



# At Your Service

Fall, 2024

The Wethersfield Veterans Commission traditionally meets from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month, except for July and August. The public is welcome to all meetings! You can contact the Wethersfield Veterans Commission through our webpage at [wethersfieldct.gov/social/veterans](http://wethersfieldct.gov/social/veterans). You can also email us at [veterans.commission@wethersfieldct.gov](mailto:veterans.commission@wethersfieldct.gov) or call a town liaison, below.

Interested in serving on the Veterans Commission? Please email [veteranscommission@wethersfieldct.gov](mailto:veteranscommission@wethersfieldct.gov) to request more information.

## Commission Members

*Rick Newell, Chair*  
*Tricia Giscombe, Vice Chair*  
*Sandra Rhodes, Secretary*  
*Mark Rudewicz*  
*Laura Bloomquist*  
*Sean Cattanach*  
*Dave Williams*

## Student Representatives

*Anxelika Deda*  
*Roge Williams*

## Town Liaisons

*Rachael Mattioli, Assistant Director, Wethersfield Parks and Recreation*  
(860) 721-2890  
Email: [rachael.mattioli@wethersfieldct.gov](mailto:rachael.mattioli@wethersfieldct.gov)

*Daniel Rosario, Elderly Services Coordinator, Wethersfield Social and Youth Services*  
(860) 721-2880  
Email: [daniel.rosario@wethersfieldct.gov](mailto:daniel.rosario@wethersfieldct.gov)

*Ken Lesser, Town Council Liaison*  
Email: [ken.lesser@wethersfieldct.gov](mailto:ken.lesser@wethersfieldct.gov)

Mailing Address: Wethersfield Parks and Recreation  
505 Silas Deane Hwy, Wethersfield, CT 06109

## A Very, Very Special Thanks to Jennifer Glick!

Jennifer Glick was a very active and highly valued member of the Wethersfield Veterans Commission for the last three years contributing greatly to the newsletter and reading her poetry at veterans events. Jennifer grew up in Simsbury, CT. She graduated from college in 1969 with a nursing degree. After graduating, she headed west to Texas. While working in a hospital in Texas, she was recruited by the Army for a special nurses program in Vietnam. It was 1970, and Jennifer was a First Lieutenant. She went to Fort Sam Houston for six weeks of nurses' basic training. She arrived in South Vietnam in November 1970 and was assigned to the 67<sup>th</sup> Evacuation Hospital in Qui Nhon where she served for seven months until being transferred to the 6<sup>th</sup> CC in Cam Ranh Bay for the rest of her tour of duty. Jennifer's nursing experience focused primarily on the area of mental health.

Perhaps, the most important lesson that Jennifer learned from her service in Vietnam is that while the physical wounds heal, the psychological wounds linger. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder was not an official diagnosis until the 1980's but many service men and women were dealing with it after Vietnam. Jennifer herself dealt with PTSD with a recurring dream for 20 years after her Vietnam Service.

Upon returning home in November of 1971, Jennifer decided not to remain active in the Army. She continued her career in nursing at hospitals, in the managed care community, and finally ended up in the Commissioner's Office of the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. Her focus was on long term care for people with behavioral issues. She obtained her Master's Degree in Social Work which led to an adjunct teaching position at the UConn School of Social Work teaching Aging and Mental Health.

Jennifer is now retired, but volunteers as a resident advocate for the State's Long Term Care Ombudsman. In her free time, she likes to write poetry and create mixed-media art work. We are grateful for Jennifer's service to our country, and to our community through her service on the Veterans Commission.

## Wethersfield Veterans Day Ceremony

The annual ceremony honoring the town's veterans will occur on **Monday, November 11**. The ceremony will be held at **11:00 AM** marking the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month when the armistice was signed, ending WWI. Join fellow veterans, community members and students in front of Wethersfield High School as we Honor All Who Served. In the event of inclement weather the ceremony will be held indoors in the school auditorium.



**National Anthem sung by the WHS Choralaires  
Veteran's Day Ceremony 2023**

## Heroes and Hounds

Military Working Dogs have played an important part in wars and conflicts going back to WWI.

