Veterans Affairs Committee

Wednesday, March 4, 2026 4:00PM
40 McMaster Street, Ballston Spa, NY

Chair: Ian Murray
Members: John Antoski, J.D. Arnold, Harry Brennan, Michael Gyarmathy, Minita Sanghvi, Toni Sturm

Agenda

I. Welcome and Attendance

II. Appointment of Vice Chair

III. Approval of the minutes of the December 2, 2025 meeting

IV. Veterans Service Agency Annual Report– Frank McClement, Veterans Service Agency

V. Other Business

VI. Adjournment

SARATOGA COUNTY
AGENDA ITEM REQUEST

TO: Steve Bulger, County Administrator
Ridge Harris, Deputy County Administrator
George Conway, County Attorney
Therese Connolly, Clerk of the Board
Stephanie Hodgson, Director of Budget

CC: John Warmt, Director of Purchasing
Jason Kemper, Director of Planning and Economic Development
Bridget Rider, Deputy Clerk of the Board
Audra Hedden, County Administrator's Office
Emily Spring, County Attorney's Office

DEPARTMENT: Veterans Service Agency

DATE: 2/26/26

COMMITTEE:

This column must be completed prior to submission of the request.

County Attorney's Office Consulted

1. Is a Resolution Required:
   No, Discussion Only

2. Proposed Resolution Title:
   Presentation of Veterans Service Agency 2025 Annual Report

3. Specific Details on what the resolution will authorize:

4. Is a Budget Amendment needed: ☐ YES or ☑ NO
If yes, budget lines and impact must be provided.
Any budget amendments must have equal and offsetting entries.

County Administrator's Office Consulted Yes

☐ Please see attachments for impacted budget lines.
(Use ONLY when more than four lines are impacted.)

Revenue

Account Number	Account Name	Amount

Expense

Account Number	Account Name	Amount

Fund Balance (if applicable): (Increase = additional revenue, Decrease = additional expenses)

Amount:

5. Identify Budget Impact (**Required**):

a. G/L line impacted

b. Budget year impacted

c. Details

6. Are there Amendments to the Compensation Schedule?

☐ YES **or** ☑ NO (If yes, provide details)

Human Resources Consulted

a. Is a new position being created? ☐ Y ☐ N

Effective date

Salary and grade

b. Is a new employee being hired? ☐ Y ☐ N

Effective date of employment

Salary and grade

Appointed position:

Term

c. Is this a reclassification? ☐ Y ☐ N

Is this position currently vacant? ☐ Y ☐ N

Is this position in the current year compensation plan? ☐ Y ☐ N

7. Does this item require the awarding of a contract: ☐ Y ☑ N

Purchasing Office Consulted

a. Type of Solicitation

b. Specification # (BID/RFP/RFQ/OTHER CONTRACT #)

c. If a sole source, appropriate documentation, including an updated letter, has been submitted and approved by Purchasing Department? ☐ Y ☐ N ☐ N/A

d. Vendor Contact Name:

e. Vendor Email:

f. Vendor Phone:

g. Is the vendor/contractor an LLC, PLLC, or partnership:

h. State of vendor/contractor organization:

i. Commencement date of contract term:

j. Termination of contract date:

k. Contract renewal date and term:

l. Is this a renewal agreement: ☐ Y ☐ N

m. Vendor/Contractor comment/remarks:

8. Is a grant being accepted: ☐ YES or ☑ NO

County Administrator's Office Consulted

a. Source of grant funding:

b. Agency granting funds:

c. Amount of grant:

d. Purpose grant will be used for:

e. Equipment and/or services being purchased with the grant:

f. Time period grant covers:

g. Amount of county matching funds:

h. Administrative fee to County:

9. Supporting Documentation:

- ☐ Marked-up previous resolution
- ☐ No Markup, per consultation with County Attorney
- ☐ Information summary memo
- ☐ Copy of proposal or estimate
- ☐ Copy of grant award notification and information
- ☑ Other Annual Report

10. Remarks:

Presentation of Annual Report

VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY

FRANK MCCLEMENT, DIRECTOR

518.884.4115

SARATOGACOUNTYNY.GOV

2144 DOUBLEDAY AVE, SUITE 15, BALLSTON SPA, NY 12020

MEMO

To: Steve Bulger County Administrator

From: Frank McClement, Director

Subject: 2025 Annual Report

Attached you will find the 2025 Annual Report for the Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency. With your approval, it is my intent to present this report at the upcoming Veterans Committee meeting on March 4, 2026.

EST. 1791

SARATOGA COUNTY

NEW YORK

Veterans Service Agency

Saratoga County Veterans
Trust and Agency Fund

SARATOGA COUNTY
VETERANS
PEER
CONNECTION
Reinforcements for Life.

