



Oct-Dec 2025

LI 202 AFA news

Chapter Officers

| | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
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| Steven Latus | Vice President |
| Ray Donnelly | VP Corporate Development |
| Kenneth J. Nevor | VP Veterans Affairs |
| Andrea Nordquist | VP Media Relations |
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CALENDAR OF LIAFA EVENTS 2025

Vietnam Medal Ceremonies

Wed, Jul 8, 2026

During Shootout for Soldiers
Town of Oyster Bay Field of Dreams
5619 Old Sunrise Highway
Massapequa
5:00 PM

Women's Military Service Medal Ceremonies

To be announced

85th Anniversary Annual Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony—Dropping of the Roses

Mon, Dec 7, 2026

American Airpower Museum
1230 New Highway
Farmingdale
10:30 AM

Visit us on the WEB:

LIAFA.ORG

Visit us on FACEBOOK:

Air & Space Forces Association—Long Island Chapter 202

Email us at: LIAFA202@gmail.com

Newsletter editor: Steven Latus

President's Message

We are still accepting applications for both the Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medal as well as the Women's Military Service Medal. Please see towards the end of this newsletter for applications as well as the requirements for each medal.

As of December 31, we have 403 chapter members.

This newsletter's emailing list is based upon the AFA National online chapter roster, which is not open to the general public.

Of the 403 chapter members as of December 31, we have email addresses for only 315 members and out of those addresses, 34 are invalid.

Therefore, if you change your email address or have never supplied AFA National with your email address, please log into your account on afa.org, click on *My Account* and enter that information into your profile. Doing so enables us to email you our quarterly newsletter after the end of each calendar quarter.

Thank you to all our members for your support and a big thank you also to our currently-serving men and women all over the world, and to our veterans. Let us all hope and strive to make the new year better than the old.



Image courtesy of the Military Officers Association of Sarasota, Inc.

Recent Events

2025 Run for Heroes

Hosted by Rockville Centre American Legion Post 303 at Baldwin Park in Baldwin on **Saturday, October 18**, this 5K run/walk brought together veterans, families, and runners to support local veteran halls and those who have served and continue to serve our country. All proceeds from the event benefited the following participating posts:

- Baldwin American Legion Post 246
- Rockville Centre American Legion Post 303
- Lynbrook American Legion Post 335
- Malverne American Legion Post 44
- Freeport American Legion Post 342
- East Rockaway VFW Post 3350



U.S. Representative Laura Gillen (red "S" on sweatshirt) and NYS Assemblywoman Judy Griffin (yellow shirt) join with veterans at the run.
Photo credit: Judy Griffin's Facebook page

VetFest 2025

This event was held on **Sunday, October 19**, at the 13-acre farm in Islandia owned by Pal-O-Mine Equestrian, a nonprofit organization that uses horses to facilitate growth, learning and healing for children and adults with disabilities, veterans and others. A \$10,000 grant from the Marilyn Lichtman Foundation supported VetFest 2025 and will also help fund Pal-O-Mine's many programs for veterans and their families throughout the year.

Pal-O-Mine hosted 40 veterans' resource groups, covering issues such as housing, employment, education, equine therapy and much more. The event was free to veterans, service members, and their families, and was sponsored by the Veteran Suicide Prevention Coalition, whose members include Nassau Library Systems, Northport VA Medical Center, Pal-O-Mine, Living Blue Apparel, Northwell Health Military Liaison Services, YES Community Counseling Center, CN Guidance and Counseling Services, New Ground, Bridge Back to Life, NY Council on Problem Gambling, Army National Guard Military and Family Readiness Program, Northwell Health South Oaks Hospital and Nassau County Veterans Service Agency. To learn more about all of Pal-O-Mine's programs for veterans and others, visit Pal-O-Mine.org.



Robert Brull, president of the Marilyn Lichtman Foundation, and Lisa Gatti, founder and CEO of Pal-O-Mine Equestrian.

Photo credit: Pal-O-Mine.org website

Free Veteran Haircut Event

The Barber and Beauty Institute of New York, located in Hempstead, held a free haircut event at the offices of the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency in East Meadow on **Tuesday, October 28**, from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM.

Topgolf Fundraiser for VHали (Veterans Health Alliance of Long Island)

VHали is comprised of representatives from state and county government, the VA medical center, veterans' organizations, mental health and substance abuse providers, universities, hospitals, individual veterans, and civilians who all have a personal interest in supporting Long Island veterans. This fundraiser was held on **Thursday, October 30**, at the Topgolf facility in Holtsville. Topgolf is a reimagined driving range, featuring golf balls with embedded microchips to instantly facilitate scoring, and various golf-based games featuring giant targets, paired with all-weather hitting bays, food, beverages, and music.

Suffolk County Veterans Resource and Stand Down Event

This event took place on **Friday, October 31**, at the Suffolk County Community College Health & Wellness Center in Riverhead. It was sponsored by the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Catholic Health, and General Needs.

Farewell Luncheon for Cathy Ward, LIAFA Secretary

All the LIAFA officers gathered for the luncheon on **Sunday, November 2**, at The Refuge in Melville to bid Cathy bon voyage and to remember her long and valued service as LIAFA secretary. Cathy departed later that week for Williamsville, a suburb of Buffalo, where she will get to spend more time with her son Bryce and her granddaughter Letti. Don't let that upstate snow get you down, Cathy!



The gorgeous cake, in Cathy Ward's honor.

Photo credit: Steven Latus



25-year AFA service award presented to Cathy Ward.

Photo credit: Steven Latus



LIAFA president Fred Di Fabio saying goodbye to Cathy Ward.

Photo credit: Steven Latus

105th Birthday Drive-By Parade for Army Sgt. Anthony Catalano, World War II Combat Veteran

The celebration took place on **Sunday, November 2**, in front of Catalano's home in Mineola. Catalano served with Patton's 3rd Army during World War II and was part of the historic liberation of the Dachau Concentration Camp, the first and longest-operating Nazi concentration camp. The parade consisted of a procession of cars, motorcycles, Boy Scout troops, and emergency vehicles from the local fire department and the Nassau County Police Department. The parade was organized by Nassau County Legislator Scott Strauss and the village of Mineola.



Anthony Catalano, behind the red blanket.

Photo credit: Long Island Press/Hannah Resnick

Kellenberg Annual Veterans Tribute Dinner

On **Monday, November 10**, Kellenberg Memorial High School in Uniondale held its annual dinner, sponsored by the Kellenberg Memorial High School History Club. Kellenberg's own Boy Scout Troop 87 presented the colors, while the Firebird Swing Chorus performed the "Star Spangled Banner." I was unable to find attendance figures or any more details about this year's dinner, but attendance is historically 300+. Retired master sergeant Peter Gong (he initially served 12 years with the Army but retired from the Air Force after serving an additional 16 years) concluded the evening by playing Taps.



[Master Sergeant \(Ret.\) Peter Gong leads Boy Scout Troop 87 into the hall.](#)

Photo credit: Facebook page for Kellenberg Memorial High School

250th Birthday Celebration for the U.S. Marine Corps

The celebration took place on **Monday, November 10**, at the Marine Corps League Sunrise Detachment Hall in Massapequa. Food, cash bar, a cake ceremony, oldest/youngest Marine and a Springfield 1903 rifle raffle were all part of the festivities.



Several of the USMC celebrants, including WWII vet Cliff Doering (in wheelchair).

