



# **NYMetroVets Newsletter**

## **March 21, 2016**

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News and events that *NYMetroVets* is following:

**LEGISLATION WOULD HALT BAD MILITARY DISCHARGES DUE TO PTSD, TBI** (Military Times)

**NEW VA FIRING RULES, HEALTH CARE OPTIONS MOVING QUICKLY** (Military Times)

**VA AIMS TO IMPROVE BELEAGUERED SUICIDE PREVENTION EFFORTS** (Stars and Stripes)

**VA GETS ‘F’ FOR PERSIAN GULF WAR CLAIMS APPROVALS** (Military Times)

**VA EXPANDS HEPATITIS C DRUG TREATMENT** (Veterans Today)

**DOES VA’S PLAN FOR FIXING CYBER WEAKNESSES TAKE TOO LONG?** (NextGov)

**NEW YORK LAUNCHES VETERANS APP** (WAMC)

**CITIES ACROSS US SLASH HOMELESSNESS FOR VETERANS** (Boston Globe)

**FACELIFT OF HARLEM HELL FIGHTERS HOME WINS PRESTIGIOUS NEW YORK CITY PRESERVATION PRIZE** (National Guard)

**IN NEW YORK, LGBT VETERANS AND ADVOCATES CALL FOR ‘RESTORATION OF HONOR’** (Observer)

**VIETNAM VETS SEEING ELMHURST PARK MEMORIAL** (Queens Chronicle)

## **BRONX VETERAN TREATMENT COURT HELPS REHAB TROUBLED FORMER SOLDIERS (Bronx Times)**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**NYC Veterans Department Feedback:** The New York City Veterans Advisory Board is soliciting feedback from veterans and the public regarding the new Department of Veteran Services (DVS) that starts July 1st. What services do you want to see from the new Department? What resources? Anything you think should be considered? If you have a thought or want to comment, please e-mail us at: [NYCDVSFeedback@gmail.com](mailto:NYCDVSFeedback@gmail.com).

**Free Assessment and Treatment at Weill Cornell/New York Presbyterian Hospital:** The Program for Anxiety and Traumatic Stress Studies (PATSS) at Weill Cornell Medical College provides **free evidence-based assessment and treatment** to military service members, veterans, and their loved ones. Thanks to generous funding from foundations such as the Haven from the Storm Foundation and funding for clinical research trials through the Department of Defense, we now have several free clinical and research treatment options available for eligible individuals. We can see:

- Combat trauma survivors from any war era and with any discharge status
- Male and female military sexual trauma survivors
- Family members of veterans struggling with their loved one's military-, deployment-, or transition-related issues

Treatment is typically brief and symptom-focused. Services not based on discharge status. All information is kept strictly confidential. Services are provided on Manhattan's Upper East Side and in White Plains, NY. Want to know more? Please call us at **212-821-0783** or visit us online at [www.patss.com](http://www.patss.com).

**The Craft of War Writing** – This free writing workshop for Veterans and the General Public will focus on reading war narratives while considering how participants can draft their own stories. Each week the class will read published pieces in the file of war writing, from classic authors to the most contemporary. Participants will compose their own short pieces, read either other's work, offer feedback, edits and suggest revision strategies to help one another realize the vision for his or her own stories, whether fiction or creative non-fiction. Periodic guest authors will also be invited to visit. Jeremy Warneke, a US Army veteran and writer will be the instructor for this course. The Craft of War Writing is offered in collaboration with **Voices From War**. Registration is currently open and the class will run from April 2nd through June 11th. These 2 hour weekly workshops will take place at the Morris Park Library on Saturdays from 12 PM to 2 PM. For more information and to register, please visit: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1hAfzIramh7-AJii0iMw35cc3FJFhHH9zZ1xaLC-l8j0/viewform>

**Yoga for Veterans:** Yoga for Veterans NYC was founded in 2008 and is the longest running yoga and meditation program for veterans in NYC. All veterans are welcome, regardless of physical ability, age, race, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, discharge characterization or status, era of service or other life experience. Classes are small enough to give attention to individual students who may be dealing with injuries, challenges or disabilities. No prior experience with yoga or meditation is necessary and beginners are welcome. For more information, please visit our site at: <http://yogaforvetsnyc.org/>

**Photography Workshop:** The Bronx Vet Center is proud to host a Veteran's Photography Workshop with the instruction program and resources provided by the Josephine Herrick Project. Because this multiple week workshop is being done at the Vet Center, it is focused at combat veterans and their family members. Potential members do not need to be registered with the VA for medical care to join. The workshop is free and cameras are provided, with the instruction coming from a professional photographer. There will be an Open House on March 30th from 5 – 7 PM for potential members. It will be an informal chance to meet the instructor and ask questions. The actual workshop series will run every Wednesday for 8 weeks from April 20th thru June 8th from 5 – 7 PM at the Bronx Vet Center. Please reach out to Mr. Marco Bongioanni at the Bronx Vet Center (718) 367-3500 if you have any questions or are interested.

