



**COUNTY OF ROCKLAND
VETERANS SERVICE
AGENCY NEWSLETTER**

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December 2013

www.rockvets.com

Volume 4 / Issue 12

A SOLUTION TO HEALTHCARE FOR VETERANS

National Healthcare seems to be on everyone's mind - but we've had a National Healthcare system for nearly a century. It's called the Department of Veterans Affairs. The VA Healthcare system in the past few decades has developed a Neighborhood Clinic system, which we're proud to say, started right here in Rockland County and now has about 1,000 locations across this country. In 1995 when we opened the first clinic here in Pomona, any veteran who served on active duty and was honorably discharged, was entitled to use the system.

However, in January of 2003, someone decided to put a financial ceiling on the Veterans Healthcare System. So past that point of January of 2003 only veterans who had a household income of below \$50,000.00 annually would be able to enroll. I'm sure it was pure coincidence that this ruling came down 6-weeks before we went into Iraq in March of 2003. Now that Iraq is over and Afghanistan will soon be, (and maybe we've learned to stay out of war,) our numbers of veterans are, and will continue, dropping.

Perhaps at this point it would be a good idea to lift the financial ceiling and allow all veterans to be seen again. This in one swift move could take many people off the President's list of uninsured. It would also free veterans of all ages from needing to sign up for Obamacare or be fined for not doing it. Then perhaps we could open this proven National Healthcare system gradually to veterans' spouses, perhaps their families, thereby taking more uninsured off the rolls, and into a proven system.

What I'm driving at is using the VA Healthcare system as a skeleton on which to build a larger system. We also have military bases across this country and across the world - many have hospitals and healthcare facilities as part of their systems. We will again, I'm sure, be hearing the term "base closings." Before we take that step, perhaps we might think about leaving the healthcare portion of those bases in place.

SOLUTION: CONTINUED...

Since the Veterans Administration and the Department of Defense Healthcare systems could lower the number of those uninsured, it can be enlarged so we could use these facilities to gradually treat our older and sicker citizens, starting for instance, with those over 80, then 75, then 70, and so on, as the system is developed. We know this VA Healthcare system works and it could be built on rather than thrown out. However, in some ways I find it reassuring to see that there is a grown man in this country with a better job than mine, who knows less about websites than I do. Jerry

ROCKVETS RADIO SHOW

On Friday, December 6th, the RockVets radio show will air just after the 10:00 a.m. newsbreak on radio WRRCR at 1300 AM. Call in (845-362-0013) with questions, information, or to announce upcoming events of interest to the veteran community.

MARINE CORPS "TOYS FOR TOTS" PROGRAM

The Marine Corps League of Rockland County is once again coordinating the annual "Toys For Tots" campaign. Each year, the Marine Corps Reserve, Detachments of the League and other veterans collect toys and/or cash contributions all across the United States. Here in Rockland, the Marine Corps League has over 200 toy and cash collection boxes located in various churches, businesses, and other public spaces. In addition, the League and active duty Marines assemble on the third floor of the Palisades Mall in West Nyack every weekend between Thanksgiving and Christmas to accept donations. Each year, the Marine Corps League distributes over 13,000 toys to needy children through over 45 registered non-profit organizations in the county. Any support you can render to this effort will be most appreciated by the families who are so in need. For further information, contact Jim O'Neill via e-mail at: joneill78@optimum.net.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR – FROM JERRY DONNELLAN

This year "Toys for Tots" turns 65. It's a great program that over the years has provided millions of toys to kids who otherwise might not get any. If you'd like to donate a new, unwrapped toy you can drop it off at our office (Veterans Service Agency, 20 Squadron Blvd., Suite 480, New City, NY) or many points around the County. If you would like information on other drop off points please call (845) 269-9610. You can also donate online at www.toysfortots.org or if you wish to keep it local, you can send a check to the Rockland County Marine Corp League – PO Box 1775, Haverstraw, NY 10927. In light of Superstorm Sandy we encourage you more than ever this year to be generous. At the same time, we would advise you to be careful of scams. If you have questions about donations to veterans' organizations or any other charities, you can check them out at www.charitynavigator.org.

EVENT TO BENEFIT MONTROSE VA NURSING HOME AND MARINE CORPS "TOYS FOR TOTS" PROGRAM

On Saturday, December 7th at 8:00 p.m., an event will be held at Kennelly's Grill House – 962 South Route 9W in Congers, NY (hosted by Phil Varmon.) The American Legion will gather and distribute items as gifts for the patients residing at the Montrose VA Nursing Home. The items requested are for both men and women and include: T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweat-pants, socks, hats, pajamas, and underwear. A free buffet will be served, and a cash bar will be available. You can view information about VA Nursing homes at <http://www.nysvets.org>. There will also be a collection area for the Marine Corps *Toys for Tots* program and if you'd like to contribute to that, please bring a new, unwrapped toy to the event.

