

June 2025

★ Blue Star Mothers ROC ★



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.

Meetings & Events

- * BSM Meeting & Care Packages June 21st @9:00am at the Webster Cottrell-Warner Post 942, 818 Ridge Rd, Webster, NY 4580
Note change in location & time
- * Future Strong Stars: July 7th @7-8pm Panera Bread 795 Jefferson Rd Henrietta
- * Women Veterans' Coffee House: July 11th @5:30pm Ely Fagan American Legion. RSVP to 585-210-9779

Blue Star Mothers of America Membership Renewal Due by 8/1/2025

Your Blue Star Mothers of America annual membership needs to be renewed by August 1st. The membership fee is \$30 with half of the money going to national and the other half staying with our chapter. The easiest way to renew your membership is to go to <https://www.bluestarmothers.org/> Log-in with your username and password. Your profile should open up and there a button to click to renew. Remember we are chapter NY8. Associate membership is free.

Upcoming Events

- * Garlic Fest Sept 6th & 7th
- * Veteran Stand Down Sept 12th

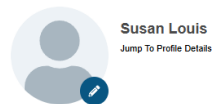


Member Logout

PUBLIC RELATIONS Join/Renew About Us Files Patriotic Instructor

My Community My Profile Connections My Features Inbox

Profile Invoices Forms I've Taken Email History Settings



Joined

Susan Louis
Jump To Profile Details

Expiration Date
8/31/2025

Balance:
\$30.00

View Invoices

Member Status:

Active

Your membership will expire at
11:59 PM EST on Aug 31,
2025.

Renew Now

Donate Now (not for renewing
membership dues)

Quick Links

Big Dipper

Blue To Gold

Chapter and Department
Resources

Compliance Guide

Convention Information

Supporting the VA Food Pantry

Support the Canandaigua and Rochester VA Food Pantry by bringing something for the Pantry to our monthly Blue Star Mothers meeting.

Pantry List

Canned chicken

Pasta

Rice-A-Roni Meals

Oatmeal

Canned Fruit

Reusable Shopping Bags

Canned Tuna

Pasta Sauce (glass/plastic jar or cans)

Peanut Butter

Cereal

Canned Vegetables



ROC Veterans provides information about events in the Finger Lakes Area for Veterans & their families. They have a Facebook page, Instagram account and website that can keep you current with events in the area.

Surviving Military Spouses Luncheon

Surviving military spouse are invited to join with other military widows and widowers for lunch and open discussion and support, consider coming to the monthly lunch at Panera Breads, 1902 Monroe Ave, Brighton, NY on the second Thursday of each month from 1-3pm.

PATRIOTIC HOLIDAYS & RECOGNITION DAYS




Presidents' Day (third Monday of February)
Star-Spangled Banner Day (March 3)
K-9 Veterans Day (March 13)
Rosie the Riveter Day (March 21)
Medal of Honor Day (March 25)
National Vietnam War Veterans Day (March 29)
Gold Star Spouses Day (April 5)
Anniversary of the day the Gulf War ended (April 11)
Purple Up! Day, part of Month of the Military Child (April 15)
Loyalty Day (May 1)
Silver Star Service Banner Day (May 1)
V-E/Victory in Europe Day (May 8)
Home Front Heroes Day (May 9)
Military Spouse Appreciation Day (Friday before Mother's Day)
Children of Fallen Patriots Day (May 13)
Armed Forces Day (third Saturday in May)
Memorial Day (last Monday of May)
Anniversary of D-Day (June 6)
National Women Veterans Recognition Day (June 12)
Flag Day (June 14)
Juneteenth (June 19)
PTSD Awareness Day (June 27)
Made in America Day (July 2)
Independence Day/Fourth of July (July 4)
National "Hire a Veteran" Day (July 27)
National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day (July 27)
National Buffalo Soldiers Day (July 28)
Purple Heart Day (August 7)
Agent Orange Awareness Day (August 10)
Navajo Code Talkers Day (August 14)
V-J Day (September 2)
Patriot Day/National Day of Service & Remembrance (September 11)
Uncle Sam Day (September 13)
VFW Auxiliary Birthday (September 14)
Constitution Day & Citizenship Day (September 17)
POW/MIA Recognition Day (third Friday in September)
Gold Star Mother's & Family Day (last Sunday in September)
Johnny Appleseed Day (September 21 OR March 11)
VFW Day (September 29)
Global War on Terrorism & Desert Storm Veterans Day (October 7)
Day of the Deployed (October 26)
Statue of Liberty's Birthday (October 28)
Veterans Day (November 11)
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (December 7)
Bill of Rights Day (December 7)



