



Rensselaer County  
 Unified Family Services  
 Veterans Service Agency  
 1600 Seventh Avenue  
 Troy, NY 12180  
 Phone: (518) 270-2760  
 FAX: (518) 270-2956

# Rensselaer County Veterans Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 1  
 January 2008

KATHLEEN M. JIMINO

County Executive

Joseph W. Cybulski  
 Commissioner

Robert M. Reiter  
 Director

## Guide to Agent Orange Benefits:

### Van Transportation...

- \* Don't drive and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic!?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and the Troy VA CBOC for any morning medical appointments.

For more details call 270-2760

Maintenance is complete and van transportation has resumed.



This guide is for Vietnam Veterans and their family members. It is our goal to ensure that all veterans understand and receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

During the Vietnam War herbicides were used to rid the trees of leaves in order to expose enemy troops. These herbicides, the most famous of which is Agent Orange, may have harmed some veterans who were exposed to them. The Department of Veterans Affairs presumes herbicide exposure for veterans who served in Vietnam if they become ill with particular conditions (see list at right). Compensation is available for these veterans or their families.

Public Law 107-103 (signed into law on 12/27/01) amends existing law providing a presumption of exposure to herbicides for all veterans who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam Era. Proof of exposure is not necessary for claim purposes. However, evidence of service in Vietnam during the war and supporting medical documentation need to be submitted. The law also removes the 30-year limitation on presumptive service connection for respiratory cancers due to herbicide exposure.

### Conditions currently recognized by VA as related to Agent Orange:

- Chloracne

- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
  - Multiple myeloma
  - Respiratory Cancers: lung-trachea-bronchus
  - Prostate cancer
  - Soft tissue sarcoma
  - Hodgkin's disease
  - Porphyria cutanea tarda
  - Periphel neuropathy (acute or subacute)
  - Type II Diabetes
  - Lou Gehrigs Disease (ALS)
  - Spina bifida in children of veterans
- (continued page 2)

### BEING HOME HAS CHANGED.....

Soldiers, Marines and Seaman who have been returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan are increasingly running afoul with the law, bringing the stress of War home.

Most of it is small-time stuff, but some allegations against the Service Members in the past three years have been serious. The volume of crime being reported to law enforcement authorities has seen a jump over 100%. Some of the Service Members have been home for three years and the problems are just coming to light. Drunk driving, domestic violence, drug addictions, child abuse and reports of thefts have been on the rise.

I don't know if anyone is tracking the numbers, but the cases reported to our office are becoming a disturbing trend. Most of the veterans have had no history of wrong doing before being sent to war, they are returning and making bad decisions. I believe that the reason they are increasingly running afoul of the law is from the stress of war; better known as PTSD due to their experiences in combat.

As one of our friends tells me, what do you expect? A year of testosterone build up, they are making split-second, life or death decisions, and someone is always telling them when to dress, what to eat, and how they can spend their free time.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is what they are bringing home with them, caused by what they are seeing and dealing with in this war. Behavioral symptoms have many different signs and we need to do a better job of screening our Troops for this problem and quickly before we allow more undiagnosed soldiers go home alone. If you are aware of one of our veterans who is in need of help, please call our office and we will do everything in our power to help (270-2760). **PLEASE NOTE: Disregard any emails in regards to telling veterans they must register or re-register for their VA benefits before Jan. 17, this is not true.**

Yours in Patriotism, *Bab*

## A Message From County Executive Kathleen M. Jimino:

Happy New Year! I wish you all much happiness and success in the New Year. As we begin 2008 I would like to recognize the sacrifices made by the men and women of our armed forces who through their actions have afforded us the freedom we are so fortunate to enjoy. Thank You!

As we enter the New Year I again urge all Veterans to review the benefits afforded them through their service to our nation. Many times these programs and/or your health may change over time making you eligible for other services. As an example, on the horizon is a Veterans real property tax exemption for those who served in the Cold War. Further information will be available soon so again, please schedule an appointment with our County Veterans Service Agency. They will ensure you are receiving the services and benefits you have earned and certainly deserve.

Sincerely,  
*Kathleen M. Jimino*

**Kathleen M. Jimino**

### **Agent Orange (continued from page 1):**

#### **Spina Bifida (agent Orange Act of 1996):**

- Created benefit eligibility for children of Vietnam Veterans diagnosed with Spina Bifida
- Cash allowances are awarded for job training, health care and rehabilitation
- Assistance may also be found at the Shriners Hospital for Children

#### **Eligibility for Agent Orange Related Compensation**

**Claim for a condition officially recognized by VA as related to**

#### **Agent Orange Exposure:**

Exposure to Agent Orange is conceded if a veteran served in Vietnam. However, the veteran will still need to submit the following evidence:

- proof of service in Vietnam during wartime (January 9, 1962 to May 7, 1975)
- Medical documentation of the condition(s) officially recognized by the VA

**NOTE:** Some conditions require that a veteran prove his/her symptoms started within a specific time frame after departure from Vietnam.

#### **Claim for a condition not officially recognized by VA as related to Agent Orange exposure:**

If a veteran has been diagnosed with a condition(s) not shown at the left, he/she may submit a claim with the following supporting evidence:

- Medical documentation (preferably a confirmed diagnosis) of the claimed condition and
- An opinion from a doctor stating that it is as likely as not that the condition is the result of Agent Orange exposure.

## **Upcoming Events:**



*Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event.*

January 1... New Year's Day—**Office Closed**

January 14... Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m., Delford R. Hilton, US Army, Korea

January 21... Martin Luther King Day—**Office Closed**

February 11...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m., **TO BE ANNOUNCED**

February 18... President's Day—**Office Closed**

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Please watch next month's newsletter, included will be our Annual Report. *Happy Holidays and Happy New Year from all the staff at Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency!*



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

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Volume 3, Issue 2  
FEBRUARY 2008

**KATHLEEN M. JIMINO**  
Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

County Executive  
Robert M. Reiter  
Director

## COLD WAR VETERANS' EXEMPTION

The New York State Legislature has passed a bill which the Governor signed that would allow local governments to offer a real property tax exemption for property owned by veterans who served during the Cold War period. Rensselaer County Executive Kathleen M. Jimino has reviewed the exemption and expects to send a local law to the County Legislature for their consideration to create this exemption from county property taxes.

The following is some detailed information about the exemption, who is eligible and what will be required to apply for it.

### **How does the Cold War veterans' exemption work?**

The exemption provides a basic property, of either 10 or 15 percent of assessed value (as adopted by the municipality) to veterans who served during the Cold War period. The law also provides an additional exemption to disabled veterans, equal to one-half of their service-connected disability ratings. The basic exemption is limited to 10 years, but there is no limit for the disabled portion of this exemption. In both instances, the exemption is limited to the primary residence of the veteran, and is applicable only to general municipal taxes, not to school taxes or special district levies.

### **Where the Cold War exemption is in effect, does the assessor automatically give the exemption to a Cold War veteran?**

No. Where the exemption is offered by local option of the municipality, the veteran must file an application, RP-458-b, with the assessor by "taxable status date". In most towns, this date is March 1, but please check the date with your assessor to be sure. The veteran must show a discharge or release from the US Armed Forces under honorable conditions, that the service was during the Cold War period for at least one year (exclusive of active duty training), and that he or she was awarded the Cold War Recognition Certificate as authorized under Public Law 105-85 (the 1998 National Defense Authorization Act). If the veteran seeks the additional exemption available under the law, proof must be provided to show a service-connected disability.

### **What type of proof will be accepted?**

Form DD-214, which you should have received upon separation from the service, contains some of the information the assessor needs to determine your eligibility. For this exemption, you will also need to provide the Cold War Recognition Certificate. Other written documentation also may help to prove eligibility, such as a copy of discharge orders, VA documentation for disability rating, etc. You should also have a copy of the deed to the house or other proof that you and/or your spouse are the owners of the property.

(Cont'd Page 2)

### **Van Transportation...**

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- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for most morning medical appointments.

For more details call 270-2760



**FREE TAX PREP.....**  
Westside Waterfront Weed-N-Seed Troy has set up a VITA site at the Troy CYO, 237 4th Street. They will be providing free tax return preparation for individuals and families whose taxable income is below \$40,000. They will be providing this free service from Feb. 6th to April 4th on Wednesday's 6-9pm, Thursday 9am-2pm, and Saturdays 9am-2pm. For further information and/or to schedule an appointment, please call 270-4689.

## Cold War Veterans' exemption continued from page 1

### Where can I get a copy of my veteran's service records or other information to document my eligibility?

Check with your local office of the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs or your County Veterans Service Agency as to how you should proceed.

### What does the law mean by the "Cold War"?

The exemption is available to veterans who served on active duty (exclusive of training) for at least one year in the United States armed forces between September 2, 1945 and December 26, 1991, and who are not currently receiving either the eligible funds or alternative veterans' exemption.

### What are the ownership requirements of

### the Cold War exemption?

The legal title to the property must be in the name of the veteran or the spouse of the veteran or both, or the unremarried surviving spouse of the veteran. If the property is owned by more than one qualified owner, the exemption to which each is entitled may be combined. Also, if a veteran is the unremarried surviving spouse of a veteran, that person may also receive any exemption to which the deceased spouse was entitled.