Photo credit: Rich Gresser

Special Screening of Warrior Ranch Documentary

The screening took place on **Thursday, November 13**, at the David S. Mack Center for Training and Intelligence, Nassau County Police Academy in Garden City. This award-winning documentary showed the profound role that horses play in healing the invisible wounds of veterans and first responders. The screening was followed by a Q&A/panel discussion including SSGT (Ret.) Paul Martinez (Army Ranger) and Police Officer Shawn Feeney (SSGT, Marine Corps).

Blue Star Mothers NY-14 Red Bow Initiative

On **Saturday, November 15**, the Blue Star Mothers and volunteers came together at the Sunrise Detachment Marine Corps League building in Massapequa to set up 500 Christmas trees to help veterans in need during the 2025 holiday season. The red bows tied to the tops of the trees were originally placed on the graves of American service members the prior year in honor of their service and sacrifice. Additionally, volunteers helped pack food and spices to send to our service members overseas.



Red Bow volunteers getting it done!

Photo credit: Jackie Redler/Facebook page for Marine Corps League Sunrise Detachment

Warrior Help a Hero Showdown

The games were: Long Island Warriors vs. FDNY at 6:45 PM; Long Island Warriors vs. NJ Warriors 8:30 PM on **Saturday, November 15**, at the Northwell Health Ice Center at Eisenhower Park in East Meadow. All proceeds benefited the Matthews family. Jay Matthews is a married 35-year-old Long Island native who is an active Army Reserve member, a Selden volunteer firefighter and an FDNY firefighter. Jay's and his wife Brittney's young son, Jack, born mid-2023, was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of cancer (BCOR Sarcoma) at eighteen months old; he passed away this past August. The family has incurred significant medical, home improvement and other bills caring for Jack and childcare for his older sister, McKenna.

Veterans Annual Winter Stand Down

The annual Nassau County Winter Stand Down, hosted by Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman and the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency, took place on **Tuesday, November 25**, from 9 AM to 1 PM at the Freeport Armory; the stand down is always held on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. Volunteers came on the Monday morning before the event to help pack the items into bags to be distributed at the stand down. It was a drive-through-only event; items distributed included over 500 turkeys with fixings, canned vegetables, mashed potato mix, clothes, boots, toiletries, gift cards and nonperishable foods; all items were brand new. Roughly 600 veterans, the highest turnout in many years, came to the event and received a bag of goodies and information on resources available to help them throughout the year.

Among the volunteers at the stand down were Nassau County Executive **Bruce Blakeman**, Nassau County Veterans Service Agency Director **Ralph Esposito**, Nassau County Comptroller **Elaine Phillips**, State Senator **Steve Rhoads**, and Nassau County Legislator **Samantha A. Goetz**. Supporting organizations participating in the event were General Needs, Long Island Cares, Island Harvest, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, American Red Cross, P.C. Richard & Son, Home Depot, Bedgear, Nassau County Police Department, My Country 96.1 FM, PSEG Long Island, Reworld and the Incorporated Village of Freeport.



Ralph Esposito and Elaine Phillips pointing out the event's message.
Photo credit: Facebook page for Nassau County Comptroller Elaine Phillips

84th Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony (Dropping of the Roses)

The ceremony was held at the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale on **Sunday, December 7**. Special recognition was given to five World War II veterans in the form of proclamations presented by Nassau County Veterans Service Agency Director **Ralph Esposito**, Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency Deputy Director Col. (Ret.) **Jim Brennan** and Chaplain **Robert Robesch**.

Other distinguished guests included Suffolk County Executive **Ed Romaine**, 106th Rescue Wing (ANG) Director of Compliance & Resolution **LTC Peter Papandrea**, Commander of the Navy Reserve Center of Long Island **CDR Heidi Antonucci**, American Airpower Museum Director **Larry Starr**, Deputy Executive Director of the Long Island State Veterans Home **Jonathan Spier**, President and Cofounder of Mission Margraten Plus **Roger Kilfoil**, Vice President and Cofounder of Mission Margraten Plus **Stephanie Folwell**, Paws of War veteran advocate **Ray Meyer**, Skytypers Air Show Team Pilot **Tom Daly** and veteran caseworker for Congressman Tom Suozzi **Ed Aulman**.

Five World War II vets attended the ceremony. They were:

- SSG Dominick Critelli—U.S. Army, Battle of the Bulge, age 104
- CPL Cliff Doering—U.S. Marine Corps, Battle of Okinawa, age 100 (now deceased—see “Taps”)
- Tech 4 Harold Levenberg—U.S. Army, European Theater, age 100 (now deceased—see “Taps”)
- SSG Tom Morris—U.S. Army Air Corps, Pacific Theater, age 101
- Tech 5 David Palmer—U.S. Army, European Theater, age 100

After the roses were blessed, the colors were retired, and the indoor ceremony ended, eighty-five roses (eighty-four red roses and one white rose for 9/11) were presented to the crew of the Skytypers Air Show Team’s SNJ-2 *Texan* aircraft, who then took off to drop the roses over the Statue of Liberty at 12:55 PM to mark the exact New York time of the Pearl Harbor attack.

Many thanks, as always, to our supporters: Shootout for Soldiers, Long Island State Veterans Home, NDIA (National Defense Industrial Association), American Airpower Museum, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Band, Hicksville Veteran Association, vocalist Eric Wieboldt, Sergeant at Arms Paul Massi (USMC veteran), Skytypers Air Show Team, Navy Reserve Center, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 82, Patriot Guard Riders, American Legion Riders Post 1244, Rolling Thunder Chapter 6, Civil Air Patrol Lt. Quentin Roosevelt Cadet Squadron NY-288, Blue Star Mothers, Costco of Melville, Applebee’s Restaurant and the Town of Babylon.

For a video of the event, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueQ1eLi8oCo>.

Following are several pictures from the event:



World War II vets, seated L to R: Cliff Doering, Harold Levenberg, Tom Morris and David Palmer.
Ed Romaine handing a certificate to David Palmer while Ralph Esposito looks on.

Photo credit: Ken Nevor



World War II vet Dominick Critelli, seated with blue-green shirt and gray sweater, while Navy personnel prepare to deliver the roses to the plane waiting outside that will deliver them to the Statue of Liberty.

Photo credit: Ken Nevor



LIAFA president Fred Di Fabio chats with the Skytyper crew before they take off for the Statue of Liberty.
Photo credit: Steven Latus

Editor's note: I met a delightful lady at the ceremony, 84-year-old Arlene Ray from Great Neck, who caught my eye because she was wearing a t-shirt proudly proclaiming that she was born on December 7, 1941 (not in Hawaii but in Queens). She kindly allowed me to take a few pictures of her so here they are (please forgive the poorly-staged photo of the back of her t-shirt, which only goes to show that I'm no photographer):



Arlene Ray

Photo credit: Steven Latus



Arlene Ray

Photo credit: Steven Latus

Upcoming Non-LIAFA Events



WEDNESDAY THROUGH THURSDAY, JULY 8–9, 9:00 AM–9:00 AM at the Town of Oyster Bay Field of Dreams, 5619 Old Sunrise Highway in Massapequa. There will be twenty-four one-hour games in a row. Shootout for Soldiers is a nonprofit organization that hosts lacrosse experiences to support American veterans through fundraising and community engagement.

As the front-page calendar shows, LIAFA will hold its 50th Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medal Ceremony during the first day of the tournament, **WEDNESDAY, JULY 8 AT 5:00 PM.**

Long Island Chapter 202 of the Air & Space Forces Association is proud and grateful to be one of the local charity beneficiaries that share in a portion of the net proceeds raised from this event. Shootout for Soldiers is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

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Announcements and Programs

New York Bill Providing Property Tax Exemption for Veterans with 100% Service-Connected Disability Signed into Law

New York Senate Bill S-1183 was signed into law by Governor Hochul on December 19, 2025. **NOTE:** the exemption is **NOT** automatic; local governments (counties, cities, towns, villages, or school districts) must adopt a law to implement this exemption. If adopted, the law allows for a full exemption from property taxes on the veteran's primary residence. Veterans must have been discharged under honorable conditions and rated as 100% disabled by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Changes to How Disabled Veterans Can Get VA Automobile Grants

Qualified disabled veterans who have previously received a Department of Veterans Affairs automobile grant to purchase a specially equipped vehicle 30 or more years ago may now be eligible to apply for another one.