Veteran Women Coffee House and Origami for Good

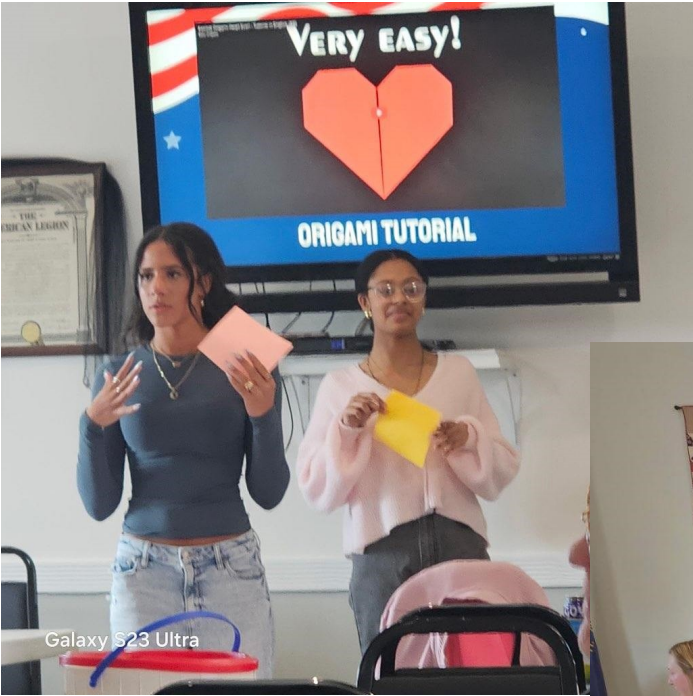
The Rochester Blue Star Mothers supports the growing group of Veteran women at their monthly gathering to share a meal, talk and on this night practice some origami. On May 9th four members of the Origami for Good Club came to the Veteran Women Coffeehouse to share the craft of origami. The 10th graders go to Bishop Kearny High School in Irondequoit. Presenters were Leah (Blue Star Mother Nancy Lopez's granddaughter), twin sisters Naomi and Ruth, and Janelle, who is a foreign exchange student.

Before dinner started, the girls gave a small presentation introducing themselves and talked about the organization and their mission statement. ORIGAMI FOR GOOD is a youth-run nonprofit that uses creativity and culture to celebrate Japanese heritage and spread joy, connection, and comfort to communities around the world. Their mission statement - they are a youth-led nonprofit organization that makes origami and send it to soldiers, youth, seniors, patients, and more in order to inspire creativity and appreciation for Japanese art & culture.

The girls handed out sheets of origami paper and helped the veterans make paper hearts. After dinner, everyone made paper crabs. The veteran women and students enjoyed the activity.



Origami for Good



**VA**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

How to Talk With a Veteran in Crisis

If a Veteran you care about is going through a difficult time or having thoughts of suicide, you're probably worried and confused. You want to help but may be scared you could make things worse—the only wrong thing to do is to do nothing. Now is the time to act. You can begin by learning the signs of crisis and how to start a conversation with the Veteran.

REMEMBER: Everyone has a role to play in suicide prevention. Small actions, like starting a conversation, can make a big difference.



Signs of crisis

Every Veteran is different, and many may not show any obvious signs of intent to kill themselves. But some actions and behaviors can be a sign they need help.

Crisis signs

These signs require immediate attention. If a Veteran you know needs medical attention, **call 911** now. For immediate help in dealing with a mental health or suicide crisis, call the Veterans Crisis Line: **Dial 988 then Press 1.**

- Thinking about hurting or killing themselves
- Looking for ways to kill themselves
- Talking about death, dying, or suicide
- Self-destructive behavior, such as drug abuse, risky use of weapons, etc.

REMEMBER: If you believe a Veteran is at high risk of suicide and has already taken pills or harmed themselves in some way, **call 911**. And keep yourself safe—**never** negotiate with someone who has a firearm. **Get to safety and call 911, noting the Veteran is armed.**

Warning signs

These signs may indicate that a Veteran needs help. Contact the Veterans Crisis Line now—**Dial 988 then Press 1**—if a Veteran you know is exhibiting any of these:

- Appearing sad or depressed most of the time
- Hopelessness
- Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, or mood swings
- Feeling as if there is no reason to live
- Feeling excessive guilt, shame, or sense of failure
- Rage or anger
- Engaging in risky activities without thinking
- Increasing alcohol or drug misuse
- Losing interest in hobbies, work, or school
- Neglecting personal welfare and appearance
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Showing violent behavior, like punching a hole in the wall or getting into fights
- Giving away prized possessions
- Getting affairs in order, tying up loose ends, or writing a will



How to start the conversation

For a Veteran in crisis—whose emotional struggles and health challenges may lead to thoughts of suicide—conversations and connections can mean the difference between keeping them safe and a tragic outcome.

