

The Aviator

American Legion James Ely Miller Post 833

51 Juniper Ave
Smithtown, NY 11787
Phone: 631-724-1804
Email: commander@alpost833ny.org
Website: alpost833ny.org



US95th Aero Squadron
the "Kicking Mules"



the first fighting aero squadron to the front



MEETING:
Post 833: 1st Monday of the Month 8pm Meeting
SONS: 3rd Wednesday of the Month 7pm Meeting
 51 Juniper Ave Smithtown, NY 11787

Welcome

Welcome to The Aviator. The hope is that this newsletter will keep the membership better informed as to what is happening at the Post and in the community. Please read through as I hope you will find it informative. **Please take note that the July Monthly Meeting is Cancelled. Enjoy the summer weather!!!**

Correction from the June Issue: Ava Andrejko sang the National Anthem at the Memorial Day Ceremony on May 27, 2024. (See Page 10)

Take care,
Bill Coderre
Commander



Upcoming Events

JULY: No Monthly Meeting (Summer Hiatus)
Happy Birthday America!!!
James Ely Miller Post 833
Smithtown, NY 11787
No Meeting in JULY

AUG 05: Monthly Meeting
James Ely Miller Post 833
Smithtown, NY 11787
7pm: Dinner
8pm: Meeting

AUG 24: BBQ
Byzantine Catholic Church Field
Start: 2pm
End : 6pm
(See Page 11 for flyer)

AUG 30 Driver Safety Course
James Ely Miller Post 833
Start: 4pm
(See Page 12 for flyer)



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Post Officers

- Commander: Bill Coderre**
- 1st Vice: Don Lettieri**
- 2nd Vice: Richie Pandolf**
- 3rd Vice: George Garcia**
- Adjutant: Ron Fischer**
- Finance Officer: George Church**
- Chaplain: Anthony Cannella**
- Sgt. at Arms: Lou Forrisi**
- Judge Advocate: Ed Hemp**
- Service Officer: Courtney Nagle**
- Historian: George Church**
- Membership Chair: Al Krauth**
- Compliance: Wayne Crerend**
- Homeland Security: Kevin Eaton**

Past Events

"The secret of change is to focus all of you energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new."



Down the road from the home of Fred Wagner. (now the Byzantine Catholic Church Rectory) The gambrel barn, then belonging to Fred and Annie Wagner at their Sunny Brook Farm, is now the Captain James Ely Miller American Legion Post 833.

The land was once part of Fred's 180-acre Sunny Brook Farm. The land



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Post Beautification

On May 19th, members of Girl Scout Troop 1986 arrived at the Post to do a little Area Beautification. Shea Paese, Giana Borzumato, Brynn Lennon, and Shayna Simson are all working towards their Silver Award.

On June 1st, Girl Scout Troop 1986 returned to Post 833 for a formal presentation. Each young lady spoke and expressed their gratitude for our service to our country and allowing them to use our Hall for their meetings.

Commander Coderre presented each young lady with a Certificate of Appreciation and thanked them for all of the work they did for James Ely Miller Post 833.

Girl Scout Troop 1986 went Above and Beyond for James Ely Miller Post 833 and we are forever grateful.



Past Events

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The land was once part of Fred's 180-acre Sunny Brook Farm. The land was purchased in 1928 from WWI American aviator Clarence Bernard Maloney who flew with the RAF until injured in France some seven months after Captain Miller was killed in action.

Smithtown Day

On June 2, 2024, James Ely Miller Post 833 participated in the Annual Smithtown Day Festival.

Members arrived early in the morning to set up our booth at the Smithtown Veterans Plaza. They then spent the day handing out Poppies and conversing with he many passersby.

It was a long day but a fruitful one and we were able to help support our brethren in VFW Post 10870

Thank You to all who came down to help throughout the day.



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Past Events

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James Ely Miller Post 833 Welcomes our New County Commander Kevin Eaton

On June 10th, members of Post 833 welcomed the new Suffolk County Commander Kevin Eaton to our Post. Kevin Eaton is a Past Post 833 Commander, 2nd Division Commander and County Adjutant. He was sworn in as County Commander at the Suffolk County American Legion County Convention on June 8, 2024.