The Advancing Uniform Transportation Opportunities for Veterans Act, known as the AUTO Act (signed into law in January 2023), allows veterans with qualifying service-connected disabilities to receive an automobile grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs every 10 years instead of just once in their lifetimes. Under the new law, veterans who haven't received a vehicle grant in 30 years are immediately eligible to apply for another one; and they can then apply for a new grant every 10 years.

Eligibility requirements haven't changed. Veterans and active-duty service members qualify for the automobile grant if they have a service-connected disability that includes at least one of these conditions:

- Loss, or permanent loss of use, of one or both feet
- Loss, or permanent loss of use, of one or both hands
- Permanent decreased vision in both eyes, meaning 20/200 vision or less in the better eye with glasses; or greater than 20/200 vision but with a visual field defect that reduces peripheral vision to 20 degrees or less in the better eye
- Severe burn injuries
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis
- Ankylosis in one or both knees or hips (this qualifies for adaptive equipment grants only, not the automobile purchase grant)

The disability must be service-connected or treated as service-connected under 38 U.S.C. 1151, which covers disabilities resulting from VA medical care.

The AUTO Act also updated how VA classifies certain vehicle modifications. The law allows VA to pay for specific modifications as medical services rather than only through the adaptive equipment program. These modifications include van lifts, raised doors, raised roofs, air conditioning and wheelchair tie-downs for passenger use. This change matters because it provides another pathway for veterans to obtain necessary vehicle modifications through VA health care rather than solely through the benefits system.

For more details and how to apply, please go to <https://www.military.com/benefits/veterans-health-care/veterans-can-now-get-va-auto-grants-every-10-years-heres-what-changed.html>.

2026 COLA for Military Retirees and SBP Annuitants

Based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index, there is a 2.8 percent Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for most retired pay and Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities effective December 1, 2025. Retirees will see the change in their December 31, 2025, payment and SBP annuitants in their January 2, 2026, payment.

VA Home Improvements and Structural Alterations (HISA) Grants

The VA Home Improvements and Structural Alterations Benefit (HISA) provides financial assistance to disabled veterans with service-connected medical conditions (and sometimes non-service-connected conditions) who require modifications to their homes, whether owned or rented by the veteran.

This benefit provides medically necessary improvements and structural alterations to Veterans/Servicemembers' primary residence for the following purposes:

- Allowing entrance to or exit from the primary residence
- Use of essential lavatory and sanitary facilities (e.g. roll-in showers)
- Allowing accessibility to kitchen or bathroom sinks or counters (e.g., lowering counters/sinks)

- Improving entrance paths or driveways in immediate area of the home to facilitate access to the home through construction of permanent ramping
- Improving plumbing or electrical systems made necessary due to installation of home medical equipment

You may use HISA benefits to pay for more than one home alteration, until you exhaust your lifetime benefit. HISA benefits approved by VA for use in a particular home alteration but unused by you will remain available for future use.

\$6800 lifetime limitation:

- A service-connected condition
- A non-service-connected condition of a veteran rated 50% or more service-connected.
- A non-service-connected condition of a veteran in receipt of benefits under Title 38, USC Section 1151 for the condition requiring such benefit.

\$2000 lifetime limitation:

- All other veterans receiving medical services furnished under Title 38, USC Sections 1710(a)(2) and (3).

***** IMPORTANT***:** Do not start a modification until you receive an approval letter from Prosthetic & Sensory Aids Service (PSAS).

For more information, go to <https://www.prosthetics.va.gov/psas/HISA2.asp>.

Nassau County DD Form 214 Recording and Veterans Discount Photo ID Card

County Clerk Maureen O'Connell offers a Veterans Recognition Program, allowing veterans the opportunity to record their veteran discharge papers (DD Form 214) free of charge with the Nassau County Clerk's Office. Upon recording these documents, the veteran will be eligible to receive a Veterans Discount Photo ID Card, which provides discounts at participating businesses throughout Nassau County.

For a downloadable list of participating businesses, go to: [Copy of Participating Businesses - Database](#)

For more information, visit the Nassau County Clerk's website at www.nassaucountyny.gov/clerk.

Be on the Alert for Veteran Charity Scams

Making a donation to a veterans charity might seem like a great idea, but if it's a charity that you've never heard of or one that has solicited you in person or by telephone, mail or email, it's worth taking a few minutes to check it out before writing that check, reaching for your wallet or submitting your credit card information. Phony charities claiming to support police, firefighters, veterans or sick children are not uncommon, so it makes sense to do some research before handing over your money. Websites like Charity Navigator and Charity Watch provide information about many charities, including data on their fundraising practices, and often highlight suspect charities. The sites are free and may save you from enriching scammers and depriving legitimate charities of needed donations.

Navy Seeks Interviews with Former Grumman Employees at Calverton

The U.S. Navy is requesting interviews with former employees, or their surviving family members, who worked at the Grumman-operated Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant in Calverton between 1954 and 1996. These interviews will aid in the Navy's environmental remediation at the site, which covers approximately 6000 acres.

Since Grumman vacated the premises in 1996, the site has been a subject of controversy over chemical contamination, with dangerous chemicals such as perfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and 1,4-dioxane that have leaked into the Peconic River and threaten the groundwater in the area.

The Navy said it is particularly interested in employees' knowledge of:

- Past operations and activities
- Waste management practices
- Building utilization
- Grounds maintenance
- Aircraft fabrication practices on site
- Any other relevant information, both on- and off-property.

Any former employee at Grumman's Calverton facility interested in participating in an interview or in learning more is asked to send an email to NAVFAC_ML_PAO_ALL@us.navy.mil or call 800-906-9339.

Participation in the interviews is completely voluntary and all information shared during the interviews will be kept confidential.

Free Discount Drug Program for Veterans

VeteranRx offers up to 80 percent off on brand-name and generic prescription drugs for veterans and their families. The program includes more than 35,000 pharmacies around the country, including all major chains. No medical service connection to the VA is necessary. There are no enrollment forms, no age or income requirements, no waiting periods, no eligibility requirements, no exclusions, covers pre-existing conditions, no claim forms to file, no annual or lifetime limits. This program has no service connection requirements. Ask your pharmacist to run both your insurance and the savings card and use the one that saves you the most money. Sometimes the free savings card will offer better prices than your insurance copay. Any veteran and family member of a U.S. Veteran with or without prescription coverage can use this free card. It even covers pet medications. Go to <https://www.veteranrx.com/> for more info.

Veteran Functions at Eisenhower Park

All veterans organizations that wish to hold an event, ceremony or other function at the park must contact the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency to get a permit. This requirement protects the organization as well as the park since the NCVSA holds an insurance policy covering any accidents or injuries that may occur during such events. Please call Ralph Esposito at (516) 572-6512 or Paul Vista at (516) 572-6521.

Veterans Traffic Court (Nassau County)

The Nassau County Traffic and Parking Violations Agency (NCTPVA) at 801 Axinn Ave. in Garden City holds monthly traffic court sessions on the third Thursday afternoon of each month, dedicated to assisting veterans and active-duty military members with resolving violations. NCTPVA will work with the District Court to bundle all traffic violations together. This program is a one-time-only opportunity so don't waste it on minor violations.

