



# RPC Quarterly

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

Summer/Fall 2008

Ballston Spa, New York

*A Tribute to*  
**Dottie O'Donnell-Nixon**  
*Upon Her Retirement*



*RPC Founder and Executive Director from  
1983-2008*

*This Issue:*  
RPC's Focus on  
Veterans Programs

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# Message from the Executive Director



Dear Supporters and Friends,

I am happy to share with you our first quarterly newsletter! We hope to use this vehicle to keep you informed about our activities as we continue to serve the housing needs of the rural poor and the special needs of our homeless and underemployed veterans.

In each issue, we will “spotlight” one of our programs; in this, our first issue, we will explain the various services available to veterans through our Veterans Affairs program.

In addition, we will inform you about upcoming events and provide you with information that is pertinent to our organization; we will share with you our short and long term goals and our all important “wish list.”

Our history is rich in tradition and success stories and we owe it all to the founder and, until this year, the Executive Director of SCRPC – Dottie O’Donnell-Nixon. All that we are today is the result of her hard work and dedication over the past 25 years. More about “Saint Dottie” later in this issue.

Needless to say, I have rather large shoes to fill – as I have discovered, since joining SCRPC last April, Dottie will be a hard act to follow – but I pledge to do my best to uphold the tradition of the Saratoga County Rural Preservation Company.

Sincerely,

A.C. (Budd) Mazurek  
Executive Director

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# 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

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## SPOTLIGHT ON VETERANS PROGRAMS

Saratoga County Rural Preservation Company (SCRPC) has, for 20 years, provided transitional housing for homeless veterans. Through those 20 years, we have added services to assist those veterans in reaching their goals – whatever those goals might be.

When a homeless vet first enters our program, we conduct an assessment of the challenges facing him; Trained Case Managers determine what the needs are and develop a plan to address those needs. The plan can include securing and maintaining entitlement benefits, maintaining a successful recovery program, employment opportunities and permanent housing.

With the assistance of a Veterans administration MSW Social Worker, the Case managers and our two Employment Coordinators, work closely with the veteran to insure the highest level of success.

We are proud to say that most of the veterans accessing our services go on to permanent housing, with a good job, while maintaining their recovery plan. In fact, several of our “graduates” have been successfully employed by SCRPC – giving back what they received when they were in need.





*American legion post 490 riders who participated in a "Poker Run" on June 14th, to benefit the RPC Vet House*



*Youth volunteers from Rebuilding Together Saratoga County (RTSC) painting the Vet House basement*



*More RTSC volunteers at work!*

Rebuilding Together Saratoga County (RTSC), over the course of two months, installed new kitchen cabinets, a new stove, renovated two bathrooms, painting several resident rooms, painted the basement, sealed the front porch and insulated the entire house! All of the above was completed at the 36 Church Street Vet House. Additional work was completed at our permanent veterans housing in Wilton to include: painting the storage building, constructing 6 picnic tables and tons of landscaping.

SCRPC will be forever grateful to RTSC and its volunteers for time, energy and money expended to help improve the quality of life for our veterans.

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## DOTTIE O'DONNELL-NIXON

While Dottie had a successful career leading up to 1983, the focus of this biography begins 25 years ago when the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal awarded the Saratoga County Rural preservation Company (RPC) its initial grant to begin a housing program; later that year, the Town of Wilton awarded Dottie the management of their Section 8 program and two years later the State awarded Dottie another 100 units of Section 8 management.

During the subsequent three years, Dottie became very aware of the problems associated with homeless veterans, first as Chairperson for the Saratoga County Veterans Advisory Board and second, through her involvement managing the various Section 8 programs. This awareness led to her opening a four unit shelter for homeless vets in Saratoga Springs and the building of permanent housing in Wilton for veterans and their families transitioning from homelessness or temporary shelters. Today, the Curr-Ahee project has 12 units (Curr-Ahee is a Native American slogan meaning "we stand alone together" that has been used by the 101<sup>st</sup> Army Airborne Division since World War II); in addition, there is a two family unit in Ballston Spa for disabled veterans and their families. The transitional shelter (Vet House) moved to Ballston Spa in 1991 and could accommodate 10 veterans.

Throughout the 1990's, RPC (and Dottie) expanded the Section 8 program, received funding to construct low income permanent, owner occupied, housing (called Hill Manor) in Victory Mills, New York and began phase two of the Curr-Ahee project.

In the new millennia, RPC has been awarded HUD grants to help qualified homeowners rehabilitate their homes, to help qualified homeowners make their homes handicap accessible and to assist qualified individuals towards the purchase of their own homes. In addition, services to our homeless veterans population increased with the addition of the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program and our case management/advocacy program, both supported through various grants from the Department of Labor and the Veterans Administration.

In May of this year, Dottie was honored by being selected as one of the "Top 10 Women of Influence" in Saratoga County, a testament to her storied career.

Today, RPC is poised to move on to new venues and opportunities – all made possible by Dottie O'Donnell Nixon – Saint Dottie!

## SCRPC Wish List

2 new beds	Copier
Curtains for Vet's rooms	Outdoor smoking shelter
Area rugs for Vet's rooms	Low cost maintenance program
Sheets, bedspreads, pillows	for our company Van
Fax machine	Computers for the Vets

## Future Projects

SCRPC is embarking on an ambitious project to open a separate transitional female vet house in the community. Veterans Administration statistics demonstrate that there is a need for such a facility in the Capital Region, based on the number of females currently serving in the military and those who have served in the past. There is only one such transitional housing dedicated strictly to house homeless female vets in New York State (Zion House in Avon New York) and only a handful nationwide. We hope to mirror the successful operation of our Vet House on Church Avenue in Ballston Spa by providing the same case management, advocacy, employment readiness and transitioning to permanent housing that we offer to our male veterans. We will be seeking an adequate housing facility for 8-10 female vets and hope to secure funding through various public and private foundation grants, as well as donations from individuals in the community. A separate, restricted usage account has been established for donations to this project. For more information, contact Budd Mazurek, Executive Director of SCRPC, at 885-0091 ext 203.

## Special Thanks to These Supporters

Rebuilding Together Saratoga County	American Legion Post 490
American Veterans Care Organization	R. Falco Insulation LLC
State Farm Insurance	Wal-Mart
United for Change/Ballston Spa HS	Stewart's Shops

**Saratoga County**  
**Rural Preservation Company**  
36 Church Avenue  
Ballston Spa, New York 12020



*RPC Veterans House*