

# M1 Newsletter

## MADISON COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY

NOV - DEC 2025



### Welcome

Welcome to the latest newsletter from the Madison County Veterans Agency!

It is an honor to serve the veterans, service members, and their families of our county. In each issue, we aim to highlight the events, resources, and connections that make our veteran community so special.

Our mission is to ensure that every veteran and their family is aware of and has access to the benefits and support they deserve. This newsletter is designed to keep you informed about our agency's activities, local resources, and important dates.

Veterans Day is just around the corner — a time to honor and thank the brave men and women who have served our country.

Let's take a moment to recognize the veterans in our lives and in our communities for their courage, sacrifice, and dedication. Whether through a simple thank you, a shared

story, or a moment of reflection, every gesture matters.

We are forever grateful for your service!

As we look back on our recent successes, like the wonderful Veteran Breakfast Buffet and the Creative Canvas event for our Valkyries Rest group, we are reminded of the incredible spirit and camaraderie of our veteran community. These events are a testament to the strength and vibrant community that exists right here in Madison County.

We are excited to continue this work and invite you to read on for more inspiring stories and upcoming opportunities.

*MCVSA Team*

### In this newsletter you can expect:

Look Back

Volunteer  
Spotlight

Upcoming  
Events

Agency  
Highlights

Joseph P. Dwyer  
Program  
Highlights

Story of Impact



## Here's what has happened in the last few months!

Our Veterans Breakfast Buffet on Oct. 11th was a massive success, with a record-breaking 94 attendees!

It was a joy to witness the camaraderie and hear the laughter as everyone shared great food and conversation. We are so proud to provide a space for our veterans to connect with one another. We will continue spreading the word about our events honoring veterans. Please save the date for our next Breakfast Buffet on December 13th!

A huge thank you to Erin at Painting Wild for leading our first Creative Canvas Event as well as to the Gorman Foundation for opening up their space for us to use! It was a night of creative expression and connection for 10 of our women Veterans from the Valkyries Rest group. The evening was filled with tremendous laughter and creativity. We had so much fun and are already looking forward to planning more events together!



### Volunteer Spotlight

This month, we're shining the spotlight on our incredible volunteers: Keri, Steven, Joan, and Toni!

Every Friday, these dedicated individuals generously have given their time to support our Karma's Kompanions Program, spending quality time with the canines who are part of this meaningful initiative.

We believe in the powerful, healing bond between humans and animals. Karma's Kompanions is designed to connect Veterans with pets in need of loving homes, promoting wellness and companionship for both.

Interested in getting involved? We'd love to have you join us! Reach out to learn how you can make a difference.



For more details about events, please visit our website or call the office!

#### **NOVEMBER**

11/7 4p-5p - Wounded Widows  
11/11 - VETERANS DAY  
11/20 - Valkyries Rest Dinner at  
Theodores Restaurant  
11/21 12p - Pizza and Pups  
11/21 4p-5p The League of Gentlemen  
Warriors

#### **DECEMBER**

12/5 4p-5p - Wounded Widows  
12/13 9a-11a - Veteran Breakfast Buffet  
12/19 12p - Pizza and Pups  
12/19 4p-5p The League of Gentlemen  
Warriors



## Where the mission is you!

At the Madison County Veteran Service Agency, we are committed to empowering veterans and their dependents by ensuring they are fully informed of the federal, state, and local benefits they have earned through service.

In a collaborative and confidential environment, our accredited and dedicated Veteran Service Officers (VSOs) provide professional guidance to help veterans, their families, and authorized representatives navigate and access a wide range of benefits, including:

- VA Healthcare & Life Insurance
- Service-connected & Non-service-connected Disability Pensions
- VA Vocational Rehabilitation & Educational Benefits
- VA Home Loan Guarantee & Property Tax Exemptions
- NYS Veteran Nursing Homes & Burial Benefits
- Survivor Benefits & NYS Blind Annuity

We also assist with valuable services such as:

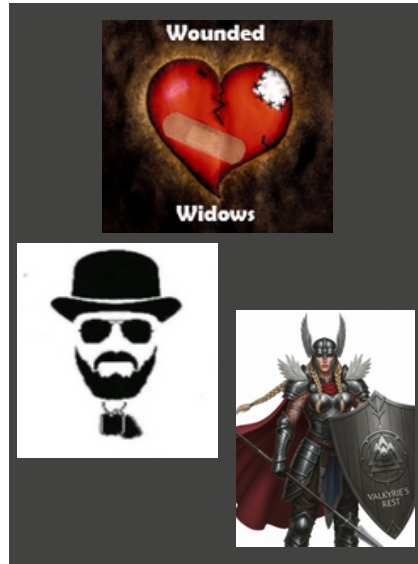
- FAVOR Veteran Discount Program
- Military Medals, Awards & Records
- NYS Veteran License Plates & Driver's License Status
- Discounted Hunting/Fishing Licenses & Park Passes
- Reference Materials and More

If you or a loved one would like help accessing these benefits—

*continued ....*

or simply want to meet with one of our amazing VSOs—please call our office to schedule an appointment today!

We're here to serve those who served.



## Monthly gatherings with a purpose

At MCVSA, we host monthly gatherings designed to support and uplift our Veteran community. Each group offers a welcoming space tailored to different experiences. Check the Events section for upcoming dates and times!

### Wounded Widows

A compassionate group where widows come together for emotional support, shared experiences, and meaningful conversations—led by a fellow widow who understands the journey. This group meets on the first Friday of the month.

### The League of Gentlemen Warriors

A brotherhood of male Veterans focused on building camaraderie, promoting well-being, and supporting one another through shared understanding. This group meets on the third Friday of the month.

### Valkyries Rest

A dynamic community of women Veterans united by strength, resilience, and mutual support. They come together each month to enjoy meaningful activities chosen by members, fostering connection, empowerment, and celebration of each woman's unique journey. For upcoming events contact the office!



## Joseph P. Dwyer Program: Supporting Our Veterans

In addition to MCVSA's outreach efforts, the agency continues to expand its support services through the Joseph P. Dwyer Peer Support Project. This initiative is dedicated to fostering peer connections, raising awareness, and building a strong, supportive community for veterans.

Most recently, the agency hosted the first in a series of training sessions for Peer Supporters and Veteran Mentors. These sessions are designed to cultivate a robust network of support by equipping both civilian and veteran volunteers with essential skills in areas such as role clarity, effective communication, suicide prevention, and crisis intervention.

If you are interested in joining our veteran support network or would like more information about our services, please contact our office at 315-366-2395.





Story of impact: A Winter Miracle- Community Warms a Veteran Widow's Home

The biting winds of winter had descended upon Canastota, carrying with them a chilling threat for a local widow. This wasn't just any widow; she was the surviving spouse of a Vietnam War veteran, a woman battling cancer with unwavering resilience while caring for her grandchildren. But this year, the cold was relentless, and her aging furnace, after years of patched-up repairs, finally succumbed to its fate – irreparable and leaving her home dangerously frigid.

It was Patrick's Heating who first recognized the severity of the situation. Upon learning of the widow's failing furnace, they reached out to the Madison County Office for the Aging, expressing their concern and willingness to help. The Office for the Aging, recognizing the veteran connection, then connected with the Madison County Veterans Service Agency.

Replacing the furnace was a daunting prospect, a \$9,000 mountain looming over her already burdened shoulders. The Madison County Veterans Service Agency stepped into the role of a vital go-between, connecting the widow directly with Patrick's Heating, the American Legion Post 169 in Oneida, and the Madison County Office for the Aging, and also worked with St. James Church. The first act of generosity came from Patrick's Heating, who, upon hearing the widow's story, generously offered to drastically reduce the cost, charging only for parts and labor, bringing the total down to \$4,500.

The American Legion Post 169 in Oneida NY contributed a substantial \$2,500 donation, a testament to their unwavering commitment to veterans and their families. The Office for the Aging and St. James Church each contributed \$1,000, completing the financial puzzle.

The Madison County Veterans Service Agency, acting as the central point of contact, facilitated seamless communication and coordination between all parties, ensuring swift action. Within a remarkably short time, a new furnace was installed, transforming the widow's cold, worrying home into a warm, safe haven. This wasn't just about fixing a furnace; it was a powerful demonstration of community solidarity, a beacon of hope shining through the winter darkness. It was a reminder that even in the face of adversity, compassion and collective action can create a true "winter miracle" for a deserving veteran's family.

MADISON COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY	315-366-2395
<a href="http://www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/169/Veterans-Service-Agency">www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/169/Veterans-Service-Agency</a>	Mission 1 <sup>st</sup> Veteran Community Center 1065 Northside Plaza, Oneida, NY, United States, New York