For more information, please call the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency at (516) 572-6565. Also see the following link: www.nassaucountyny.gov/4917/Veterans-Traffic-Court.

Veterans Treatment Court (Nassau County)

U.S. military veterans charged with minor nonviolent offenses may qualify for reduced charges or penalties by participating in a court-supervised treatment program. To apply, a pre-screening questionnaire must be completed and forwarded to the district attorney's office. You must then contact the Veterans Treatment Court Project Director to set a clinical evaluation for the purpose of determining treatment needs. If you are found to be eligible, you will be contacted by the D.A.'s office and a plea offer will be proposed. For more information, please visit their website at www.nassaucountyny.gov/4919/Veterans-Treatment-Court. **Volunteers are also being sought to be mentors; training will be provided. Please call Rosemary Walker at (516) 493-4145.**

Nassau County Veterans Service Agency Transportation Program

This program provides free transportation for scheduled VA medical appointments. The veteran will be picked up at his or her residence and driven in a Nassau County Veterans Service Agency vehicle to a designated VA facility.

Locations that are serviced for transportation are:

- VA Clinic, East Meadow
- VA Clinic, Valley Stream
- VA Vet Center, Hicksville
- VA Main Hospital, Northport

All appointments for transportation are required to be reserved two weeks prior to your scheduled VA appointment. Please call Jessica DeLisi (VSA Transportation Coordinator) at (516) 572-6526 to schedule transportation.

The Nassau County Veterans Service Agency is looking for volunteers to transport veterans to and from the aforementioned VA facilities. Please donate any time you have to give on Monday–Friday from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM You pick whatever times and dates work for you. Nassau County will provide the vehicles; a valid New York State driver's license is required. To volunteer, please call Jessica DeLisa at (516) 572-6526. The need is urgent so please help if you can!

VetMart Food Pantry

The VetMart food pantry at the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency is located at 2201 Hempstead Turnpike, Building Q, East Meadow. Building Q is located on the property of the Nassau University Medical Center (NUMC), around the back of the property.

Veterans may register at the food pantry for eligibility with a Veterans ID Card or DD Form 214 Military Discharge Form. (*Note: Other forms of veteran identification may be accepted, but eligibility will be at the discretion of the agency*). Once registered with the proper veteran documentation, the veteran may come to the food pantry once per week for food distributions; toiletries and other supplies are issued monthly. The Veterans Food Pantry is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM (*closed Weekends and Holidays*). For more information/questions about the food pantry or directions to the facility, veterans may call (516) 572-6565.

Nassau County VSA Outreach Events Available

These events are open to all veterans groups based in Nassau County. They include:

- Intake of veteran's contact information and digital storage of veteran's DD Form 214
- Access to veteran's VA digital folder (with processed VA Power of Attorney)
- Access to local experts to expedite VA disability benefit claims
- Option to file future VA claims remotely
- Presentations on the PACT Act and Aid and Attendance benefits
- Assistance in applying for VA Healthcare enrollment

Call the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency at (516) 572-6565 to schedule an event for your veterans group.

Nassau County Veterans Service Agency—Filing VA Claims

Speak with a trained and certified Veterans Service Officer from the Nassau County VSA to help process your VA benefits, such as claims for:

- VA Disability Compensation for eligible veterans who got sick or injured while serving and whose condition worsened due to military service.
- Survivors Pension (DIC) Dependency Indemnity Compensation for the surviving spouse, child or parent of a service member who died in the line of duty or the survivor of a veteran who died from a service-related injury or illness.
- Aid & Attendance Benefit for qualified wartime-era veterans and their surviving spouses who require increased care due to disability or advanced age. Intended to help individuals cover the costs of in-home nursing care, assisted living or nursing home care.
- Burial benefits for eligible veterans to help cover burial, funeral and transportation costs.

Veterans and their families can call (516) 572-6565 to find out more about these VA benefits and to schedule an appointment. Please bring the veteran's DD Form 214 to your appointment; all services are provided free of charge.

Volunteer Drivers Wanted for Veterans—Disabled American Veterans (DAV)

DAV is also looking for volunteer drivers to help veterans get to VA medical appointments. A valid New York State driver's license is required. For more information, please send an email to Robert.Erdody@va.gov or call (631) 235-8220. For a volunteer application, please send an email to Jennifer.Pohl2@va.gov or call (631) 261-4400, extension 7182.

VHUC Veterans Transportation Program

Through the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), the VHA-UBER Health Connect (VUHC) program offers another way for eligible veterans to access transportation to VA-authorized appointments. To qualify, veterans must meet the following criteria:

- Be service connected for 30% or more
- Be traveling to/from treatment for a service-connected condition
- Receive a VA pension or disability
- Have an income that does not exceed the maximum annual VA pension rate

Please call Primary BT Representative Patricia Sangenito at (631) 261-4400, ext. 5579/2661 or Alternate BT Representative Anne O'Rourke at (631) 854-6600 for more information. Both are with Northport VA. (Note: "BT" stands for Beneficiary Travel.)

Nassau County Transportation Program by GoGo

The Nassau County Office for the Aging, together with the New York State Office for the Aging, are piloting this program in Nassau County to serve senior veterans. Trips may be to medical appointments, including to the Northport VA Medical Center. How to use GoGo:

1. Call the Nassau County Veterans Service Agency at (516) 572-6526 to register.
2. Applications will be processed within 48 hours.
3. Office for the Aging will call you with approval.
4. Once you are notified of approval, call GoGo Grandparent at (855) 464-6872 to set up your ride.

Be the One App Now Available

For veterans in crisis, a new app for both Apple and Android devices offers guidance and community resources. The *Be the One* app was developed by Columbia University's Lighthouse Project and tailored to The American Legion's *Be the One* suicide prevention mission. It's available on both Apple's App Store and Google Play and uses the Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale (C-SSRS), that gives anyone anywhere a simple series of questions to ask to determine if a veteran is at risk of suicide, and the severity and immediacy of that risk.

The app can be installed and run on the iPhone, the iPad and Android phones. One of the app's key features is privacy. Your name, address and phone number are not requested or recorded; only your ZIP code is disclosed so that local resources can be shown.

Schedule Be the One Training for Your Post for 2026

The American Legion has partnered with the Columbia University Lighthouse Project to bring in-person training as well as virtual training to Legion Family members. To schedule an in-person training session, email Wendy Lakso at wendy.lakso@nyspi.columbia.edu. She is the director of partnerships, and veteran and military initiatives for the Lighthouse Project.

The online 90-minute virtual training sessions will continue through 2026. They teach the Columbia Protocol that supports suicide risk assessment through a series of six simple questions. All attendees will be asked to complete an online survey before the class and upon completion. These surveys help track the effectiveness of the training and allow us to plan for future development. Go to <https://www.legion.org/advocacy/be-the-one/be-the-one-training> for a list of upcoming online virtual sessions.

Center of Excellence at SUNY Old Westbury

SUNY Old Westbury is home to the only Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) in New York State.

CEVSS:

- Provides a single point of contact to coordinate support services for veteran students, regardless of their branch or duration of service.
- Supports veterans with admissions, registration, financial aid, veterans' benefits, academic advising and career development.
- Facilitates support through disabilities services and physical, emotional and mental health counseling as well as all other services available to students.
- Provides career advice and networking opportunities to help veteran students make successful transitions to college and the civilian workforce.
- Facilitates internship opportunities to provide hands-on experience and increase employment opportunities after graduation.
- Assists with employment resources to help veteran students find job openings, create resumes and learn interview skills.