DONATIONS AND HELP NEEDED FOR VETERANS IN NURSING HOME

On Sunday, December 15th at 1:00 p.m. a group of Hudson Valley veterans, known as The Bob Hope Division, will conduct their 5th Annual Christmas Party at the Veterans' Nursing home, 2090 Albany Road, (Route 9) in Montrose, New York 10548. You can join the group as they distribute gifts at the nursing home on that day. Your help is also requested to wrap the donations on Saturday, December 14th at 4:00 p.m. – at the Kearsing-Edwards American Legion Post 1600, Station Road in Pomona, New York 10970 – 845-354-9785.

The following items are needed: batteries – AA, AAA and D sizes; socks, pens, pencils, writing paper, picture frames (3 x 5 and 4 x 6); game books: crossword books, word-find books, suduko puzzle books, pocket books, nail clippers, nail files, phone cards, tissue packs, playing cards, card games, scarves, DVD movies (old or new,) T-shirts, hair brushes, tooth brushes, tooth paste, soap, white face cloths, white socks (male and female) and white towels. Collection points for these items will be the R.C. Clerk's Office at 1 S. Main Street, New City; VA Medical Clinic at 345 N. Main Street in New City; and the Rockland County Bar Association at 337 North Main Street, New City. You can also call 845-429-2916 for pick-up of donations.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS FOR VETERANS IN ROCKLAND

DECEMBER 5TH: UNITED HOSPICE VETERANS RECOGNITION EVENT

On Thursday, December 5th, 2013, United Hospice of Rockland will host their annual Veterans Recognition Event from 1:30 – 4:30 p.m. It will be held at the Salvation Army Conference Center, 440 West Nyack Road, West Nyack, NY 10994. A Special Screening of the Award Winning Documentary [Honor Flight](#) will be shown. This is the heartwarming story of World War II Veterans and their long overdue recognition. Refreshments will be served. Veterans are welcome to invite a family member to join them at the event. To request an invitation to this event or for further details, contact Mimi Hoffman at 845.634.4974 or via e-mail: mhoffman@hospiceofrockland.org.

DECEMBER 8TH: ANNUAL PEARL HARBOR COMMEMORATION

The annual Pearl Harbor Commemoration will be held on Sunday, December 8th – 2:00 p.m. at the Suffern Village Hall Auditorium.

DECEMBER 14TH: MOSCARELLA AMERICAN LEGION POST 199 HOLIDAY PARTY

Saturday, December 14th, 2013: Moscarella American Legion Post 199 is having their Annual Holiday Party. It will be held at Krucker's Restaurant and Grove, 81 Call Hollow Road, Pomona, New York 10970 – 845.354.9832. The gathering will run from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and the fee is \$50.00 per person in advance, \$55.00 per person at the door. For further information, please call Commander, Maureen Morgan at 845.729.5471, Past Commander, Peter Medina at 845.641.6899, or Past Commander, Robert Young at 910.372.2722. Please make reservations by December 1st and entrée selection – choice of Prime Rib of Beef, Filet of Salmon, or Chicken Marsala. Hors D'oeuvres, full dinner and dessert will be served, as well as beer, wine and soda all evening. A cash bar is also available.

DECEMBER 15TH: HOLIDAY BREAKFAST FOR VETERANS

As a way of giving thanks to our veterans for their service, Senator David Carlucci is hosting a holiday breakfast on Sunday December 15th, at 10:00 a.m. at the Nyack Seaport. The event is free for veterans. If you would like to attend, please call Senator Carlucci's office at: 845 623 3627.

EDUCATION BENEFITS FOR POST 9/11 VETERANS

Education Benefits of the Yellow-Ribbon Program. Additional information is available through the US Department of Veterans Affairs website at: http://www.gibill.va.gov/GI_Bill_info/CH33/Yellow_ribbon.htm

COULD YOU BE AT RISK FOR DIABETES?

