



County of Albany Veterans Service Bureau Newsletter

March-April 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



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

Winter sure has been an up and down season as far as the weather goes. As we move towards the end of Winter and into Spring and hopefully some warmer weather means there will be more Veteran events happening as we can get outdoors. If you know of local events coming up, please let us know so we can help promote your events, attend, and provide resources. Also, we will be getting closer to and start planning things for Memorial Day so send that information to us so we can assist or provide resources.

One of the big events for December was Wreaths Across America and wreaths were placed at the Saratoga National Cemetery. The wreaths now need to be removed so if you have some time to spare you can volunteer to help with the removal. Wreath removal at the Saratoga National Cemetery will be March 4th, 2023 starting at 8am.

If any Veteran organization would like us to attend your membership meetings to make a presentation about available resources or just answer question, feel free to contact me and we will make it happen.

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 planning ceremonies for 2023 and there are still dates available. If you would like to nominate a Veteran for this honor, please contact me (518-447-7710 or 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.

Access Disability Benefit Decisions Online

Veterans can now access their disability benefit claim decisions on VA.gov, instead of waiting for a mailed copy to be delivered. Previously, Veterans could access benefits summary letters on va.gov, but not the full copy of decision notification letters in their electronic claims folders. About 280,000 notification letters have been downloaded since the service commenced a month ago.

"Veterans now have access to their benefits decisions anytime, anyplace – right at their fingertips," VA Secretary Denis McDonough said. "VA disability benefits can also open the door to other federal and state benefits, so quick and easy access to a decision means quicker access to the additional benefits veterans deserve."

To access decision letters, Veterans can [log in to VA.gov](https://www.va.gov) and [check the status of their claim](#).

100 Heritage Lane, Albany, New York 12211 | (518) 447-7710 | FAX (518) 447-7714
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>

March is Women’s History Month

CSM JoAnn Naumann

Command Sergeant Major Naumann, Special Operations - Korea, is the first woman to hold a position in the command team in Special Operations history. She has dutifully served in the U.S. Army for 26 years and has broken barriers and paved the way in the special operations field since transferring to special operations in 2002.

Lt Col Martha McSally

Lieutenant Colonel McSally was the first American woman to fly in combat after the 1991 lifting of the prohibition of women in combat. She flew the Fairchild Republic A-10 Thunderbolt II 'Warthog' close air support aircraft over Iraq and Kuwait during Operation Southern Watch. She is also the first woman to command a USAF fighter squadron, the 354th Fighter Squadron (354 FS) based at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona.

McSally, now a Republican congresswoman, quickly points out that the oath for a military officer -- to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic -- is the same for a member of Congress. "I served my country in uniform for 26 years," the 46-year-old said in an interview. "I personally consider this just a continuation of my service to my country."

SGT Leigh Ann Hester

Sergeant Hester, of the 617th Military Police Company, a National Guard unit out of Richmond, Kentucky, is the first woman to receive the Silver Star since World War II for exceptional valor.

Hester's squad was shadowing a supply convoy on March 20, 2005, when anti-Iraqi fighters ambushed the convoy. Hester led her team through the "kill zone" and into a flanking position, where she assaulted a trench line with grenades and M203 grenade-launcher rounds. She and Staff Sgt. Timothy Nein, her squad leader, then cleared two trenches, at which time she killed three insurgents with her rifle. When the fight was over, 27 insurgents were dead, six were wounded, and one was captured. Hester, 23, who was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and later moved to Nashville, Tennessee, said she was surprised when she heard she was being considered for the Silver Star. "I'm honored to even be considered, much less awarded, the medal," she said in an interview with the Army Times. Being the first female soldier since World War II to receive the medal is significant to Hester, but she doesn't dwell on the fact. "It really doesn't have anything to do with being a female," she said. "It's about the duties I performed that day as a soldier." Hester, who has been in the National Guard since April 2001, said she didn't have time to be scared when the fight started, and she didn't realize the impact of what had happened until much later. "Your training kicks in and the soldier kicks in," she said. "It's your life or theirs. You've got a job to do, protecting yourself and your fellow comrades."



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 Forms

The VA forms change on a regular basis as new conditions and laws are passed. The PACT Act contributed to big changes to their forms. So if you are filing claims on your own, make sure you use forms directly from the VA's webpage to ensure you have the most current forms. Claims on old forms will be rejected and returned upon review without any action or processing.

Discounts & Free Stuff!