Point of contact:

Jennifer Jaikaran, LMSW

Director, CEVSS

(516) 274-7768

jaikaranj@oldwestbury.edu

CEC Health Care Veteran Support Group

Weekly meetings are held every Wednesday at 1:30 PM at the Merrick Library at 2279 Merrick Ave. in Merrick. Contact Carolyn Cerky at (516) 316-0155.

CEC Health Care has its offices at 2146 Jackson Ave. in Seaford, where they offer psychiatric care and evaluation, mental health counseling and therapy, and treatment services for addiction and substance abuse. Their phone number is (516) 622-8888, ext. 2; their website is cechealthcare.org.

E-ZPass Disabled Veterans Non-Revenue Program

The New York State Thruway Authority offers free, unlimited travel anywhere on the Thruway to certain qualifying disabled veterans. A disabled veteran who obtains a fee-exempt vehicle registration from the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) may enroll in the Authority's Disabled Veteran Non-Revenue E-ZPass Program. Eligibility is *not* determined by percent disabled designations, specialty license plates or other similar criteria.

You must find out whether you are eligible for a fee-exempt registration before applying for the program by completing Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) [Form 21-4502](#) (automobile and adaptive equipment) and send to your assigned VA Regional Office, either in NYC or Buffalo. The VA will rate your claim, and if approved, you will be notified. Please call the Toll-Free VA number for questions about filling out Form 21-4502 at (800) 827-1000 (hearing-impaired TDD line (800) 829-4833).

The vehicle must be in the name of the disabled veteran applying for the program. Your Tag may be used if you need to travel in another vehicle, but you must be present in that vehicle, and the vehicle must be a passenger (2-axle, 4-tire) vehicle. Veterans who are approved for the program are asked to send in a renewal application and updated fee exempt registration every two years based on the expiration date of the fee-exempt registration.

If you travel on roadways and tolling facilities offering E-ZPass other than the NYS Thruway or outside of New York State, you must establish a revenue account by completing the [E-ZPass Application for Disabled Veteran Revenue Plan](#) (TA-W5080) in order to use your Tag. (*This revenue account form is only for disabled veterans who have been approved for the non-revenue program and would like to set up a revenue account in order to travel outside of the NYS Thruway system.*)

For more information, visit <https://www.thruway.ny.gov/ezpass/veterans.html>.

DD214s and Other Military Service Records Are Available Online

The following VA website is for veterans to gain access to their DD Form 214 and other military service records online: <https://vatrecs.archives.gov/VeteranRequest/home.html#BasicInformation>.

Nassau County Firefighters Operation Wounded Warrior (NCFF-OWW)

A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization **not** affiliated with the Wounded Warrior Project or any other Operation Wounded Warrior organization, the NCFF-OWW is committed to helping those who put their lives in harm's way to protect the rights granted to us, the citizens of the United States of America. Their mission is to boost the morale of service members wounded in the line of duty. The NCFF-OWW works closely with military representatives of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Washington DC, the Womack Army Medical Center in Fort Liberty, NC and the Naval Hospital in Camp Lejeune, NC. Together, they ensure that useful clothing, personal entertainment electronics, and get-well cards are properly channeled to recovering service personnel. Donations are brought down to

Bethesda Naval Hospital and other Wounded Warrior centers via Fire Truck Caravan. Firefighters from throughout the Greater New York area join their 'parade' from New York to military hospitals in the south. Volunteers are also welcome to join their ranks, even if you are not a firefighter! The NCFF-OWW is comprised of firefighter and EMS volunteers throughout Nassau County who conduct numerous fundraising events throughout the year to help meet their goal of providing material and moral support to the wounded men and women of our Armed Forces. Each year's efforts culminate with a personal visit of NCFF-OWW representatives to each of the military hospitals in the area to meet with our brave wounded warriors and express their gratitude for the sacrifices that they have endured for our country. In addition to collecting items and visiting our wounded service personnel, the NCFF-OWW organizes, on behalf of the Nassau County fire service, welcome-home receptions for local service members who have recovered from serious injuries. Donations are accepted and greatly appreciated. Please visit their website at www.ncff-oww.org for more information.

CN Guidance and Counseling Services

All services by this nonprofit organization are free for veterans or loved ones of veterans. Services are available in the community or via telehealth and include outreach and engagement, peer support and linkages to community resources. They also provide referrals and warm handoffs to programs within CN Guidance based on eligibility, including therapy, medication management, medication-assisted treatment for substance abuse, case management and primary care physician. For more information, please call (516) 246-0614 or (516) 246-0621 or send an email to vetservices@centralnassau.org.

Veterans News UVO Long Island is looking for volunteers to act as crew members for its weekly show on public access TV (training will be provided.) The show airs on Cablevision channel 115 on Mondays at 6:30 PM and Cablevision channel 20 on Fridays at 6:30 PM. It is also on at various times on Verizon FIOS channel 36, on Lynbrook and Malverne public access channels, on public access MNN TV Network in Manhattan or any time on YouTube by entering *Veterans News UVO*. The crew meets at the North Shore TV Studio at 1111 Marcus Ave., Suite LL27 in Lake Success on the last Tuesday of the month to tape the program. For more information, please email Ed Aulman at mardiv1@optonline.net, or call him at (516) 921-0595.

Veterans Legal Assistance Program

Receive a FREE consultation with attorneys who specialize in elder law, taxes, wills and estates, family law, VA benefits and claims, disability, discharge upgrades, employment, housing, bankruptcy, debtor/creditor matters, Medicare/Medicaid, landlord/tenant disputes, immigration, and criminal law. For more information, email the Hofstra Legal Assistance Project at VLAP@hofstra.edu or call (516) 463-7302.

General Needs Ltd.

Located in East Northport, this is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that distributes NEW clothing as well as personal items such as toiletries to homeless veterans. If you would like to donate, volunteer, sponsor a distribution or if your business or organization would like to assist General Needs (or if you would just like more information), please call them at (631) 266-1672 or email them at Info@GeneralNeeds.org. You can also visit their website at www.GeneralNeeds.org or go to their Facebook page to see any upcoming events.

Veterans Project by Long Island Cares

This project encompasses several veterans' service programs such as a mobile pantry, job search assistance and Military Appreciation Tuesdays hosted at pantries located in Huntington Station, Bethpage, Hampton Bays, Lindenhurst, Valley Stream and Freeport. For more information, please call (631) 582-3663, extension 142.

Their website is www.licares.org/what-we-do/feed-long-island/veterans-project.

Joseph P. Dwyer Veterans Peer Support Project (Suffolk County)

A joint initiative of the Suffolk County United Veterans and the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency, it serves veterans, service members and their families with post-service transitional issues such as PTSD and TBI (traumatic brain injury); a diagnosis is NOT required for attendance. All groups are confidential and anonymous. They also provide services to student veterans at numerous Long Island college campuses and monthly community outreach in various locations. For more information, please call (631) 853-8345 or send an email to vetspeertopeer@suffolkcountyny.gov. They also have a Facebook page.

Nassau County Joseph P. Dwyer Vet2Vet Peer Networking Groups

Vet2Vet consists of small groups of veterans who meet weekly to share knowledge, provide mutual support and share resources. Confidential and open to all veterans regardless of discharge status. Free to attend; no pre-registration is required. Meetings are at: Mental Health Association, 16 Main St. in Hempstead at 5:15 PM on Mondays and 6:30 PM on Wednesdays; Levittown Public Library, 1 Bluegrass Lane in Levittown at 2 PM on Thursdays (biweekly). There are also spouse/partner meetings at 6:30 PM on Tuesdays and women-only meetings at 6:30 PM on Wednesdays, both at Mental Health Association, 16 Main St. in Hempstead (park in the municipal lot across the street; use the side parking lot and side entrance closest to the gated area.) No pre-registration is necessary.