The last Post 833 member to be County Commander was Past Post Commander H. Stanley Hand in 1953.

Commander Eaton performed the Officer Induction Ceremony for Post 833.

Commander Eaton, as you navigate the challenges of command in the county and pursue the objectives of the American Legion, James Ely Miller Post 833 will always be by your side. We wish you nothing but the best.



From the Left: Ted Hemp, George Church, Don Lettieri, Anthony Cannella, Ron Fischer, Courtney Nagle, Wayne Crerend, Lou Forrasi



County Officer Induction Team

From the Left: Hugh Doherty, (Behind: George Church), Phil Barczak, Bill Coderre, Kevin Eaton, Roby Johnson



Past Events

"The secret of change is to focus all of you energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new."



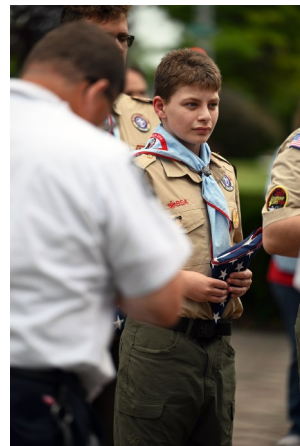
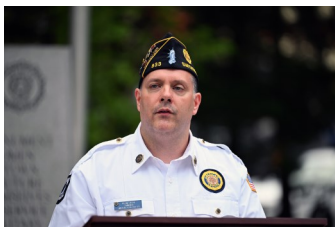
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Flag Retirement Ceremony

On June 14th, Post 833 along with Scout Troop 214 held the 1st Annual Flag Retirement Ceremony at the Smithtown Veterans Plaza.

Vishnu Padmanaban of Troop 214 approached Post 833 about conducting a Flag Retirement Ceremony on Flag Day. After further communication, a ceremony and logistics were worked out. Troop 214 brought hundreds of unserviceable Flags to be Retired with Honor.

It was a nice ceremony and we look forward to making it an annual event on Flag Day. I want to thank Troop 214 and all of Post 833 and Squadron 833 in attendance.





Membership

The renewal process begins in July for the upcoming 2025 membership year. The Legion Membership year is July 1st to June 31st. Renewal notices are sent out in July, October, and January.

If dues are paid to the local post, it takes a little longer for national to be notified about the renewal and the member may receive another renewal notice. If this occurs, please contact Post 833 to ensure that we have received your dues.

To avoid this, we **STRONGLY** suggest that you renew your membership online. By doing so, your membership will be renewed immediately avoiding any delays in notification to national.

Important Note: 2025 Dues Increase

Due to National and County raising dues, Post 833 dues will increase to \$55 for 2025 (This was voted on at the January meeting)

VOAGC Members:

If you have not paid your 2024 dues by January 1, 2024, Your FOB will be deactivated.

"Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifices." Harry S. Truman, April 16, 1945



MYLEGION

All members are encouraged to register online at www.mylegion.org Once an account has been established, you will be able to:

- Update your personal information
- Sign up to receive the Digital Dispatch, a monthly e-newsletter sent directly to subscribers' e-mail inboxes that features stories from the print publication. The e-newsletter features headlines with clickable links to the full stories on the [Digital Dispatch website](#).
- Opt-in to receive E-newsletters on important Legion topics.



2025 - 2026 Elections

March Post 833 meeting: Nomination of candidates for elected positions were presented to the membership.

Nominations will be posted in the office and below.

April Meeting: Nominations for Election of new Officers are finalized.

May Meeting: Slate will be voted on by membership (See finalized nomination slate)

June Meeting: New Officers begin their office



Building Revitalization

The Roof has been replaced. All work was completed on 11/3/2023. The DASNY reimbursement check was received on 1/2/2024.

The Hall Floor has been replaced as well. There was extensive structural damage due to water and insects over the past 100 plus years. Due to Palermo Flooring, the floor is structurally sound and will last at least another 100 years. All work was completed 3/28/2024.