2025 Annual Report

Frank McClement

Director

Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency

Mission Statement

"The Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency assists Veterans and their families with securing earned benefits and services through quality customer service and advocacy."

Saratoga County is home approximately **14,159 Veterans (per VA data)** and their families. The Agency is staffed by Accredited Service Officers to assist in filing claims for Federal VA benefits which include:

- Disability Compensation
- Pension / Aid & Attendance
- Health Care
- Education and Training
- Home Loan
- Burial and Memorial
- Dependents and Survivors

Agency staff also provides additional services to include:

- Transition Assistance
- Homeless Outreach – Housing Assistance
- Military Records and Medals Requests
- Inter-County and Outside agency connections and referrals
- Employment connections and referrals to resources
- Van Transportation to Stratton VA Medical Center, Albany
- Support of Veteran Recognition Programs and Ceremonies
- Outreach Presentations and Education
- Veterans resource for local governments

Saratoga County has honored over 300 Veterans at the monthly **Honor Deceased Veterans Ceremony**. The ceremony has become a tradition here at Saratoga County, and includes participation from elected officials at all levels of government, as well as local Veterans organizations and supporters.

The Saratoga County F.A.V.O.R. Program is dedicated to educating and assisting Veterans record in the importance of recording their original DD-214 discharge document with the County Clerk's office. By doing so, Veterans and their families are readily equipped to garnish a variety of benefits and programs available to them in honor of their service to our Country.

The Saratoga County Veterans Trust Fund accepts donations and makes disbursements to Saratoga County Veterans and Veteran's organizations in need of assistance. The Fund provides grants to Saratoga County Veterans or their families for training, education, health care, housing assistance and essential services; and for the benefit of groups, organizations, programs, and projects dedicated to the welfare and support of the Saratoga County Veterans. Donations are tax deductible, and all funds stay local.

The **Saratoga County Veterans Peer Connection** provides an opportunity for local Veterans who have reintegrated to civilian life to assist fellow Veterans who may experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or other re-acclimation challenges. Personalized and informal, these pairings yield relationships intended to ease the transition from military to civilian life. Funding is made possible through the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Peer Support Program for Veterans www.veteranpeertopeer.org

Contact information: phone, 518-884-4115; fax – 518-884-4290; e-mail veterans@saratogacountyny.gov

VSA 2025 by the Numbers:

- **Veteran Population – According to VA VetPop figures from FY2024, Saratoga County is home to 14,159 veterans, ranking 13th in NYS, but one of the highest in the greater Capital Region.** For comparison; Albany County -14,133 Rensselaer County –8,412; Warren – 4,516; Washington County – 3,696; Schenectady County – 7,225. https://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran_population.asp

- **Veterans Transportation** – The Saratoga County VSA provided **479** Veterans rides to VA medical appointments, logging over **16,975 miles** between January and December 2025. (Appendix A)

- **VA Expenditures** - Department of Veterans Affairs Total Expenditures for FY 2024 equaled **$142,148,015 in Saratoga County**. See attached for breakdown. (Appendix B)

- **Peer to Peer Program** – Saratoga County Veterans Peer Connection Program has shown tremendous results. In 2025, we continued to grow the program and created some outstanding opportunities and support for Veterans. Our program remains the benchmark for all of NYS (Peer to Peer Report – Appendix F)

- **Electronic Claim Development – 100% of all claims** that pass through this office are electronically developed and archived. This allows for an integrated service network internally, and more efficient service and record keeping.

- **Veterans ID Card (FAVOR)** – The VSA continues to partner with, and assist the Saratoga County Clerk and Saratoga County Board of Supervisors with the FAVOR Veterans ID card program. This program has also contributed to the VSA conducting over **86 *official requests for records in 2025 and over 2600 since the beginning of the program*** for those Veterans who did not have proper service documentation in their possession. These requests will facilitate future benefits delivery for either financial and/or end of life benefits for Veterans and their surviving family members.