For more information, please call (516) 489-2322, extension 1213. Their website is <https://veteranshealthalliance.org/nassau-county-pfc-dwyer/>.

Suffolk County Joseph P. Dwyer Vet2Vet Peer Networking Groups

Vet2Vet consists of small groups of veterans who meet weekly to share knowledge, provide mutual support and share resources. Confidential and open to all veterans regardless of discharge status. Free to attend; no pre-registration is required. Meetings are at: Liberty Village, 600 Albany Ave. in Amityville at 6 PM on Mondays; Liberty Landing, 58 Portion Road in Lake Ronkonkoma at 4 PM on Wednesdays; **Seniors 60 and over only**—Rose Caracappa Senior Center, 739 Route 25A in Mount Sinai at 10 AM on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. There are also women-veterans-only Zoom meetings at 11:30 AM-12:30 PM on the first and third Saturday of each month (meeting ID: 932 2123 8672) and women-only MST (Military Sexual Trauma) Group Zoom meetings at 6 PM on Mondays (meeting ID: 886 6132 0754). No pre-registration is necessary. For more information, please call (631) 853-8345 or send an email to vetspeertopeer@suffolkcountyny.gov. Their website is <https://mhaw.org/dwyer/>.

Veterans' Rights Project

The Veterans' Rights Project is able to assist any person who has previous military experience regardless of discharge status. All services are free. Services include housing, family law, public benefits, re-entry services and discharge upgrades.

Their website is <https://legalservicesli.org/resources-self-help/veterans/>.

Contact information:

Hempstead Office: 1 Helen Keller Way, 5th Floor, phone (516) 292-8100

Islandia Office: 1757 Veterans Highway, Suite 50, phone (631) 232-2400

Riverhead Office: 400 West Main St., Suite 200, phone (631) 369-1112

Veterans Defense Program

Justice-involved veterans often do not have the funds to hire an attorney and are represented by public defenders. Public defense attorneys are rarely trained to adequately represent veterans who suffer from the invisible wounds of war or to translate the combat experience of their clients to explain resulting criminal behavior. This program provides training, support, and legal assistance to promote trauma-informed effective representation of veterans and service members. The Veteran Defense Program (VDP) is a project of the New York State Defenders Association (NYSDA), a statewide nonprofit organization working to improve the quality and scope of publicly-supported legal representation for people who cannot afford a lawyer. For information and assistance, please call Director Gary A. Horton at (585) 219-4862 or email him at ghorton@nysda.org. Their website is nysda.org/page/VDP.

Donate a Bicycle to Beacon House to Help a Veteran

Beacon House provides housing in forty-two locations throughout Nassau and Suffolk counties. On any given day, over 255 men, women, and children from the tri-state area benefit from programs that address homelessness, physical disabilities, PTSD, TBI, mental health issues and addiction. Non-veterans, too, have access to housing, drug/alcohol addiction services and job skills/readiness development programs. Email Ed Aulman at mardiv1@optonline.net or call him at (516) 921-0595. A charitable donation receipt will be provided by Beacon House.

Walls of Honor

The Walls of Honor is a place of remembrance within Veterans Memorial Plaza at Eisenhower Park in East Meadow. Please note—these are honor walls, not memorial walls, and are open to all currently serving and to all veterans with an honorable discharge, living or deceased, and who are current or former Nassau County residents. There is a \$100 application fee for each name to be engraved. An application is toward the end of this newsletter. For more information, please call Allison Ridam Krivosheiw at (516) 236-3245 or email her at alliridam@gmail.com.

Local Website for Veterans

We-Are-Vets.us is a local Long Island website presenting a mix of information, history and memories for active-duty troops, veterans and interested civilians. Eric Spinner is the webmaster while Gary Glick,

Marvin Gold, Pat Yngstrom and Bernard Fradkin make up the rest of the team. Their website is www.we-are-vets.us.

Honor Flight Long Island

Honor Flight recognizes American World War II, Korean War and Vietnam veterans by flying them to and from Washington, D.C. to see their memorials ***at no cost***. The flights, deluxe tour bus service, lunch, dinner and tee shirts are **FREE** to our veterans. Flights depart from MacArthur Airport in Islip. You must submit an application to get on their wait list, where you will be assigned to a flight on a first-come, first-served basis by order of application date. It will be approximately four to five months after applying before you are assigned to a flight. You can download and print an application to mail or you can fill out an online application. Go to <http://www.honorflightlongisland.org/general-9> to do either one. You can find out more information on this same website or you can call Jamie Bowden at (631) 702-2423 or send an email to jb Bowden@southamptonny.gov.

Honor Flight Long Island is also looking for Guardian volunteers. Guardians escort the veterans on the aircraft, accompany them throughout the day and make sure our veterans have everything they need for a memorable experience. Prospective Guardians must complete an application and must pay their own way, an expense of \$400.

Prospective Guardians, please note:

- Spouses are NOT eligible to serve as Family Guardians.
- All Guardians must attend the Mandatory Guardian Orientation. A flexible schedule will be created so each Guardian can make one of the several sessions.
- Every Guardian must be between 18-66 years of age or be in peak physical condition and able to handle the rigors of the day (i.e. pushing a wheelchair, extensive walking, bad weather).
- Guardians pay \$400 for the privilege to escort these veterans to D.C.
- Guardians DO NOT need to submit the \$400 donation until it is your turn to fly.
- Guardians will be contacted by Honor Flight Long Island when they have been scheduled for an upcoming flight.

For information on filing a Guardian application, either online or by downloading the form and mailing or emailing a completed form, please visit <https://www.honorflightlongisland.org/copy-of-veteran>. If you wish to make a donation to support Honor Flight Long Island in its mission, please go to <https://www.honorflightlongisland.org/support-our-mission> or mail a check to Honor Flight Long Island, c/o Southampton Town, 116 Hampton Road, Southampton, NY 11968. Honor Flight Long Island is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization; all donations are fully tax-deductible.

MedEquip Medical Alert Device with Monitoring—FREE for Veterans

This device (available as a pendant or a wristband) with Stat-VA data is the only medical device of its kind that incorporates veteran health information. All you need to do is **press the button** and a responder will know who and where you are and handle the rest. You do not need to have a pre-existing condition to qualify.

- No monthly or subscription fees
- 24/7 responders
- Coast to coast connection
- HIPAA compliant
- Joint Commission Accredited
- GSA approved program
- No contract to sign
- Service can be terminated at any time.
- Fall Detection (available)

Ask your VA doctor or clinician about the **MedEquip Alert with Monitoring**. The device must be ordered using GSA# **GS-35F-202GA**. You can also call (844) 435-7808 or visit <https://www.medequipalert.com/veterans/> for more info.

§

id you know . . .

... that, during World War II, B-17 ball turret gunner Alan E. Magee survived falling from 22,000 feet—without a parachute.



Shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Magee, then days away from turning 23, enlisted in the Army Air Forces on January 7, 1942. He applied to be a pilot but was passed over. Instead, he was trained as a ball turret gunner since his height (5'6") and weight (155 lb.) meant he would be a perfect fit for the turret, an important but vulnerable position that sat beneath the belly of the B-17, exposed to fighters and flak, with nowhere to run.