### What are the residential and occupancy requirements of the law?

The property must be used exclusively for residential purposes, and must also be the primary residence of a Cold War veteran or the unremarried spouse of a Cold War veteran unless that person is absent from the property due to medical reasons or institutionalized for up to five years. If a portion of the property is

used for non-residential purposes, the exemption will apply only to that portion of the property that is used exclusively for residential purposes.

### What are the dollar limits on the Cold War veterans' exemption?

Once it decides to put the Cold War exemption into effect (at either 10 or 15 percent of assessed value), each county, city, town and village has the additional option of using the maximum set of exemptions established by State law or passing a local law to use a reduced maximum set of exemptions. The maximums are listed in the instructions for the Cold War veterans exemption available online or from your assessors office. You should check with your assessor to determine the maximum exemption limits in your municipality.

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## A Message from our County Director:

Hello All-

I received an email from a dear friend who is currently serving in Iraq, who is treating our military personnel for PTSD and other problems incurred in a war zone. She has informed me of desperately needed supplies for our deployed military members.

They are in need of egg crate mattress pads. Some of the soldiers are sleeping on old mattresses, while others are still sleeping in sleeping bags. They are also in need of sheets and blankets, but most importantly they need the egg crate mattress pads. I be-

lieve you can purchase these at Wal-Mart.

The deployed soldiers are also in need of the following listed items:

- Batteries (all sizes)
- Baby wipes
- Calling cards
- Puzzle books and magazines
- Packs of gum
- Mouthwash
- Deodorant
- Maxi pads/tampons
- Bars of soap
- Razors
- Toothpaste

- Toothbrushes
- Shampoo
- Lip balm
- Hand lotion
- Shaving cream
- Flea collars
- Individually wrapped snacks (no chocolate)

If you want to donate any of these items to a deployed soldier, but do not know one or have the funds to do so, our office will accept these items and ship them to our local deployed soldiers.

Yours in Patriotism,  
*BCB*

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## Upcoming Events:



*Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event .*

February 11...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **John R. Dwyer Jr., USMC Peacetime**

February 21...President's Day— **Office Closed**

March 10...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **John P. Rogers, US Army Air Corps, WWII**

April 14...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **William D. Mohan, US Army Air Corps, WWII**

May 12...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Edward J. Patrick Jr., US Navy, Vietnam**

May 26...Memorial Day— **Office Closed**

May 26...Veterans of Lansingburgh 12th Annual Memorial Day Parade, kick off at 11:00 a.m.

**\* NOTE: Anyone wanting to honor a deceased Rensselaer County veteran, please call our office for more information 270-2760 \***

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Volume 3, Issue 3  
MARCH 2008

**KATHLEEN M. JIMINO**  
Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

County Executive  
Robert M. Reiter  
Director

## Economic Stimulus Package

### Van Transportation...

- \* Don't drive and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic!?
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For more details call 270-2760



Recently, Congress passed an Economic Stimulus Package that allows select taxpayers to be eligible to receive a payment of \$300 (\$600 on a joint return) if they had at least \$3,000 in qualifying income. To qualify, one must have no tax liability, such as low income workers or these who receive Social Security benefits or Veterans' disability compensation, pension or survivors benefits received from the Department of Veterans Affairs in 2007.

Qualifying income includes Social Security benefits, certain Railroad Retirement benefits, certain veterans' benefits and earned income, such as income from wages, salaries, tips and self-employment. While these people may not be normally required to file a tax return because they do not meet the filing requirement, the IRS emphasizes they must file a 2007 return in order to receive a payment. The IRS has produced

a special form that highlights the specific sections that need to be filled out in order to qualify for a tax rebate. You can access the form at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/newsroom/1040a.pdf>

Recipients of Social Security, certain Railroad retirement benefits, certain veterans' benefits should report their 2007 benefits on Line 14a of Form 1040A or Line 20a of Form 1040. Taxpayers who already have filed but failed to report these benefits can file an amended return by using Form 1040X. The IRS is working with the Social Security Administration and Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that recipients are aware of this issue.

Some people receiving Social Security and veterans' benefits may not realize that they need to file a tax return to get the stimulus payment.

### FREE TAX PREP.....

Westside Waterfront Weed-N-Seed Troy has set up a VITA site at the Troy CYO, 237 4th Street. They will be providing free tax return preparation for individuals and families whose taxable income is below \$40,000. They will be providing this free service from Feb. 6th to April 4th on Wednesday's 6-9pm, Thursday 9am-2pm, and Saturdays 9am-2pm. For further information and/or to schedule an appointment, please call 270-4689.

### VA Increases Travel Reimbursement for Eligible Veterans

Over a million eligible veterans will see their mileage reimbursement more than double starting February 1, 2008, for travel to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities.

This increase helps veterans—especially those living in rural areas—offset some of the gasoline costs as they travel to receive VA health care. Increasing the mileage reimbursement is one more step by VA help veterans access the health care they deserve.

The 2008 appropriations act provided funding for VA to increase the beneficiary travel mileage reimbursement rate from 11 cents per mile to 28.5 cents per mile, effective February 1, 2008. While increasing the payment, VA, as mandated by law, also equally increased the deductible amounts applied to certain mileage reimbursements. The new deductibles are \$7.77 for a one way trip, \$15.54 for a round trip, with a maximum of \$46.62 per calendar month.

## *A Message from County Executive Jimino:*

I hope you find the information contained in this month's Veterans Newsletter helpful. We in Rensselaer County take a great deal of pride in the programs and services available to help support our Veterans who have through their service defended the freedoms we hold so dear.

To ensure that you are receiving all of the benefits you are entitled to through your service to our nation or the service of your spouse I urge you to check in with our Veterans Service Agency from time to time since programs or your eligibility may change making it very important to keep in touch with us.

Sincerely,  
*Kathleen M. Jimino*  
Kathy Jimino

### REVISIONS TO COLD WAR VETERANS TAX EXEMPTION CRITERIA

As of February 2008, the Cold War Veterans Tax Exemption criteria has been revised as follows:

- Type of proof that will be accepted— Form DD-214, which you should have received upon separation from the service, it is no longer required to also have the Cold War Recognition Certificate.
- Length of service to qualify— the veteran must show a discharge or release from the US Armed Forces under honorable conditions and that the service was during the Cold War period, it is no longer necessary to have at least one year active duty (exclusive of active duty training).

## Expansion of Eligibility for Combat Veterans

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2008 was signed by President Bush on January 28, 2008. This Act extends the period of enhanced health care eligibility provided to a veteran who served in a theater of combat operation after November 11, 1998 (commonly referred to as combat veterans or OEF/OIF veterans as follows:

• **Currently enrolled veterans and new enrollees who were discharged from active duty on or after January 28, 2003** are eligible for the enhanced benefits, for 5 years post discharge.

• **Veterans discharged from active**

**duty before January 28, 2003, who apply for enrollment on or after January 28, 2008**, are eligible for the enhanced benefit until January 27, 2011.

As before, veterans included in this authority may be enrolled in Priority Group 6, if not eligible for a higher Priority Group placement, and may be charged co-pays for medication and/or treatment of conditions that are clearly unrelated to their combat service (e.g. common cold, broken bone). These veterans, while not required to disclose income, may do so to determine their eligibility for a higher priority status, beneficiary travel benefits and exemption of co-

pays for care unrelated to their military service.

There is no change to VA's policy of continuing enrollment of veterans who enroll with VA under this "Combat Veteran" authority after their enhanced eligibility period ends. At the end of the enhanced eligibility period, VA will reassess the veteran's information and make a new enrollment decision. If the veteran was in Priority Group 6 and no other eligibility factors apply then he/she will continue enrollment in either Priority Group 7 or Priority Group 8 depending on their income level and will be required to make applicable co-pays.

## Upcoming Events:



*Call us by the 15th of the month  
and we will list your event .*

**March 10...**Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **John P. Rogers, Army Air Corp. WWII**

**April 14...**Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **William D. Mohan, Army Air Corps, WWII POW**

**May 12...**Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Ret. BMC-Edward J. Patrick, Jr., Navy, Vietnam**

**May 24...**East Greenbush Memorial Day Parade, kick off time 10 a.m.

**May 26...**Memorial Day— **Office Closed**

**May 26...**Veterans of Lansingburgh 12th Annual Memorial Day Parade, kick off at 11:00 a.m.



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Volume 3, Issue 4  
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Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

County Executive  
Robert M. Reiter  
Director

## Children of Vietnam Veterans Born with Spina Bifida or Children of Women Vietnam Veterans Born with Certain Birth Defects

### **SPINA BIFIDA—There are three basic eligibility requirements:**

1. The parent(s) of a spina bifida child-claimant must have performed active military, naval, or air service in the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975.

2. The child must be the natural child of the Vietnam veteran, regardless of age or marital status, who was conceived after the date on which the veteran first entered the Republic of Vietnam. The term “natural child” means a biological child and excludes the notion of deriving entitlement from adoptive parents. Only a biological parent of an adopted child could make the child eligible.

3. Spina Bifida benefits are payable for all types of spina bifida except spina bifida occulta. Private physicians, government or private institution examination reports may establish the diagnosis.

