

## **Allegany County Veterans' Service Agency**

January 1, 2015 thru December 31, 2015

### **Agency Profile:**

The Allegany County Veterans' Service Agency is a department of the Allegany County Government. The department is serviced by the Director and the Assistant Director, both of whom are American Legion Accredited Service Officers. There are just over 4,100 veterans in Allegany County. The Allegany County Veterans' Office assists veterans, widows, family members and advocates in regards to the following services: Service Connected Compensation claims, Pension benefits, Veterans' Home Loans, New York State Tax Exemptions for Real Property, education benefits, Survivor's benefits, burial markers, burial benefits, insurance claims, correcting discharge paperwork, recording DD-214's at the County Clerk's Office, ordering military medals, acquiring veteran's medical and/or personnel records to ensure the maximum benefits, VA approved home modification, assisting funeral directors with burial rituals and veterans identification cards. Office personnel also work closely with nursing home social workers, VA social workers, Department of Social Services, Social Security Disability, Employment and Training Center and the Office of the Aging to ensure veterans are receiving benefits. In addition, the office provides a well balance of veterans to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at County Legislators meetings.

### **Some 2015 Highlights:**

The Assistant Director completed her American Legion Veteran's Service Officer training.

Employees have been going through the files of WWII veterans who registered with Allegany County. It has been discovered that most of these veterans have passed on years ago thus the files are being purged which is clearing up valuable office space.

Agency employees are also assisting other veterans and auxiliary organizations with veterans funeral luncheons, breakfasts, fundraising, and medical appointments. This office has assisted veterans and family members in PA, TN, FL, and CA. A large portion of time continues to be spent helping veterans with VA and community doctor and/or hospital healthcare bills.

The county veteran population for 2014 was listed as 4,153 individuals. The county Veterans Necrology report for 2015 is as follows; WWII- 38/Korean- 42/Vietnam- 35/Peacetime- 18/Persian Gulf- 1 and Multiple Era-7. A total of 125 people died during the year. The office processed a total of 70 Veterans Memorial Marker applications in the year 2015.

According to the Geographic Distribution of VA Expenditures (GDX) for year 2014, compared to counties with 5,000 veterans and less, Allegany County ranked second in securing money due our veterans to an amount of \$31,400,000.00. This is a \$473,000.000 increase over the 2014 amount. This office will not receive the 2015 expenditure report until May 2016. Due to close monitoring the office was able to return \$1260.44 back to the county taxpayer.

Respectfully Submitted: Michael Hennessy, Director