Magee was assigned to the 303rd Bomb Group, 360th Bomb Squadron, which flew B-17 Flying Fortresses out of Molesworth Airfield in England. On January 3, 1943, Staff Sergeant Magee flew his seventh mission aboard a B-17 nick-named *Snap! Crackle! Pop!*, whose target was the strategic German U-boat pens at Saint-Nazaire, France. This mission was especially hazardous since it was a daylight raid on a heavily-defended area known to bomber crews as “Flak City.”

As the bomber group neared the target, German flak batteries opened up, filling the skies with dangerous shrapnel. Magee’s ball turret was hit, rendering it inoperable. Amazingly, he was uninjured,

but his parachute was shredded. Magee left the turret and was heading to the radio room when another flak strike took off part of the bomber's right wing, putting the bomber into a violent spin. In the chaos, Magee was knocked unconscious and thrown out of the aircraft at an estimated speed of 120 mph and at an estimated height of 22,000 feet—a bit over four miles.

Fortunately for Magee, he did not hit the ground directly, which would have been instantly fatal but instead crashed through the glass roof of the Saint-Nazaire railroad station. The structure absorbed much of the impact, but Magee was severely injured with 28 shrapnel wounds, a broken nose, a damaged left eye, a punctured lung, kidney damage, a fractured right leg and a right arm that was nearly severed. German civilians and soldiers pulled his body from the wreckage. Many assumed he was already dead. He was not. He regained consciousness at a first aid station before transport to the hospital.

The German doctor who treated him told Magee, "We are enemies, but I am first a doctor, and I will do my best to save your arm." And he did. Magee never learned the doctor's name, but he did recover from his wounds and was later transferred to Stalag Luft 17B at Brauna-Gneikendorf, near Krems an der Donau, Austria, along with two other survivors, where they spent the rest of the war as POWs.

Magee was liberated in May 1945 and received the Air Medal for meritorious conduct and a Purple Heart. He went on to earn his pilot's license, got married and worked in the aviation industry in a variety of roles. On January 3, 1993, the 50th anniversary of the attack, the people of St. Nazaire honored Magee and the crew of his bomber by erecting a 6-foot-tall (1.8 m) memorial to them. He died at the age of 84 in San Angelo, Texas, on December 20, 2003, from stroke and kidney failure.



[Alan E. Magee in undated photo](#)
Photo credit: American Air Museum in Britain

Taps



Wavalyn “Wave” Odelle Di Fabio of Medford, while being under hospice care at St. Charles Rehabilitation in Port Jefferson, passed away on December 8 at age 83 due to kidney failure. Wave was the wife of Fred Di Fabio, president of LIAFA, for 63 years.

Wavalyn was a gifted, artistic woman who inspired creativity and a love for nature in her family. Above all, she was a woman of strong faith in Jesus Christ, offering encouragement, wisdom, and sincere friendship to many.

She was interred at Calverton National Cemetery and is survived by her husband Fred; her daughter, Joanna, wife of John Fruhauf; her daughter Donna, wife of Brian Stanfield; and her son Anthony, married to Bobbie Jo; grandchildren Daniel, David, Deborah, Justin, Aleena, and Jocelyn; and three great-grandchildren.



*Wavalyn Di Fabio in undated photo.
Photo credit: Michael J. Grant Funeral Home website*

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Taps (continued)



Dorothy Oxendine of Farmingdale passed away on November 9 at age 99 of undisclosed causes. Dorothy lost her son, Marine Paratrooper PFC Willie French "Frenchie" Oxendine III, while he was assigned to I Company, 3rd Battalion, 26th Marines, 3rd Marine Division, III MAF, during the Vietnam War on May 30, 1968 (Memorial Day); he was only 19. She also lost a daughter, Lois, in 2014.

Her grief propelled her to join the American Gold Star Mothers and she soon became a prominent member within the organization, eventually serving as its National President from 2002 to 2003. She was also a member of the Long Island National Cemetery Memorial Organization (LINCMO), becoming its first (and so far, only) female president in 2008. In 2003, driven by a need for closure and remembrance, she journeyed to Vietnam to visit the site where her son had been killed.

She was interred at Long Island National Cemetery in Farmingdale and is survived by her daughter, Barbara Ezzo; her sister, Delores; her six grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.



Dorothy Oxendine in undated photo.

Photo credit: Arthur F. White Funeral Home website

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Taps (continued)



Francisco Muñiz III of Westbury passed away on December 23 at the age of 84 of undisclosed causes.

Francisco was an Army Vietnam combat veteran who served as a Light Weapons Infantryman; he was in for six years (1964-1970), attaining the rank of Specialist Fourth Class.

Francisco joined Chapter 82 of the Vietnam Veterans Association (VVA) in 1980, serving in a variety of officer and board positions over the years. Since 2005, he served as secretary of the Vietnam Veterans of America New York State Council. He was a founding member of the Veterans Health Alliance of Long Island, a coalition of agencies that provide outreach, advocacy and training to veterans and their families. He also served as a peer facilitator for the Nassau County PFC Dwyer Project, providing Vet2Vet Peer Support to veterans of all generations, and as president of the New York Vietnam Veterans Foundation.

He is survived by his children Jose, Anna, Carmen and Francisco, and his six grandchildren.



Francisco Muñiz III in undated photo.

Photo credit: Dignity Memorial website

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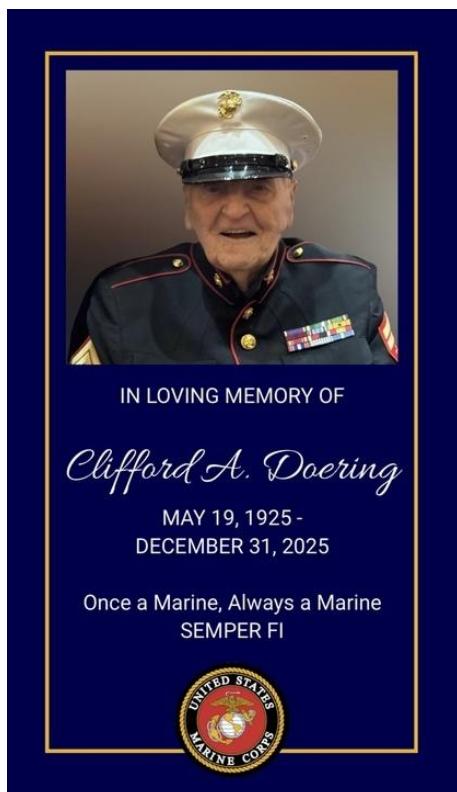
Taps (continued)



Clifford “Cliff” A. Doering of Hicksville passed away at the Long Island State Veterans Home on December 31 at the age of 100 of undisclosed causes. He joined the Marines at the age of 18 and saw combat in one of the bloodiest and final battles of World War II, the Battle of Okinawa. After the war, he was selected to serve in the Presidential Honor Guard under President Harry Truman. He was on reserve for the Korean War and separated with the rank of corporal.

Clifford retired after almost 50 years with the A&P Company but continued to work part-time jobs and do volunteer work well into his 80s. He was an active member of the Plainview American Legion, the Hicksville VFW and the Sunrise Detachment of the Marine Corps League. He was recognized multiple times by Nassau County for the countless hours he spent chauffeuring disabled veterans to their medical appointments at the Northport VA. He said it helped him to feel grateful for his own life and health to assist vets who were sick, disabled or amputees.

He is survived by his adoring children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews.



Clifford A. Doering
Photo credit: McCourt & Trudden Funeral Home website

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Taps (continued)



Harold Levenberg of Holbrook passed away at age 100 of undisclosed causes. I was unable to find much information about him. From listening to the video of his funeral service that was posted on Gutterman's of Woodbury's website, I did discover that he was a widower, with his first wife Sylvia passing in 2010 and his second wife Grace passing in May 2025. He has two daughters, Laurie and Carol. He played tennis up until age 98.