The Building Revitalization program was initiated so that James Ely Miller Post 833 will continue to be able to honor it's Mission:

“To Provide Support For Veterans, Active Duty Military, and Their Families”



Boys' State June 28—July 3, 2024

Post 833 Interviewed and will Sponsor 1 delegate for Boys' State. Payshel Sharma is presently in 11th grade (Junior), at Smithtown HS West and will be representing James Ely Miller Post 833 at Boys' State.

American Legion Boys' State is a week-long program that immerses high school youth (currently completing their junior year) in citizenship and leadership training. The Cost is \$600 per delegate which includes transportation to and from Morrisville College.

For more information, please visit the Department of New York Boys State Webpage. [Click Here for the New York Boys State Webpage](#)



AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE AND NATION AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE

Since 1935, American Legion Boys State has been one of the country's most revered and selective government instruction programs, teaching high school students about the operation of local, county and state governments. Fifty American Legion departments conduct this program, serving more than 17,000 young men each year. The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors a similar program for young women called Girls State.

At American Legion Boys State, young men learn about the rights, privileges, duties and responsibilities of a franchised citizen. Elected and appointed local officials offer participants objective, practical training in city, county and state governance, and activities are conducted such as legislative sessions, court proceedings, law enforcement presentations, assemblies, band, chorus and recreational programs.

American Legion posts select participants to attend their respective Boys State program after receiving recommendations from school officials. Usually posts, local businesses or community organizations pay the cost of attendance.

American Legion Boys State participants go on to achieve success in a variety of fields. Notable alumni include astronaut Neil Armstrong, basketball legend Michael Jordan and national television news journalist Tom Brokaw.



Honor Flight - Long Island

On May 29, 2004, President Bush dedicated the World War II Memorial to honor "The Greatest Generation," 59 years after the end of WWII. One year later, the Honor Flight Program was inaugurated.

Earl Morse and Jeff Miller, co-founders of Honor Flight, realized that many World War II veterans would never have the opportunity to visit the memorial that was erected in their honor.

It is the intention of Honor Flight Long Island to honor as many of our fellow Long Islanders, who helped to preserve our freedom, as we can by providing them a free trip to visit their memorial. Along with WWII, we are now taking Korean War, Vietnam War and other conflict veterans to Washington D.C.

Please see the website for Veteran and Guardian Applications under [Apply to Fly](#)

Website: <https://www.honorflightlongisland.org/>

Next Flight: Saturday, October 5, 2024

Join us in welcoming all of the Veterans and Guardians from this Honor Flight Home.

October 5th Flight Info: <https://www.honorflightlongisland.org/events-1/fall-flight-saturday-october-5-2024>



WALK-A-THON NYS



Sponsored by
Sons of the American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary

“THEY MARCHED FOR US.....
LETS WALK FOR THEM”

A program operated in partnership for 17 years by the Sons of The American Legion and The American Legion Auxiliary

Date: **Ended June 14, 2024**

GOAL: **\$65,000**

PROCEEDS: Awarded equally to support the following:

SAL: NYS VA Medical Center Homeless Programs & NYS Veterans Homes

ALA: Hope For The Warriors:

Hope For The Warriors has advocated restoring a foundation of Stability, Strength, and Community for military families since 2006.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

**SAL Squadron 833 raised
\$4600**

**Thank You to ALL
Who Participated**

American Legion

James Ely Miller Post 833



Suffolk County American Legion

NEWS YOU CAN USE

[Click](#) below for the latest news and [UPCOMING EVENTS](#) from the Suffolk County American Legion



THE AMERICAN LEGION
VETERANS • DEFENSE • AMERICANISM • YOUTH

Suffolk County American Legion

"News You Can Use"



American Legion

James Ely Miller Post 833

51 Juniper Ave
Smithtown, NY 11787

Phone: 631-724-1804
E-mail: commander@alpost833ny.org
Website: alpost833ny.org





**Ava,
Thank You for an OUTSTANDING Performance of the
National Anthem**



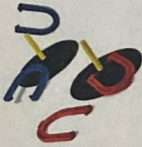
Ava Andrejko and NY State Senator Mario Mattera



FAMILY BBQ
SATURDAY AUGUST 24th
2:00 pm – 6:00 PM

The Veterans of American Gun Club is sponsoring a BBQ with the Resurrection Byzantine Catholic Church
& American Legion Post 833; AM Vets
Edgewater & Juniper Avenue
Smithtown, NY 11787

All family members welcome!