### **Children of Women Vietnam Veterans Born with Certain Birth Defects:**

Under Public Law 106-419, children born to women Vietnam veterans may be eligible for a monthly monetary allowance if they suffer from certain birth defects. Children must have been conceived after the date on which the veteran first entered the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on February 28, 1961, and ending on May 7, 1975. (Spina Bifida however, is covered under the VA’s Spina Bifida Program.) VA identifies the birth defects as those that are associated with the service of the mother in Vietnam and resulted in permanent physical or mental disability.

### **However, covered birth defects do not include conditions due to :**

- Familial disorders
- Birth-related injuries; or
- Fetal or neonatal infirmities with well-established causes.

**NOTE:** The law defines the term “child” as the natural child of a woman Vietnam veteran, regardless of age or marital status.

### **Covered Birth Defects (Include, but are not limited to.)**

1. Achondroplasia.
2. Cleft lip and cleft palate.
3. Congenital heart disease.
4. Congenital talipes equinovarus (club foot).
5. Esophageal & intestinal atresia.
6. Hallerman-Streiff syndrome.
7. Hip Dysplasia
8. Hypospadias megacolon.
9. Hydrocephalus due to aqueductal stenosis.
10. Hirschprung’s disease (congenital).
11. Imperforate anus.
12. Neural tube defects.
13. Poland syndrome.
14. Pyloric stenosis.
15. Syndactyly (fused digits).
16. Tracheoesophageal fistulia.
17. Undescended testicle.
18. Williams syndrome.

### **Van Transportation...**

\* Don’t drive or are physically incapable of driving and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic?

\* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for most morning medical appointments.

For more details call 270-2760



### **Rensselaer County Honor-A-Deceased Veteran**

• Have a deceased loved one or friend who was a veteran and resided in Rensselaer County?

• Would you like them to be honored in a ceremony?

• If so, please call 270-2760 to request an application.



## A Message From Our Director

Hello all-

I have just returned from a training program in Washington DC and informed a potential linkage between HYPERTENSION (high blood pressure) and exposure to Agent Orange. It appears that HYPERTENSION will now be designated as a presumptive condition and I urge any and all who have been exposed to Agent Orange to call and re-file your claim.

As well, the County's Veteran's Office has received our "Report Card" of expenditures on Rensselaer County Veterans. While our veterans population has dropped to 12,487, there was a 15% increase on total expenditures to nearly \$39 million. The breakdown includes:

**Compensation and Pension:**  
\$13,898,000.00

**Education and Vocational Rehabilitation:** \$1,337,000.00

**Insurance:** \$939,000.00

**Medical Care:** \$22,604,000.00

As always we are here for our veterans and their family members.

Your in Patriotism,  
*BOB*

## Gold Star Parent Annuity

The Gold Star Parent Annuity which took effect on January 28, 2008, in which the State of New York recognizes the ultimate sacrifice, which the Gold Star parents have made to our state and country. This program administered by the New York State Division of Veterans Affairs, will authorize an annuity payment of up to \$500 per Gold Star parent. The annual annuity is capped at \$1000 per service

member.

To be eligible for this program, the Gold Star Parent (as defined by 10 USC 1126) must be a resident of New York State and have an income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. The current income limit is \$20,800 for a single individual (add \$7,200 for each additional person in the household).

In order to receive the annuity each Gold Star Parent must submit a completed application to the Division of Veterans Affairs who will review it for completeness and to determine eligibility.

For more information or to request an application please call your local Veterans Service Agency at 270-2760.

## Upcoming Events:



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**April 14...**Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **William D. Mohan, US Army, WWII POW**

**May 12...**Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Edward J. Patrick, Jr., US Navy (Ret.), Vietnam**

**May 24...**East Greenbush Memorial Day Parade, kick off at 10:00 a.m.

**May 26...**Memorial Day— **OFFICE CLOSED**

**May 26...**Veterans of Lansingburgh 12th Annual Memorial Day Parade, kick off at 11:00 a.m.

**May 26...**Poestenkill Memorial Day Parade, kick off 11:00 a.m.

**May 26...**Nassau Memorial Day Parade, Kick off at 2:00 p.m.

**June 8...**Troy Flag Day Parade

**July 4...**Independence Day — **OFFICE CLOSED**

**September 7...**33rd Uncle Sam Birthday Parade, start time 1:00 p.m.



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MAY 2008

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**County Executive**  
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Director

## Military Headstones and Markers

Veterans, active duty servicemembers, retired reservists, and National Guard servicemembers are eligible for an inscribed headstone or marker to mark their grave at any cemetery-national, state veterans, or private. The headstone or marker will be delivered at no cost, anywhere in the world. Spouses and dependent children are eligible for a government headstone or marker only if they are buried in a national or state veterans cemetery.

Flat markers are available in bronze, granite or marble. Upright headstones come in granite or marble. In national cemeteries, the style chosen must be consistent with existing monuments at the place of burial. Niche markers are available to mark columbaria used for inurnment of cremated remains.

Headstones and markers previously provided by the government may be replaced at the government's expense if badly deteriorated, illegible, vandalized or stolen. To check the status of an application for a headstone or marker for a national or state veterans cemetery, call the cemetery. To check the status of one being placed in a private cemetery, call 1-800-697-6947.

**Inscription:** Headstones and markers must be inscribed with the name of the deceased, branch of service, and year of birth and death. They also may be inscribed with other markings, including an authorized emblem of belief and, space permitting, additional text including rank; war service such as "World War II"; complete dates of birth and death; military awards; military organizations; civilian or veteran affiliations; and words of endearment.

**Private Cemeteries:** To apply for a headstone or marker for a private cemetery, mail a completed VA Form 40-1300 , Application for Standard Government Headstone or Marker for Installation in a Private Cemetery or a State Veterans' Cemetery, and a copy of the veteran's military discharge document and death certificate to Memorial Programs Service (41A1), Department of Veterans Affairs. 5109 Russell Rd., Quantico, VA 22134-3903. Or fax documents to 1-800-455-7143.

For veteran death occurring on or after Sept. 11, 2001, VA will provide a government headstone or marker even if the grave is already marked with a private one. Before ordering, check with the cemetery to ensure that the additional headstone or marker will be accepted. Any placement fee will not be reimbursed by the VA.

### **Van Transportation...**

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- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for most morning medical appointments.

For more details call 270-2760



### **Presidential Memorial Certificates**

Certificates are issued upon request to recognize the military service of honorably discharged deceased veterans. Next of kin, relatives and friends may request them by calling your local Veterans Service Agency. Please have a copy of the veteran's discharge document and death certificate to accompany the request.

## A Message From Our Director

Wow, we have gone from winter to summer with out a spring... MEMORIAL DAY is coming real soon and it's a time to remember and honor all our service members who have passed. It is now observed as a National Holiday on the last Monday of May.

Many American's have lost sight of the significance of this day to our Nation. Instead of using Memorial Day as a time to honor and reflect on the sacrifices made by Americans in combat, and their families back home, some Americans use this day as a celebration of the beginning of summer.

Today, we find our Country at War, once more.

I hope this Memorial Day that everyone all across American makes time

to attend a parade, speeches, or ceremonies to honor those who paid the ultimate price on behalf of our Nation. Like my Uncle Robert Martin Casey, Rensselaer, New York, who was killed in Action on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1950, Korea, who I was named after when I was born the following year.

Our Nation pays its respect to military men and women, known and unknown. Americans know that freedom is both precious and costly, and that those who expect to enjoy the blessings of freedom must, at times, engage in battle to protect it.

Look in the *Upcoming Events* section of this newsletter for parades and ceremonies in your area.

Talking about parades, Sunday

June 8<sup>th</sup> is Troy's Flag Day Parade. This is the nations largest. Rensselaer County veterans will once more march and for the non marchers we will have vans to take them.

Meet in the upper parking lot of the County office building, near the flag pole by 11:45 am at the latest. We will take care of your transportation to the start of the parade and will return you to your vehicles. If you have children or grand children who wish to join you, by all means bring them along. Please pass this information to any and all veterans you know. For more information call 270-2760.

Yours in Patriotism,  
*BOB*

## Letter From LTC Farry in Afghanistan

If anyone can help Mike out, we would all be grateful..... Bob

Hello to everyone from AFGHANISTAN! My name is Mike Farry for those of you I have not talked to before. I am a friend and colleague of Ben Tupper. I am trying to continue the great work that Ben did when he was here. Thankfully I am in a position of some influence that allows me to help provide humanitarian assistance to the good people of Afghanistan. Some of you may know that my full time job is as a police lieutenant back in NY...(Albany). I often use the analogy that most people are good...there just happens to always be a few bullies around that try to keep other people unhappy. The same is true here...magnified 1000 times. The cost of bullying is much greater here. The expense is children are uneducated, unclothed for the elements, receive no medical treatment and have no real hope

for the future. Much of the work that Ben and others like him have done has given hope, comfort and joy to those who were blessed by people like you.

I will be here in Kandahar until January. Right now the weather is very hot. The number one thing that is needed right now is school supplies. Essentially pencils, pens, crayons and paper. Education is the most sought after thing here. Without it the future is dim. The literacy rate in AFG is the 3rd lowest in the world. There is also always a need for used clothing, shoes, boots, sweaters, blankets, hats etc. It will be a long year, so if you can support me thru the year as you are inclined to do. Please do not send me anything.....I have all my essential necessities met...which are not much, but the little that I have and need still makes me feel horrible for having it when I see how the Afghans live after years of bullying and lack of aid and central government.

