



# RENSSELAER COUNTY VETERANS NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 9  
SEPTEMBER, 2007

KATHLEEN M. JIMINO, County Executive

Joseph W. Cybulski  
Commissioner

Robert M. Reiter  
Director

**Rensselaer County**  
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Veterans Service Agency  
1600 Seventh Avenue  
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## CHAMPVA (Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs)

CHAMPVA is a comprehensive health care program in which the VA shares the cost of covered health care services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries. The program is administered by Health Administration Center and their offices are located in Denver, Colorado.

### 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 any morning medical appointments.
- \* Call our office for more details...270-2760



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

Due to the similarity between CHAMPVA and the Department of Defense (DoD) TRICARE program (sometimes referred to by its old name, CHAMPUS) the two are often mistaken for each other. CHAMPVA is a Department of Veterans Affairs program whereas TRICARE is a regionally managed health care program for active duty and retired members of the uniformed services, their families, and survivors. In some cases a veteran may look to be eligible for both/either program on paper. However, if you are a military retiree, or the spouse of a veteran who was killed in action, you are and will always be a TRICARE beneficiary, you can't choose between the two.

### ELIGIBILITY:

To be eligible for CHAMPVA, you cannot be eligible for TRICARE/CHAMPUS and you must be in one of these categories:

1. The spouse or child of a veteran who has been rated permanently and totally disabled for a service-connected disability by a VA regional office, or
2. The surviving spouse or child of a veteran who died from a VA-rated service connected disability, or
3. The surviving spouse or child of a veteran who was at the time of death rated permanently and totally disabled from a service connected disability, or
4. The surviving spouse or child of a military member who died in the line of duty, not due to misconduct (in most of these cases, these family members are eligible for TRICARE, not CHAMPVA).

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

Hello All-

It's hard to believe that fall is coming already! We will once more be having the "Stand Down" on October 13th at the Colonie BPO Elks. If you are interested in volunteering to help out at some point during the day, please call our office and give us your information, this is a very helpful program for our homeless veterans or at risk veterans and their families.

Every once in awhile some of the bills passed in Washington need to be praised! The passage by unanimous consent of bill (S.1877) clarifying U.S. law to allow veterans' and servicemen and women not in uniform to salute the flag. Under current law (US Code Title 4, Chapter 1) states those veterans' and servicemen and women not in uniform should place their hand over their heart. This bill allows "The salute as a form of honor and respect, representing pride in one's military service". Veterans and service members continue repre-

senting their military service even when not in uniform, current U.S. law leaves confusion as to whether veterans and service members out of uniform can or should salute the flag. This legislation will clarify this regulation, allowing veterans and service members alike to salute the flag, whether they are in uniform or not.

"I look forward to seeing those who have served saluting proudly at ballgames, parades, and formal events. This is an appropriate way to honor and recognize the 25 million veterans in the United States who have served in the military and remain role models to other citizens. All who are currently serving or have served in the military have earned this right, and their recognition will be an inspiration to all".

*Yours in Patriotism,*

**BOB**

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



September 8th and 9th Troy will celebrate Samuel Wilson's birthday (9/13/1766). This event includes a graveside ceremony at Oakwood Cemetery at 10:00 am. and brunch at 11:00 am on Saturday at the Veterans of Lansingburgh (\$15.00 donation). On Sunday the festivities begin with a parade at 1:00 p.m. followed by family fun and entertainment in Knickerbacker Park and an 8:00 p.m. 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 1-3...Schaghticoke Fair **COME VISIT OUR BOOTH!** (Office Closed on 9/4)
- September 8..... Uncle Sam Gravesite Ceremony at 10:00 a.m. (line-up 9:30) followed by Brunch at the Veterans of Lansingburgh at 11:00 am.
- September 9..... **Uncle Sam Parade** (see above article)
- September 10... **Honor-a-Deceased Veteran**—County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 a.m.  
**James H. Westbay, US Army, WWII**
- October 8..... Columbus Day observed—**OFFICE CLOSED.**
- October 9..... **Honor-a-Deceased Veteran**—County Legislative Chambers at 8:15 a.m.  
**Edward F. McDonough, US Army, Korea**
- October 13..... Capital Region Veteran's **Stand Down** 7 a.m.-2 p.m. at Colonie Elks