FREE!!!!

We will be providing

Hot Dogs
Hamburgers
Water

We will be setting up
Badminton; Volleyball; Horseshoe's

Anyone can bring balls, gloves or other games!!

Please volunteer to bring other items as
Potato; Macaroni; Coleslaw etc.

Sign Up and let us know how many people will be coming!!

Any questions please contact us at
Veteransgunclub@gmail.com

Or

Donna Kearney
917-412-7781



DEFENSIVE DRIVING COURSE



Upon completion of the class, may be eligible to receive a discount on auto insurance and a point reduction on your driving record.

2024 Course Dates:

April 26th

June 26th

August 30th

October 30th

4pm – 10pm



Course Cost:

Legion & SAL Members: \$30

All others: \$50

Location: 51 Juniper Ave Smithtown, NY 11787

Contact Don Lettieri: 631-219-2882

New York State Commemorative Medals for Korean War and Vietnam War Veterans

You can apply online at <https://dmna.ny.gov/awards> or fill out the paper application, which is attached below.

Eligibility requirements:

Korean War Veterans: Service members who served in one of the following locations between June 27, 1950 and January 31, 1955:

- Korean Peninsula
- its contiguous waters
- Korean airspace

Vietnam Veterans: Service members who served in one of the following locations between November 1, 1955 and May 17, 1975:

- Vietnam
- Thailand
- Laos
- Cambodia
- its contiguous waters
- Vietnam airspace

If you have any questions regarding this application process, please contact the NYS Military Awards Office at 518-786-0468.



<https://dmna.ny.gov/awards/>

**NEW YORK STATE
KOREAN WAR
COMMEMORATIVE
MEDAL**

<https://dmna.ny.gov/awards/korea.html>

**NEW YORK STATE
VIETNAM WAR
COMMEMORATIVE
MEDAL**

<https://dmna.ny.gov/awards/vietnam.html>



**NEW YORK STATE
SILVER ROSE VETERANS
SERVICE CERTIFICATE**

<https://dmna.ny.gov/awards/>





CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

JONATHAN DOE

In recognition of your service during the period of the Cold War,
2 September 1945 – 26 December 1991, in protecting peace and
stability for this nation, the people of the state of New York are forever grateful.

10 April 2024

Headquarters, New York Army
National Guard
Latham, NY 12110

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Shields".

RAYMOND F. SHIELDS, JR.
MAJOR GENERAL, NY ARNG
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

New York State Cold War Certificate

To whom awarded:

The Cold War Certificate may be awarded to any current New York State citizen or a person who was a New York State citizen while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States during the Cold War period, 2 September 1945 to 26 December 1991, whose entire service was honorable.

Standards:

This certificate may be awarded only to those persons whose discharge certificate indicates service under the conditions of "honorable" (Honorable Discharge) or "under honorable conditions" (General Discharge under Honorable Conditions).

This certificate may be awarded posthumously to a designated survivor of the deceased. Not more than one certificate shall be awarded to any one person. This is a one-time issue.

How awarded:

Applications for the New York State Cold War Certificate will be made using [DMNA Form 105](#).

Posthumous applications will be submitted using the same mechanisms, using [DMNA Form 105-1](#).

You will need to use Adobe Reader (or Adobe Acrobat) to view the applications above.

Adobe Reader can be downloaded for free from <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>

**Applications may be submitted By Mail to: Division of Military and Naval Affairs,
ATTN: MNGA-AWD,
330 Old Niskayuna Road
Latham, NY 12110**

or electronically by Email to: ng.ny.nyarnng.list.cold-war@army.mil

For security reasons, email attachments must be in 'PDF', 'JPG' or 'GIF' format.
Attachments in any other format are blocked by the email system.

All requests will be sent to the New York Division of Military and Naval Affairs with supporting documents attached/enclosed to validate service during the Cold War period.