I do however ask, if you are so inclined to pray for me and the coalition soldiers and people of AFG. Also if you would send me your picture for my own scrapbook.....so someday when my grandchildren ask what did you do during the war, I have a real good picture book story to tell of compassion, friendship and support....not just a story of violence and misery. In turn, for those who indicate interest i will send a monthly (or so) letter with pictures of the things we have been able to do with your support. Thank you in all you do.

Sincerely,

**Mike Farry (please do not put rank on mail for OPSEC reasons)**

**FOB Lyndsy  
RCAC-ARSIC South  
Afghanistan**

## Upcoming Events:



*Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event .*

May 12...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Edward J. Patrick, Jr., US Navy (Ret.), Vietnam**

May 22...Villages of Valley Falls, Schaghticoke and Johnsonville Memorial Day parade, kick off at 7:00 p.m.

May 24...East Greenbush Memorial Day Parade, kick off at 10:00 a.m.

May 26...Memorial Day—**OFFICE CLOSED**

May 26...Veterans of Lansingburgh 12th Annual Memorial Day Parade, kick off at 11:00 a.m.

May 26...Poestenkill Memorial Day Parade, kick off at 11:00 a.m.

May 26...Nassau Memorial Day Parade, kickoff at 2:00 p.m.

June 8...Troy Flag Day Parade

June 9...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Charles E. Thompson, US Army, WWII**

July 4....Independence Day—**OFFICE CLOSED**

July 14...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **John E. Thompson, US Navy (Ret.), Vietnam Era**

September 7... 33rd Uncle Sam Birthday parade, start time 1:00 p.m.

## Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony

Every second Monday of the month, the County honors a deceased veteran in a very moving and respectful ceremony in the County Legislative Chambers.

If you have loved one, who was a veteran from Rensselaer County and would like to have them honored, please contact the Rensselaer County Veterans at 270-2760 for an application.

The following criteria applies to the honorees:

- Must have been deceased at least one year prior to being honored;
- Must be from Rensselaer County (born, raised or resided in);
- Must have been Honorably Discharged and discharge must accompany application;
- May only be honored once;
- Submitted application must be legible and have a family contact (name, address and telephone number);
- List of all medals, campaigns, and battles;
- Include civilian history (all community services and organizations);
- Be as detailed as possible, the entire ceremony is dedicated to this veteran and it is their life story.

## Troy Flag Day Parade



### MARCHERS WANTED

June 8, 2008 Annual Troy Flag Day Parade

Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency

Is looking for Veterans to march with us in the parade

If you are interested please call our office for details

At (518) 270-2760

## Military Medal Presentation for Local Veterans

Several times each year we host medal ceremonies for our veterans who never received the medals they earned while serving their country. It would be an honor to present these tributes of military service to all of our local veterans.

If you are interested in receiving your medals or the medals of a deceased loved one, please contact our office (270-2760) to request the form needed. When the medals arrive, we will present them to you at the next upcoming medal ceremony.



## Rensselaer County Veterans Van Transportation Guidelines

- Reservations have to be made five (5) business days prior to scheduled medical appointment, by verbally contacting our office via the telephone. The sooner you book your ride the better the possibility that you will secure your reservation for your transportation needs. If you call and get our voicemail, please leave you name and date and time of your appointment, but we advise that you call our office the following business day to confirm receipt of your message. Also, advising our van drivers of your appointment does not put you on the schedule; you must call the office personally. Calling on a Friday for a Monday appointment does not count as a (5) five business day notice and therefore we may be unable to accommodate your need for transportation.
- There is no charge for this service; however, this service is for non-driving veterans only. If you drive and are going in for a medical appointment which requires that you do not drive, then we will transport you in. We only transport for morning appointments. We reserve the right to consider each request on an individual basis and need.
- Riders must be able to access the vehicle (in and out) without assistance. We do have a wheelchair accessible van, if you need this type of accommodation, you must let us know at the time you schedule your ride.
- Our drivers are NOT required to give personal assistance such as carrying packages from the vehicle into a home. They are also totally forbidden to transport your medical prescriptions. If you need prescriptions, you must ride the van to the VA medical facility to pick them up yourself.
- It is NYS policy to wear a seat belt while in a motor vehicle, therefore we do enforce this law.
- All schedule trip are round trips. Please advise at the time of scheduling if you require a one-way trip.
- Cancellation due to weather conditions will be at the discretion of the Veterans Service Agency. You will be notified of cancellations.
- Loss of transportation privileges may result if you are repeatedly not available when the van stops to pick you up; you are not ready when the van is ready to leave the VA or if your language and/or behavior are inappropriate.
- If you are not ready to board the van by 12:30, the drivers will page you. If you do not respond to the page within 5 minutes (either by arriving at the van or verbal contact with the driver), the van may leave without you and you will have to secure your own ride home. After verbal contact with the driver, they will not wait more than five minutes.
- If you are experiencing incontinence, we will expect that you are properly prepared to ride our vehicles without causing a problem, i.e. incontinence clothing additions, etc. The drivers are not allowed to deviate from the scheduled route to accommodate you individual needs.
- In the event of an individual emergency arises, both 911 and the person you designated as you “emergency contact person” will be contacted. Your transportation with us for the remained of the day will be cancelled.
- NO food or drink is allowed on the van.

### A Message From Our County Executive

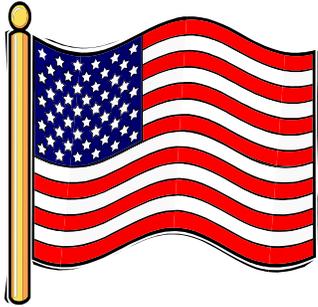
During the month of May we celebrate two special days, Mother’s Day and Memorial Day. To be separated from your child because you or they are in harms way makes for a difficult Mother’s Day and I am hopeful you will join me in keeping all military moms or moms serving in the military in our thoughts and prayers as we celebrate Mother’s Day.

Memorial Day is a day where we recognize all those who have fallen while fighting for the freedoms we hold so dear. As we recognize those fallen soldiers let us also keep in mind all those who are currently serving our Country, defending our freedoms and our way of life. May they come home safely to a grateful nation.

Sincerely,  
*Kathleen M. Jimino*  
 Kathleen M. Jimino

### Important Documents:

Those seeking a VA benefit for the first time must submit a copy of their service discharge form (DD-214, WDAGO 53-55, NAV PERS 53-55, Report of Separation or Certificate of Military Service), which documents your service dates and character of discharge, along with personal identifying information: name, date of birth and service number. The veteran’s discharge form should always be kept in a safe and secure location accessible to the veteran and next of kin or designated representative.



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Rensselaer County  
Unified Family Services  
Veterans Service Agency  
1600 Seventh Avenue  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: (518) 270-2760  
FAX: (518) 270-2956

Volume 3, Issue 6  
JUNE 2008

**KATHLEEN M. JIMINO**  
Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

**County Executive**  
Robert M. Reiter  
Director

## VETERANS PREFERENCE FOR FEDERAL JOBS

Since the time of the Civil War, veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces have been given some degree of preference in appointments to federal jobs. Veterans' preference in its present form comes from the Veterans' preference Act of 1944, as amended, and now codified in Title 5, United States Code. By law, veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces during certain specified time periods or in military campaigns are entitled to preference over others when hiring from competitive lists of eligible candidates, and also in retention during a reduction in force (RIF).

To receive preference, a veteran must have been discharged or released from active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces under honorable conditions (honorable or general discharge). Preference is also provided for certain widows and widowers of deceased veterans who died in service; spouses of service-connected disabled veterans; and mothers of veterans who died under honorable conditions on active duty or have permanent and total service-connected disabilities. For each of these preferences, there are specific criteria that must be met in order to be eligible to receive the veterans' preference.

Recent changes in Title 5 clarify veterans' preference eligibility criteria for National Guard and Reserve service members. Veterans eligible for preference include National Guard and Reserve service members who served on active duty as defined by Title 38 at any time in the armed forces for a period of more than 180 consecutive days, any part of which occurred during the period beginning on September 11, 2001, and ending on the date prescribed by Presidential proclamation or by law as the last date of OIF. The National Guard and Reserve service members must have been discharged or released from active duty in the armed forces under honorable conditions.

Another recent change involves veterans who earned the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal for service in OEF. Under Title 5, service on active duty in the armed forces during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized also qualifies for veterans' preference.

*(continued on Page 2)*

### Van Transportation...

- \* Don't drive and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic!?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for most morning medical appointments.

For more details call 270-2760



### MARCHERS WANTED

For the Troy Flag Day Parade.  
More info please call Rensselaer County Veterans at 270-2760

## A Message From Our Director

Hello All-

Here we are into summer and enjoying all the heat. Don't forget the TROY FLAG DAY PARADE, meet at the upper parking lot at the County Office Building at 11:00 am, Sunday June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

On a few occasions lately I have been asked to handle emergency room bills for Non VA care that veterans' receive. To be eligible for emergency care at non-VA facilities, this is what MUST

happen; the nearest VA health care facility has to be notified within 72 hours, the condition treated was of such nature that a delay in seeking treatment would have been hazardous to your health, you have NO coverage under a health plan, you are enrolled and getting care at your local VA, or being treated for a service-connected disability and there was an emergency. Please call our office for more information.