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

## Christmas Packages for our Troops...



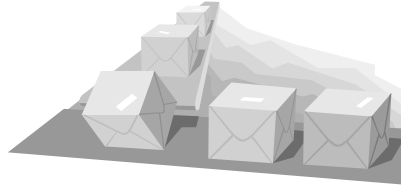
We are beginning to collect the following items to send to our troops for the upcoming holiday:

- |                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Batteries (all sizes) | Calling Cards |
| Baby Wipes            | Puzzle Books  |
| Magazines             | Packs of Gum  |
| Shaving Cream         | Deodorant     |
| Maxi pads/tampons     | Razors        |
| Toothpaste            | Toothbrushes  |
| Bars of soap          | Lip Balm      |
| Hand Lotion           | Flea Colors   |

Individually wrapped snacks  
(nothing that will melt, exp. chocolate)

You may donate any of the above items to the Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency.

If you know of deployed military personnel that you would like to receive a package, please contact our office with their full mailing address.



Deadline for receiving items is  
**OCTOBER 26, 2007**

## Important Documents:

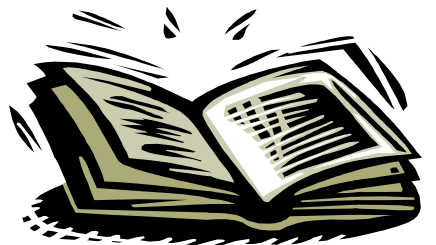
Those seeking a VA benefit for the first time must submit a copy of their service discharge form (DD-214, WDAGO 53-55, NAV PERS 53-55, Report of Separation or Certificate of Military Service), which documents your service dates and character of discharge, along with personal identifying information: 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 9th Annual Veterans Day Breakfast will be held on November 11th. 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 19, 2007**. 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 host 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 13, from 7:00 am until 2:00 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

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## Message from our County Executive...

**Kathleen M. Jimino**

We owe a tremendous debt to the men and women of our armed forces who have through their service to our nation, defended the freedoms we enjoy as Americans. Unfortunately, many of our veterans suffer from injuries or health problems due to their service to our nation, and while some injuries heal, others do not. In recognition of the sacrifices made by our veterans, benefits and services programs are available to help them upon their return home and throughout their lifetime.

Often times, veterans will inform me of problems they have encountered applying for the benefits they are due based on their service to our nation and without hesitation I direct them to our County's Veterans Service Agency. There, veterans will find the information and assistance to help ensure they receive the benefits they are rightfully due from their service to our nation.

And while some service related health problems do not appear until long after their service has ended, I again urge our veterans to reach out to us when a health problem arises as the problem or condition may be recognized by the federal government as resulting from the veteran's military service thereby entitling the veteran to assistance for the problem.

Our goal is to make sure that all of our veterans get the benefits to which they are entitled. It is just one small way we can say thank you for all they have done for us.

Sincerely,  
*Kathleen M. Jimino*

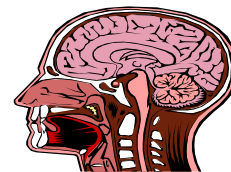
## Free Veterans Day Car Wash

For the third 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.

## RETURNING MILITARY PERSONNEL: ASK YOURSELF TWO QUESTIONS...

- Were you injured while deployed?
- Did your injury result in any of the following?



- ▶ Seeing "stars", being dazed or confused?
- ▶ Not remembering the injury?
- ▶ Being "knocked out"?
- ▶ Having a headache or dizziness?
- ▶ Irritability?
- ▶ Decreased concentration or feeling disoriented?
- ▶ Ringing in your ears?
- ▶ Sensitivity to light and noise?
- ▶ Feel like you're losing it?

You may have traumatic brain injury. Get help at 1-800-228-8201. Brain Injury Association of NYS 10 Colvin Ave., Albany, NY 12206-1242 ([www.bianys.org](http://www.bianys.org))