Documentation will include a copy of the recipient's Report of Separation (i.e., WD AGO Form 53-55, DD Form 214, or NGB Form 22, etc.). Documentation must include a discharge certificate indicating the character of service as "honorable" (Honorable Discharge) or "under honorable conditions" (General Discharge under Honorable Conditions). Ensure documentation submitted clearly indicates New York State residency while on duty in the Armed Forces during the applicable dates.

Do not send original proof of military service documents. Please ensure only the last 4 digits of the Social Security number are visible. It is also recommended the Date of Birth be crossed off.

If you do not have, in your possession, the required documentation necessary for eligibility or require confirmation of your federal service, you may request a copy of your service record by writing to:

**National Personnel Records Center,
Veterans Special Actions Division,
9700 Page Boulevard,
St. Louis, MO 63132.**

Application for New York State Cold War Recognition Certificate

Privacy Notice

Authority: Military Law, section 247.

Principal Purpose: To secure sufficient information from an applicant or a requester to determine eligibility and to process requests for the Cold War Recognition Certificate.

Routine Uses: Information is used for official purposes within the Division of Military and Naval Affairs; specifically, to process requests for Cold War Certificates. This information may be used in accordance with established uses for the Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

Disclosure: Disclosure of the last four (4) digits of the Social Security Number and other personal information is voluntary. However, failure to provide complete information may hinder proper identification of the requester, and may prevent the agency from determining eligibility of the requester for the Cold War Certificate.

Instructions: Fill out this application and mail with **supporting documentation** to the Division of Military and Naval Affairs, ATTN: MNGA-AWD, with your proof of military service. Acceptable supporting documents include any official government or military document that contains the recipient's name, address indicating New York State residency, last four numerals of the recipient's Social Security Number, and dates of service showing at least one day of service during the Cold War era (September 2, 1945 to December 26, 1991). Examples of acceptable supporting documentation include DD Form 214, WD AGO 53-55, and NGB Form 22. **DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.**

You must certify your honorable service by signing and dating the application and returning it with a copy of supporting document(s) to:

First Class Mail:

Division of Military and Naval Affairs
ATTN: MNGA-AWD
330 Old Niskayuna Road
Latham, New York 12110-3514

Electronic Mail (Email):

ng.ny.nyarnng.list.cold-war@army.mil

Applicant's Name (First, MI, Last): _____

Last Four (4) Numerals of Recipient's Social Security Number: XXX-XX-_____

Mailing Address: _____

City:_____ **State:**_____ **Zip Code:**_____

Daytime Phone Number:_____

Contact Email Address (if applicable):_____

Contact Email Address (if applicable): _____

Please mail my Cold War certificate.

Please Email my Cold War certificate.

By submission of this form and supporting documentation, I confirm my faithful and honorable service to the state of New York and the nation during the Cold War Era. Please enter initials in box and enter date below if submitting electronically:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

You may print and sign and scan this application and email it to ng.ny.nyarnng.list.cold-war@army.mil with the supporting documents.

Lifetime Liberty Pass



Starting April 1, 2024, New York veterans and Gold Star families will be granted free access to state parks, campgrounds, historic sites and recreational day areas throughout the state, thanks to an expansion of the Lifetime Liberty Pass Program, the governor's office announced.



This program will now give the following benefits:

- Free vehicle parking at New York State Parks and DEC-operated campgrounds, day use areas, boat launch sites, historic sites, arboretums, and park preserves
- No greens fees at State Park-operated golf courses
- No swimming pool entrance fees at State Park-operated pools
- Discounted campsite and cabin rentals at State Park and DEC-operated campgrounds

