

January 2026

★ 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

- * **January 17th, 2026**
@9:30am Henrietta Ely
Fagan American Legion
260 Middle Rd Henrietta NY
- * **Future Strong Stars**
Feb 2nd @7-8pm Panera
Bread 1501 Howard Rd
Gates See page10 for the
2026 schedule
- * **Women Veterans' Coffee
House** Jan16th and Feb
11th @5:30pm Ely Fagan
American Legion. RSVP to
585-210-9779

Upcoming Events

Baby Shower
Sunday, May 17th 2026
from 11am-1pm

**COMING
SOON**

Wreaths Across America Webster NY

The Rochester Blue Star Mothers participated in Wreaths Across America at the Webster Union Cemetery on Sunday, December 13th where over 2100 Veterans were honored and remembered with wreaths on their graves.



Lights of Honor

On Sunday, December 7th the Rochester Blue Star Mothers hosted the annual Lights of Honor event at the Blue Cross Arena in downtown Rochester. This event honors service members past and present with the hanging of an ornament containing their picture and name. The ornaments hung honor the military branches, remembering wars and conflicts, and military medals and awards. What started as one tree eight years ago has grown to **FIVE** trees to hold the nearly 1100 ornaments. This truly is a community event with a local high school choir, Fife and Drum Corps and a junior cadet group lead by veteran and BSM Kathy Quiñones with a welcome by NY8 President, Amy VanDerwerken.



Towpath Fife and Drum Corps



Amy VanDerwerken
Blue Star Mothers NY8
President

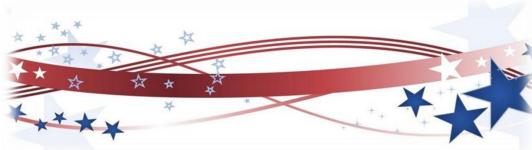


Lights of Honor



Blue Star Mothers NY 8 wish to recognize the following for their dedication and unwavering support of today's military, veterans and their families which makes our mission easier to sustain (in alphabetical order).

American Red Cross
Blue Cross Arena at the War Memorial
Compeer Corps
Disabled American Veterans New York 15
Ely Fagan Stevens Connors American Legion #1151
Mission BBQ
Panera Bread
Stokoe Farms
Veterans Outreach Center
Whitehaven Memorial
Greg Wilkes, Wilkes Engraving
Debby Tellier



Blue Star Mothers ROC NY8
1335 Jefferson Road #93272 Rochester, New York 14692
Web: www.bluestarmomsroc.com
Facebook: Blue Star Mothers ROC
Phone: (585) 210-9881

ANNUAL LIGHTS OF HONOR

**Blue Star Mothers
Rochester NY8**

Honoring our Military Past & Present

**Sunday, December 7, 2025
2:00 P.M.
Blue Cross Arena at the War Memorial**



Pittsford Sutherland
Concert Choir



Jeanne Ristau
LOH
Organizer



Lights Of Honor

Presented by
Blue Star Mothers of Rochester

These trees are a tribute to the brave men and women who faithfully serve or have served.

May we always remember their sacrifices.





Welcome to the Lights of Honor Ceremony

Presentation of Colors – Towpath Volunteers, Fife and Drum Corps. and Rochester Early College International HS JR ROTC

National Anthem – Pittsford Sutherland Concert Choir

Pledge of Allegiance – Women Veterans Coffee House

Blue Star Mothers' Preamble – Blue Star Mothers/Associate Members

Invocation – Rev. Susan Shafer

Welcome – Amy VanDerwerken, President Blue Star Mothers NY8

Introduction of Distinguished Guests

Master of Ceremonies – Eric Wheeler, United States Army and Navy Veteran

Keynote Speaker – Lt. Col. Michael Sim, United States Army

Armed Forces Medley – 198th Army Brass Band Quintet

Presentation of Branch Ornaments

Song for the Unsung Hero – Pittsford Sutherland Concert Choir

Presentation of Era/Conflict Ornaments

American Medley – Towpath Volunteers, Fife and Drum Corp

Honorable Military Career – United States Navy Captain Russ Sanchez

Presentation of Medals

Lighting of the Trees – Pedro D. Quinones IV (PJ)

