



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

Van Transportation...

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

For more information please call (518) 270-2760.



Rensselaer County Veterans Newsletter

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KATHLEEN M. JIMINO
County Executive

PETER K. GOEBEL
Director

2017 VA "ADOPT- A -VET" HOLIDAY PROGRAM

The Stratton VAMC annual Holiday gift donation program for Veterans in need is now underway. Each year has been more successful; in 2014, the first year, they helped 8 Veteran families, in 2015 they helped 55 Veteran families, and last year the VAMC employees and many other community groups and agencies helped over 60 Veteran families.

This donation program is part of Voluntary Services Holiday outreach for Veterans. A "needs" list of gifts that can be donated is being maintained by Mike Fitzpatrick and Noney Grier. If you wish to fulfill a Veteran family's needs or a portion of it, or have any questions, please contact Mike or Noney at:

Mike Fitzpatrick @ 518-626-6919 michael.fitzpatrick3@va.gov

Noney Grier @ 518-626-5507 noney.grier@va.gov

All gifts must be **brand new in original packaging and unwrapped**. Gifts can be dropped off at:

Stratton VA Medical Center
113 Holland Avenue,
Room 712 or 711 "D" wing (Voluntary Services)
Albany, NY 12208

A Message From Our County Executive

As Veterans Day occurs this year 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. Veterans Day is a solemn day marked with ceremonies, memorial services, parades, dinners and breakfasts, all honoring those who have served and I strongly urge you to take advantage of one of the many opportunities available to honor our veterans.

Additionally, as I reach the end of my career in public service I would like to personally thank all of our veterans for their service, as well as the groups and individuals who seek to assist our veterans who have given so much to our nation. It has truly been my honor and privilege to serve the residents of Rensselaer County and I will always cherish the opportunity the residents of this county have granted me, especially our veterans who among so many other things have guaranteed our democratic way of life!

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Jimino

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

The following criteria applies to the honorees:

- Must have personal tie to Rensselaer County (born, raised, or resided in);
- Must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable and discharge must accompany application;
- Copy of obituary must accompany application;
- May only be honored once;
- Submitted applications 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 one particular veteran and it is their life story;
- Completed applications and supporting info must be turned into:

Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency, 1600 Seventh Avenue, Troy, New York 12180

For an application , please call us at 518-270-2760 or download an application at www.rensco.com

RETURN THE F.A.V.O.R. **VETERAN DISCOUNT PROGRAM**

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

Eligibility for the Rensselaer County Veterans' Discount Program is for Veterans or the widows/widowers of Veterans.

Eligibility for a Veterans ID Card is dependent on being an honorably discharged Veteran of the United States Military.

The Veteran or widow/widower **MUST** apply for the card in person.

Receipt of the Veterans FAVOR card is dependent on the Veteran or widow/widower's filing of an original Discharge (DD-214 / Report of Separation) at the Rensselaer County Clerk's Office.

WHERE DO I APPLY?

Rensselaer County Clerk's Office
105 Third Street
Troy, NY 12180
(518) 270-4080

Upcoming Events...



Call our office to inquiry about listing your event

December 7th...Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

December 11th...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers at 8:30 am, *Edward L. Pratt, USA, Sgt.-WWII*

December 16th...Wreaths Across America at Saratoga National Cemetery

December 25th...CHRISTMAS DAY—OFFICE CLOSED

January 1st... NEW YEAR'S DAY—OFFICE CLOSED

January 8th...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers at 8:30 am,

Stanley Opitz, USMC, Corp.-WWII & David Opitz, USN, SN-Vietnam Era

BURIAL AND PLOT INTERMENT ALLOWANCES

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VA burial allowances are flat rate monetary benefits that are generally paid at the maximum amount authorized by law for an eligible Veteran's burial and funeral costs. A VA regulation change in 2014 simplified the program to pay eligible survivors quickly and efficiently. Eligible surviving spouses of record are paid automatically upon notification of the Veteran's death, without the need to submit a claim. VA may grant additional benefits, including the plot or interment allowance and transportation allowance, if it receives a claim for these benefits.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

If the burial benefit has not been automatically paid to the surviving spouse, VA will pay the first living person to file a claim of those listed below:

Veteran's surviving spouse; **OR**
The survivor of a legal union* between the deceased Veteran and the survivor; **OR**
The Veteran's children, regardless of age; **OR**
The Veteran's parents or surviving parent; **OR**
The executor or administrator of the estate of the deceased Veteran.