If you and/or the Veteran are not in immediate danger, start a conversation by asking questions like:

- *"It sounds like you're feeling so incredibly (insert appropriate feeling here—trapped, overwhelmed, betrayed, etc.). Sometimes when people feel this way, they think about suicide. Is this something you're thinking about?"*
- *"When did you first start feeling like killing yourself?"*
- *"Did something happen that made you begin to feel like taking your life?"*

When responding to answers from a Veteran, remember simple, encouraging feedback goes a long way in showing support and encouraging help-seeking:

- *"I'm here for you. How do you hurt and how can I help?"*
- *"Can we talk for a while and see if we can find a way to keep you safe right now?"*
- *"I might not be able to understand exactly what you're going through or how you feel, but I care about you and want to help."*

You don't have to be an expert to talk to a Veteran facing challenges. You just need to show genuine care and concern.



Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Make supportive and encouraging comments, don't ask invasive personal questions.
- Don't inject judgment or emotion in the conversation. Stay calm.
- Listen more than you speak—don't dominate the conversation.
- Remind them you are there for them.
- Let them decide how much to share.
- It's okay to ask directly: "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" or "Are you having thoughts of suicide?" If the Veteran answers yes, follow the steps below:

1. Inform them they can **Dial 988 then Press 1** to reach the Veterans Crisis Line or ask if they'd like to do this with you.
2. If the Veteran has already initiated a plan to kill themselves or injured others or has an immediate plan to do so, **call 911**.
3. Try to find out where the Veteran is located and whether anyone else is nearby.
4. For immediate emergency or medical assistance, **call 911**.

Asking if someone is having thoughts of suicide will not give them the idea or increase their risk. It may seem daunting, but it could save their life. Although many people may not show clear signs of intent to kill themselves, they'll likely answer direct questions about their intentions when asked.

REMEMBER: Even if the Veteran doesn't ask for support, they may need it. Make sure they know the Veterans Crisis Line is available **24/7** to help during a crisis.

Learn more with these resources:

Veterans Crisis Line: A free, anonymous, confidential resource available to Veterans in crisis, as well as their family members and friends. **Dial 988 then Press 1**, chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat, or text **838255**.

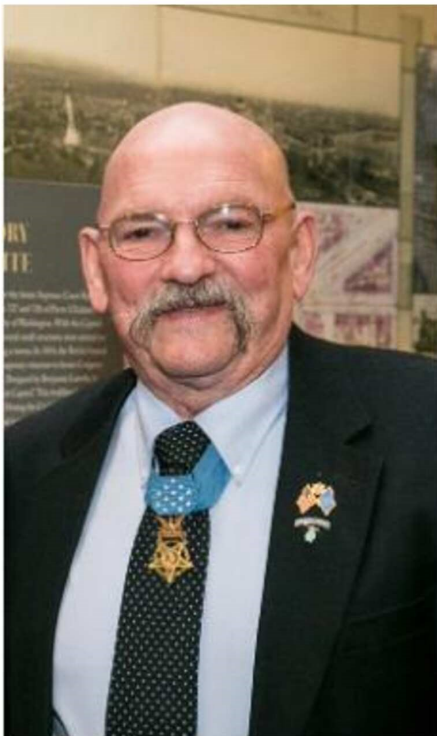
VA Mental Health: VA's repository of mental health resources, information, and data materials.

Make the Connection: VA's premier mental health literacy and anti-stigma website highlights Veterans' real, inspiring stories of recovery and connects Veterans and their supporters with local resources.



Honor Our Heroes

Give Blood



Gary Beikirch Memorial Blood Drive

**Saturday, August 23, 2025
9-2pm**

**First Bible Baptist Church
990 Manitou Rd
Hilton, NY 14468**

For an appointment, please visit redcrossblood.org
and enter sponsor keyword: IMOGaryBeikirch
Or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).



A former U.S. Army Special Forces combat medic, Beikirch, received the Medal of Honor, for his heroic actions at Camp Dak Seang, Vietnam, on April 1, 1970. Despite serious wounds, Sergeant Beikirch worked to defend the camp and tend to wounded soldiers. Gary went on to be active in his community as a school guidance counselor and minister. He died December 26, 2021, surrounded by his wife, Lolly, and family.

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, see how you can help. Our kids stood up and volunteered, now we need YOU to do the same.

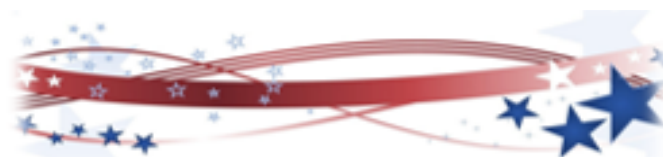
Military Baby Shower: April 27th, a community baby shower for military and veteran families expecting a child or have an infant less than 6 months old. Help needed: collect shower gifts, ask for donations, create baskets, support at event: decorating, picking up food items, welcoming moms, serving food, 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.

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.

Webster Garlic Fest September 6th & 7th Contact Cherie Wood at WebsterGarlicFest@gmail.com to get involved in this stinkin good time.

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.



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