Free Guide Offers Valuable Career Tips for Veterans

Transitioning out of the military back into civilian life can trigger a world of uncertainty and confusion for many service members. Choosing your career path and integrating back into your community after being immersed in a regimented military culture presents challenges that may take some time to overcome.

[Mother Of All Transition Guides](#) from [G.I. Jobs](#) is like a one-stop shop for military transitioning. It's packed with tips for active-duty service members and recently discharged Veterans on gaining career success in the private sector. The eight-chapter guide covers a myriad of topics that educate readers on the keys to successful transitioning. Or as the guide phrases it, "The tips you need to get the \$#@% out and hit the civilian world with a BANG!"

Those tips include:

- Understanding that military values translate to civilian jobs: punctuality, integrity, understanding chain of command, teamwork, a strong work ethic.
- Resume advice for helping land a civilian job.
- Guidance on whether it's necessary to go back to school, and if so, how to get started.
- Stress relief tips after transition.
- Common interview questions and tips for mastering the video interview.
- Three things you should never ask in an interview.
- Why you should consider a federal job and how to federalize your resume.
- How to drive your career in the civilian world.
- For those who want to be their own boss, the top five reasons why Veterans should consider opening a franchise.

Many articles in the downloadable guide include links to dozens of other articles on GIJobs.com that explore topics like "6 Mistakes Veterans Make on LinkedIn" and "From Military Uniform to Business Attire: Types of Suits."

Discounts

[TurboTax](#) File federal and state taxes for free. Offer for enlisted active duty and reservists only.

[Yeti](#) Offers special pricing.

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Patriot Guard Riders New York

PGRNY is a diverse group of patriots who come together to show respect and support to US service members, veterans, first responders who die in the line of duty, and their families by standing flag lines and providing escorts at memorial services, only at the request of the family. They also stand flag line for other events honoring veterans and military personnel by request.

PO Box 637
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590
(585) 866-1747
<https://pgrny.org>



The **Veterans Miracle Center** 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.

10 Interstate Avenue
Albany, NY 12205
(518) 486-8398
<http://www.vmc.albany.org/>
Hours: Mon - Fri /9am - 5pm
By appointment only

Resources & Veteran Organizations

There are many resources and Veteran organizations within Albany County and a few are shown below. A larger listing is available on our webpage at:

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

<p>American Legion Blanchard-Currey Post 1040</p> <p>16 W. Poplar Drive Delmar, NY 12054 (518) 439-9819</p> <p>http://nabpost1040.us/</p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on first Mon</p>	<p>Veterans of Foreign War Watervliet Post 729</p> <p>783 Broadway Watervliet, NY 12189 (518) 273-4896</p> <p>www.facebook.com/watervlietvfw/</p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on third Mon</p>	<p>Marine Corps League Capt. Wm. Dale O'Brien Det 241</p> <p>(518) 237-1712</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/CaptWmDaleOBrien241/</p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on 2nd Wed at Am. Legion Zaloga Post</p>
<p>American Legion Voorheesville Post 1493</p> <p>31 Voorheesville Ave Voorheesville, NY 12186 (518) 765-4712</p> <p>www.facebook.com/pg/VoorheesvilleALP1493</p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on third Thu</p>	<p>Veterans of Foreign War Ravena Post 9594</p> <p>12 Whitbeck St Ravena, NY 12143 (518) 756-9594</p> <p>www.facebook.com/VFW9594/</p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on second Thu</p>	<p>Tri-County Council of Vietnam Era Veterans</p> <p>PO Box 11100 Albany, NY 12211 (518) 465-6829</p> <p>www.tccvev.com</p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on first Tue at Am. Legion Zaloga Post</p>
<p>American Legion Colonie Post 1256</p> <p>140 VFW Dr Albany, NY 12205 (518) 456-7794</p> <p>www.vfwpost8692.com/am legion 1256</p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on second Fri</p>	<p>Veterans of Foreign War Robert Weininger Post 8692</p> <p>140 VFW Dr Albany, NY 12205 (518) 456-7794</p> <p>www.vfwpost8692.com</p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on second Mon</p>	<p>American Veterans (AMVETS) EJ Knapik Post 35</p> <p>PO Box 4152 Schenectady, NY 12304</p> <p>www.facebook.com/cdnయాUSA/</p> <p>Monthly meeting: 7pm on fourth Thur at Guilderland Elks Lodge</p>

UPCOMING 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.