

Veterans Corner
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By: Robert G. Mitchell

VA Reaches out to Veterans and Spouses

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is reaching out to inform wartime veterans and surviving spouses of deceased wartime veterans about an under-used, special monthly pension benefit called Aid and Attendance.

Although this is not a new program, not everyone is aware of his or her potential eligibility. The Aid and Attendance pension benefit may be available to wartime veterans and surviving spouses who have in-home care or who live in nursing-homes or assisted-living facilities.

Many elderly veterans and surviving spouses whose incomes are above the congressionally mandated legal limit for a VA pension may still be eligible for the special monthly Aid and Attendance benefit if they have large medical expenses, including nursing home and Assisted Living expenses, for which they do not receive reimbursement.

To qualify, claimants must be incapable of self support and in need of regular personal assistance.

The Aid and Attendance income threshold for a veteran without dependents is \$19,736 annually. The threshold increases to \$23,396 if a veteran has one dependent, and by \$2,020 for each additional dependent. The annual Aid and Attendance threshold for a surviving spouse alone is \$12,681. This threshold increases to \$15,128 if there is one dependent child and by \$2,020 for each additional child.

Additional information and assistance in applying for the Aid and Attendance benefit may be obtained by calling Robert Mitchell at the Saratoga County Veterans Service Agency at 884-4115.

Attention Military Retirees

Saratoga Springs Naval Base is looking for volunteers for their retired actives Office (RAO) Interested Retirees should contact the Administration Office LCDR Hudson at 886-0200 X 2.

Veterans Wanted

Drywall Laborers and Experienced Tapers (own tools), Call for an interview 893-7318.

Blue Star Mothers

Blue Star Mothers of America Inc., Capital Region chapter #2 – NY is looking for membership. In order to join you must be the mother of an active-duty or honorably discharged military personnel or step-mother of a child before they were thirteen years of age. For more information write to Blue Star Mothers chapter #2 – NY P.O. Box 243 Delmar, NY 12054 or visit their website at www.capitalregion2bsm.org.

Attention Navy Veterans

Navy veterans were faced with many dangers while defending their country. Many lost their lives or were injured during their service; many more have contracted cancer due to exposure to toxic substances such as asbestos while working as machinist mates, ship fitters, mechanics, insulators, pipefitters, welders, firemen, boilermakers, boiler tenders, carpenters, electricians, painters, and laborers aboard ships or in shipyards. These servicemen were exposed to products including insulation, pipe covering, firebrick, asbestos, cements, gunnite, gaskets and packing's, asbestos cloth, and gloves. Any veteran that thinks he/she has a lung disease or lung cancer due to these conditions please contact Robert G. Mitchell at the Saratoga County Veterans Agency at 518-884-4115.

VA Accepting Application for Post 9/11 GI Bill Benefits

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today that Veterans can begin submitting application on-line for the Post 9/11 GI Bill. "There is no better investment than education," said Tammy Duckworth, VA's assistant secretary for public and intergovernmental affairs. "The Post 9/11 GI Bill will provide new opportunities that are essential to our Veterans, our workforce and our economy."

Veterans, service members, reservists and National Guard members with active duty since September 10, 2001, may be eligible for this benefit. Veterans will remain eligible for benefits for 15 years from the date of last discharge or release from a period of active duty of at least 90 continuous days.

Eligible applicants must have served for an aggregate period of at least 90 days since September 10, 2001, or served at least 30 continuous days on active duty since September 10, 2001, and received a discharge for a disability. For more information call 1-888-442-4551 or visit www.GIBILL.VA.gov.

COMING EVENTS

The Town of Malta Veteran's Committee is planning its 1st annual Malta Veteran's Festival to be held Saturday, June 27, 2009. A parade will begin an evening celebration with food booths, military displays, children's activities and fireworks; all to honor the local veterans and focus attention on their sacrifices. The parade, which will commence at the Malta Town Hall and conclude at the Albany Saratoga Speedway, is due to step off at 4:30pm.

SUMMER STEAK AND CHICKEN BBQ

To benefit the Guardian House Project for Homeless women veterans will be held on August 15, 2009 at 1pm until 6pm at the Fraternal Order Eagles Lodge on 373 Crescent Avenue in Saratoga Springs. The cost is \$25 per person (children under 10 free). Hot dogs hamburgers and salads all day, steaks and chicken with baked potato and salad 4:30-6:00. For more information call 518-885-0091 or visit www.vethome.org