Have you been told that you are at risk for diabetes or have you already been diagnosed with pre-diabetes? Then call the Rockland County Department of Health today to see if you are eligible to take part in their free, highly successful Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP). Over 16 weeks, trained lifestyle coaches lead one-hour weekly small group sessions that will help you improve your food choices, increase your physical activity level and learn coping skills to maintain weight loss. By making small lifestyle changes, you can reach the two main goals of the program: lose 5-7% of your body weight and keep it off, and be more physically active. Our next program is scheduled to begin January 28, 2014. There are a few spots still open - call (845) 364-2502. Ronda Rosman R.C. Department of Health, Division of Health Promotion & Chronic Disease Prevention, 50 Sanatorium Road, Building J Pomona, New York 10970
Phone: 845-364-3857
Fax: 845-364-3837
Follow them on Facebook and Twitter:
www.facebook.com/rockhealth
www.twitter.com/rockhealth

THE COMPLETE VETERAN'S GUIDE TO ASBESTOS EXPOSURE, MESOTHELIOMA AND LUNG CANCER

Posted in November 2013 by [Donnie La Curan](#) in [Veteran News](#)

Because asbestos was heavily used on military bases, in equipment and vehicles, and in almost all sea vessels until the 1970's, a disproportionate number of veterans have developed mesothelioma, lung cancer, and other asbestos related diseases. Mesothelioma and lung cancer are deadly diseases, making it very important that people are able to recognize the symptoms [...] • [Continue Reading →](#)
<http://www.veteransresources.org/2013/11/complete-veterans-guide-asbestos-exposure-mesothelioma-lung-cancer/#.Upsuoo2887A>

E-BENEFITS HEALTH BOOKLET

IB 10-465 Veterans Health Benefits Guide

This Veterans Health Benefits Guide is designed to provide Veterans and their families with the information they need to understand VA's health care system—eligibility requirements, the enrollment process, enrollment Priority Groups, copayments that certain Veterans may be charged and the health benefits and services available to help Veterans. Additionally, inside you will find helpful information about My HealthVet, Creditable Coverage for Medicare Part D, Income Verification and medically related travel benefits.
<http://www.va.gov/healthbenefits/resources/epublications.asp>

VET CENTERS – MILITARY TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN LIFE

Vet Centers offer a wide range of services to help you make a successful transition from military to civilian life. You've earned these benefits and there is no cost to you or your family members. Services include -

- individual & group counseling
- marital and family counseling
- bereavement counseling
- medical & benefits referrals
- employment counseling
- [More Services...](#)
- <http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/index.asp>

VA OFFERS DENTAL INSURANCE PROGRAM

Posted in November 2013 by [Donnie La Curan](#) in [Veteran News](#)

VA is partnering with Delta Dental and MetLife to allow eligible Veterans, plus family members receiving care under the Civilian Health and Medical Program (CHAMPVA), to purchase affordable dental insurance beginning Nov. 15, VA officials announced today. "VA continues to explore innovative ways to help Veterans get access to the care and services they have [...] • [Continue Reading →](#)
<http://www.veteransresources.org/2013/11/va-offers-dental-insurance-program/#.Upsvfl2887A>

HEALTH PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH DEPLETED URANIUM

DU is a potential health hazard if it enters the body, such as through [embedded fragments](#), contaminated wounds, and inhalation or ingestion. Simply riding in a vehicle with DU weapons or DU shielding will not expose a service member to significant amounts of DU or external radiation.

The potential for health effects from internal exposure is related to the amount of DU that enters a person's body. If DU enters the body, it may remain in the body. Studies show high doses may especially affect the kidneys.

According to the VA report, so far no health problems associated with DU exposure have been found in Veterans exposed to DU. Researchers and clinicians continue to monitor the health of these Veterans. Go to the [Department of Defense's Depleted Uranium \(DU\) Library](#) to learn about results of medical and scientific research and other DU topics.

http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/depleted_uranium/

HOMELESS VETERANS

If you are a Veteran who has lost your home, receive the support you've earned to get back on your feet. Contact VA's National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838) to speak to a trained VA responder. The hotline and online chat are free and neither VA registration nor enrollment in VA healthcare is required to use either service. When you call or join the online chat:

- You will be connected to a trained VA responder.
- The responder will ask a few questions to assess your needs.
- If you're a Veteran, you may be connected with the Homeless Program point of contact at the nearest VA facility.
- Contact information will be requested so staff may follow up.

VA offers these services, all available via 1-877-4AID-VET, to homeless Veterans and Veterans at risk of homelessness and their families:

http://www.va.gov/homeless/for_homeless_veterans.asp

COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT – COLA INCREASE

It's official. The 2014 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for military retired pay, SBP annuities, Social Security checks, and VA disability and survivor benefits will be 1.5%, effective December 1, 2013. It will first appear in the January checks, which will be paid on December 31.