- **Veterans Trust Fund** – The VSA worked to promote awareness of and bolster the Saratoga County Veterans Trust and Agency Fund throughout 2025. In 2025, we were excited to return our major fundraiser, Revolutionary Run for Veterans 5k. The event was a tremendous success with over 300 registered runners. See attached report for more details on Fund activity (Trust Fund Report - Appendix D)

VSA 2025 Highlights:

- **Staff Training** – The Staff of the Saratoga County VSA participates in ongoing professional development and training to ensure constant adherence to VA laws and regulations. In 2025, this included:
    - Quarterly Veteran Service Officer Conference – Stratton VA Medical Center
    - Mandatory VA Information Security Awareness - Privacy Policy (HIPPA) Training (e-learn)
    - NYS Division of Veterans Affairs Training – (web-based monthly trainings offered at no cost)
    - SafeTalk Suicide Prevention Training – Agency staff became certified in Suicide Alertness.
    - National Association of County Veterans Service Officers - Web -based and in person
        - Director McClement attended annual training conference in Louisville, KY.
    - Mandatory Sexual Harassment and Workplace Violence Training – Saratoga County HR
    - Firearms Safety through the Lens of suicide Prevention
    - Notary Public – Recertification (Megan Cutbush)

- **Honor Deceased Veteran Ceremonies** – The Program continued with our consistent schedule in 2025. This program continues to be a success, and working in partnership with the Board of Supervisors, as well as county, state, and congressional elected officials, and local Veterans organizations we continue to tell great stories and highlight the military service and lives of some of Saratoga County's best. - *Appendix C*

- **Veterans Transportation Service** – Service use is up just slightly in 2025 from 2024. We have still not seen an increase back to previous pre-Covid years demand, and have adjusted our schedule for 2026 accordingly. We have 2 committed drivers on staff, and they provide great service to our Veterans. *Appendix A*

- **Saratoga County P2P Veterans Program** – Program Coordinator, Erin Cassidy, has once again done a great job with the program in 2025. Agency staff supports the program as well. NYS funding for the program has remained virtually the same with the exception of a small COLA. While our program has grown, we find ourselves somewhat limited by our funding. Despite this challenge we leverage the grant in creative ways, and seek to offer support and enrichment activities to our Veteran Community. Partnerships that we have developed have given us great opportunities to reach more Veterans in creative ways. See attached report for program highlights. – *Appendix F*

- **Facebook** – We continue to work with Christine Rush and Anne VanVorst to increase social media presence, and publicize events and programs.

- **Electronic Claim Development** – No major changes in 2025. We continue to maximize efforts to be as "paperless" as possible. In April 2020, we upgraded our contact/case management software system to the "VetPro" platform. This platform allows for fully web-based access, along with remote signature capabilities, and fully electronic submission directly to the VA VBMS system. The software platform continues to grow and improve as has our experience and knowledge working with it, and remains a low-cost option for us to own our data. We also have access and use of NYS "VetOps" system at no cost.

- **Equipment** – New laptops for all staff budgeted for and ordered in 2025. Implementation is scheduled through IT.

- **Veterans Outreach**– Staff attended several outreach events in 2025. We participated in the Saratoga County Fair, Saratoga Race Track Military Appreciation Day, local Farmers Markets, American Legion National Commanders Visitation, as well as speaking at Veterans breakfasts and luncheons. Director McClement attends monthly Saratoga County American Legion meetings. We partnered with the Naval Support Unit Saratoga and hosted a Cabin Fever Event for families, as well as conducted outreach events at the Commissary on the base. We also continue to capitalize on word of mouth referrals due to maintaining close liaison with outside agencies and organizations that interact with Veterans, as well as leveraging social media.

- **Affiliate Organizations** – Agency Director and staff are either members or maintain close liaison with over 20 outside groups and organizations. Director McClement also serves on the Saratoga County Long-Term Care Council, Sheriff Department TAM Group, as well as liasons with local assessors for subject matter expert assistance. *Appendix E*

- **Veterans Trust and Agency Fund** - In 2025, we continued to provide support for local Veterans, Veterans Food Pantry at VCHC and funds were also leveraged to purchase gift cards for needy Veteran families for Christmas and emergencies throughout the year, as well as assist with support for our Annual Veterans Christmas Gala. – *Appendix D*

- **Revolutionary Run for Veterans** – Our event grew in 2025. We are able to promote our programs, as well as local Veterans groups and providers, and raise funds for our Trust Fund. Working with the Saratoga 250 Commission, we continue to brand this event as a connection to the history of the Battle of Saratoga and todays Veterans. We had over 300 registered runners, and we raised over $16,000 for the fund!

Major Legislation/Funding Highlights

- **Pact ACT – Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022.** Signed into law in October 2022, this legislation is arguably the largest piece of federal Veterans legislation in the last 10-20 years. Our office continues to feel the effects of this with more demand for services even 3 years later.

- **The Dole Act** - Section 302 of the Dole Act authorizes $10 million annually for two years to create a new program to award competitive grants to CVSOs. This was signed into law, but requires each state to apply for the grant and distribute to counties based upon criteria set forth in the legislation. We are awaiting word from NYS on any funding opportunities from this. We received no news in 2025.

