short. Three years had passed, and Steve Metros' health was worsening. In fact, he had double pneumonia when the date of a new ceremony for Dowd arrived. But he was able to attend the unveiling of Dowd's name on the memorial on May 14 of that year, an event complete with 21-gun salute, honor guard and wreaths.

"Captain Metros always said, before he dies, he's going to see his partner and friend on our memorial," Christopherson said.

As Steve Metros gave television interviews, he seemed to open up about the day of the shooting and the sight of his partner in a pool of blood.

"That was the first time I'd ever really seen my dad talk in detail about it," said Christy Metros Bougie. "And the emotion, and he was tearing up about it — it really stuck with me."

Their careers had diverged on the day Dowd was so awfully injured, but Metros had ensured that his friend would be remembered not just as someone who survived but as someone who had given his life for Denver.

"That day, that scarred him, and he always felt committed to our dad and our family, to make sure that things went right," Tom Dowd said.

And things were put right indeed, Michael Metros said. "The day of the ceremony, the police chief (Robert White) did apologize to the Dowd family, that the Denver Police Department hadn't recognized the sacrifice that he had made that day," he recalled.

That day, Metros was able to thank all the people he'd cajoled and convinced over the years, including Tommy Dowd, whom the Metros family credits as instrumental in the process.

Metros even set a lunch date with Caruso, the medical examiner. It would never happen.

The captain's illness grew worse in the next 36 hours, and his family took him to Porter Adventist Hospital. Seeing his father near death, Michael Metros said, "Dad, you don't have to do this anymore."

The elder Metros had finished his last duty — and he seemed relieved. He ended his medications, spending his last days reminiscing happily with his family. He died on June 2, less than three weeks after the ceremony for Mike Dowd — and now they both have their place in the city's history.

"You put your life on the line to do a job. Every day you go, you cannot come back," Tom Dowd said. "That bond that you build ... that just kind of galvanizes them for life."

Now, he said, his own kids can see their grandfather's legacy in stone — not just in downtown Denver, but also at state and national memorials to fallen officers. "They can go down there," he said, "and his name is on that wall forever."

## **"Code 7"**

### **DENVER POLICE RETIREES ASSOCIATION**

- April 12<sup>th</sup>-White Fence Farm
- Monthly Breakfast--1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of Every Month
- May 18, 2017 Police Memorial
- May 17<sup>th</sup> – Piccolo's Restaurant
- August 2017 – Picnic time and place TBD.

**\*\*Check the [DPRA.info](http://DPRA.info) Web site for more information\*\***



Congratulations to the following members of the Denver Police Department who, after serving with exemplary dedication and pride, have been promoted to the rank of retirement!!!

We know you are looking forward to a well deserved and fulfilling retirement. We hope DPRA is included in your plans and you will join us at the DPRA dinners, the annual Laughlin trip and all the other fun activities throughout the year