Last month I talked about the new

Hypertension (high blood pressure) claims based on herbicide exposure (Agent Orange). If you know of any family member who lost a Vietnam Veteran to any heart problem, please have them make contact with our office on the issue of benefits. Widows of veterans' who have passed from a service connection disability are entitled to benefits of \$1,100 and more a month, along with health insurance for them.

Yours in Patriotism,

*Bob*

## Veterans Preference for Federal Jobs (cont'd from Page 1)

Any Armed Forces Expeditionary medal or campaign badge qualifies for preference. Medal holders must have served continuously for 24 months or the full period call or ordered to active duty. As of December 2005, veterans who received the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal are entitled to veterans' preference if otherwise eligible. For additional information, visit the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Web site at <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp#2>.

Veterans' preference does not require an agency to use any particular appointment process. Agencies can pick candidates from a number of different special hiring authorities or through a variety of different sources. For example, the agency can reinstate a former federal employee, transfer someone from another agency, reassign someone from within the agency, make a selection under merit promotion procedures or through open, competitive exams, or appoint someone noncompetitively under special authority such as a Veterans Readjustment Appointment or special authority for 30 percent of more disabled veterans. The decision on which hiring authority the agency desires to use rests solely with the agency.

When applying for federal jobs, eligible veterans should claim preference on their application or resume. Veterans should apply for a federal job by contacting the personnel office at the agency in which they wish to work. For more information, visit <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/> for job openings or help creating a federal resume.

**Veterans' Employment Act:** When an agency accepts applications from outside its own workforce, the Veterans' Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 allows preference eligible candidates or veterans to compete for these vacancies under merit promotion procedures. Veterans who are selected are given career or career-conditional appointments. Veterans are those who have been separated under honorable conditions from the U.S. armed forces with three or more years of continuous active service.

## Upcoming Events:



*Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event .*

June 8...Troy Flag Day Parade, kick off at 1:00 p.m.

June 9...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Charles E. Thompson, US Army, WWII**

July 4...Independence Day — **OFFICE CLOSED**

July 14...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **John E. Thompson, US Navy (Ret.), Vietnam Era**

August 11...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **George A. Randall III, US Army, WWII**



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Rensselaer County  
Unified Family Services  
Veterans Service Agency  
1600 Seventh Avenue  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: (518) 270-2760  
FAX: (518) 270-2956

Volume 3, Issue 8  
AUGUST 2008

KATHLEEN M. JIMINO  
Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

County Executive  
Robert M. Reiter  
Director

## Programs for Veterans with Service-Connected Disabilities

### Van Transportation...

- \* **Don't drive** and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic!?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for most morning medical appointments.

For more details call 270-2760.



**Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment:** The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program assists veterans who have service-connected disabilities with obtaining and maintaining suitable employment. Independent living services are also available for severely disabled veterans who are not currently ready to seek employment. Additional information is available on VA's web site at <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/vre/>.

**Eligibility:** A veteran must have a VA service-connected disability rated at least 20% with an employment handicap, or rated 10% with a serious employment handicap, and be discharged or released from military service under other than dishonorable conditions. Servicemembers pending medical separation from active duty may also apply if their disabilities are reasonably expected to be rated at least 20% following their discharge.

**Entitlement:** A VA Counselor must decide if the individual has an employment handicap based upon the results of a comprehensive evaluation. After an entitlement decision is made, the individual and counselor will work together to develop a rehabilitation plan. The rehabilitation plan will specify the rehabilitation services to be provided.

**Services:** Rehabilitation service provided to participants in the VR&E program are under one of five tracks. VA pays the cost of all approved training programs. Subsistence allowance may also be provided. The five tracks are:

(Continued on Page 2)

### CHINA BEACH LZ-15

Remembering Forty Years  
1968-2008

Saturday, 2 August 08

11 a.m. till Dusk

Local 190 Laborers'  
Training Center

Wemple Rd., Glenmont, NY

Couples \$30

Adults \$20

Under 16 FREE

More Info call (518) 465-6829

## A Message From Our Director

Hello All-

I would like to tell all of you about a monthly ceremony that we have for deceased veterans. This ceremony is called the Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony and is conducted every second Monday of the month.

One deceased veteran is chosen monthly and a ceremony is held in his/her honor, where we reflect on their personal life, as well as their military career.

The family is presented with a flag that has been flown over the nation's capital in memory of the veteran, and then we fly that flag over the County Office Building for 30 days in honor of the veteran. At the conclusion of the

30 days, the flag is returned to family.

The family is also presented with proclamations and a pamphlet that includes the bio on the veteran being honored.

This is a very honorable ceremony and a very fitting one for a person who served their country unselfishly.

There are guidelines to submitting a deceased veteran to be honored:

- 1) The veteran must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable;
- 2) Must have resided in Rensselaer County during some part of their life to have a

connection to the county;

- 3) Can only be honored once;
- 4) Must have been deceased at least one year prior to being honored.

We in Rensselaer County Government strongly believe that all our deceased veterans and their families deserve the honor of this fitting ceremony. With that in mind we are asking for your assistance in identifying those qualified for our Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony. If you know of someone, please contact my office so that we may begin the process.

Yours in Patriotism,  
*Bob*

## Programs for Veterans with Service-Connected Disabilities (cont'd Page 1)

- **Reemployment with Previous Employer:** For individuals who are separating from active duty or in the National Guard or Reserves and are returning to work for their previous employer.
- **Rapid Access to Employment:** For individuals who either wish to obtain employment soon after separation or who already have the necessary skills to be competitive in the job marketplace in an appropriate occupation.
- **Self-Employment:** For individuals who have limited access to traditional employment, need flexible work schedules, or who require more accommodation in the

work environment due to their disabling conditions or other life circumstances.

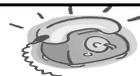
- **Employment Through Long-Term Services:** For individuals who need specialized training and/or education to obtain and maintain suitable employment.
- **Independent Living Service:** For veterans who are not currently able to work and need rehabilitation services to live more independently.

**Period of a Rehabilitation Program:** Generally, veterans must complete a program within 12 years from their separation from military service or within 12 years from the date VA notifies them that they have a com-

pensable service-connected disability. Depending on the length of program needed, veterans may be provided up to 48 months of full-time services or their part-time equivalent. These limitations may be extended in certain circumstances.

**Work-Study:** Veterans training at the three-quarter or full-time rate may participate in VA's work-study program and provide VA outreach services, prepare/process VA paperwork, work at a VA medical facility, or perform other VA-approved activities. A portion of the work-study allowance equal to 40 percent of the total may be paid in advance.

## Upcoming Events:



*Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event.*

August 2...China Beach, starts at 11 a.m. till Dusk, Donations are: 16 & under FREE, Adults \$20, Couples \$30-more info call 465-6829

August 11...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **George A. Randall III, US Army, WWII**

August 27th thru September 1st...Schaghticoke Fair, come see us at our booth.

September 1...Labor Day-**OFFICE CLOSED**

September 7...33rd Uncle Sam Birthday parade in Lansingburgh, start time 1:00 p.m.

September 14...Honor-a-Deceased Veterans Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Joseph F. Salmon, Sr., US Army, Korea**



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, Issue 9  
SEPTEMBER, 2008

KATHLEEN M. JIMINO, County Executive

Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

Robert M. Reiter  
Director

Rensselaer County  
Unified Family Services  
Veterans Service Agency  
1600 Seventh Avenue  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: (518) 270-2760

## SOLDIER'S heart

### BRINGING OUR VETERANS HOME Rensselaer County Workshop Fall 2008

#### Van Transportation...

- \* Don't drive and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic!?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for most morning medical appointments. Call our office for more details, to included hours of operation and rules/regulations 270-2760.



#### Services offered...

- Compensation: service-connected.
- Pension: non-service connected.
- Death Pension
- Federal Grave Markers
- VA Insurance Claims
- Medical Van Transportation

There are presently 1,260 Rensselaer County residents serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. These are included in the **14,000 veterans** living here now. Many of these are suffering emotionally from their experiences at war. Their internal wounds to heart and soul affect their families and community as well.

**Soldier's Heart and The Sage Colleges** announce an exciting and innovative community program designed to **help veterans heal from the unseen wounds of war. This 8 session workshop** is for Rensselaer County service people and veterans of any war, their families, clergy, helping professionals and other community members. Healing from war requires that communities be involved in their veterans' reintegration, regardless of how long ago they served. Military Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is more than an anxiety condition. The issues veterans face are complicated and often isolating because they are misunderstood.

The program will be presented by **Dr. Edward Tick**, internationally acclaimed author of the groundbreaking book, *War and the Soul*, along with Soldier's Heart staff and faculty from The Sage Colleges.

The **BRINGING OUR VETERANS HOME** program integrates worldwide models of successful return of soldiers over the ages, explores the essential ingredients of emotional and spiritual healing from war and creates a **doorway to a reconciliation between true warriors and their communities**. Modeled on our nationally recognized intensive retreats, the program will be experiential and unique.

Program Dates: (6-9PM) Sept. 16 & 23, Oct 1 & 7, Nov. 18 & 25, Dec. 2 & 9  
Location: Troy Area United Ministries, 392 2nd St., Troy, NY

Group size will be limited. Please call today to reserve your place or for further information - **518-274-0501**.

