



# County of Albany Veterans Service Bureau Newsletter

July - August 2023

Daniel P. McCoy  
Albany County Executive

Kenneth Secor  
Director



## Services for Veterans

Albany County Veterans Service Bureau provides information on the various Veterans benefits and aid Veterans and their families with various county, state, and federal entitlements such as:

- Disability, pension, and/or compensation benefits
- Burial allowances, head stones, and flags
- Educational benefits
- Upgrading military discharges
- Obtaining copies of records
- Job referrals
- Return the FAVOR cards

## Veterans Service Officers (VSO)

Albany County Veterans Service Bureau has American Legion certified VSO's to assist Veterans with benefits.

Ken Secor, SGM (Ret)  
Jim Ader, SGT (Ret)  
Call (518) 447-7710 or email at  
[veteransbureau@albanycountyny.gov](mailto:veteransbureau@albanycountyny.gov)



Connects Service members and Veterans in crisis, as well as their family members and friends, with qualified, caring VA responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text-messaging service.

This free support is confidential and available every day, 24/7, to all Veterans, all service members, National Guard & Reserve, family members & friends.

<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net>

## Message from the Director

It was great to see so many Veterans at the Memorial Day events that were held within the County. It was very humbling seeing how many dedicated and proud Veterans that we have within the County that came out to remember our fallen and lost comrades by placing flags at cemeteries or attending ceremonies and parades. I truly believe that Albany County has the best Veterans in the region and it is truly an honor to know and work with so many of you. Also, during the weekend I took some time to reflect on my fellow service members who are not with us today, especially the ones lost on 9/11 and in combat in Iraq.

We have some exciting news regarding our Veteran Peer Support Program on the next page. Listed are some of our programs and we will be announcing more soon. Most of our programs are free to Veterans so sign up and enjoy some of them.

Most Veteran organizations take a break for the summer but if yours has any meetings or events that you would like us to attend to make a presentation about available resources, the PACT Act, or just answer questions and provide information, feel free to contact us to schedule it.

Our monthly Honor A Veteran ceremonies are listed on the calendar of events on our webpage with the most recent details that include locations and honorees. We are starting to plan ceremonies for 2024 and there are many dates available. If you would like to nominate a Veteran for this honor, please contact me (518-447-7710 or [kenneth.secor@albanycountyny.gov](mailto:kenneth.secor@albanycountyny.gov)) with the Veteran's name and point of contact for the family.

As always, thank you to all my fellow Veterans.

## NYS FreshConnect Checks

In collaboration with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets and NYS Department of Veterans' Services, Veteran Service Officers for each County are offering FreshConnect checks to Active Duty members, Veterans and their immediate family members, as well as un-remarried surviving spouses of Veterans.

Albany County residents who are Veterans and their immediate family members are eligible to receive FreshConnect checks from the Albany County Veteran Services Bureau. Recipients will receive a booklet of FreshConnect checks worth a total of \$50 to be used for fresh produce and other food items at participating farmers markets throughout New York State. We have a limited supply of FreshConnect checks which will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. If you would like FreshConnect checks, contact our office at (518) 447-7713. The FreshConnect "season" generally begins in July and runs until December. Only one booklet of checks may be obtained per Veteran household.

100 Heritage Lane, Albany, New York 12211 | (518) 447-7710 | FAX (518) 447-7714  
[www.AlbanyCounty.com/veterans](http://www.AlbanyCounty.com/veterans)

**ALBANY COUNTY**  
*Cares* about our veterans



### Return The F.A.V.O.R. Discount For Veterans

Return the F.A.V.O.R. (Find & Assist Veterans of Record) is a merchant discount program for eligible Albany County Veterans. The program provides veterans with a discount on services or purchases at participating merchants.

Veterans can enroll by bringing their DD-214 to the Albany County Veterans Service Bureau office Monday through Friday 9am to 4pm. Please call for an appointment to ensure availability and timely service.

Return the FAVOR ID application form can be downloaded at:

<http://www.albanycounty.com/veterans>

### Albany County Veterans Peer Support Program (ACVPSP)

This program was started last year with the mission of helping Military members transition to civilian life and to help with Veterans physical and mental wellbeing. Below are some of our highlighted programs that are FREE to all Veterans.

#### Sweat With A Vet Hot Yoga Sessions

ACVPSP and The Hot Yoga Spot have partnered to offer FREE yoga sessions for Veterans. These sessions will be exposing Veterans to the benefits of yoga to improve their physical and mental wellbeing with a small group of like minded Veterans. We all move at our own pace in class so no prior experience is required. Class size is limited so it is encouraged to register for class early. Yoga mats will be provided free of charge, just bring a water source.

