

September 2024

Blue Star Mothers ROC

Blue Star Mothers of America



We are mothers, stepmothers, grandmothers, foster mothers and female legal guardians who have children serving in the military, guard or reserves, or children who are veterans. We support each other and our children while promoting patriotism. Our organization focuses on our mission every single day and will never, ever, forsake our troops, our veterans or the families of our Fallen Heroes.

Upcoming Events/Meetings

- * BSM Meeting:
September 21st @9:30am
Henrietta Ely Fagan American Legion, 260 Middle Road, Henrietta NY
- * Future Strong Stars: Oct 7th @7pm at Panera 800 Greece Ridge Center Dr, Greece
- * Women Veterans' Coffee House:
October 11th @5:30pm
Ely Fagan American Legion. RSVP to 585-210-9779
- * Gold Star Mother & Family Day Sept 29th
- * Lights of Honor
Sunday, December 1st
See page 6 for details
- * Army Navy Game
December 14th
The 125th meeting between these teams

[Volunteers Needed for the events listed below](#)
[See page 7 for details](#)

- *VOC Stand Down Sept 13th
- *Lights of Honor Dec 1st
- *Army Navy Game Dec 14th



THE GARLIC FESTIVAL

For a Stinkin' Good Time

The Rochester Blue Star Mothers NY8 once again helped support the Webster Garlic Festival, which is a fundraiser for the chapter, Wreaths Across America and Gold Star Mothers. BSM and Associate Members volunteered at the Festival that counted over 4,200 attendees and a 140 vendors selling items such as candles, cheese, maple syrup. Food Trucks offered a number of tasty items. Festival goers got to see baby goats, alpacas and 70 year old tortoise.

A Big Blue Star Mother THANKS to all the vendors that came out and displayed their items at the Garlic Festival, your support for this event was amazing!!!



Supporting the VA Food Pantry

Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. expects there is a Blue Star Mother VAVS Representative at every VA facility. As part of our VAVS (Veterans Administration Voluntary Service) commitment, our chapter is supporting the Canandaigua/Rochester VA Food Pantry. The pantry is made available to veterans coming to the Canandaigua facility and will be a mobile food pantry to the VA Outpatient Clinic in Rochester on Chalkins Rd. You can help support this pantry for veterans in need by bring the items on the Panty List to our monthly chapter meetings.

Pantry List

Canned chicken

Canned Tuna

Pasta

Pasta Sauce (glass/plastic jar or cans)

Rice-A-Roni Meals

Peanut Butter

Oatmeal

Cereal

Canned Fruit

Canned Vegetables

Reusable Shopping Bags

September is Suicide Prevention Month

If you're a Veteran in crisis or are concerned about one, connect with the Veterans Crisis Line responders for confidential help. Many of them are Veterans themselves. This service is private, free, and available 24/7. Additional info on pages 4 & 5.

Here's how you can connect with a Veterans Crisis Line responder, anytime day or night:

- * Call 988 and select 1**
- * Text 838255**

The Veterans Outreach Center's Pound the Ground 5K

The Rochester Blue Star Moms again participated in the VOC's Pound the Ground 5K at Mendon Ponds Park on Thursday, August 22nd. NY8 Moms and Associate Members ran, walked and staffed a table with information about our chapter's mission and events.




 ★ Serving Those Who Serve U.S. ★

Female veterans, Gold Star moms,
 Blue Star moms, and spouses!
 Join VOC for a cookie baking event!



American Legion Post 1151
 260 Middle Rd, Henrietta
 November 30, 10am-4pm.

For more details, contact
 Michele.Rast@vocroc.org / 585.295.7801
 Please RSVP by Sept. 29



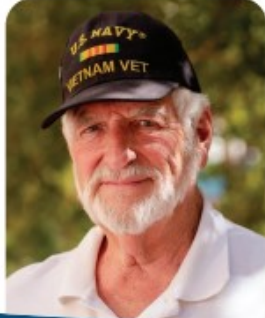
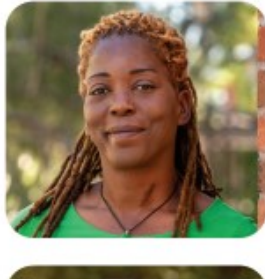
Friendship. Support.
Camaraderie.