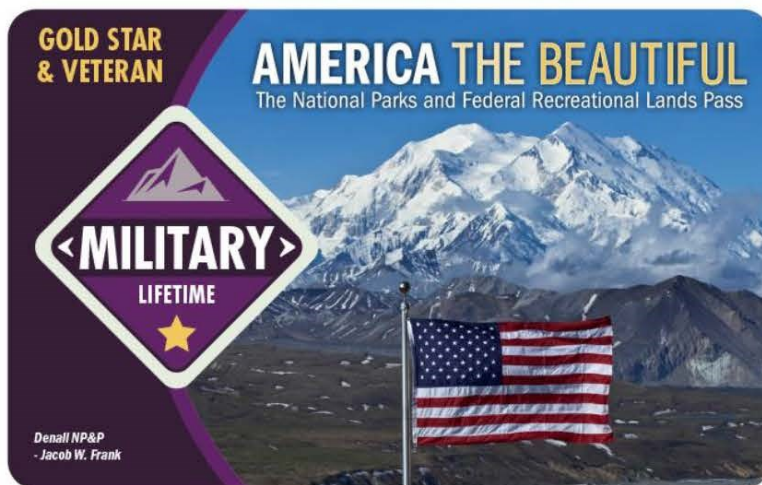
Gold Star Family Members will receive the program's benefits when they present a Lifetime Liberty Pass card to employees at staffed parks. Lifetime Liberty Pass applications will be available on the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation's website starting on April 1. **Veterans who have a veteran status designation on their New York State DMV ID can present their ID to employees and don't need to apply for a card.**

More information about the Lifetime Liberty Pass Program can be found at <https://parks.ny.gov/admission/lifetime-liberty-pass.aspx>

LIFETIME VETERANS PASS

The lifetime pass covers entrance fees for a driver and all passengers in a personal vehicle (or passholder and up to three adults at sites that charge per person) at national parks and national wildlife refuges, as well as standard amenity fees at national forests and grasslands, and at lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Veterans can present one of the four forms of acceptable ID (Department of Defense ID Card, Veteran Health ID (VHIC), Veteran ID Card, or veteran's designation on a state-issued US driver's license or ID card) at [participating federal recreation areas](#) that normally charge an entrance fee. Gold Star Families obtain information, self-certify they qualify and download a voucher on NPS.gov.



The new lifetime pass for Gold Star Families and Military Veterans provides free entrance to national parks and other federal recreation areas.

To obtain a Lifetime Pass:

1. In Person: Visit a Federal Recreation Area

Fire Island National Seashore SHIRLEY, NY
Phone: (631) 281-3010
Passes Available: Access Pass, Military Pass

Long Island NWR Complex SHIRLEY, NY
Phone: (631) 286-0485

Wertheim NWR SHIRLEY, NY
Phone: (631) 286-0485

Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS HYDE PARK, NY
Phone: (845) 229-9115

Sagamore Hill National Historic Site OYSTER BAY, NY
Phone: (516) 922-4788

2. Online <https://store.usgs.gov/MilitaryPass>

Click: Determine Military Pass Eligibility

Click: I am a Veteran (In new window)

Click: Add to cart

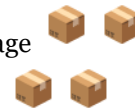
(There will be a \$10 service fee)

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS CARE PACKAGES

**Upon request, we are collecting donations of some of the following items to be shipped to our servicemen and women overseas~

~ Any and all donations are greatly appreciated. ~

~Monetary donations are also accepted and appreciated as well to cover postage



For further information, please contact Tara Montebello at (631)290-0979

Thank You.. ~~



God Bless our troops



Suffolk County American Legion Auxiliary

We are collecting items to be shipped to our soldiers overseas.



The following items have been requested:

Personal hygiene items for both women and men. Hand warmers, Deodorant, Travel size Shampoo and Conditioners. Soap. Lotion, Hand Sanitizer, Lip Balm, Nail Files and clippers, Foot powder, Hats, Ear Muffs, Scarves, Socks, Disposable Razors, Shaving cream, Q-Tips, Toothbrushes and Toothpaste, Mouthwash. Playing cards, Puzzle books, Magazines, Hand held games, Stationary, Candy, Gum, Beef Jerky, Nuts, Non-Perishable Snacks.

Monetary donations are also accepted.