Please visit our web site [www.soldiersheart.net](http://www.soldiersheart.net)

\* This program is free of charge as a generous donation of the Louis and Hortense Rubin Community Fellows Program

## A word from our County Veterans Director.....

Hello All, here we are once more, coming into fall. The "Stand Down" will be October 18<sup>th</sup> and we are in need of volunteers, please call our office at 270-2760. This is a great program for our Homeless or at risk Veterans' and their families. It will be held once more at the Colonie Lodge of Elks.

Our 10th Annual Veterans' Day breakfast is coming up fast, it will be November 9<sup>th</sup> at the Brunswick Lodge of Elks. Last year we had over 800 attend and it looks to be even larger this year. We are asking for help in all areas for this event. The Medal Ceremonies will be held once more at the end of breakfast and this also will be the largest ever. We have received medals for over 25 Veterans' who never received them. Please show your support for our Veterans' and attend.

To **ALL** Posts, we want to do a Veterans' information night/afternoon at **ALL** Posts throughout the County. We will bring in benefit personnel throughout the whole system, medical, employment, New York State and VA to name a few. All we ask is for the Post to provide the space, some light refreshments and we will work with you in regards to getting the word out. This is for **ALL** Veterans and Families and we will cover all benefits. This is a good way to get your local area veterans into your Post and see what you're all about. We have found that it helps in your membership, call today to set your date. We have found that a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday works well, with the

time being 6:00 pm till 8:00 pm, we will work with you.

Don't forget your **FREE** car wash from Hoffman's on Veterans' Day, this is the 4<sup>th</sup> year the Hoffman family has invited all members of the active duty and former members of the Military for a free wash, "Thank You".

Our new Van has arrived, we would like to "Thank" former Senator Joseph Bruno, and with out his support we would not have acquired this vehicle. If you get the time, take a **LOOK** at it, the new logo looks great.

Our County Veterans need to understand that our office is able to do all the programs that we do because of the direction from our County Executive, Kathleen M. Jimino. The next time you see her, please thank her for the support.

I encourage all who can, to attend the Soldier's Heart workshop. This is a great program and it will be an eye opener for many, understanding the suffering from the experiences from war. See the 1<sup>st</sup> page of this newsletter for more information.

Yours in Patriotism,

**BOB**

## JOIN US FOR THE UNCLE SAM PARADE...



September 6th and 7th Troy will celebrate Samuel Wilson's birthday (9/13/1766). This event includes a graveside ceremony at Oakwood Cemetery at 10:00 am. and a brunch at the Veterans of Lansingburgh, tickets can be purchased at the door. On Sunday the festivities begin with a parade at 1:00 p.m. followed by family fun and entertainment in Knickerbacker Park and a fireworks show.

Our veterans office always participates in the parade. It is our desire to have a large representation of Rensselaer County Veterans. If you would like to join our marching contingent, (line-up at noon) you may contact our office for more details.

### Upcoming events...

### mark your calendars

September 1...Schaghticoke Fair **COME VISIT OUR BOOTH!** (Office Closed)

September 6..... Uncle Sam Gravesite Ceremony at 10:00 a.m. (line-up 9:30) followed by Brunch at the Veterans of Lansingburgh

September 7..... **Uncle Sam Parade** (see above article)

September 8... **Honor-a-Deceased Veteran**—County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 a.m.  
**Joseph F. Salmon, Sr., U.S. Army, Korea**

October 13..... Columbus Day observed—**OFFICE CLOSED.**

October 14..... **Honor-a-Deceased Veteran**—County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 a.m.  
**Marjorie R. Sislowksi, U.S. Air Force, Vietnam Era**

October 18..... Capital Region Veteran's **Stand Down** 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at Colonie Elks



**IF YOU WOULD  
LIKE YOUR EVENT  
LISTED IN OUR  
UPCOMING  
EVENTS SECTION,  
PLEASE CONTACT  
OUR OFFICE BY  
THE 15th OF THE  
MONTH**

## Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony

Every second Monday of the month, Rensselaer County honors a deceased veteran in a very moving and respectful ceremony in the County Legislative Chambers.

If you have loved one, who was a veteran from Rensselaer County and would like to have them honored, please contact the Rensselaer County Veterans at 270-2760 for an application.

The following criteria applies to the honorees:

- Must have been deceased at least one year prior to being honored;
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- Must have been Honorably Discharged and discharge must accompany application;
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- List of all medals, campaigns, and battles;
- Include civilian history (all community services and organizations);
- Be as detailed as possible, the entire ceremony is dedicated to this veteran and it is their life story.

## Important Documents:

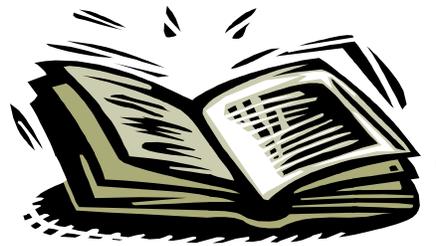
Those seeking a VA benefit for the first time must submit a copy of their service discharge form (DD-214, WDAGO 53-55, NAV PERS 53-55, Report of Separation or Certificate of Military Service), which documents your service dates and character of discharge, along with personal identifying information: name, date of birth and service number. The veteran's discharge form should always be kept in a safe and secure location accessible to the veteran and next of kin or designated representative.

## Place Your Ad...

Our 10th Annual Veterans Day Breakfast will be held on November 9th. You may place your ad in our program at the following rates:

- Full Page.....\$100
- 1/2 Page.....\$ 60
- 1/4 Page.....\$ 30
- Booster.....\$ 10

Please send your ad layout and payment by **October 17, 2008- NO EXCEPTIONS.**



We need this lead time in order to get the program "press" ready and would appreciate it if every effort would be made to adhere to this deadline.

Please make your check payable to the Rensselaer County Veterans Fund, 1600 Seventh Avenue, Troy, NY 12180.

If you have any questions you may contact our office at 270-2760.



### MEDAL CEREMONIES...

Several times a year Rensselaer County hosts a medal ceremony for veterans who never received the medals that they earned while honorably serving their country.

It is an honor to be able to present these military decorations and awards to those who sacrificed unselfishly. You may contact our office to initiate an order for your personal or a family member's medals. When they arrive, we will present them to you at the next ceremony.

## CAPITAL REGION VETERANS STAND DOWN

Saturday, October 18, from 8:00 am until 1:00 pm will be the annual Veterans Stand Down for veterans who are homeless or at risk of being homeless and their families.

Free help will be available for employment, food, clothing, medical screening, legal assistance, as well as information on programs and services. Day care will be available throughout the day.

This event will take place at the **Colonie BPO Elks, 11 Elks Lane, Latham, NY.**

If you are interested in going and can not get transportation to the Stand Down, you can contact your local Veterans Service Agency to inquire about transportation at the following county VA numbers:

- Albany..... (518) 477-7713**
- Columbia..... (518) 828-9511**
- Rensselaer..... (518) 270-2760**
- Saratoga..... (518) 884-4115**
- Schenectady.... (518) 377-2423**
- Washington..... (518) 746-2470**
- Saturday only... (518)785-3557**

## FLY THE FLAG

On Thursday, September 11, 2008, an American flag should be displayed outside every home, apartment, office, and store in the United States. Every individual should make it their duty to display an American flag on this seventh anniversary of one of our country's worst tragedies.

We do this to honor those who lost their lives on 9/11, their families and loved ones who continue to endure the pain, and those who today are fighting at home and abroad to preserve our cherished freedoms.

In the days, weeks and months following 9/11, our country was bathed in America flags as citizens mourned the incredible losses and stood shoulder-to-shoulder against terrorism. Sadly, those flags have all but disappeared.

Our patriotism pulled us through some tough times and it shouldn't take another to galvanize us in solidarity. Our flag is the fabric of our country and together we can prevail over terrorism of all kinds.

Yours in Patriotism,

**BOB**

## Message from our County Executive...

**Kathleen M. Jimino**

This year, the United States Congress and the President agreed on an economic stimulus package that provided a "stimulus" check to help boost our national economy. The checks range in amounts from \$300 to \$600 for an individual, and up to \$1,200 per family. An additional \$300 per child is added to the amount as well. To receive your stimulus check all you had to do was file an income tax return or a special Internal Revenue Service form, the 1040a.

I am hopeful that many of you receiving this newsletter have already received your well deserved stimulus check. If not, it's not too late to file the appropriate paperwork to receive your check. However, time to file is running out as the October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline is fast approaching.

As always, the County's Veteran's Service Agency and our Department for Aging are here to help so please do not hesitate to give us a call.

Sincerely,

*Kathleen M. Jimino*

## NYS Small Business Development Center

**Veterans Business Outreach Center**  
*Serving the Veterans of New York State*

John Narciso, Regional Coordinator  
Toll-free at **1-877-875-VETS (8387)**  
In Albany: (518) 485-7647

### Services

The Veterans Business Outreach Program consists of six stages:

- A pre-business workshop
- Assessment of your business concept
- Preparing your business plan
- Comprehensive feasibility analyses
- Entrepreneurial training (including on management assistance, developing effective marketing plans, help in locating government procurement contracts, and others)
- Mentor assistance

While we cannot provide you with a loan, we can help put your business in position to obtain the financing you need.

