



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

KATHLEEN M. JIMINO  
County Executive

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Rensselaer County  
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Phone: (518) 270-2760

## VETERANS PREFERENCE for FEDERAL JOBS

### 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

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)*

## 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.

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



September 11th & 12th Troy will celebrate Samuel Wilson's birthday (9/13/1766). This event includes a graveside ceremony on Saturday at Oakwood Cemetery at 10:00 am. Followed by a brunch at the Veterans of Lansingburgh; tickets can be purchased at the door. On Sunday the festivities begin with a parade at 12:45 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...

September 1st– 6th ...Schaghticoke Fair **COME VISIT OUR BOOTH!** (Office Closed)

September 11... Uncle Sam Gravesite Ceremony at 10:00 a.m. followed by a brunch at the Veterans of Lansingburgh

September 12..... **Uncle Sam Parade** (see above article)

September 13...Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in Legislative Chambers, 8:15am **Winston E. Miller, Army Air Forces ,WWII**

October 2... Capital Region Veteran Stand-Down (see Page 3)

October 11.....Columbus Day observed-**OFFICE CLOSED**

## Honor-A-Deceased Veteran Ceremony

The second Monday of every 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 be from Rensselaer County (born, raised or resided in);
- Must have been discharged under honorable conditions 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.

### Important Documents:

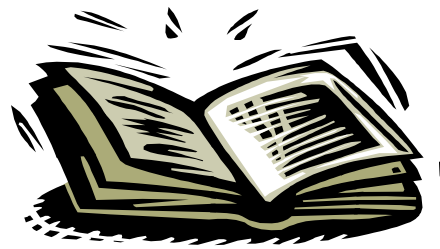
Those seeking a VA benefit for the first time must submit a copy of their service discharge form (DD-214, WDAGO 53-55, NAV PERS 53-55, Report of Separation or Certificate of Military Service), which documents your service dates and character of discharge, along with personal identifying information: 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 12th Annual Veterans Day Breakfast will be held on November 7th. 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 18, 2010- 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...

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 members medals. When they arrive, we will present them to you at the next ceremony.

## CAPITAL REGION VETERANS STAND DOWN

Saturday, October 2, from 8:00 am until 1:00 pm will be the annual Veterans Stand Down for veterans and their families who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

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 Saturday, September 11, 2010, 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.

**Message from our County Executive...**

**Kathleen M. Jimino**

I have always felt that the programs and services provided by Rensselaer County make a profound difference in the lives of our residents. Whether it is those offered through our Veterans Services Agency, the Health Department, Aging, or the many other county agencies that day in and day out work to make Rensselaer County an even better place to live, work, or raise a family.

To help shine a spotlight on some of those services Rensselaer County will once again this year have a number of informational tables and representatives at the Schaghticoke Fair which runs from September 1<sup>st</sup> through the 6<sup>th</sup>.

So if you are taking part in some of the family fun the fair offers, I hope you will stop by to visit us in our traditional location in the Hoosic Valley Fire Department building.

Hope to see you soon and a sincere thank you for you service and the hope that your summer was healthy and happy!

Sincerely,

*Kathleen M. Jimino*

***A Message from our Director.....***

*I want to discuss a new program that has started in the Troy City Court under the supervision of Judge Maier.*

*It is called VetTrak. It is an alternative to incarceration program designed specifically for veterans. New York has recognized that military service and the effect of training and combat experience may result in a difficult transition back to civilian life. In the event that an individual who has served this nation in the Armed Services becomes involved in our criminal justice system, the court can now provide a problem-solving court track as an alternative to incarceration. Successful completion of VetTrak, associated with an existing treatment court program, may result in a reduction in legal charges and increased opportunities for long term success.*

*Veteran's eligible for the program must have a pending misdemeanor case in Rensselaer County and have one or more of the following: substance abuse problem, mental health issues and/or traumatic brain injury. The status of his/her discharge from the Armed Services and whether the veteran saw combat will not preclude them from entering the program.*

*For more information or questions please contact: Bonnie Hazard, Resource Coordinator @270-1602 , ext. 324 or Bryan Blanchard, Veteran Community Advocate @ 694-0639.*

*Yours in Patriotism, Bob*