Items can be dropped off as Rusy Bohm Post 411 on Tuesdays 8am to 1pm at 39 Nassau Ave, Islip, NY 11751



JOSEPH DWYER VETERANS PEER SUPPORT PROJECT

IN PERSON GROUPS:

Liberty Village - 600 Albany Avenue, N. Amityville
Every Monday: 6-7 pm

Liberty Landing - 58 Portion Road, Lake Ronkonkoma
Every Wednesday: 4-5 pm

United Methodist Church - 158 W Montauk Hwy,
Hampton Bays Every 1st & 3rd Thursday: 4 - 5 pm

Sag Harbor - 3330 Noyac Road Building D Sag Harbor
Every 2nd & 4th Thursday 5 - 6pm

Senior Veteran Group: Rose Caracappa Senior Center
- 739 Route 25A, Mt Sinai *Open to Veterans 60 & up
Every 2nd & 4th Thursday: 10-11 am

American Legion Monthly Community Breakfast - Post
269 215 South Ocean Ave. Patchogue
Every 3rd Saturday: 10 - 11am *Open to all

WOMEN VETERANS ZOOM GROUPS:

Women's Main Group -
MEETING ID: 932 2123 8672
Every 1st and 3rd Saturday: 11:30am-1:30pm

New Moms Group - MEETING ID: 857 3879 4618
Every 2nd and 4th Saturday: 11:30am-12:30pm

MST Group - MEETING ID: 886 6132 0754
Every Tuesday: 6-7 pm

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK:

**JOSEPH P. DWYER VETERANS PEER SUPPORT
PROJECT**



**DWYER GROUPS
ARE OPEN TO ALL
VETERANS AND
SERVICE
MEMBERS.**

**GROUPS ARE
ANONYMOUS,
CONFIDENTIAL,
AND FREE.**

**REGISTRATION
AND PROOF OF
SERVICE ARE NOT
REQUIRED**

For more
information:
(631) 853-8345

In The News

Articles sent in by members

VA Expands Burial Benefits

AIR FORCE PHOTO



Gravestones are shown on Aug. 30, 2023, at the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood, Ill. VA reported that the department delivered more than 84,000 burial benefits during the 2022 fiscal year.

VA Expands Burial Benefits for Veterans

VA in October raised the burial and plot allowances for veterans who died in nonservice-related incidents. The department also asks veterans and families to plan ahead for VA's "end-of-life benefits."

BY DAVE SPIVA

The VA last year announced new burial allowance rates for veterans who have died in nonservice-related incidents since October.

VA announced several updates to burial benefits aimed at providing support to veterans and their families. These updates, according to VA, reflect the department's commitment to honoring U.S. veterans around the world.

TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES

In the past, VA covered costs for transporting remains to eligible national cemeteries. Now, this benefit has been extended to include transportation expenses to state and tribal veteran cemeteries.

"[For service-related deaths], VA will pay up to \$2,000 toward burial expenses for deaths on or after Sept. 11, 2001, or up to \$1,500 for deaths prior to Sept. 11, 2001," according to VA. "If the veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased may be reimbursed."

For nonservice-related deaths, VA will pay a \$948 burial allowance and \$948 for a plot if the veteran died on or after Oct. 1, 2023. If the veteran died between Jan. 5, 2023, and Oct. 1, 2023, VA would pay an \$893 burial allowance and \$893 for a plot. Learn more about allowance rates at <https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/veterans-burial-allowance>.

PLAN 'END-OF-LIFE BENEFITS' NOW

VA Under Secretary for Benefits Joshua Jacobs noted in a VA press release that in fiscal year 2022, VA delivered more than 84,000 burial benefits to families.

"Expanding burial benefits means we are able to ensure veterans are honored in their final resting place and assist their family, caregivers and survivors during the difficult time of their loved one's passing," Jacobs said.


VA's national cemeteries provide benefits for traditional casket or cremation burials. For eligible veterans and family members, VA national cemetery

burial benefits include:

- Opening and closing of the gravesite
- Inscribed headstones or markers
- Burial flag
- Award of the Presidential Memorial Certificate
- Perpetual care of the gravesite

For those being placed in private cemeteries, benefits only include:

- Headstones, markers or medallions for the gravesite
- Burial flag
- Presidential Memorial Certificate

VA also may provide burial allowances to assist with a family member's burial and funeral costs for those eligible. VA encourages veterans to consider their "end-of-life benefits" provided by the department. To learn more, visit <https://www.va.gov/plan-ahead>. More information about VA burial benefits can be found at <https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials>. 

EMAIL dspiva@cfw.org