- **SSG Gordon Fox Suicide Prevention Grant –** A Federal Grant Program administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Currently, Saratoga County has no grant awardees, however we had a couple of different Veteran serving organizations applying for funds. Director McClement formed a coalition with the two most effective organizations interested in funding to apply as a coalition and partner on different aspects of the program. We worked with VCHC and THS – Freedom Reigns to apply. The grant for 2025 was released on fairly short notice and after a tremendous amount of work, we were able to submit a solid application. While we were not awarded funds this year, a lot was learned and we are hopeful for another opportunity in the future.

- **NYS Property Tax Exemption Bill 2025-S1183 –** This bill was passed but had flaws in its language. This could have a significant effect on County and local assessments as it could provide complete exemptions for 100% Permant and Totally Disabled Veterans. The County as well as local municipalities would have to pass legislation and this office has already received several inquiries from the Veteran Community. Chapter Amendments are expected and should take effect by Fall 2026.

2026 Goals

- Streamline Office Intake and client scheduling – We are working toward a smoother intake process to allow us to serve more Veterans with less lead time, and more efficient.
- We are hoping to partner with VA and neighboring counties to conduct a large-scale claims clinic. Preliminary discussions have taken place, but we are dependent on outside agencies. Leadership changes at the VA Regional Office in NY tabled this effort in 2025, but we hope to work towards an event in 2026. More information to come.
- Plan and execute the 2025 Revolutionary Run for Veterans – we hope to add some special elements to this event that ties into the 250th Commission goals.
- Plan and execute our 5th Veterans Holiday Party.
- Advocate for additional State and Federal funding. We hope to add additional staff but budget constraints have not been in our favor the last 3 years. We will also pursue additional grants if possible.

Veterans Service Agency 2025/2026
Organization & Staffing

Director (Fulltime): *Frank McClement* was appointed by the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors on May 20, 2014. Frank is a Veteran of the US Army, having served as an Airborne Infantryman with the 82d Airborne Division from 1995-1998. His service took him from Ft Bragg, NC to Egypt, Israel, and Kazakhstan. Frank joined the County in September 2010, and had served over 4 years as the Veterans Service Officer in the Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency prior to his appointment as Director. He has Veterans Advocacy experience at the federal, state and county level. Mr. McClement is trained and accredited by the New York State Division of Veterans Services (NYSDVS), The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW), and the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO). Frank also serves on the Saratoga County Youth Advisory Board, Saratoga County Aging Advisory Board, and is a commissioner of the 250th Revolutionary War Anniversary Commission. He also serves his community as a Councilman on the Waterford Town Board.

Service Officer (Fulltime): *Tamim Fares* joined our team in July of 2023, and has progressed quickly through his training and accreditation process. Mr. Fares is accredited through the NYSDVS and is in process of completing further accreditation. Tamim is a 6-year Veteran of the US Army, having served as an Infantryman with combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Tamim has become a solid VSO with technical knowledge that grows by the day. His diligence and attention to detail have resulted in positive decisions in some seriously complex and difficult claims for Veterans that had sought benefits from the VA.

Veterans Services Specialist (Fulltime): *Megan Cutbush* was hired on January 3, 2014. Mrs. Cutbush is trained and accredited by the NYSDVS, VFW, and NACVSO. Mrs. Cutbush's primary role is daily administrative office operation, but also maintains accreditation to comply with Federal and State regulations, as she also plays a significant role in VA claims-related clerical work. She is also a Notary which is a resource for the office as well as Veterans in the community. This position was changed from Clerk/Typist to more accurately reflect the requirements and responsibilities of the job.

Peer to Peer Program Coordinator (Part-Time) – *Erin Cassidy* joined the team on December 23, 2022. Erin is a Veteran of the US Army, having served as an MP from 2000-2004. Erin is also the spouse of a recently retired active-duty service member of the US Army. Erin has been a great asset to our team, and excellent for the program.

Van Drivers (Part Time – 2 Positions): *Rich Nolin* (US Army Veteran), *Rich Lindsey (US Army Veteran)* vacancies. Rich N. joined our team in 2022, and has been dedicated to our mission. Rich L. joined our team in early 2024, and has been a great asset to our Van.

Staff Funding: All staff positions are paid for by Saratoga County tax dollars with the exception of the Peer Connection Program Coordinator. This position is 100% funded through the NYS PFC Joseph Dwyer Grant. Additionally, the New York State Department of Veterans' Services State Aide supplemented the VSA with **$30,000 Aid to Localities** in 2025, which is no change from 2024.

Conclusion

2025 was a successful year for our team. Our reputation for quality service and advocacy remains strong in our community, and I am proud of my team for the work they do.

