



RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

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

- * 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



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 10th, 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 8th 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**

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

Upcoming Events:



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

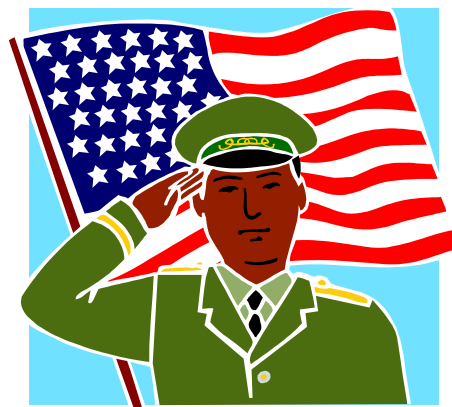
If you are interested please call our office for details

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.