## Welcome to the following retirees:

**Tech. Donald Gilworth, 89044** Retired Jan 2017

**Tech. Derrick Dominguez, 91001**, Retired Jan 2017

**Sgt. Betty Hale, 92026**, Retired Jan 2017

**Sgt. Jeffrey Koltz, 88023**, Retired Feb 2017

**PO Dwayne Huddleston, 99067**, Retired Feb 2017

**Crpl. Kevin Malloy, 99046**, Retired Feb 2017

**PO Kevin Kreuzer, 86013**, Retired Feb 2017

**Sgt James Moneghan, 82054**, Retired March 2017

**PO Gregory Innes, 90018**, Retired April 2017

**Det. Carl Terry, 93020**, Retired April 2017

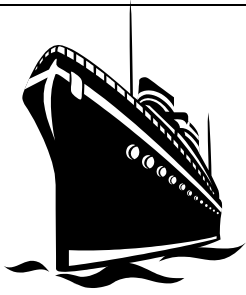


# Farewell for Now

It takes only a minute to say hello  
and forever to say goodbye



- **Retired Officer Dennis Talty, 67009**, passed away March 7, 2017
- **Retired Officer John Super, 80043**, passed away March 5, 2016
- **Catherine Shain wife of deceased Officer Louis Shain** passed away March 3, 2017.
- **Retired Officer Ronald J. Baldi, 55019**, passed away February 25, 2017.
- **Retired Officer William Angermann III** passed away February 20, 2017.
- **Retired Lt. Daren Ciempa, 96001** passed away February 20, 2017.
- **Jean Baldi wife of Ronald Baldi** passed away February 7, 2017.
- **Retired Officer Nelson Love, 50042**, passed away February 4, 2017.
- **Becky Schlitter wife of Bill Schlitter** passed away January 24, 2017.
- **Retired Officer Belt Harlan Jr, 73078**, passed away January 8, 2017.
- **Helen Hamby wife of Gordon Hamby** passed away January 1, 2017.



## The Ship Sailed to Panama!

The beautiful Island Princess cruise ship set sail February 28, 2017 for the Panama Canal, it was filled with several DPRA retirees.

A warm heartfelt thank you goes to Deb Dilley for organizing the adventure. The first evening of the cruise all the retirees met in the Wheel House lounge for a 'Meet and Greet' evening. After that first evening we were all on our own, but not really! At times, during the cruise, we would run into other retirees and stop to fill each other in on the excursions we took and learn of theirs. Sometimes it was a quick conversation as we hurried off to our next adventure, other times we would slow down and join together for lunch or dinner. Everyone had a different experience!

The first stop on the cruise was Aruba, an interesting island 19 miles in length and 15 miles from the coast of Venezuela. Nothing is indigenous to Aruba, all is imported!

Our next stop was Cartagena Columbia. Cartagena is a gorgeous fishing village on Colombia's Caribbean coast; it has excellent beaches, a historic old town and beautiful colonial architecture.

Next we travel thru the Panama



The local sheriff was looking for a deputy, so Gomer - who was not exactly the sharpest nail in the bucket, went in to try out for the job. "Okay," the sheriff drawled, "Gomer, what is 1 and 1?"

"11" he replied.

The sheriff thought to himself, "That's not what I meant, but he's right."

"What two days of the week start with the letter 'T'?"

"Today and tomorrow."

He was again surprised that Gomer supplied a correct answer that he had never thought of himself.

"Now Gomer, listen carefully: Who killed Abraham Lincoln?"

Gomer looked a little surprised himself, then thought really hard for a minute and finally admitted, "I don't know."

"Well, why don't you go home and work on that one for a while?"

So, Gomer wandered over to the pool hall where his pals were waiting to hear the results of the interview. Gomer was exultant.

"It went great! First day on the job and I'm already working on a murder case!"



## Three Elderly Sisters

Three sisters, ages 92, 94, and 96, live in a house together. One night the 96-year-old draws a bath. She puts one foot in and pauses. She yells down the stairs, "Was I getting in or out of the bath?"

The 94-year-old yells back, "I don't know. I'll come up and see." She starts up the stairs and pauses. Then she yells out, "Was I going up the stairs or down?"

The 92-year-old is sitting at the kitchen table having tea and listening to her sisters. She shakes her head and says, "I sure hope I never get that forgetful." She knocks on wood for good measure. She then replies, "I'll come up and help both of you as soon as I see who's at the door."



(Cont. from p8)

canal. The Panama Canal officially opened on August 15, 1914, it was completed at a cost of more than \$350 million and was the most expensive construction project in U.S. history to that point.

Pictures do not do the Canal justice, it was an incredible sight and journey, passing thru the canal and seeing the vastness of the nearby jungle brought a whole new meaning to the word 'jungle', it was astonishing. The canal was a truly memorable experience and was intensified by witnessing it with friends.

Next stop: Costa Rica. There were many excursions available in beautiful Costa Rica, volcanoes, zip lines, tours thru the historic city and the list goes on.