Attachments:

- **Appendix A:** Contacts and Services for 2025
- **Appendix B:** VA Expenditures in Saratoga County FY2024*
  *(2025 numbers have not been released by VA as of this report.)
- **Appendix C:** Saratoga County Honor Deceased Veterans Program
- **Appendix D:** Saratoga County Veterans Trust and Agency Fund Report EOY 2025
- **Appendix E:** Veterans Service Agency Affiliate Organizations Overview
- **Appendix F:** Veterans Peer Connection Program Report

Veterans Service Agency 2025/2026
Organization & Staffing

Director (Fulltime): *Frank McClement* was appointed by the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors on May 20, 2014. Frank is a Veteran of the US Army, having served as an Airborne Infantryman with the 82d Airborne Division from 1995-1998. His service took him from Ft Bragg, NC to Egypt, Israel, and Kazakhstan. Frank joined the County in September 2010, and had served over 4 years as the Veterans Service Officer in the Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency prior to his appointment as Director. He has Veterans Advocacy experience at the federal, state and county level. Mr. McClement is trained and accredited by the New York State Division of Veterans Services (NYSDVS), The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW), and the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO). Frank also serves on the Saratoga County Youth Advisory Board, Saratoga County Aging Advisory Board, and is a Commissioner of the 250th Revolutionary War Anniversary Commission. He also serves his community as a Councilman on the Waterford Town Board.

Service Officer (Fulltime): *Tamim Fares* joined our team in July of 2023, and has progressed quickly through his training and accreditation process. Mr. Fares is accredited through the NYSDVS and is in process of completing further accreditation. Tamim is a 6-year Veteran of the US Army, having served as an Infantryman with combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Veterans Services Specialist (Fulltime): *Megan Cutbush* was hired on January 3, 2014. Mrs. Cutbush is trained and accredited by the NYSDVS, VFW, and NACVSO. Mrs. Cutbush's primary role is daily administrative office operation, but also maintains accreditation to comply with Federal and State regulations, as she also plays a significant role in VA claims-related clerical work. This position was changed from Clerk/Typist to more accurately reflect the requirements and responsibilities of the job.

Peer to Peer Program Coordinator (Part-Time) – *Erin Cassidy* joined the team on December 23, 2022. Erin is a Veteran of the US Army, having served as an MP from 2000-2004. Erin is also the spouse of a recently retired active-duty service member of the US Army. Erin has been a great asset to our team, and excellent for the program.

Van Drivers (Part Time – 2 positions): *Rich Nolin* (US Army Veteran), *Rich Lindsey (US Army Veteran)* vacancies. Rich N. joined our team in 2022, and has been dedicated to our mission. Rich L. joined our team in early 2024, and has been a great asset to our Van.

Staff Funding: All staff positions are paid for by Saratoga County tax dollars with the exception of the Peer Connection Program Coordinator. This position is 100% funded through the NYS PFC Joseph Dwyer Grant. Additionally, the New York State Department of Veterans' Services State Aide supplemented the VSA with **$30,000 Aid to Localities** in 2025.

2025 Veterans Service Agency Contacts and Services

- **Scheduled Appointments** – Conducted **465** claim appointments. *(2024 -399)*
- **Walk-Ins-** Assisted **577** Veteran walk in inquiries. (2024- 507)
- **Claims** – Total number of forms created and submitted - 1068
- **Phone calls** – Our office averages over **1000 phone calls per month.**
- **Medicaid Pension Referrals** – Reviewed and/or processed **0** referrals for Veterans or spouses in Medicaid covered nursing home care. *(2024–0)*
- **DSS - TA Referrals** – Contacted **48** Veterans referred from DSS for benefits review. *(2024-52)*
- **Record Requests** –Submitted **86** requests for records from National Personnel Records Center. *(2024- 95)*
- **Van Riders** – Provided **479** rides for Veterans to the Stratton VA Medical Center, Albany, for a total of approximately **16,975** miles *(2023 -404 /Approx. 14,939 miles)*

Appendix A

VA FY2024** Expenditures in Saratoga County

Total Expenditure	Compensation & Pension [1]	Education & Vocational Rehabilitation/ Employment [2]	Insurance & Indemnities [3]	Medical Care[4]
$142,148,015	$69,076,363	$ 7,835,252	$346,540	$54,983,699

1-**Compensation and Pension**- Cash payments made directly to Veterans or dependents for the following programs: veterans' compensation for service-connected disabilities; dependency and indemnity compensation for service-connected deaths; veterans' pension for non-service-connected disabilities; and burial and other benefits to veterans and their survivors.

2- **Education and Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment**- Includes automobile and adaptive equipment, specially adapted housing, survivors' and dependents' educational assistance, Vocational Rehabilitation, Post-Vietnam Era Veterans educational Assistance, Montgomery GI Bill, Reserve Educational Assistance program, and Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance.