Harold C. Levenberg (2nd from left, at LIAFA's 2025 Pearl Harbor ceremony).
Photo credit: Ken Nevor

Requirements for the Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medal

- currently living in Nassau, Suffolk, Brooklyn, Queens, or Staten Island;
- can attend the ceremony (awards are presented ***only*** at the ceremony; they are *not* mailed);
- served in the Vietnam theater of operations in any branch of the military as per DD Form 214.

A medal application is on the next page. You can also submit the application online from our website at LIAFA.org (please click on the Veterans tab).

DD Form 214 *and other required documentation must still be mailed*; please black out your Social Security number and/or Service Number on DD Form 214.

LONG ISLAND CHAPTER #202 OF THE AIR & SPACE FORCES ASSOCIATION (LIAFA)



A Department of Defense (DOD) Vietnam 50th Anniversary
Commemorative Sponsor

LIAFA proudly presents the Vietnam 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medal to thank and honor Vietnam War veterans and their families for their commitment and service.
(Awarded to living Long Island Vietnam Vets of all services)



COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL APPLICATION

Name _____

Phone # _____ Cell # _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Branch of Service _____ Rank/Grade _____

Vietnam service dates _____

Units assigned and location during war _____

Please mail a copy of your DD-214 (black out your Social Security Number) and this completed application to:

Fred Di Fabio, President
67 Pacific Dunes Ct.
Medford, NY 11763-2405



For information call:
631-487-7210

- Visit our web page at **LIAFA.ORG** to view a video of the ceremony.
- Also check out our Facebook page: **Long Island Air Force Association - LIAFA**
- Attendance is **FREE**. Bring your family, friends and neighbors.
- You will be contacted to schedule you for one of our upcoming ceremonies upon receipt of your application.

Requirements for the Women's Military Service Medal

- currently living in Nassau, Suffolk, Brooklyn, Queens, or Staten Island;
- can attend the ceremony (awards are presented only at the ceremony; they are not mailed);
- Female veteran **or** currently serving in any branch of the military as per DD Form 214 for veterans, or ID or other documentation for those currently serving.

A medal application is on the next page. You can also submit the application online from our website at LIAFA.org (please click on the Veterans tab).

DD Form 214 and other required documentation must still be mailed; please black out your Social Security number and/or Service Number on DD Form 214.



WOMAN'S RECOGNITION CEREMONY

**ARE YOU A WOMAN WHO IS A VETERAN OR
IS CURRENTLY SERVING?**

Long Island Chapter #202 of the Air & Space Forces Association proudly presents and honors woman veterans and women currently serving and their families for their commitment and service.

(Awarded to women of all Services and Eras)

APPLICATION

Name _____

Phone # _____ Cell # _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Branch of Service _____ Rank/Grade _____

Service dates _____

Please mail the completed application and a copy of documentation showing military service (DD-214 for veterans) (black out your Social Security Number) to:

Fred Di Fabio, President
67 Pacific Dunes Court
Medford, NY 11763-2405

For information,
call: 631-487-7210

- Check out our web page at: **LIAFA.ORG** and visit us on Facebook: **The Long Island Air Force Association - LIAFA**
- Attendance is **FREE**. Bring your family, friends and neighbors.
- You will be contacted to be scheduled for an upcoming ceremony.

**THIS AWARD HONORS LONG ISLAND WOMAN VETERANS AND WOMEN WHO ARE
CURRENTLY SERVING**
(Not Awarded Posthumously)

Official Veteran Registration Form

The Nassau County Veterans Monument Fund, Inc.

PRESENTS:

"WALLS OF HONOR"



The "Walls Of Honor"

offers places of remembrance to residents of **Nassau County, NY**
within **Veterans Memorial Plaza**,
Eisenhower Park, East Meadow, New York.

The Walls of Honor are exactly what they state, they are Honor Walls, not memorial walls. Stainless Steel Panels, mounted on Granite Walls, Engraved with Veterans names, ensures that the greatest contribution to our legacy of freedom is recognized for generations to come.

GIVE THE GIFT OF A LIFETIME

Reserve a place of **HONOR** for yourself, family member or friend and become part of a monument to the men and women who bravely served this nation through its darkest moments or protected it during times of peace. **Any** Veteran of any U.S. involved war. **Any** Veteran who is currently serving. **Any** Veteran living or deceased. **Any** Veteran who took the oath of enlistment & has been honorably discharged is eligible to be remembered.

The **Walls of Honor** is on-going. As long as veterans apply, there will be room for their names. Once a year we welcome all to attend our **Annual Honoree Dedication Ceremony** where new honorees names are placed on the Walls of Honor.

There is a \$100.00 application fee for each name to be engraved.
Donations are always greatly appreciated.

For additional information please contact Allison Ridam Krivosheiw
cell/text: 516-236-3245 /alliridam@gmail.com

revAR 05/2024

 **TO REGISTER:** 

Type or Print all information **CLEARLY**

Each registration form should include ONE NAME - For additional forms contact Allison or Joan Ridam @ 516-804-5802

NOTE: BE SURE TO INCLUDE A COPY of DD-214 or SEPARATION PAPERS or ANY OTHER TYPE OF PROOF OF SERVICE
Along with Proof of Nassau County Residency

Donor's name:

Address:

Town:

State:

Zip Code:

Area code & Phone number (Please circle: Home / Cell)

 - - **HONOREE INFORMATION:**

All Letters are Capital Letters. For lower case letters, circle the box (e.g. Mc, Mac)
Leave blank boxes for space between words.

1. Name of Veteran being honored: (First, Middle, Last) **JOHN E. McCORMICK**

2. Branch of service: * See below for abbreviations

3. Date of service: (optional) _____

4. If applicable: Prisoner of War - Missing in Action - Killed in Action Please include proof of status.

check box: POW MIA KIA

IMPORTANT: SERVICE MEMBERS' NAMES ARE NOT ENGRAVED ALPHABETICALLY. THEY ARE ENGRAVED IN THE ORDER THEY ARE RECEIVED. THE INFORMATION YOU SUBMIT IS WHAT WILL BE ENGRAVED ON THE WALL.
DOUBLE - CHECK YOUR INFORMATION. If you wish to place multiple names on a panel, submit together a separate application for each person. In receipt of this form, the donor will be sent a certificate of acknowledgement.

***Service Branch Abbreviations:**

USA - US Army / USAF - US Air Force / USN - US Navy / USMC - US Marine Corps / USCG - US Coast Guard /
USAAC - US Army Air Corps / USAAF - US Army Air Force / USMM - US Merchant Marines / USANG - US Army National Guard /
NYARNG - NY Army Reserved National Guard /ANG - Air National Guard / USNG - US National Guard / WAC- Women Army Corp /
ABN - Army Airborne / USSF - US Space Force / All service prior year 1900, e.g.: Civil War, Revolutionary War-please contact us.

Submit this completed form, payment and proof of service & residency to:

Nassau County Veterans Monument Fund, Inc

PO Box 7911

Hicksville, New York 11802-7911

For additional information please contact Allison Ridam Krivosheiw cell/text: 516-236-3245 / alliridam@gmail.com

The Nassau County Veterans Monument Fund, Inc. is a 501-(c)(3) non- profit organization. It is a private organization and not part of Nassau County government and has no affiliation with any government agency. Federal Tax # upon request.

Please make check payable to : Nassau County Veterans Monument Fund, Inc.

The Walls Of Honor are open to Nassau County Veteran residences living &/or deceased

A \$100.00 application fee for each Veteran name is all that is required to ensure that future generations know the sacrifice & courage of these brave Americans.