



Patchogue Lodge # 1323 makes a \$1,000.00 donation to the Long Island State Veterans Home at Stony Brook University. Pictured on the left is Exalted Ruler Joseph P. Gannone making the presentation to Johathan C. Spier, Director of Community Relations for Long Island State Veterans Home. The funds were designated to be used for therapeutic recreation for the Veterans at the home.

Once a month on Friday night, Chef Jim Vuturo cooks hamburgers for Elk members, their families and friends at the Lodge. Jim has volunteered his time because he wanted a part of the proceeds to go to a special Veterans project "The Wounded Warrior Project". Jim recently a check for \$ 700.00 to Reggie Cornelia (representative of the Wounded Warrior Project) for the past years fund raising efforts.



Utica Lodge #33 visited Syracuse VA hospital on Veterans Day. Ed Potrzeba organized a group from our Lodge to visit the Veterans at the Syracuse VA Hospital. In attendance were Ed and his wife Virginia; ER Julie Sylvester, PER Dan Kenney and his wife Linda; Brenda Pendrak, Doug Clark, Earl Jones, Ron Rosinski, Lisa Rosinski, Tammy Pulchalski and Bob Burmaster. The "wish list" item of a digital camcorder by the Recreation Dept. was presented to the staff. Elk member, Tammy, was the hit of the visit with the Veterans who enjoyed her enthusiastic dancing with them and getting all in attendance to join in on the fun and activities. Utica Grade School students of Elk member, Paul Hart, sent home-made cards to be distributed to the Veterans in the dining hall and on the floors. The Veterans were very thankful, as were the staff. We also treated the Vets to pizza, apples, cider and a one-man band. We were told that all were excited to once again see us this year. This is a most humbling and rewarding experience and all are encouraged to join us next year. Additional pictures will be forthcoming.



Sgt. Fred Shippee, a member of C Co 2-1 GSAB, Forward Support MEDEVAC Team 2, presented **Potsdam Lodge #2074** an American Flag flown during Operation Iraq Freedom. The flag was flown in support of OIF 10 on a MEDEVAC mission in Iraq on

August 23, 2010 in a Blackhawk Helicopter. He is pictured presenting the flag and a certificate of verification to Exalted Ruler Wyatt Boswell, Leading Knight William LaPoint, Loyal Knight Robert Watkin and Esquire William Shippee.



Potsdam Lodge #2074 members, along with Clarkson University ROTC Cadets visited Veterans at the United Helpers Nursing Home in Canton in remembrance of Veterans Day. Each of the Veterans residing at the home was provided a gift bag and enjoyed visiting with the Cadets and Elk members. Nursing Home Veteran's Malcolm Bates and Richard Valley (front row) are pictured with Elk and Clarkson ROTC members. Following the visit, the Cadets were treated to a complementary lunch at the Lodge.



Ogdensburg Lodge #772 recognized Veterans Leo Tynon, Robert Burgess, James Blake and Robert Williams with a State of New York Conspicuous Service Award (signed by Governor Paterson) and a State of New York Medal for Merit (signed by Brigadier General Patrick A. Murphy). A certificate and medal accompanied each distinction. Vietnam Veteran Robert Williams (center) received his awards at the Ogdensburg District Deputy visitation. He is pictured with PSP Tim Kelly, DD Stuart Rishe, SVP Jennifer Neaton, PSP Nelson Navarra and PER Jerry Reed.



Poughkeepsie Lodge #275 – at their Annual Night of Champions the lodge recognized the Castle Point VA Hospital Wheelchair Olympics team for their accomplishments at the Wheelchair Olympics. The team travels all over the United States to compete. Tom Incovaia, (Deputy VAVS Rep.) presents the award to L to R; Edward Horvat, Donald Plunkett, Jimmie Loupe and Craig Shera.

Yorktown Lodge #2324 veterans chairman Wayne Gorski and Peekskill Lodge Veteran's chairman Neil Gross together with Alan Kotash hosted a luncheon for 25 Veterans from Montrose VA Hospital at the Lodge. The Veterans enjoyed the lunch, played bingo and returned to the VA Hospital with goodie bags.

Esperance Lodge # 2507 held their 14th Annual B-B-Q at the Samuel Stratton Veterans Hospital Lodge members served over two hundred patients, family members and staff. Esperance Lodge members distributed over three hundred dictionaries to third grade students in four school districts. Esperance Lodge held it's 14th Annual Haunted House on the lodge grounds. Over five hundred people attended the free event and were treated to free cider and donuts. Thirty five lodge members joined forces to make this event a success.

Years ago, the Elks made a promise that "So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them." This promise holds as true today as on the first day it was spoken, and today the need for the promise and the service provided because of it has never been greater. Our Veterans who have sacrificed so much to protect our freedoms and allow us to live the American dream continue to need our help day in and day out.

That promise, as it was first uttered many years ago, is being fulfilled by the dedicated men and women of Elkdom, who work on a daily basis through their Lodge to help make the lives of Veterans better. They continue to volunteer many hours of service to help improve and enhance the daily lives of our Veterans in need. They visit the VA medical centers and Veterans nursing homes, aid Veterans within our communities, and give freely of their time. These men and women of Elkdom who give unselfishly of their time to improve the lives of our Veterans should be recognized for their efforts even though they do not seek this recognition.

While the Order of Elks serves and assists our Veterans 365 days a year, the month of November is singled out as Veterans Remembrance Month and it is a special time to give recognition, not only to our active-duty military, but to all of our Veterans who have served in our military throughout the years. As Elks, fulfilling our solemn promise, be sure this month to thank all those who have and are serving to protect our freedoms. Always remember that freedom is not free. It is paid for on a daily basis by our active-duty military personnel, and by those Veterans who continue to carry the scars of freedom for the rest of their lives.

As we begin the New Year, it is appropriate that we dedicate ourselves to our Elk commitment: "So long as there are Veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them." One group of Veterans who need our help more than ever before in our history, are our homeless Veterans. They come from all walks of life and have a wide range in age. They were in Vietnam, Granada, Iraq and other locations, too numerous to name; but they all have one thing in common, they are all Veterans who have served and protected this great nation. You can see them walking the streets, and sleeping on benches. They are dirty, unshaven and wearing tattered clothes. Our homeless Veterans are now estimated to be 200,000 in number. However it is also reported that as many as 500,000 Veterans are homeless at some time during the year.

There are several ways that your Lodge can provide assistance to our homeless Veterans. Our Adopt-A-Vet Program would be a great way to get started and get involved; or contact your local area Veterans support groups. You may also get in touch with the National Coalition of Homeless Veterans at www.nchv.org. It doesn't matter how we help our Veterans, just as long as we do help them. Get involved, get active and don't forget our real American heroes.

"GOD BLESS OUR SOLDIERS SERVING AT HOME AND ABROAD", "GOD BLESS OUR VETERANS" AND "GOD BLESS AMERICA"