3- **Insurance and Indemnities**-includes: Death Claims, Matured endowments, dividends, cash surrender payments, total disability income provision payments, and total and permanent disability benefits payments.

4- **Medical Care**-Medical Care expenditures include dollars for medical services, medical administration, facility maintenance, educational support, research support, and other overhead items. Medical Care expenditures do not include dollars for construction or other non-medical support.

** Source National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics:
https://www.va.gov/vetdata/veteran_population.asp

**Note – 2025 numbers have not been released as of the date of this report.

2025 Honored Veterans

Month	Town/City	Veteran Honoree
January	Clifton Park	Chuck Eells
February	Galway	No Ceremony
March	Halfmoon	Allen L. Ayotte
April	Edinburg	Sanford Roth
May	Malta	Thomas Vandish
June	Charlton	John J. Ivers
July	Day	John T. Golden Sr.
August	Wilton	John "Jack" O'Brian
September	Northumberland	Andrew G. Stine
October	250th Event – Details TBA	TBD
November	Town of Saratoga	Michael J. Booth Sr.
December	Stillwater	Thomas Messore

2026 Honor Deceased Veterans Ceremony Schedule

Month	Town/City	Veteran Honoree
January	Waterford	David A. Catallo
February	Corinth	Earl E. Seelow
March	Mechanicville	Donald Daley Sr.
April	Moreau	TBD
May	Providence	TBD
June	Milton	Charles Wanits
July	Hadley	TBD
August	Greenfield	TBD
September	Ballston	John A. Mancini
October	250TH Event No Ceremony	TBD
November	Saratoga Springs	TBD
December	Galway	TBD

VETERANS TRUST FUND

DATE	TRANSACTION DESCRIPTION	DISBURSEMENTS	DEPOSITS	ACTUAL BALANCE
1/16/2025	Plaza 15 Self Storage	$ 475.16		
1/17/2025		$ 348.98		
1/17/2025			$ 100.00	
	MONTH TOTAL: JANUARY 2025	$ 172,413.36	$ 322,439.09	$ 150,025.73
2/7/2025			$ 100.00	
2/7/2025			$ 100.00	
	MONTH TOTAL: FEBRUARY 2025	$ 172,413.36	$ 322,639.09	$ 150,225.73
3/18/2025			$ 1,900.00	
	MONTH TOTAL: MARCH 2025	$ 172,413.36	$ 324,539.09	$ 152,125.73
4/4/2025	Frank McClement	$ 1,500.00		
4/11/2025			$ 1,300.00	
4/11/2025			$ 100.00	
	MONTH TOTAL: APRIL 2025	$ 173,913.36	$ 325,939.09	$ 152,025.73
5/6/2025	IMO Jack O'Rourke - Lynn Foley		$ 25.00	
5/6/2025	IMO Jack O'Rourke - William Engellenner		$ 100.00	
5/6/2025	IMO Jack O'Rourke - McFadden		$ 100.00	
5/6/2025	IMO Jack O'Rourke - Hartl		$ 100.00	
5/6/2025	IMO Jack O'Rourke - Seesny		$ 50.00	
5/6/2025	IMO Jack O'Rourke - Seesny		$ 20.00	
5/6/2025	IMO Jack O'Rourke - Hedden		$ 25.00	
5/6/2025	IMO Jack O'Rourke - Blackman		$ 50.00	
5/6/2025	IMO Jack O'Rourke - Brackley		$ 25.00	
5/6/2025	IMO Ralph Serino - Patrice Chesterfield		$ 25.00	
5/6/2025	IMO Jack O'Rourke - John H Dennis		$ 100.00	
	MONTH TOTAL: MAY 2025	$ 173,913.36	$ 326,559.09	$ 152,645.73
6/3/2025		$ 1,497.69		
6/20/2025		$ 1,255.86		
	MONTH TOTAL: JUNE 2025	$ 176,666.91	$ 326,559.09	$ 149,892.18
7/11/2025		$ 487.11		
7/11/2025		$ 454.85		
	MONTH TOTAL: JULY 2025	$ 177,608.87	$ 326,559.09	$ 148,950.22
8/18/2025		$ 240.00		
	MONTH TOTAL: AUGUST 2025	$ 177,848.87	$ 326,559.09	$ 148,710.22
9/29/2025	MONTH TOTAL: SEPTEMBER 2025	$ 177,848.87	$ 326,559.09	$ 148,710.22