The Heroes and Hounds program was founded in 2009, supporting soldiers and working K9 partners. Since 2009, Mark Rudewicz has sent nearly 3,000 care packages and necessary equipment to the Middle East during the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. This program has also supported various units of every military branch here in the United States as well as bases in Europe.

All the packages are addressed on a very personal level to individuals and K9 Units. In the past Mark has brought the boxes to be shipped to Westover Air Force Base in Chicopee, MA.

Many American soldiers' lives have been saved because of the K9's keen sense of smell and their ability to detect explosive devices. Usually, the K9 and its handler are out in front clearing the way on the road to detect any explosive devices that were planted. With all the technology in the military and law enforcement nothing still can beat the dog's nose. In the military the dog outranks his handler by one rank, so if the handler is a corporal then the dog is a sergeant. Please keep an eye out for more information !

## Meet our New Student Reps

Anxhelika Deda and Roge Williams have joined the Commission as of September 2024. Both submitted essays in 8<sup>th</sup> grade for the Memorial Day contest and won!

Anxhelika is a senior with plans to earn a Bachelor's degree and study abroad in Spain. She has been in Wethersfield for seven years after immigrating from Albania, and is fluent in two languages. Anxhelika would like to start new service projects to benefit Wethersfield Veterans with a breakfast and producing videos, perhaps for our Photo Share project.

Roge is a freshman with plans of going to West Point, going into the service, and owning a fishing charter company. He would also like to continue playing hockey and lacrosse. His father is a Veteran and Roge would like to assist him in the Veteran Photo Share project. Roge states "I think it is important for students to understand that veterans are half the reason we are free today. I think students should also know that every veteran has had a role in our lives whether it was substantial or not."

## Veterans Photo Share

The Veterans Commission, in conjunction with Wethersfield High School, is working to preserve our town's Veterans history by creating a Veterans website. The goal of the website is to showcase residents past and present who have served this great nation.

We are asking Wethersfield Veterans to voluntarily share in helping to create content for the website. Veterans, or their families, can complete a form which asks for branch of service, name, rank, and dates served. Veterans can also include pictures or partake in a short video about their time in service. Wethersfield has a very proud history of military service dating back to before this nation became the United States of America. Showcasing our veterans is a small way to not only preserve this history but thank them for their service.

We are in the early stages of creating the website. If interested in sharing and preserving yours or a loved one's military service please email us at **veterans.comission@wethersfieldct.gov**.

## LOCAL AND STATE RESOURCES FOR VETERANS

### **Town of Wethersfield Elderly Services:**

Daniel Rosario is the Town's Elderly Services Coordinator providing citizens, including military veterans, with supportive community-based services, including necessary referrals, and information on Town and outside agencies' programs. Mr. Rosario can be reached at 860-721-2880 or via email at

[daniel.rosario@wethersfieldct.gov](mailto:daniel.rosario@wethersfieldct.gov). More specific information regarding Elderly Services can be found online at [wethersfieldct.gov/social](http://wethersfieldct.gov/social)

**Elderly Outreach and Case Management:** For seniors with financial need who require assessment, referral or coordination of services to remain in their homes.

**Transportation (Dial-A-Ride):** Available to those age 60 and older and those with disabilities under age 60, who need transportation within the greater Wethersfield area. Priority is given to medical appointments. Yearly registration fee of \$78 and ID cards are issued.

**Health Insurance Options (C.H.O.I.C.E.S.):** A program for Health Insurance assistance, for state and federal benefit and support programs which may assist Connecticut seniors.

**Friendly Shopper and Friendly Visitor:** For homebound seniors, Friendly Shoppers do grocery shopping and Friendly Visitors provide social contacts and a friendly face to visit on a regular basis.

**Renter Rebate:** Provides rent subsidies for seniors and disabled who qualify.

**Tax Preparation Assistance:** An AARP-run program from February to April each year that provides tax preparation assistance to low and moderate income residents who need help filling out federal and state income tax forms. Appointments for assistance are made through the Department of Social and Youth

**CT Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)** The Office of Advocacy and Assistance is located within the CT DVA at 287 West Street, Rocky Hill CT. The Office provides assistance to Veterans, their eligible spouses, and eligible dependents in obtaining veteran's benefits under federal, state, and local laws.