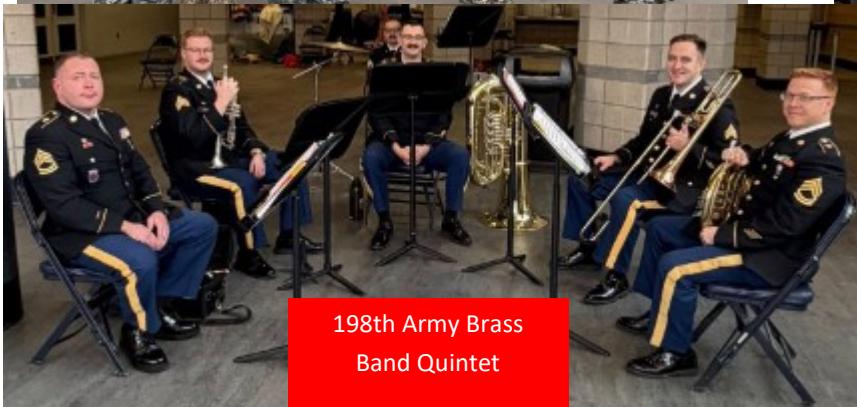
Benediction – Rev. Susan Shafer

Retiring the Colors – Rochester JR ROTC and Towpath Volunteers, Fife & Drum Corps.