SEND HOLIDAY CARDS TO NATION'S HEROES THIS THANKSGIVING BEFORE PO BOX CLOSURES DECEMBER 6

Posted on November 25, 2013 by [Donnie La Curan](#) in [Veteran News](#)

The American Red Cross encourages people to spend time this Thanksgiving season sending holiday cards through the Red Cross Holiday Mail for Heroes program before the post office box closes on December 6. During the holiday season, this Red Cross program delivers tens of thousands of cards to service members, veterans and their families at military [...]. • [Continue Reading →](#)

<http://www.veteransresources.org/2013/11/send-holiday-cards-nations-heroes-thanksgiving-po-box-closes-december-6/#.UpswCY2887A>

Whether handmade or purchased, Americans can send cards postmarked no later than December 6th to ensure they are delivered in time for the holidays. All holiday greetings should be addressed and sent to: Holiday Mail for Heroes, P.O. Box 5456, Capitol Heights, Maryland 20791-5456

VETS' REP IN ROCKLAND

Our Department of Labor Veterans' Representative is Natalie Hernandez. If you are in the market for employment possibilities or a career change, contact Natalie at 845-356-5429, or via e-mail at: Natalie.Hernandez@labor.ny.gov or on twitter at NatDOLVetRep.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Shore Group Associates (<http://www.shoregrp.com>) is hoping to hire about 30 new employees in the first quarter of 2014, and is considering opening an office in the Westchester area. They would like to hire some veterans and are looking for the following:

- A commercial broker in the Westchester area to help with [locating] the office
- Project managers
- Interns who have computer skills and have just separated from the Marines (Navy, maybe!)
- Recently separated Officers

Since we are a tech firm and very social driven, anyone interested in these possibilities should do the following: Follow us on FB, Twitter, and Google+ and Linked in. Shore_neal on twitter Shoregroupassoc on twitter Shore group associates on FB

Send a cover letter with a resume to Neal Conlon neal.conlon@shoregrp.com Neal Conlon, 3rd battalion Sgt USMC 1996-2004



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We would like to keep you up-to-date on events and matters of interest to veterans and will be sending these newsletters regularly. If at any time you no longer wish to receive them, please send a note to

info@rockvets.com. Your e-mail address will immediately be deleted from our newsletter mailing list. If you find any of this information useful, please pass it along to others.

ROCKVETS - ON THE INTERNET AND AIRWAVES

You can find information, useful links, and view our webpage at www.rockvets.com. Previous copies of our newsletters are also available on our website at: www.rockvets.com/newsletters. You can e-mail us at: info@rockvets.com or on our facebook page: www.facebook.com/rockvets.

On the first Friday of each month, just after the 10:00 a.m. news-break, RockVets has a live call-in talk show on Rockland County's local radio station – WRCR 1300 AM. We encourage you to call-in and ask any questions you may have relating to veterans or the military. This is also a good opportunity to promote any upcoming events for your organization that would be of interest to the veteran/military community. The call-in number is 845.362.0013. The show is also live on the internet at: www.wrcr.com. So please listen in, and call if you have questions or information to share.

The next radio broadcast will be on Friday, December 6th, 2013 right after the 10:00 a.m. newsbreak. This month's show is once again sponsored by the Marine Corps League - Rockland County Detachment and we appreciate their support.

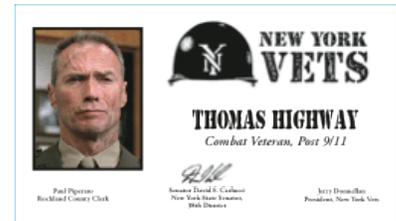
So that we can keep you up to date on as much information as possible, we have included links to many articles so you may read further about those items. At the time the newsletter is sent to you, the links are all working well. If the links do not work for you, just cut and paste the address into your browser and that should bring you to the correct article, or you can do a search for the article on the web. Providing the information in this newsletter does not necessarily constitute our endorsement or opinion.

If you have information that can benefit the military and veteran community, or would like the community to know about an event your group is hosting, please send it to us so we can publish it in the next newsletter: info@rockvets.com.

MERRY CHRISTMAS, HAPPY NEW YEAR, HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

[And coming soon...]

**NY Vets ID Card for Post 9/11
Combat Veterans**



**VETERANS SERVICE
AGENCY OF ROCKLAND**

If you plan to come to the Veterans Service Agency office, please call to make an appointment so we can give you the time you need - 845.638.5244.

**Jerry Donnellan, Director,
Veterans Service Agency of
Rockland, 20 Squadron Blvd.,
Suite 480, New City, NY 10956
- Phone: 845.638.5244 - E-mail:
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**WE ARE HERE TO CARE FOR
YOU WHO HAVE WORN THE
UNIFORM – NO MATTER WHERE
OR WHEN YOU SERVED.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
SERVICE.**