Tuesday, 7:15pm at Hot Yoga Spot Latham Crossroads Center, 7 Johnson Rd, Latham, NY 12210

<https://www.thehotyogaspot.com/latham-location>  
(518) 219-8112

Thursday, 6:00pm at Hot Yoga Spot Albany Stuyvesant Plaza, 1475 Western Ave, Albany, NY 12203

<https://www.thehotyogaspot.com/albany-location>  
(518) 219-8112

#### Walking Club

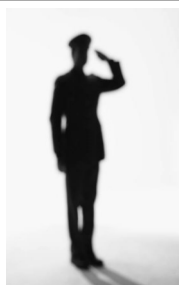
ACVPSP and Weininger VFW Post #8692 have partnered to host a weekly walking club every Wednesday morning at 9am at the Colonie Crossings. There are walkers of all abilities so you can get some exercise and have good conversation with fellow Veterans and their families. There is no cost for this.

#### Cornhole League

ACVPSP and Weininger VFW Post #8692 have partnered again to host a weekly cornhole league every Wednesday evening at 7pm at their post building at 140 VFW Dr, Albany, NY 12205. This league has players of all abilities. If you can't make every week, you can attend when you can and be a substitute player. This league is FREE to Veterans.

#### Veteran Mental Health First Aid Course

ACVPSP and the Mental Health Association of NY (MHANY) conducted this course on June 22nd at the Zaloga Post. The course was well attended and it teaches how to identify, understand, and respond to the signs of mental health and substance abuse challenges among Veterans. This is a great course for anyone that deals with Veterans, such as Post officers. We will be conducting another course later in the year and more information will be posted when plans are finalized.



### Albany County Honor A Veteran Program

Each month Albany County honors a deceased Veteran with a ceremony at various locations throughout the County. A County Proclamation is presented to the Veteran's family and an American flag that was flown over our Nation's Capitol is raised in tribute to the honored Veteran.

Anyone (family, friends, funeral directors, Veterans groups, etc.) may submit nomination form and resume for consideration.

For nomination information, process, & criteria, please visit our webpage at:

<http://www.albanycounty.com/veterans>  
or call (518) 447-7710





### Important Documents & Information When Applying for Benefits

- Honorable Discharge from the Armed Forces or Report of Military Separation (DD-214)
- Record of Marriage
- Birth certificate or adoption papers for dependent children
- Death Certificate of Veteran & any previous spouse
- Divorce Papers
- Veterans social security number
- Department of Veterans Affairs claim or file number
- Annual family income information (wages, retirement, interest, etc.)

All Documents listed above may be copied, except for the DD-214, which must be a certified copy.



Albany County's suicide and warning prevention app for your smartphone. A source of information if you need help or if you know someone that does. It provides warning signs, what to say, help for Veterans, teens/young adults and adults, resources, contacts, and assessments.

Available through iTunes and Google Play stores.

### Albany County Mobile Crisis Team

Psychiatric crisis services are available 24/7 at the CDPC Crisis Unit and from the Mobile Crisis Team.

Call (518) 549-6500

<https://www.albanycounty.com/mentalhealth>

### VA Food Pantry

The Albany VA Medical Center has a food pantry run by their Volunteer Services Department for Veterans in need. Unfortunately the shelves are getting bare and they could use some donations to replenish the stock.

#### Items needed:

Canned vegetables	Cereal	Rice	Mac & cheese
Canned chicken	Oatmeal	Ramen	Peanut butter
Canned Tuna	Jelly	Pasta	Pasta sauce
Canned soup	Canned fruit		

For any questions or to schedule a drop-off contact the Volunteer Services office at (518) 626-5507.

### Veterans Miracle Center

This is a special place for Veterans and active-duty military personnel, as well as their immediate families, who are in need to receive daily life necessities absolutely free. They are also in need of donations to replenish a dwindling supply.

#### Food items needed:

Canned vegetables	Cereal	Rice	Mac & cheese
Canned chicken	Oatmeal	Jelly	Peanut butter
Canned Tuna	Pasta	Pasta sauce	Canned soup
Canned fruit			

#### Other items needed:

Razors	Dish detergent	Kitchen utensils
Shaving Cream	Laundry detergent	Toasters
Deodorant	Cleaning products	Coffee makers
Twin blankets		

To get more information or schedule a drop-off (10 Interstate Ave, Albany, NY 12205) contact them (Mon - Fri, 9am-5pm) at (518) 486-8398.

### Discounts & Free Stuff!

#### Free

[NY Lifetime Liberty Pass](#) free vehicle entry to state parks and DEC-operated day-use areas, as well as numerous state boat launch sites, historic sites, arboretums and park preserves; free golf at 28 State Park golf courses; free swimming pool entrance at 36 State Park pools, and discounted camping and cabin rentals at all 119 State Park and DEC campgrounds.

[Veterans, Gold Star Families Lifetime National Parks Pass](#) free entrance to national parks for Veterans and their families. The pass gives free access to about 2,000 public locations spread out across more than 400 million acres of public lands.

[Intrepid Museum](#) Free admission for active military and Veterans. 20% off on Individual, Dual and Family memberships. Special programs also available.