Closing Remarks – Amy VanDerwerken, President Blue Star Mothers NY8



209th Regiment of Cadets



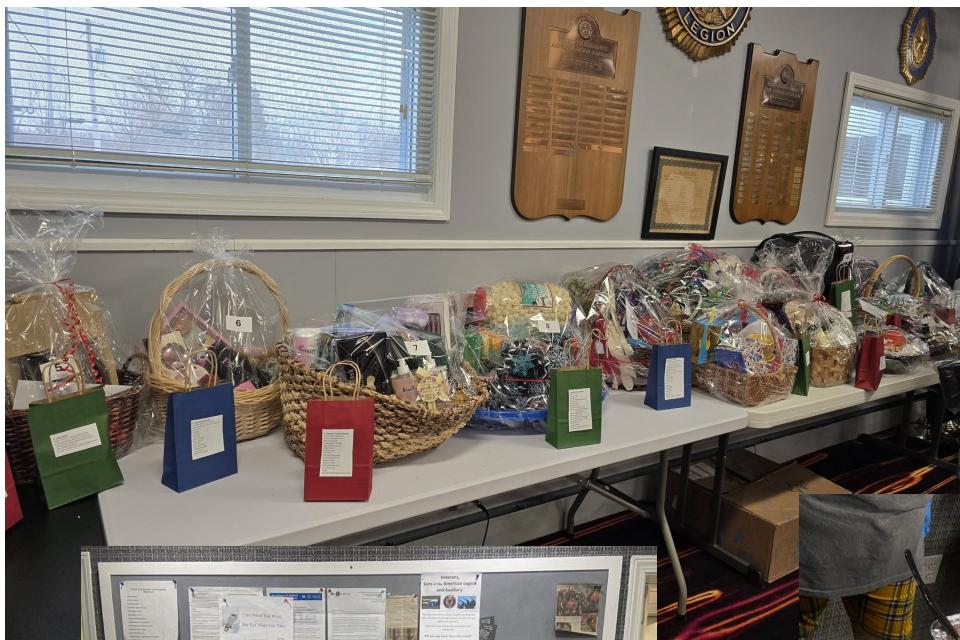
198th Army Brass Band Quintet



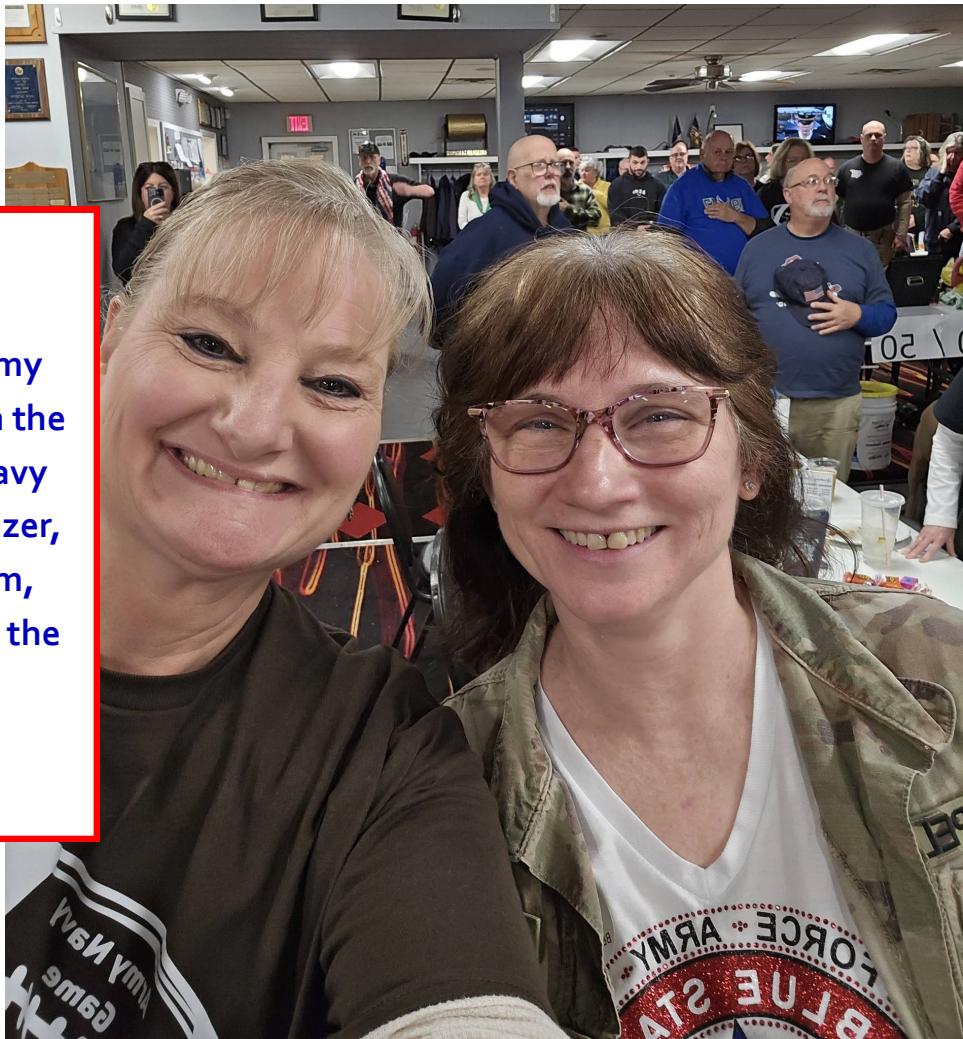
Patriot Guard

Army Navy Game Fundraiser

The Spencerport Legion again graciously opened their doors to the Rochester Blue Star Mothers for our annual Army Navy Game Fundraiser. The Army Navy Game provides a lot of opportunities for bragging rights and pushups when touchdowns are scored. Celebration is free and open to the community with free food and snacks throughout the game by generous local restaurants. With raffle baskets and 50/50 raffles our chapter raises money to support care packages, military baby showers, holiday food for veterans, and veteran standdowns. Thank you Spencerport Hots, Mission BBQ, DJ's Pizzeria, Salvatore's, Pontillo's Pizza, Subway, Slayton Place and Chef King for your very generous donations.



NY8 President, Amy VanDerwerken on the right and Army Navy Fundraiser Organizer, Proud Marine Mom, Nancy General on the left.



When times are hard, it helps to have someone to talk to.