By the way . . . there is **no charge** for these services.

### How it Works

If you're a veteran in any of these four areas, a network of resources is available to start or sustain your business:

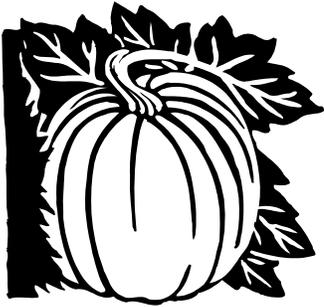
- local Small Business Development Center
- regional SBA or SCORE offices;
- veterans assistance groups;
- military organizations

By calling or e-mailing, we'll serve as a reference point to the skills of these people to provide your business with the help it needs.

## Free Veterans Day Car Wash

*For the fourth consecutive year Hoffman's Car Wash is inviting all active duty and former members of the military to have their vehicle (or vehicles) washed free of charge on Veteran's Day!*

*The only requirement is that the person coming through the car wash let the employees know that they are either active duty or former military. There is no need to show any type of identification-they will take you at your word.*



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Rensselaer County  
Unified Family Services  
Veterans Service Agency  
1600 Seventh Avenue  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: (518) 270-2760  
FAX: (518) 270-2956

Volume 3, Issue 10  
October 2008

KATHLEEN M. JIMINO  
County Executive

Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

Robert M. Reiter  
Director

## Armed Forces Retirement Home

Veterans are eligible to live in the Armed Forces Retirement Home located in Gulfport, Mississippi (scheduled to open in the fall of 2010), or Washington, D.C., if their active duty military service is at least 50 percent enlisted, warrant officer or limited duty officer if they qualify under one of the following categories:

- 1) Are 60 years of age or older; and were discharged or released under honorable conditions after 20 or more years of active service.
- 2) Are determined to be incapable of earning a livelihood because of a service-connected disability incurred in the line of duty.
- 3) Served in a war theater during a time of war declared by Congress or were eligible for hostile fire special pay and were discharged or released under honorable conditions; and are determined to be incapable of earning a livelihood because of injuries, disease or disability.
- 4) Served in a women's component of the armed forces before June 12, 1948; and are determined to be eligible for admission due to compelling personal circumstances.

Eligibility determinations are based on rules prescribed by the Home's Chief Operating Officer. Veterans are not eligible if they have been convicted of a felony or suffering from alcohol, drug or psychiatric problems. Married couples are welcomed, but both must be eligible in their own right. At the time of admission, applicants must be capable of living independently.

The Armed Forces Retirement Home is an independent federal agency. For information, call 1-800-332-3527 or 1-800-422-9988, or visit their Web site at <http://www/afrh.gov/>.

### Van Transportation...

- \* Don't drive and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic!?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for *most* morning medical appointments.

For more details call 270-2760.





**VETERANS STAND-DOWN**  
Saturday, October 18, 2008  
8 a.m.—1 p.m.  
At the  
Colonic BPO Elks #2192  
11 Elks Lane, Latham, NY




Noting that there is no dedicated memorial for all veterans from Rensselaer County who served in WWII, the Troy City Council, on February 3, 2005 unanimously voted for Resolution 6, appointing members of the WWII Memorial Committee of Rensselaer County, established to design, fund and locate a WWII Memorial in the City of Troy.

The committee has held and will continue to sponsor various fundraising activities, if you would like to contribute, please send you donation to:

WWII Memorial Committee of Rensselaer County

P.O. Box 1135, Troy, NY 12180



**10th Annual Veterans Breakfast**  
Sunday, November 9, 2008  
8:30 am-11:30 am

**Noontime Medal Presentation Ceremony**  
Free Breakfast at the Brunswick Elks  
665 Brunswick Rd, Eagle Mills  
(Free to all Veterans & Immediate Family Members only please)

For more information, please call 270-2760

## A Message From Our Director

October is a bold month of color; with the seasons changing the trees are just bountiful. It won't be long before the cold of winter sets in and we're all concerned over the high cost of heating our homes. I urge all low income veterans' and widows to check with our county's Department for the Aging to see if you qualify for aid.

**VIETNAM VETERANS**, we can't stress enough the affects Agent Orange has had on so many veterans' lives. There are other areas where this was used in, other than Vietnam, like the DMZ in Korea and Guam to name a few. Many veterans think that you have to prove that you were

sprayed with this and that is not the case. All the proof needed is to show ONE day stationed in an area where it was used and one of the following conditions:

- Chloracne
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Multiple myeloma
- Respiratory cancers: lung-trachea- bronchus
- Prostate cancer
- Soft tissue sarcoma
- Hodgkin's disease
- Porphyria cutanea tarda
- Peripheral neuropathy (acute or subacute)
- Type II Diabetes
- Lou Gehrig's Disease (ALS)
- Spina bifida in children of veterans

Many veterans have passed away from the above Agent Orange related health issues; and if they were married at the time of their passing, their widows are due Dependency and Indemnity Compensation which is over \$1,000.00 per month, along with health insurance. If you know of any persons you believe fit these criteria, please have them call our office.

Yours in Patriotism,

*Bob*

## Commissary and Exchange Privileges

Unlimited exchange and commissary store privileges in the United States are available to honorably discharged veterans with a service-connected disability rated at 100 percent, unmarried surviving spouses of members or retired members of the armed forces, recipients of the Medal of Honor, and their dependents and orphans. Certification of total disability is done by the VA. Reservists and their dependents also may be eligible. Privileges overseas are governed

by international law and are available only if agreed upon by the foreign government concerned.

Though these benefits are provided by DOD, VA does provide assistance in completing DD Form 1172, "Application for Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card." For detailed information, contact the nearest military installation.

For ID cards, call for an Appointment at the following:

- Albany Reserve Center: 489-5441
- Glens Falls: 792-6368
- Latham DMNA: 786-4406
- Stratton ANG: 244-2115
- Watervliet Arsenal: 266-5290

Commissary:

- Scotia Commissary: 370-5935
- Hours of Operation: 370-5913
- Navy Exchange: 377-6440

## Upcoming Events:



*Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event .*

October 13...Columbus Day observed—**OFFICE CLOSED**

October 14...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony—County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 a.m., Marjorie R. Sislowski, USAF, Vietnam Era

October 18...Capital Region **Veterans Stand-Down** 8 a.m.—1 p.m. at the Colonie Elks

November 4...Election Day—**OFFICE CLOSED**

November 9...Free Veterans Day Breakfast at the Brunswick Elks, 8:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m., medal presentation at Noontime

November 10...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony—County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 a.m., Ret. Lt. Col. Charles J. Werger, USMC, Korea

November 11...Veterans Day- **OFFICE CLOSED**

November 11...Veterans Day Walk in Troy, meeting at Troy City Hall at 9 am

November 11...Free car wash at Hoffman's Car Wash for all veterans

November 27...Thanksgiving Day—**OFFICE CLOSED**

November 28...**OFFICE CLOSED**

December 8...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony-County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 am, Frank J. Molloy, Jr., US Army, WWII



# Rensselaer County Veterans Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 11  
NOVEMBER, 2008

KATHLEEN M. JIMINO  
County Executive

Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

Robert M. Reiter  
Director

Rensselaer County  
Unified Family Services  
Veterans Service Agency  
1600 Seventh Avenue  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: (518) 270-2760  
FAX: (518) 270-2956

## Veterans Day Events...



**JOIN US!!**

**In a SALUTE  
to Veterans.**

There are several events happening in Rensselaer County to show our appreciation to our Veterans for their sacrifices to preserve both our nation's and our individual freedoms. Please make every effort to join us in recognizing those who served.

On Sunday, November 9th, all veterans and their immediately family members are

invited to our annual **breakfast at the Brunswick Elks** (Route 2) from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. This is a free breakfast sponsored by the Hon. Kathleen M. Jimino, Rensselaer County Executive and the Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency. The breakfast will include a noontime **Medal Presentation Ceremony** where we will be presenting medals to some of our local veterans.

Also on Veterans Day, Tuesday, November 11th, is the annual **Memory Walk** in Troy sponsored by the Veterans of Lansingburgh.

The walk begins at 9:00 a.m. at City Hall and visits each of Troy's memorials (World War II, Korean and Vietnam). The Veterans of Lansingburgh hosts refreshments at their post following this event.

Also on November 11th, Hoffman's Car Wash will be giving free car washes to all veterans.

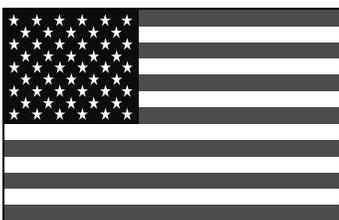
On Thursday, November 13th, Questar III located at 35 Colleen Rd. in Troy will be holding a free Veterans Day Dinner for all local veterans from 11 am to 12:30 pm, please call 273-2264 to reserve your seating.

### Van Transportation...

- \* Don't drive and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic!?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for **most** morning medical appointments.



**OUR VANS WILL BE OFF  
THE ROAD DECEMBER  
22nd-January 2nd.**



### Services offered...

- Compensation: service-connected
- Pension: non-service connected
- Death Pension
- Federal Grave Markers
- VA Insurance Claims
- Medical Van Transportation

## A Message From Our Director.....

"Happy Veterans Day", County Executive Kathleen M. Jimino is honored to sponsor our 10th Annual Free Veterans Day Breakfast and medal presentation at the Brunswick Lodge of Elks, Rt. 2, 665 Brunswick Road in Eagle Mills on November 9th from 8:30 am to 11:30 am, with a medal presentation at noontime.