### New York State Division of Veterans' Services

NYS DVS advocates on behalf of NY Veterans and their families to ensure they receive state and federal benefits granted by law for service in the US Armed Forces. They provide free benefits advising with experienced and dedicated advisors, each a Veteran, to offer Veterans professional help to resolve social, medical, and economic matters. They also manage several state benefits to include a Blind Annuity program, a Gold Star Parent Annuity, and the Veterans Education Bureau.

1-888-VETS-NYS  
(1-888-838-7697)  
<https://veterans.ny.gov/>



### New York State Military Museum

The museum houses over 10,000 artifacts dating from the Revolutionary War to Desert Storm that relate to New York State's military forces, the state's military history and the contributions of New York's veterans. The artifacts include uniforms, weapons, artillery pieces, and art. There is no admission charge to visit the museum or use research center.

61 Lake Avenue  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866  
(518) 581-5100  
<http://dmna.ny.gov/historic/mil-hist.htm>

## VETERAN EVENTS

On a monthly basis we will email a listing of Veteran events to anyone that is subscribed to our newsletter. The most current listing of Veteran events can also be found on our webpage at: <https://www.albanycounty.com/departments/veterans-service-bureau/events>.

If your organization has Veteran events that you would like added to our listing, please contact Ken Secor at (518) 447-7710 or [kenneth.secor@albanycountyny.gov](mailto:kenneth.secor@albanycountyny.gov).

## Resources & Veterans Organizations

There are many resources and Veteran organizations within Albany County and a larger listing is available on our webpage at: <http://www.albanycounty.com/veterans>

<p><b>American Legion Colonie Post 1256</b></p> <p>140 VFW Dr. Albany, NY 12205 (518) 456-7794</p> <p><a href="http://www.vfwpost8692.com/am-legion-1256">www.vfwpost8692.com/ am-legion-1256</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on second Fri.</p>	<p><b>Veterans of Foreign War Ravena Post 9594</b></p> <p>12 Whitbeck St. Ravena, NY 12143 (518) 756-9594</p> <p><a href="http://www.facebook.com/VFW9594/">www.facebook.com/VFW9594/</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on second Thu.</p>	<p><b>Marine Corps League Capt. Wm. Dale O'Brien Det 241</b></p> <p>(518) 237-1712</p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/CaptWmDaleOBrien241/">https://www.facebook.com/ CaptWmDaleOBrien241/</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on 2nd Wed. at Am. Legion Zaloga Post</p>
<p><b>American Legion Voorheesville Post 1493</b></p> <p>31 Voorheesville Ave. Voorheesville, NY 12186 (518) 765-4712</p> <p><a href="http://www.facebook.com/pg/VoorheesvilleALP1493">www.facebook.com/pg/ VoorheesvilleALP1493</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on third Thu.</p>	<p><b>Veterans of Foreign War Sheehy-Palmer Post 6776</b></p> <p>525 Delaware Ave. Albany, NY 12209 (518) 465-9349</p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/VFW6776">https://www.facebook.com/ VFW6776</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on second Thu.</p>	<p><b>Tri-County Council of Vietnam Era Veterans</b></p> <p>PO Box 11100 Albany, NY 12211 (518) 465-6829</p> <p><a href="http://www.tccvev.com">www.tccvev.com</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on first Tue. at Am. Legion Zaloga Post</p>
<p><b>American Legion Fort Orange Post 30</b></p> <p>525 Delaware Ave. Albany, NY 12209</p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/fortorange.legion">https://www.facebook.com/ fortorange.legion</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on first Wed.</p>	<p><b>Veterans of Foreign War Boyd-Hilton Post 7062</b></p> <p>11 Mill St. Altamont, NY 12209 (518) 861-8323</p> <p><a href="http://www.facebook.com/BoydHiltonVFW7062/">www.facebook.com/ BoydHiltonVFW7062/</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 1pm on third Sun.</p>	<p><b>American Veterans (AMVETS) EJ Knapik Post 35</b></p> <p>PO Box 4152 Schenectady, NY 12304</p> <p><a href="http://www.facebook.com/cdnaysa/">www.facebook.com/cdnaysa/</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on fourth Thur. at Guilderland Elks Lodge</p>
<p><b>American Legion E.T. Ruane Post 476</b></p> <p>93 Oneida St. Cohoes, NY 12047 (518) 235-4989</p> <p><a href="http://americanlegionpost476.com">http:// americanlegionpost476.com</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 12pm on fourth Sun.</p>	<p><b>Veterans of Foreign War Wm. F. Wigand Post 8444</b></p> <p>370 Central Ave. Albany, NY 12206 (518) 465-6992</p> <p><a href="http://www.facebook.com/Wigand-Post-8444-117247008294450/">www.facebook.com/Wigand- Post-8444-117247008294450/</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 6pm on second Tue.</p>	<p><b>American Legion Zaloga Post 1520</b></p> <p>4 Everett Rd. Ext. Albany, NY 12205 (518) 459-1520</p> <p><a href="http://zalogapost1520.org">http://zalogapost1520.org</a></p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on second Tue. (except Jul, Aug, &amp; Dec)</p>