Dial 988 then **Press 1**



Chat at
VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat



Text 838255



**Veterans
Crisis Line**
DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**

Supporting the VA Food Pantry For Veterans

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

Canned Tuna

Pasta

Pasta Sauce (glass/plastic jar or cans)

Rice-A-Roni Meals

Peanut Butter

Oatmeal

Cereal

Canned Fruit

Canned Vegetables

Personal care items (soap, toothpaste, shampoo)

Shelf stable milk or juice

Reusable Shopping Bags

Holiday Sandwich Platters for Veteran Facilities

Once again the Rochester Blue Star Mothers were able to provide sandwich platters, cookies and chips for a holiday meal to over 150 veterans at eight different veteran housing facilities in the Monroe Count and the Batavia area. The facilities include the Warrior Salute program's Nucor House, Veteran Outreach Center's Richards House, Otto Phoenix House and Liberty Landing, Eagle Star House facilities at 270 East Ave and City Center Court in Rochester, Eagle Star Housing facilities in Spencerport NY and Liberty Square in Batavia NY. This has been a holiday tradition since 2019. Again this year the BSM elves delivering the meals and thanking the veterans for their service and wishing them all the best were Lara Whitney, Nancy Lopez, and Sue Louis.



Vets with Pets

The Veterans Outreach Center (VOC) has a new program that supports veterans with pets. Vets With Pets (VWP) is designed to support the incredible bond veterans have with their animal. VOC help keep local veterans and their pets healthy and happy together through fun community outings, access to supplies, educational events, and connections to veterinary care. VWP is an all-encompassing program designed to enhance wellness for both the veteran and the pet. Veterans can register for services for their pets on the VOC website.

<https://veteransoutreachcenter.org/vets-with-pets/>

DONATIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



Three Non-Profits coming together to help the Veteran Community! Call the Restore nearest you to arrange for a pickup of your furniture and/or appliance donation. Tell them the Sunny Mike Foundation or the Marine Corps Coordinating Council of Greater Rochester sent you. These organizations will receive a discount when purchasing items for in-need Veterans. It's that easy!

LOCATIONS

BayTowne ReStore
1900 Empire Blvd
Webster, NY 14580
(585) 697-2012

Henrietta ReStore
2199 E Henrietta Rd,
Rochester, NY 14623
(585) 444-9588

Canandaigua ReStore
3040 County Road 10,
Canandaigua, NY 14424
(585) 396-3040

People who donate to ReStore will get 20% off same day purchases.



Military discount is 10% daily, with the exception of Thursdays which is 15%. The coupon can't be used in conjunction with either of the daily discounts.

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: Annual in April, 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 Annual in September. 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.



2026 Future Strong Stars



Come dine with us at Panera Bread locations, 7-8 p.m.

Help us in building bridges with the Families of all Branches of the Armed Forces.

05 JAN	Henrietta	795 Jefferson Road
02 FEB	Gates	1501 Howard Road
02 MAR	Brighton	1902 Monroe Avenue
06 APR	Greece	800 Greece Ridge Center Drive
04 MAY	Fairport	16 Courtney Drive
01 JUN	Webster	935 Holt Road
06 JUL	Henrietta	795 Jefferson Road
03 AUG	Gates	1501 Howard Road
07 SEP (Labor Day)	Brighton	1902 Monroe Avenue
05 OCT	Greece	800 Greece Ridge Center Drive
02 NOV	Fairport	16 Courtney Drive
07 DEC	Webster	935 Holt Road

Blue Star Mothers: 585-210-9881 or bluestarmomsroc.com



VA FINGER LAKES PRESENTS
WITH THE PARTNERSHIP CCICM & CDCE

★★★

FINGER LAKES VETERAN *Connection Cafe*

Come connect with other local Veterans,
build VA connections, and learn about
resources available to you.



Rochester Calkins VA Clinic
260 Calkins Rd
Rochester, NY 14623

Susan B. Anthony Conference Room



Third Friday of Every Month
Beginning October 17th, 2025
8:30am - 10:30am



Open to all Veterans enrolled in VA Finger Lakes Healthcare

FREE COFFEE & TEA WILL BE AVAILABLE



No RSVP Required

For question contact Gillian Olson 585-463-2608

MADE POSSIBLE BY



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
VA Finger Lakes Healthcare System