**Manhattan VTC:** The Manhattan Veterans Treatment Court is seeking volunteers to serve as mentors to fellow veterans who are involved in the criminal justice system in Manhattan. The veteran mentor initiative is designed to help and support veterans in their effort complete their court mandate. Any interested volunteers can contact Brandon Partnow, Resource Coordinator with the Unified Courts System at (646) 386-4634 or [bpartnow@nycourts.gov](mailto:bpartnow@nycourts.gov).

**Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) Program:** Are you a veteran who lives in the New York City area & is thinking about attending or going back to college? Do you need to brush up on your reading, writing and math skills? Preparing for the CUNY entrance exam? If you answered yes to any of the above, then LaGuardia Community College's FREE six-week Veterans Upward Bound (College-Prep) program is for you! Located in Long Island City (Queens); our next class starts on Monday, April 18th. If you, or someone you know, is interested and would like more information (or to register), please call (718) 482-5386.

**Remember the Veterans Crisis Line is always here for support: 1-800-273-8255 and PRESS 1. Text: 838225 or online at: <http://veteranscrisisline.net/>**

### **EVENTS:**

**VETERANS EVENTS IN NYC:** The following is a list of veteran events that are at taking place within the five boroughs. This list is not all inclusive and other events may be taking place throughout the city. Please pass this on to others. If you have any upcoming events and would like them posted in a future newsletter, please send them to me at the e-mail address below.

**March 22, 2016** – Women's Health Symposium. The women of AWARE: Assisting Women through Action, Resources & Education will be holding a Women's Health Symposium for Active Duty and Women Veterans on from 7 – 9 PM at the Reproductive Medicine Associates of New York – Eastside, 635 Madison Avenue, 10th Floor, New York, NY. All are invited to attend. For more information and to RSVP, please visit: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/womens-health-symposium-tickets-21000076795?aff=wvfn>

**March 23, 2016** – **Job Fair.** NCOA and Fort Hamilton will be hosting a job fair and seminar for all military, veterans and spouses from 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM at the Fort Hamilton Community Club. 207 Sterling Drive. Brooklyn, NY 11252. For more information, contact Shelly Conklin at: [sconklin@ncoausa.org](mailto:sconklin@ncoausa.org).

**March 23, 2016** – The MTA is hosting a “How to Read a Military Resume” Seminar at 9:30 AM at 2 Broadway, 4th Floor. The presenter is Mr. Peter Romano, who has been the Veteran Specialist at the Staten Island Workforce Center for the past three years. If you are interested in attending, please call (646) 252-2037 ASAP. Please note that security at 2 Broadway is very strict and all visitors’ names need to be sent to Security prior to the presentation. You will also need to bring current picture ID to enter the building.

**March 23, 2016** – **VA Adaptive Sports.** The VA will be holding their Adaptive Sports Spring Information Session from 11 AM to 1 PM at the Manhattan VA Medical Center, Atrium. All Veterans and organizations are invited. Come see what our sports programs are all about and sign up for your favorite!

**March 25, 2016** – **Women Veterans Conference.** La Femme Vet Network will be holding its first Women Veterans Conference at the Harlem State Office Building from 9 AM – 3 PM. They will be providing useful resources, personalized mentoring and valuable community connections needed to create an empowered journey toward wholeness.