The stop after Costa Rica was Nicaragua but was canceled due to weather and rough water so we travelled on to our final stop, Cabo San Lucas.

Sunbathing is the main event in Cabo particularly along the sandy shores of Playa Solmar (Playa is a Spanish word for shore, 'Solmar' means Sound, Ocean and Living Marina Resources) or the super popular Playa del Amor. You cannot go to Cabo without seeing the Arch over the water.



We left Cabo and sailed on to San Francisco, where, sadly the cruise came to an end but...there will be more. Hope to see everyone on the next cruise!

Charlotte, Paulette, Debbie



Costa Rica



Aruba Coastline



Gail & Don Lindley



Panama Canal



Colombia



Glen & Barb Miller

# Daily Tea for Your Brain

*Green or black may cut dementia risk*

by Candy Sagon, [AARP](#), March 22, 2017



People who drink at least a cup of tea a day receive the most benefits in terms of brain health.

On any given day, more than 158 million Americans are drinking tea, and if that's your daily habit, you could be helping your brain.

Regularly drinking a cuppa (or three) of tea — green or black — may cut the risk of dementia among older adults by 50 percent, new research by the National University of Singapore suggests.

Findings from the new study, published in the *Journal of Nutrition, Health & Aging*, also show that for those who are genetically at risk for developing Alzheimer's disease, regular tea consumption may cut their risk by 86 percent.

Earlier research, including studies in Norway, China and the United States, has linked drinking tea with better cognitive performance and a lower risk of cognitive decline. The Singapore study looked at both green and black tea consumption, as well as tea's effect on people with the APOE e4 gene, a known risk factor for Alzheimer's.

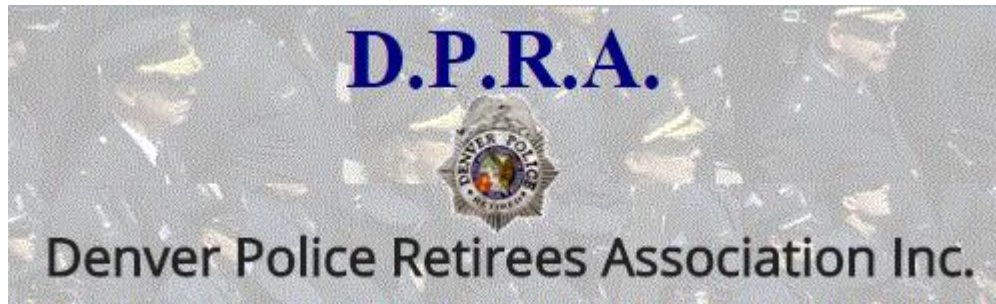
The research team studied the tea-drinking habits of 957 healthy Chinese adults age 55 and older from 2003 to 2005 and then tested their cognitive function every two years until 2010.

What they found is that regular tea drinkers (those who drank at least a cup, and up to three or more cups, a day) had the most benefits in terms of brain health. The benefits were especially strong in those with the APOE e4 gene, according to the study.

Both green and black tea were protective, but they need to be brewed from tea leaves, either loose or in tea bags, lead author Feng Lei, assistant professor at the university's Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, said in an email. The results don't apply to fruit or herbal teas.

Tea leaves contain flavonoids that have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant potentials that may protect the brain from vascular damage. Ready-to-drink teas made from powder, on the other hand, have only a minuscule amount of the flavonoids of brewed tea, according to the U.S. Agriculture Department.

Even though the study was conducted on older Chinese adults, the results could apply to other ethnic groups, as well, Feng said. He called it "a simple and inexpensive lifestyle measure" that might pay off big in later life.



**DPRA**

**c/o**

**Rocky Mountain Law Enforcement Credit Union**

**10025 Park Meadows Drive**

**Lone Tree, CO 80124**

**Web Site: [www.dpra.info](http://www.dpra.info)**

**Email: [denver@dpra.info](mailto:denver@dpra.info)**