Contact information: [portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/Office-of-Advocacy-and-Assistance](http://portal.ct.gov/DVA/Pages/Office-of-Advocacy-and-Assistance).

Manager: John S. Carragher at 860-616-3683.

**CT Veterans Legal Center:** For help in facing legal challenges around access to the VA and veterans benefits, housing issues that might involve homelessness or eviction, consumer debt disputes, sexual assault, and discrimination. Also, there is assistance for veterans with a less than honorable discharge to upgrade their papers as well as for obtaining needed mental health services.

Please call 203-794-4291 and visit their website [ctveteranslegal.org](http://ctveteranslegal.org)

**Hartford Veterans Center:** Located at 25 Elm Street, Suite A, Rocky Hill CT is available for services such as individual and group counseling, military sexual assault trauma counseling, substance abuse assessment and referral, and employment referral. Please call 860-563-8800 for more information.

**Easter Seals Veterans Rally Point:** Offers a variety of programs and services such as VA benefit consultation, Behavioral Health Services, Employment and Resume Assistance, Financial Assessment and Coaching, Case Management, Peer Meet-up Groups, etc. Locally, contact Veterans Rally Point II at 860-859-4148 located at 287 West Street, Rocky Hill CT.

**Veterans, Inc.:** Provides a clinical case management approach around the "total veteran," incorporating job training and employment services, health and wellness, and supportive services ranging from transportation to legal services. Located at 232 Arch Street, New Britain. Call 860-223-1799 or use their website [www.veteransinc.org/about-us/](http://www.veteransinc.org/about-us/)

## FEDERAL RESOURCES

**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Hartford Regional Office:** Located at 555 Willard Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Building 2E, Newington CT 06111. For assistance call Toll Free: 1-800-827-1000 or 860.666.7342. Leave your name and phone number and a representative will call you back in two business days. Appointments can be made Monday through Friday from 8.30am to 3.30am or visit [va.my.site.com/VAERA/s/](http://va.my.site.com/VAERA/s/)

## THANK YOU TO THE WETHERSFIELD TRANSITION ACADEMY!

As always, the Veterans Commission offers its sincere thanks to the students of the Wethersfield Transition Academy for their important role in mailing this newsletter to over 900 Town veterans. The students are an invaluable service to the Veterans Commission keeping Town Veterans informed of activities and services.

Thank you!



### HEALTH CARE RESOURCES

**Veterans Crisis Line 24/7:** If you are a veteran, or concerned about a veteran, the Veterans Crisis Line is a free, confidential resource available to anyone, even if you are not registered with the VA or enrolled in VA health care. **Call 1-800-273-8255 and press 1. Or text 838255. Or have a confidential chat at [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net).**

**988 Suicidal Crisis Lifeline:** Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the 988 Suicidal Crisis Lifeline is managed locally and is available for rapid access to trained crisis contact staff who provide people with referrals to resources, mobile crisis services, or emergency services as needed/desired. **To reach the Lifeline, call or text 988 or chat at [www.988Lifeline.org](http://www.988Lifeline.org).**

**Update on CT Veteran's Directed Care Program (VDC):** A state-wide program that is consumer directed providing older veterans services in their home from the caregiver of their choice.

- 1) You must be registered for VA Health Benefits to access the VDC Program. To register, call the VA Eligibility Center at 203-932-5711, ext. 3131.
- 2) If already registered for VA Health Benefits, contact your VA Social Worker or VA Primary Care Physician to discuss a referral to the program.

For veterans living in the Hartford area, any questions about home care services can be directed to the North Central CT Agency on Aging at 860-724-6443 or to Danny Rosario, Wethersfield Elderly Services Coordinator, at 860-721-2880.

**National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Committee on Veteran Social Workers in CT:** A support network for military veterans who are practicing social workers and social work students that engages in advocacy and education relating to a range of veteran issues. A key goal is to partner with veteran and military organizations in support of the health and well-being of veterans. If interested in the committee's work and are a practicing social worker or social work student, contact [VetSocialWorkers@gmail.com](mailto:VetSocialWorkers@gmail.com) or call 860-257-8066.