**March 30, 2016** – **Veterans Comedy Show.** This show will provide an opportunity for three veteran Comedy Bootcamp alumni - Isaura Ramirez, Mike Garvey, and Clifton Hoffer to take the stage alongside PJ Walsh, a US Navy Veteran, ASAP Comedy Advisory Committee member, and national headliner with more than 20 overseas tours for troops in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world. This performance will take place at the Gotham Comedy Club (208 West 23rd Street, NY) starting at 7 PM. There will also be a Q&A session that will raise awareness of the vital role that the arts plays in improving the overall well-being of our nation’s veterans. Finally, all profits from ticket sales, and proceeds from donations and sponsorships, will directly support the national expansion of ASAP’s programs, allowing the organization to empower veteran artists across the nation. For tickets, visit: <https://www.classy.org/new-york/events/asaps-veterans-comedy-bootcamp-nyc-performance-benefit/e70991>

**March 31, 2016** – **Gallop NYC Veterans Open House.** Gallop NYC invites all Veterans, their family members and friends to their Veterans Open House from 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM at the Bronx Equestrian Center, 9 Shore Road, Bronx, NY. Come meet other veterans, our staff and our horses. For more information and to RSVP, please contact: [Daniel.afonin@gallopnyc.org](mailto:Daniel.afonin@gallopnyc.org)

**March 31, 2016** – **Debate: The Future of Women in Combat.** Starting April 1, 2016, the military will begin to allow women to serve in direct combat jobs. This debate will discuss the pros and cons and the potential effects integration could have on combat readiness. This debate will take place at the Association of the Bar of the City of New York at 6:30 PM and will be moderated by Gordon Lubold, Pentagon Reporter for the Wall Street Journal. This event is free but you must [register](#) to attend.

**April 1, 2016** – NYMAS Talk: “**The Politics of James Bond: From Fleming’s Novels to the Big Screen**” with Jeremy Black, MBE, University of Exeter. NYMAS talks are free and open to the public. This talk will be held at the Soldier & Sailors Club, 283 Lexington Ave (between 34th and 35th Street), NYC from 7 PM to 9 PM. Topics and speakers may be subject to change without notice. A current updated schedule is always available at: [www.nymas.org](http://www.nymas.org).

**April 2, 2016** – **Vietnam Veterans Day**. The United War Veterans will be holding their annual event honoring Vietnam Veterans. There will be a reading of the names of the fallen (Morning Ceremony, TBA) followed by a wreath laying ceremony at the NYC Vietnam Veterans Memorial and then a Veterans Expo at 55 Water Street.

**April 8, 2016** – NYMAS Talk: “**Stalin and the Winter War with Finland**” with Stephen Kotkin, Princeton University. NYMAS talks are free and open to the public. This talk will be held at the Soldier & Sailors Club, 283 Lexington Ave (between 34th and 35th Street), NYC from 7 PM to 9 PM. Topics and speakers may be subject to change without notice. A current updated schedule is always available at: [www.nymas.org](http://www.nymas.org).

**April 9, 2016** – **USO 5K Walk/Run**. The USO will have their 5K Walk/Run at 8:30 AM at Pier 84 in Manhattan. Runners and walkers will follow a route along the Hudson River Park ending with a celebration on the Pier. Participants will enjoy entertainment from the USO Show Troupe, a rock climbing experience, kids’ activities, and fun for the whole family. There is no registration fee to participate, however all funds raised from this event will help provide valued USO programs and services. To register, please visit: <http://www.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1142824>

**April 13, 2016** – **NYC VAB**. The New York City Veterans Advisory Board will be holding a meeting from 6 PM – 8 PM. Location TBA.

**April 16, 2016** – **NYC Run As One**. Team Red, White & Blue, Team Rubicon USA and Mission Continues are partnering for the 5th annual Run as One in honor of Marine veteran Clay Hunt. Run as One is about celebrating collaborations, community and camaraderie amongst veterans groups. All three organizations will be joining forces to run/walk a 5K in locations all over the nation.

**April 16, 2016** – **Plight of our Veterans**. Plight of Veterans is a free public service event aimed at bringing awareness to the hardships Veterans face. This year’s theme is Welcome Home, a mini concert in honor of our Military. This event will take place from 2 – 4 PM at the American Legion Post 483 (240-08 135th Street) in Rosedale, Queens and is hosted by the 29th Assembly District. A mini concert will include musical performances and a proclamation presentation by Councilmember Eric Ulrich to honor V.E.T.S. Inc., for Outstanding Community Service to Veterans, Families and the Community. Lunch will be provided by Famous Dave's. All are invited.