Sunday, Sept 22, 2024 10am-5pm
Enjoy a Family Day at Stokoe Farms'
Military Appreciation Day
656 South Rd, Scottsville NY 14546
Over 40 family friendly activities; low ropes course, bee zip lines, wagon rides, petting zoo, corn maze and much more.

Max of 4 FREE admissions per military and veteran families courtesy of Stokoe Farms
Military/Veteran ID Appreciated





How to Support a Veteran in Crisis

Keep these tips in mind when talking with a Veteran who may be at risk for suicide:

- Remain calm
- Listen more than you speak
- Maintain eye contact
- Act with confidence
- Do not argue
- Use open body language
- Limit questions—Let the Veteran do the talking
- Use supportive, hopeful comments
- Be honest—There are no quick solutions, but help is available

Additional Resources

- **VA Mental Health Services:** Get information about inpatient and outpatient services available through VA at [MentalHealth.VA.gov](https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov).
- **Online Resource Locator:** Find VA facilities, Vet Centers, suicide prevention coordinators, and other VA resources at [VeteransCrisisLine.net/LocalResources](https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/LocalResources).

- **Keep It Secure:** Promotes awareness about the simple steps you can take to protect yourself and your family. It focuses on sharing information about secure gun and medication storage, the warning signs of suicide, and how to find the support you or a Veteran loved one needs. [KeepItSecure.net](https://www.KeepItSecure.net)
- **Don't wait. Reach out.:** Use this site to find support and resources designed specifically for Veterans. If you're a family member or a friend, you can also find resources for the Veteran in your life. [VA.gov/REACH](https://www.VA.gov/REACH)

VA S.A.V.E. TRAINING

FOUR WAYS YOU CAN HELP A VETERAN IN CRISIS

What is VA S.A.V.E. Training?

VA S.A.V.E. Training is a free, brief online or in-person course that will help you act with care and compassion if you come across a Veteran who is in crisis or having thoughts of suicide. The acronym S.A.V.E. helps you remember the important steps involved in suicide prevention:

- S** Know the **Signs** that indicate a Veteran might be thinking about suicide
- A** Ask the most important question of all — "Are you thinking of killing yourself?"
- V** Validate the Veteran's experience
- E** Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help

Do you want to take VA S.A.V.E. Training?

Go to [learn.psycharmor.org/courses/va-save](https://www.learn.psycharmor.org/courses/va-save) to take the course online or contact your local suicide prevention coordinator to schedule in-person training: [VeteransCrisisLine.net/LocalResources](https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/LocalResources).

You don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to take VA S.A.V.E. Training.



S Know the *Signs* that indicate a Veteran may be thinking about suicide

The signs below may indicate that a Veteran needs help. If you or a Veteran you know is experiencing any of these, contact the Veterans Crisis Line:

- Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings
- Feeling like there's no reason to live
- Rage or anger
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from family and friends

The signs below require immediate attention. If you or a Veteran you know is experiencing any of these and needs medical attention, call 911 now:

- When asked, they express a desire to hurt or kill themselves
- When prompted, they reveal they're looking for ways to die by suicide
- They talk about death, dying, or suicide
- They begin to exhibit self-destructive behavior, such as increased drug or alcohol use, talking about obtaining/using weapons for self-harm, or saving up medication

A Ask the most important question of all: "Are you thinking of killing yourself?"

Other ways to ask the question include: "Are you thinking of suicide?" or "Have you had thoughts about taking your own life?"

When asking the question, remember:

- **DO** ask the question if you've identified warning signs
- **DO** ask the question in such a way that's natural and flows with the conversation
- **DON'T** ask the question as though you're looking for a "no" answer ("You're not thinking of killing yourself, are you?")
- **DON'T** wait to ask the question until they're halfway out the door

V Validate the Veteran's experience

Use the following steps to let the Veteran know you're listening and acknowledge their experience:

- Talk openly about suicide. Be willing to listen, allow the Veteran to express their feelings, and make supportive, encouraging comments.
- Recognize the situation is serious
- Don't pass judgement

E Encourage treatment and Expedite getting help

If a Veteran is having thoughts of suicide, remain calm and reassure them help is available:

- **DON'T** keep the Veteran's suicidal behavior a secret
- **DON'T** leave them alone
- Try to get the Veteran to seek immediate help from their doctor or the nearest hospital or emergency room
- Call 911

Safety is Important

Never negotiate with someone who has a gun. Get to safety and **call 911**. If the Veteran has taken pills, cut themselves, or has done harm to themselves in some way, **call 911**.



Chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat • Text 838255

The Veterans Crisis Line isn't just for Veterans. Our responders can connect Veterans' families and friends with helpful resources.

LIGHTS OF HONOR

TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Honoring our Military Service Members and Veterans



LIGHTS OF HONOR Tree Lighting Ceremony Sunday, December 1, 2024

The Blue Star Mothers of Rochester will provide, at no cost to you, the original photo ornament to be hung on the trees at the War Memorial. These ornaments may be displayed annually on the Lights of Honor trees at the War Memorial during the month of December. You are invited back each year to hang those ornaments.

You may also order keepsake duplicate ornaments for \$15 each to bring home and hang on your tree or hand out as gifts. To order keepsake duplicate ornaments please contact us at BlueStarMothersRoc@gmail.com Or Call (585) 210-9779.



BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF ROCHESTER NEW YORK CHAPTER 8

We invite everyone in the community to share this time to honor our military personnel, past and present. Remember to include parents, grandparents, siblings, spouses and friends. During the ceremony, one person representing each service branch will place an ornament on the tree - Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard and Merchant Marines. Then an ornament will be placed to represent each of the major combat eras in our country's history - *et. al.* and finally an ornament will be placed for National recognition of military awards.

When: Sunday, December 1, 2024

Where: One War Memorial Square
Rochester, NY 14614

Time: 2:00 pm

What: Each service branch and combat era will be honored by an ornament placed on the tree by a military person. At the end of the ceremony you may collect your keepsake ornament if you have ordered one.

How: Use this form to submit your pictures for the ornament to be prepared ahead of time. Additional copies of this form are available on our website:

www.BlueStarMomsROC.com

Please e-mail or mail the following information:

Your name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____

e-mail _____

Phone # _____

To Honor (name) _____

Branch of Service _____

Era/Dates of Service _____
(WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, War on Terror, etc.)

Circle the appropriate status for this person:

SILVER: wounded in the line of duty

GOLD: died in the line of duty

BLACK: Missing in Action or Prisoner of War

BLUE: all other service members

Please circle medals awarded:

Medal of Honor, Purple Heart, Silver Star, Bronze Star, Navy Cross, etc.

Number of keepsake ornaments requested _____

Information must be received by Nov 10th.

E-mail digital (jpeg format) photos to:

BlueStarMothersRoc@gmail.com

Or Call (585) 210-9779 and leave a message and we will get back to you to discuss arrangements to get the picture.

Volunteer Opportunities

Our chapter grows and is able to help more service members, veterans and military families because of volunteers. We need the support of all members, associate members, and those thankful for our military to have successful events like The Veteran Stand Down, Lights of Honor, Care Packages etc. Please look at the opportunities below and see how you can help. Our kids stood up and volunteered, now we need YOU to do the same.

Army Navy Game Fundraiser: 2nd Saturday in December includes basket raffles, auctions, 50/50 tickets. Help needed: collect items for baskets, create baskets, support at event: selling tickets, set-up/clean-up. Contact Nancy General via text at 585-281-1417 or email her at bluestarmothersroc@gmail.com to volunteer.

Military Baby Shower: Annually in May, a community baby shower for military and veteran families expecting a child or have an infant less than 6 months old. Help needed: collect shower gifts, ask for donations, create baskets, support at event: decorating, picking up food items, welcoming moms, serving food, set-up/clean-up. Contact Amy VanDerwerken at president.ny8@bluestarmothers.us or Jill Harris at 1vp.ny8@bluestarmothers.us to volunteer.

