



RPC Quarterly

A Publication of the Saratoga County Rural Preservation Company, Inc.

Spring 2009

Ballston Spa, New York

HIRE A VET.....

It's not only a smart thing to do,
it's the *right* thing to do!



This Issue:

The focus is on RPC'S
Homeless Veterans
Reintegration Program, AKA
"Hire A VET Program"

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Message from the Executive Director



Dear Supporters and Friends,

April 14th marked my first anniversary as the Executive Director of RPC and it has been a jam packed year! Our vet house shelter received a makeover, with new kitchen cabinets and range, new floors in the kitchen and dining area, two of three bathrooms remodeled and the building re-insulated throughout – all thanks to the folks at Rebuilding Together Saratoga County. We increased our living space at the vet house to accommodate two more residents, bringing the total number of beds to 10.

We created the position of Veterans Affairs Director to oversee the activities of the vet house, case management/advocacy and our employment programs, in an effort to have a concentrated, effective action plan for each of our resident vets.

We also began our quest to establish a homeless shelter for women veterans (see page 6 for an update).

Administrative procedures, company policies, department operations and personnel needs were upgraded and improved to assist in the efficient operation of RPC during this difficult economic time. New benefits were added to our employee package and formal, annual performance review policies were established.

And I continue to be impressed by the support we receive from the community, whether it is a monetary donation, clothes for the resident, furniture for the house or simply an offer to come by and cook a special dinner for the guys!

All in all, it has been a fulfilling 12 months; I am most fortunate to be working with a dedicated, hardworking staff and an equally impressive Board of Directors.

Sincerely,

A.C. (Budd) Mazurek
Executive Director

SCRPC PROGRAMS

Veterans Employment

The Homeless Veterans Reintegration and Placement Program is designed to assist rural homeless veterans in locating long term employment; assistance includes, interview skills training, job coaching, job placement and follow up to monitor job progress. 885-0091, ext 208 or 209.

Veterans Advocacy

This program is designed to assist the homeless veteran in securing benefits, in developing a successful recovery program that covers a wide range of issues and secure transitional and permanent housing. This program is staffed by two case workers and a part time social worker. 885-0091, Ext 211.

Transitional Housing For Homeless Veterans

RPC maintains a ten bed facility for Homeless veterans at 36 Church Avenue, Ballston Spa, New York. Employment and advocacy assistance is available to the residents. 885-0091, ext 211

Permanent Housing for Formerly Homeless Veterans

RPC owns a 12 unit apartment complex in Wilton, New York for homeless, formerly homeless veterans or those veterans living in substandard housing. In addition, RPC has a two family home in Ballston Spa for disabled homeless veterans and their families. 885-0091 ext 202.

Section 8 Rental Units

RPC manages the federally funded Section 8 program for all of Saratoga County, with over 250 families receiving subsidies each month. Program includes the highly successful Family Self-Sufficiency Program which helps families in achieving economic independence. 885-0091, ext 204 or 212.

Affordable Home Ownership Program

RPC provides affordable home ownership financial support, up to \$20,000.00, to families whose income falls below moderate income levels and who are unable to secure conventional mortgage financing. 695-3344.

Home Rehabilitation Program

RPC provides moderate home rehab, up to \$25,000.00, to qualified homeowners in Saratoga County. 695-3344.

Handicap Accessibility Program

RPC provides funding to qualified homeowners to make their homes more handicap accessible. This program is available to residents of Saratoga and Washington Counties. 695-3344.

SCRPC Staff**Administration**

A.C. (Budd) Mazurek
Executive Director
rpcdirector@nycap.rr.com

Dawn Perry
Finance Director
Dawn36@nycap.rr.com

Marge Brahm
Bookkeeper
Brahm@nycap.rr.com

Susan Hillman
Administrative Assistant

James Colville
Maintenance

Michael Brown
Information Technology Specialist
vethomeorg@nycap.rr.com

Programs***Section 8***

Robin Deierlein,
Director
Rpc36@nycap.rr.com
Sandy Nordland
Don Erlenbusch

Veterans Affairs

Don Little,
Director
vetadvocate@nycap.rr.com

Terry Claire
cmanager@nycap.rr.com

Leslie Carroll
lesvet@nycap.rr.com

Fran Nichols
Fran1@nycap.rr.com

Housing

Marvin & Company
marvinandcompany@gmail.com

Administrative Offices

36 Church Avenue
Ballston Spa, New York 12020
(518) 885-0091
www.vethome.org

“Hire a Vet”