**April 20, 2016** – **Legal Services NYC Workshop.** Veterans face challenges and opportunities when entering the workplace. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protect veterans from employment discrimination. State and Federal employers, and various private companies provide hiring preferences to veterans that can make the job search quicker and less stressful. For veterans looking to develop further skills for civilian employment, unique hands-on training and educational opportunities exist that can make a new career possible. Legal Services NYC will hold this training from 3 – 5 PM at their offices (40 Worth Street, 6th Floor). This workshop is free. To register, visit: <https://www.learningcenter.legalservicesnyc.org/catalog/2234>

**April 21, 2016** – **Hiring Our Hero’s Job Fair.** Hiring Our Hero’s will be holding a Job Fair at the 69th Regiment Armory on Lexington Avenue from 8:30 AM to 1:30 PM for veterans, transitioning service members and military spouses. For more information and to register, visit: <https://www.uschamberfoundation.org/event/new-york-city-hiring-fair-0>

**April 23, 2016** – **Pats Run NYC.** This event will take place at 11 AM on Pier 84 in Manhattan. They will run, walk and honor Pat Tillman’s legacy while raising important funds to support programs for the Pat Tillman Foundation. For more information and to register for this event, please visit: <http://pattillmanfoundation.org/>

**April 23, 2016** – **VFW 96th Annual Military Ball and Testimony.** Please join the Queens County Council VFW of New York City as we celebrate 96 years of service to the Veterans that have fought for this country, as well as the service they provide to the communities we serve. This event will take place from 8 PM – 12 PM at the Knights of Columbus, 49-18 Queens Blvd, Woodside, NY. For info and tickets, please RSVP no later than April 1st with Ticket Chairperson Noelle Smith at: [NMS1980@gmail.com](mailto:NMS1980@gmail.com).

**April 24, 2016** – **3rd Annual Dinner Dance Fundraiser.** The American Legion Benjamin Moore Post 1946 and its Auxiliary presents their 3rd Annual Award Dinner Dance Fundraiser – a “Black & White” affair from 3 PM – 8 PM at Antun’s of Queens Village (96-43 Springfield Boulevard, Queens, NY). All are welcome. For more information and tickets, please contact Neil Jordan at (347) 581-0538 or e-mail: [REDLEG258@yahoo.com](mailto:REDLEG258@yahoo.com).

**FINAL THOUGHTS:** As many older veterans can remember, there used to be a time when veteran’s events were relegated to only May and November. Now, as you can see from above, events are taking place pretty much every month. Recently, I was on the West Coast learning how they do things out there when this [article](#) in the Washington Post caught my eye. In it, Phil Carter stated two important facts: **“The needs of the veteran’s population are increasing at the same time that the base of support for veterans services is shrinking.”**

If you’ve been any kind of active in this community, or work in a non-profit that assists veterans, you probably started to notice this already. I’ve been saying this for a little while now and I learned that this is already happening on the West Coast. Philanthropy

is almost non-existent out West and even here in NYC groups like the Robin Hood Foundation have finished their veteran specific initiatives. Grant money is shrinking. People are trying to jump from one life boat (job) to another to stay in the community. Even the VA is going through changes and there is an expectation that Congress will not continue to fund the VA the way they have over the past decade.

So what am I saying? I'm saying that we are entering into a different time – a time where in order to survive, groups are going to have to collaborate more and work smarter. Non-profits are going to have to become more mission focused and show potential donors and members that money being invested in them is being spent correctly with a good return on that investment.

Which brings me back to events. As resources start to shrink, the expectation is that there will be more events. Why? Because groups need money in order to survive and events are a great way to bring people in (whether good or bad). We have, in essence, reached the beginning of the survival of the fittest stage. However, like an animal when it's wounded, many groups will not go quietly. Last month I wrote about choices having to be made regarding groups fighting for the messaging, optics and gotcha moments. As groups shrink and/or leave the playing field, this will be a part of the survival instinct.

Therefore, you – **the veteran, the family member, the supporter** – will have to choose wisely and do your homework with who you give money to and what events you participate in. Research will have to be done and questions will have to be asked. We've come too far to turn into a "blind leading the blind" community. We have good leaders/non-profits and groups here in New York City but even they must be accountable.

So that's it for now. As always, if you've received this newsletter, please forward it on to others and if you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please e-mail me at: [bjoe7@hotmail.com](mailto:bjoe7@hotmail.com). Also, please join up with **NY MetroVets** on **Facebook** and **Twitter**! News regarding the veteran's community in New York City gets posted daily! Stay well and until next time...

Joe Bello  
NYC Veterans Advocate

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NYMetroVets/>