Care Packages: Boxes packed/mailed in June & November to service members deployed overseas. Help needed: solicit postal addresses for deployed service members, collect care package items, promote our Amazon gift list for needed care package items. Friday night before packing: set-up of donated items. Saturday morning: put together mailing boxes, fill boxes, seal boxes. Contact Debbie Trevett at treas.ny8@bluestarmothers.us or Kathy Dodsworth at kdodsworth@frontiernet.net to volunteer.

Gold Star Sunday: Last Sunday in September. Community event to at White Haven Memorial Park to remember and honor service members killed in service and to support their families and friends. Help needed: lining up speakers, publicity, creating flyer/program, set-up/clean-up, greeting guests Contact Rochester Blue Star Mothers NY8 at bluestarmothersroc@gmail.com to volunteer.

Lights of Honor: First Sunday afternoon in December. Community event to honor and remember service members past and present with speakers and the hanging of ornaments with pictures of the service members on Christmas tree. Help needed: lining up speakers and entertainment, creating ornaments, publicity, creating flyer/program, set-up/clean-up, greeting guests. Contact Jeanne Ristau at jeanneristau6064@gmail.com or Dory Braun at dbraun4@gmail.com to volunteer.

Veteran Stand Down: Organized annually by Veteran Outreach Center in September for area veterans with information on community services, employment and support. Held during the day on Friday at the Public Market in Rochester. Help needed: serving lunch to veterans, staffing BSM table and handing out hygiene supplies, set-up/clean-up. Contact Amy VanDerwerken at president.ny8@bluestarmothers.us to volunteer.

Veteran Women's Coffee House: Monthly get-together for veteran women. Dinner is served. Help needed: preparing food for dinner, set-up/clean-up. CoChairs are Nancy Bird and Dory Braun. Contact Dory Braun at dbraun4@gmail.com to volunteer.



Blue Star Mothers ROC



CARE PACKAGE DRIVE

Help Us Send A Little Bit of Home to Our Deployed Military

Packages sent twice a year in June and November

Items Needed by 11/18/24 for November Packages

Personal Care Items

Wet Wipes
Lip Balm/Chap Stick
Gum
Hygiene Products (Soap, Deodorant, Q-Tips, shampoo, toothpaste, Foot Powder, Tissues)
Black Cotton Socks
Magazines (sports/fitness)
Dryer sheets (used to put in boots)
Playing Cards
Cards/Letters
Cross word Puzzel books

Snacks/Treats

Beef Jerky or Slim Jims
Powdered Drink Mixes– single serve (Powerade, Gatorade, Cystal Light)
Instant Coffee single serve
Tea Bags
Hot Chocolate
Oatmeal packets
Granola / Cereal Bars / Protein Bars
Cookies (Individual packs of Oreos, Chips ohoy)
Trail Mix
Nut Packets
Pringles (snack size)
Pretzels/Cheetos/Chex Mix/Crackers – snack size

Save time and visit our Amazon BSM Roc NY8 Care Package Wishlist and purchase some items and have them shipped directly to us for packing.



Amazon Care Package Link: <https://a.co/auDQ1bo>

Blue Star Mothers NY8
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Rochester NY 14692
www.bluestarmomsroc.com
Email: president.ny8@bluestarmothers.us
Facebook: Blue Star Mothers Roc
585-943-1252



Annual Veteran Women's Retreat

The Rochester Blue Star Mothers NY8 would like to thank Marvin Hankinson, Project New Hope, MD20 Lions of New York and Camp Badger for once again sponsoring the Women Veterans Group for their annual retreat. The Veteran Women enjoyed playing games, reading, doing crafts, exploring Camp Badger, catching up with old friends and getting to know some new ones. A group of Veterans and Blue Star Mothers were able to go to Taughannock Falls and enjoy the beauty of Cayuga Lake. NY8 facilitates and supports the Veteran Women's Coffee House at their monthly get togethers.



Remembering the Fallen

At the August 17th Rochester Blue Star Mother's meeting, we remembered Army Spc. Albert R. Jex, who died 9 Feb 2009 in Mosul, Iraq, of wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. Albert would have been 39 years old on August 18th. Albert's mother, Cathy McFarlane is also a Blue Star Mother to a Navy Veteran, James. She lives in Lockport, NY.