*Legal union means a formal relationship between the decedent and the survivor that existed on the date of the Veteran's death, which was recognized under the law of the State in which the couple formalized the relationship and evidenced by the State's issuance of documentation memorializing the relationship.

The Veteran must also have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. In addition, at least one of the following conditions must be met:

- the Veteran died as a result of a service-connected disability, **OR**
- the Veteran was receiving VA pension or compensation at the time of death, **OR**
- the Veteran was entitled to receive VA pension or compensation, but decided instead to receive his or her full military retirement or disability pay, **OR**
- the Veteran died while hospitalized by VA, or while receiving care under VA contract at a non-VA facility, **OR**
- the Veteran died while traveling under proper authorization and at VA expense to or from a specified place for the purpose of examination, treatment or care, **OR**
- the Veteran had an original or reopened claim for VA compensation or pension pending at the time of death and would have been entitled to benefits from a date prior to the date of death, **OR**
- the Veteran died on or after October 9, 1996, while a patient at a VA-approved state nursing home.

HOW MUCH DOES VA PAY?

Service-Connected Death

- If the Veteran died on or after September 11, 2001, the maximum service-connected burial allowance is \$2,000.
- If the Veteran died before September 11, 2001, the maximum service-connected burial allowance is \$1,500.
- If the Veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, VA may reimburse some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased Veteran's remains.

Non-Service-Connected Death

- the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2017, VA will pay a \$300 burial allowance and \$762 for a plot.
- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2016, but before October 1, 2017, VA will pay a \$300 burial allowance and \$749 for a plot.
- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2015, but before October 1, 2016, VA will pay a \$300 burial allowance and \$747 for a plot.

Effective October 1, 2011, there are higher non-service-connected death rates payable if the Veteran was hospitalized by VA when he or she died.

- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2017, VA will pay a \$762 burial allowance and \$762 for a plot.
- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2016, VA will pay a \$749 burial allowance and \$749 for a plot.
- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2015, but before October 1, 2016, VA will pay a \$747 burial allowance and \$747 for a plot.
- If the death occurred while the Veteran was properly hospitalized by VA, or under VA contracted nursing home care, some or all of the costs for transporting the Veteran's remains may be reimbursed.

Note: If the Veteran dies while traveling at VA expense for the purpose of examination, treatment or care, VA will pay burial, funeral, plot or interment allowances, and transportation expenses.



WREATHS *across* AMERICA

Wreath Sponsorship Form

*Sponsored wreaths are placed on the grave markers at state, national veterans cemeteries as well as local cemeteries each December. Wreaths may be purchased online at www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org

If you wish to make your sponsorship with a credit card please visit our website for a secure online transaction.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

Please make checks payable to:
Wreaths Across America TM
 PO Box 249
 Columbia Falls, ME 04623
 Questions? Please call 877-385-9504
 Thank you for your Sponsorship and joining us in our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach!

Do we have permission to publicize your name as a sponsor?

☐ Yes OR ☐ No, I wish to remain Anonymous

Sponsorship	Price	Quantity	Total
Individual- 1 Wreath	\$15.00		
Mailed "In Honor" card- If you wish to send a mailed honor card telling someone of your sponsorship-see "In Honor" section below. *Card will not be mailed if the \$2 fee is not included.	\$2.00		
Family- 4 Wreaths	\$60.00		
Small Business- 10 Wreaths	\$150.00		
Corporate- 100 Wreaths	\$1,500.00		
		Grand Total	

****SORRY- WE CAN NOT TAKE GRAVE SPECIFIC REQUESTS****

In Honor of:

Please provide email of "In Honor Of" recipient, or mailing address so a card can be sent notifying them of your sponsorship in their honor. (If you have a specific message please write it on the back of this sheet and we will include it.)

Email: _____

Mailing: _____

In Memory of:

This name will be listed on our online memory wall, please provide name, rank, branch of service and state resided

Branch of Service: _____

Rank: _____

State: _____

Please note that all sponsorships are sent directly to the location and no wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.

Location ID: NYGSNS Fundraising Group ID: NY0057

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Cash \$: _____ Total\$: _____ Date: _____
 Total # Checks: _____ Reconciled: _____
 MO \$: _____
 Entered: _____

GEN: _____