VETERANS TRUST FUND

DATE	TRANSACTION DESCRIPTION	DISBURSEMENTS	DEPOSITS	ACTUAL BALANCE
10/3/2025	Gerald Plante		$ 100.00	
	Theresea & Brian Lawrence		$ 200.00	
	Mohawk Post 1450 - sponsorship		$ 250.00	
	Town of Greenfield		$ 3,742.50	
	ITAM Post #35 - sponsorship		$ 1,000.00	
	Cohoes Waterford Elks - sponsorship		$ 100.00	
	IMO Brian Dunlavy - Roberta Dunlavy		$ 1,000.00	
	Waterford Clock - sponsorship		$ 100.00	
	2025 5K RunSignUp		$ 940.00	
	Martins Pointe - sponsorship		$ 500.00	
	Lt. Fred Clark Post #91 - sponsorship		$ 100.00	
	1st National Bank of Scotia - sponsorship		$ 500.00	
10/27/2025	**MONTH TOTAL: OCTOBER 2025**	**$ 177,848.87**	**$ 335,091.59**	**$ 157,242.72**
11/7/2025	American Legion Post 234 - sponsorship		$ 100.00	
	Saratoga Wilton Elks 161 - sponsorship		$ 100.00	
	RunSignUp - 5K signups		$ 1,060.25	
	Adirondack Trust Company - sponsorship		$ 250.00	
	RunSignUp - run signups		$ 6,491.25	
11/14/2025	Waterford Bingo Fundraiser - Funds from Bingo Donation game		$ 1,140.00	
	RunSignUp - Run Sign Up 10.31.25		$ 1,745.00	
11/18/2025	[illegible]	$ 600.00		
11/24/2025	**MONTH TOTAL: NOVEMBER 2025**	**$ 178,448.87**	**$ 345,978.09**	**$ 167,529.22**
12/4/2025	Frank McClement - Christmas 2025 Help	$ 5,000.00		
	VCHC - Food Pantry Assistance	$ 2,000.00		
12/5/2025	Ruhi White - donation		$ 30.00	
	Fort Miller Group - 5K Run Sign Ups		$ 270.00	
	5K Online Registration - Run Sign Up		$ 4,459.80	
12/19/2025	Spirit of Life Community Church - donation		$ 200.00	
12/31/2025	**MONTH TOTAL: DECEMBER 2025**	**$ 185,448.87**	**$ 350,937.89**	**$ 165,489.02**

Veterans Service Agency Affiliate Organizations Overview

Agency Staff Accreditations:

Department of Veterans Affairs – Accredited Veterans Service Officers

New York State Division of Veterans Services - VSO accreditation

Veterans of Foreign Wars- VSO accreditation

National Association of County Veteran Service Officers- VSO accreditation

NYS County Veteran Service Officers Association - Member

American Legion – Director McClement serves as County Service Officer for A.L. organization

In addition to the above memberships, VSA Staff liaison with the following groups and organizations:

Saratoga County Long-Term Care Coalition, Enhanced Multidisciplinary Teams (E-MDT) to Combat Elder Abuse, Suicide Prevention Coalition, Veterans and Community Housing Coalition, Soldier On, Saratoga Veterans Business Council, We Are Dwyer Coalition, Saratoga County Assessor Association, Unified Military Affairs Council (UMAC), Employer Support of Guard and Reserves (ESGR), Capital Region Military Task Force (CRMTF), Naval Support Unit Saratoga Springs, Saratoga County 250th Commission, Saratoga County Aging Advisory Board, Malta Veterans Appreciation Program, , Therapeutic Horses of Saratoga, Alliance180

Saratoga County Veterans Peer Connection Program

2025 Annual Program Highlights

Mental Health & Wellbeing

In 2025, we hosted multiple suicide prevention and awareness trainings in in-person, virtual, and at-home (printed material) formats to ensure accessibility for all veterans in our community. Invitations were extended to neighboring county Dwyer programs to promote regional collaboration.

Trainings offered were certified, evidence-based, and accredited through nationally recognized organizations, including:

- **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention** – *Talk Saves Lives*
- **LivingWorks** – *SafeTALK*
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**
- **National Institute of Mental Health**
- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** – *Operation SAVE*

Education remains the cornerstone of prevention. By providing clear, accessible, and evidence-based information, we empower veterans to make informed decisions and strengthen community-wide awareness.

We also collaborated with a broad network of wellness providers offering equine-assisted psychotherapy, substance abuse outreach, canine therapy and service animal support, veteran-specific mental health retreats, peer support groups, mindfulness training, stress management workshops, yoga, and art therapy. These partnerships allow us to deliver holistic, veteran-centered care.

Physical Health & Wellbeing

The YMCA Health & Wellbeing Program, launched during the second half of 2025, quickly became our most in-demand initiative. By year-end, 30 veterans were actively enrolled, with projections to double participation by the end of 2026.