RPC’s Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Recent Success Stories

#1. Young Veteran

We were made aware of a young veteran, recently discharged from the Navy, who was living in his car. He came from a troubled background and had actually moved out on his own at 16. He was able, however, to graduate from high school and went directly into the Navy. After completing his obligation to the Navy, he rented a room from an elderly woman and secured the only employment available – a low paying part time position. He managed to make it work financially for several months until the landlord increased his rent. Having nowhere to go, he spent the entire winter living in his car. What he needed was a full time job that paid a decent wage and an affordable apartment. We approached the local Price Chopper Manager and advocated for him. We were informed by the Manager that he could only hire part time employees but, after meeting with the veteran, he made an exception and gave him a full time position. After securing the position, we found him an affordable apartment in the community. At last report, he was doing well and his employer is happy with his performance.

More success stories on next page....

#2. Gulf War Veteran

This individual had been a resident of Vet House and returned to seek our services. He had been employed in the construction industry and was laid off. After an extended period of unemployment, he ran through his savings and was evicted from his apartment. During the assessment phase of our intake, we discovered that he had once held a CDL Class A license. He informed us that he would like to return to driving big rigs but lacked the necessary funds to go through the program again. We did some investigating and found that his license could be reactivated after taking a driving test. We found a company that would waive the required fee until after he was hired. He then took the test, passed and was able to drive a big rig for this company. He is now back on his feet and doing well.

#3. Female Veteran

This young woman contacted us seeking our assistance in finding meaningful employment. She was a single mother with a young daughter and had recently lost her job. Because she lived in a remote area, there were few jobs available and a lengthy commute was not possible. We advised her to investigate the employment opportunities available through the State for veterans and to apply for temporary housing and food stamps through the Department of Social Services. Being pro active and with some advocating on our part, we placed her with a local school district and she is securing an apartment close to her new employer.

#4. Disabled Veteran

This veteran was referred to us from the Veterans Administration. He had lost his job, gone through all of his savings and was homeless. After being interviewed by our Case Manager, he was placed on the waiting list to enter our Vet shelter; in the meantime, we assisted him in obtaining food stamps and other services through the department of Social Services. Because he was disabled, we advised him to apply to a special state employment program for disabled veterans. We also looked at several federal opportunities and found him a position with the U.S. Census Bureau. We are happy to report that he is doing well.

Project Update: Guardian House for Homeless Women Veterans

We are pleased to report that this project, to establish a homeless shelter exclusively for women veterans, is moving along very well. We have applied for funding through the Veterans Administration and hope to receive 65% of the project cost from the VA, leaving \$115,000.00 to be raised through donations, fund raising events and other sources.

In addition to funding the purchase and rehab of a facility (which we have identified), we also need furniture, bedding and kitchen necessities; we are seeking these items through donations from the community and retailers. A short list of the items needed include: bedroom furniture for 11 residents, two washers and dryers, living and dining room furniture, outdoor and porch furniture and just about everything needed to have a complete kitchen. Arrangements have been made with a local company that has warehouse space to store the items; for more information or to make a donation, call our offices at 885-0091.

Upcoming events associated with this project include; a press conference on Memorial Day and a fundraising event on August 15th, sponsored by seven service organizations in Saratoga Springs. The organizations involved in this effort are: American Legion Post 70, Racing City Rotary, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Italian-American War Veterans, Principessa-Elena Society, Gurtler Brothers VFW Post 420 and the Wilton Elks Lodge 161. We will be sending invitations to our supporters in July.

We have been overwhelmed by the generosity and interest displayed by people of Saratoga County and beyond; while we still have much to do. We are confident that we will meet our objective.

2008-2009

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 Ballston Spa National Bank
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 American Legion Post 234
 American Legion Post 278
 American Legion Post 490
 American Legion Post 1450
 Disabled American Veterans Chapter 158
 ITAM Vets Post 35
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**Saratoga County
Rural Preservation Company**
36 Church Avenue
Ballston Spa, New York 12020



RPC Veterans House