Last year there were over 800 veterans and immediate family members served and we expect the same attendance as last year. This is just one small way that our county can say **Thank You** for your service to our country.

We have men and women in harms way once more and we all pray for their safe return.

Anyone who has lost, misplaced or never received their military medals, or are looking for a passed loved one's medals, please call our office and we will gladly assist you. When your medals arrive we notify you of the next medal presentation that we are holding, so that you may be presented with your medals during a formal formation.

Don't forget your free car wash at Hoffman's Car Wash on Veterans Day. It is the fourth consecutive year that the Hoffman family has offered this special recognition to our veteran community. Please take a moment to thank them.

Yours in Patriotism,

*BOB*

## Message from our County Executive...Kathleen M. Jimino:

As Veterans Day approaches I hope that we will all take a moment to remember and thank all those who have served our nation, defending our freedoms and way of life since the birth of our nation.

While we remember those who have previously served, I also ask that you keep those now serving in our Nation's military in your thoughts and prayers. As our

nation's war on terror continues our soldiers serve admirably, day after day, placing themselves in harms way as generations of Americans have done before them.

Veterans Day is a solemn day marked with ceremonies, memorial services, parades, dinners and breakfasts, all honoring those have served, and those currently serving. If you wish to participate in an event near you

please do not hesitate to call our Veterans Service Agency at 270-2760.

Sincerely,  
*Kathleen M. Jimino*  
Kathleen M. Jimino



## Burial and Memorial Benefits:

### Eligibility...

Veterans discharged from active duty under conditions other than dishonorable and service members who die while on active duty, as well as spouses and dependent children of veterans and active service members may be eligible for VA burial and memorial benefits. The veteran does not have to pre-decease a spouse or dependent child for them to be eligible.

VA national cemetery directors verify eligibility for burial in their cemeteries.

A copy of the veteran's discharge document that specifies the period(s) of active duty and character of discharge, along with the decedent's death certificate and proof of relationship to the veteran (for eligible family members) are all that are usually needed to determine eligibility.

Benefits include burial in VA National Cemeteries, Headstones and Markers, Presidential Memorial Certificates, burial flags, reimbursement of burial expenses and military funeral honors.

The funeral director and the next of kin make all arrangements for burial. We are, however, always available to assist where needed. Particulars on each of these benefits may be obtained by contacting our office.



## Upcoming Events...



*Call our office by the 15th of the month to list your event*

November 4...Election Day—REMEMBER TO VOTE!!! (**OFFICE CLOSED**)

November 8...Stephentown Area Veterans memorial park bench dedication at 10 am and Veterans Day Parade at 11 am

November 9...Free Veterans Day Breakfast at the Brunswick Elks, 8:30 am-11:30 am, Medal Presentation at noontime

November 10...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony-County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 am, **Ret. Lt. Col. Charles J. Weger, USMC, Korea**

November 11...Veterans Day— **OFFICE CLOSED**

November 11...Veterans Day Memory Walk in Troy, meeting at Troy City Hall, 9 a.m. start time

November 11...Free car wash at Hoffman's Car Wash for all veterans.

November 13...Free Veteran Day Dinner at Questar III from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm, please call 273-2264 to reserve your seats

November 27 & 28...**HAPPY THANKSGIVING—Office Closed**

December 8...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Frank J. Molloy, Jr. US Army, WWII**

December 25... Christmas Day (**office closed**).



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Rensselaer County  
Unified Family Services  
Veterans Service Agency  
1600 Seventh Avenue  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: (518) 270-2760  
FAX: (518) 270-2956

Volume 3, Issue 12  
DECEMBER, 2008

Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

KATHLEEN M. JIMINO  
County Executive

Robert M. Reiter  
Director

## Saying Goodbye to Congressman McNulty

On behalf of the Rensselaer County Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Committee, I hereby express our immeasurable gratitude, honor and respect to you, the Honorable Michael R. McNulty, for all of your unselfish years of service that you have given to the veteran community at large.

Your undying support of our nation's military men and women, as well as their families has always been evident, whether it was attending a medal presentation, a monthly Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony or a loved one's final service.

Over the years you have touched, helped and inspired a great number of individuals. So please understand that when we say this goodbye to you as our representative, it is with a great deal of respect and pride but also with many heavy hearts.

We know that our *Good Bye* to you is only as our Congressman. We look forward to being friends for many years to come.

Yours in Patriotism,

Robert M. Reiter

### Van Transportation...

- \* **Don't drive** and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic!?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and Clinic for *most morning* medical appointments.

For more details call 270-2760

### NOTE:

IN ORDER TO ALLOW FOR ROUTINE MAINTENANCE OUR VANS WILL BE OFF-ROAD FROM DECEMBER 22 THROUGH JANUARY 2. SERVICE WILL RESUME ON Monday, January 5, 2009.



### PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY

December 7, 1941

67 Years

December 7, 2008

Always Remembered

## Important Notice—New Law Concerning Eligibility for Government Headstones and Markers

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) furnishes upon request, at no charge to the applicant, a Government headstone or marker for the unmarked grave of any deceased eligible veteran in any cemetery around the world, regardless of their date of death. The VA may also provide a headstone or marker for the graves that are marked with a private headstone or marker, for veterans that die on or after November 1, 1990.

For eligible veterans that die on or after Nov. 1, 1990, VA may also provide a headstone or marker for graves that are already marked with a private headstone or marker. When the grave is already marked, applicants will have the option to apply for either a traditional headstone or marker, or the new device (available spring 2009).

Spouses and dependents are not eligible for a Government-furnished headstone or marker unless they are buried in a national cemetery, state veterans' cemetery, or military post/base cemetery.

## ALS as a Presumptive Compensable Illness

Veterans with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) may receive badly-needed support for themselves and their families after the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that ALS will become a presumptively compensable illness for all veterans with 90 days or more of continuous active service in the military.

ALS, also called Lou Gehrig's disease, is a neuromuscular disease that affects about 20,000 to 30,000 people of all races and ethnicities in the United States, is often relentlessly progressive, and is almost always fatal.

ALS causes degeneration of nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord that leads to muscle weakness, muscle atrophy, and spontaneous muscle activity. Currently, the cause of ALS is unknown, and there is no effective treatment.

The new interim final regulation applies to all applications for benefits received by VA on or after September 23, 2008, or that are pending before VA, the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, or the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit on that date.

VA will work to identify and contact veterans with ALS, including those whose claims for ALS were previously denied, through direct mailings and other outreach programs.

Please call Rensselaer County Veterans at 270-2760 if this applies to you or someone you know, and we will send you the necessary paperwork.

### RENSELAER COUNTY HONOR-A-DECEASED VETERAN COMMITTEE

•HAVE A DECEASED LOVED ONE OR FRIEND WHO WAS A VETERAN ?

•WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE THEM HONORED IN A CEREMONY ?

•IF SO, PLEASE INQUIRE HERE OR CALL 270-2760

#### REQUIREMENTS:

- MUST BE DISCHARGED UNDER CONDITIONS OTHER THAN DISHONORABLE;
- MUST BE DECEASED AT LEAST ONE YEAR;
- MUST HAVE RESIDED IN RENSELAER COUNTY AT SOME POINT DURING THEIR LIFETIME;
- MAY ONLY BE HONORED ONCE.

## A Message from our Director:

*Happy Holidays* from all of us here at Rensselaer Counties Veterans Service Agency. We hope that each and everyone has a happy and healthy holiday season. On December 7<sup>th</sup> (Pearl Harbor Day) it will be Ron Garzia's last day as part of our staff. Ron is retiring and will soon be in the sunshine state of Florida. We wish him well and a long and healthy retirement. With Ron gone we will be down a driver for two months, so please bare with us thru out this changing time.

Did you know that there are 23.6 million veterans in the United States? That 1.8 million are female, 16% percent are Gulf War veterans, 9.3 million veterans are 65 and older and at the other end of the age spectrum 1.9 million are younger then 35? Most veterans live in 5 states, California 2.1 million, Florida 1.7 million, Texas 1.7 million, New York 1.1 million and Pennsylvania 1.1 million. 25 percent of veterans 25 and older have at least a bachelors degree, and 90 percent have a high school diploma or higher.

Did you know that the rate of veterans who voted in the presidential election was SEVENTY-five PERCENT, COMPARED TO 63 PERCENT OF NONVETERANS?

This is a list of veterans who are living: World War II: 2,306,000; Korean War: 2,307,000; Vietnam War: 7,125,000; and Desert Shield/Storm: 2,269,00.

*Happy Holidays,*

*Bob, Lonnie and Dan*

## Upcoming Events:

December 7...Pearl Harbor remembered

December 8...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **Frank J. Molloy, Jr., Army, WWII**

December 25...Christmas—**Office Closed**

December 22 – January 2...**no van transportation** (see front page)

January 1...Happy New Year— **Office Closed**

January 5... Van schedule resumes

January 12...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m. **TO BE ANNOUNCED**

January 19...Martin Luther King Jr. Day—**Office Closed**



*Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event .*