This program provides Saratoga County veterans with enhanced benefits beyond a standard YMCA membership, including a 75% discounted rate and structured accountability through regular meeting attendance and monitored check-ins at local YMCA facilities.

Physical wellness is foundational to overall veteran wellbeing. Regular activity supports recovery from service-related injuries, reduces stress, anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms, and strengthens social connection and identity.

Participant feedback highlights the program's impact:

- "It helps me manage service-related injuries and chronic conditions."

- "It preserves my independence and quality of life."
- "It reinforces identity and purpose."
- "It strengthens social connections with other veterans."

Additionally, the **New York State Department of Environmental Conservation** Becoming an Outdoor Woman (BOW) workshops continued to grow in popularity among our veterans. These outdoor, skills-based retreats promote strength, endurance, resilience, and self-confidence. Due to increased demand, we have reallocated funding to sponsor additional veterans for these nature-based, hands-on learning experiences in 2026.

Food Support Initiative

2025 marked our third consecutive year tabling at farmers' markets throughout Saratoga County to distribute FreshConnect coupon books and provide information about Dwyer Program services.

This year, we tabled at every farmers' market within county borders and connected with more than 75 new veterans who enrolled in our program onsite. We also helped bridge food insecurity gaps by connecting veteran families with local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs near their homes.

Additional 2025 efforts included:

- Volunteering at and donating to multiple food pantries
- Partnering with **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County** for food-growing workshops, including master-level classes
- Exploring collaboration at the CCE Unlimited Garden at the 4-H Training Center to provide veterans with opportunities to learn gardening skills and grow their own food

The Food Support Initiative continues to expand, with additional programming planned for 2026.

Mentoring Program

The Mentoring Program remains the cornerstone of the Dwyer Peer-to-Peer model. Through one-on-one mentorship, veterans are paired with trained volunteer mentors who provide personalized guidance rooted in shared experience.

Mentors assist with:

- Career transitions and resume development
- Interview preparation
- Educational planning
- VA benefits navigation

- Crisis intervention and resource connection

In urgent situations, the program provides immediate referrals to mental health professionals, temporary emergency housing coordination, and financial assistance for critical needs such as hotel accommodations.

Each mentorship pairing is tailored to the individual veteran's goals and circumstances, ensuring personalized, responsive support for both veterans and their families.

As a fully volunteer-driven initiative, we continue to honor our mentors annually through a Mentor Appreciation Dinner. This event has been exceptionally well received and reinforces the value of volunteer service within our program.

Incarceration Program

The Incarceration Program remains one of the top five initiatives within our Peer Program. In 2025, we expanded our focus to address the critical first 36 hours post-release — a period identified as particularly vulnerable.

While veterans are still incarcerated, we work proactively to:

- Establish resource connections
- Develop goal plans
- Address negative thinking patterns
- Prepare for reintegration

Upon release, veterans now receive weather-resistant transition bags developed in partnership with the **Saratoga County Sheriff's Office** and the **Franklin Community Center**. These bags include:

- Clothing and toiletries
- Bus passes
- Food and shelter information
- Critical paperwork and contact numbers

We will continue expanding this initiative in 2026, including the addition of employment-focused guest speakers and expanded reentry support.

Community Partnerships

The Peer Connection Program thrives on strong community relationships. In 2025, we maintained referral partnerships with more than 100 local organizations, several of which made particularly meaningful impacts on our veterans' lives.

Key partners included:

- **Holiday Inn Saratoga Springs**, which hosted our annual Christmas Gala and provided exceptional service and accommodations
- **New York Racing Association** (NYRA), which offered veteran-focused events, employment opportunities, and the opportunity to unfurl the American flag at the racecourse
- **LifeWorks Community Action**, a consistent partner in volunteer initiatives
- **Gerald B. H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery**
- **Saratoga National Historical Park**
- **SUNY Empire State University**
- **Navy Federal Credit Union**
- **Veterans and Community Housing Coalition**
- **Therapeutic Horses of Saratoga - Freedom Rein Project**

Community partnership remains central to the Dwyer Program's success. Through collaboration, shared mission, and coordinated care, we continue to expand our reach, strengthen our impact, and position the program for continued growth in 2026.

2025 Peer to Peer Participant Numbers:

- **Current Trained Mentors -** 25
- **Current Active Mentees-** 13
    - **Mentees that have graduated in 2025-** 9
- **Current Participants –** 575
- **Gardening Club –** 6
- **YMCA-** 36
- **MST Group-** 12
- **Chorus-** 16
- **Incarcerated Jail** - 6 Trained Mentors

Appendix F