



# Veterans Strong Community Center

*Serving Veterans - Past, Present, and Future*

## JANUARY 2017

### *Note of Thanks!*

I want to take this opportunity of the New Year to thank everyone for all the moral support, donations, and kind words over the last month. It was definitely a trying time but I never lost hope. We got our Christmas miracle!

I say “we” because this Center is not about me. It’s about the thousands of Veterans that have walked through the doors looking for some kind of assistance. It’s about the Veteran that for some reason or another lost his DD214 or his medals and ribbons – or never even received them. It’s about the homeless Veteran living in a tent for the last year gaining access to the VA Healthcare system and transitional housing. It’s about the family member in need of additional support or resources because their loved one suffers from PTS.

As I reflect on the last year, it was truly one of transition and uncertainty, sacrifice and blessings. I was amazed at the outpouring of support for the Center and generosity. I was reminded how many lives I have touched over the last 5 years (yes, folks, it will be 5 years on March 5, 2017!), and how even the most seemingly simple gesture can mean the world to someone in a crisis.

I want to personally thank the Bristol Veterans Council Executive Committee, members of the BVC and member organizations, the Veterans I serve, the community at-large (even as far away as Andover, CT), Mayor Cockayne and the City Council, our anonymous Christmas benefactor, and my family. I am looking forward to seeing what 2017 has in store!

**Veterans Strong  
Community Center**

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**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AT VETERANS STRONG COMMUNITY CENTER – January 2017**

**\*Scheduling updates posted on Facebook**

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
2	3 Soldiers, Sailors, Marines Fund 9 – 12  Service Officer 12 - 3	4  BVC Monthly Meeting 6:30	5  Soldiers, Sailors, Marines Fund 9 – 2:30	6
9	10  Soldiers, Sailors, Marines Fund 9 – 12	11	12  Soldiers, Sailors, Marines Fund 9 – 2:30	13
16 <b>City Hall Closed</b>	17 Soldiers, Sailors, Marines Fund 9 – 12  Service Officer 12 - 3	18  Open until 7 pm  AW2 Advocate 1 pm – 7 pm	19  Soldiers, Sailors, Marines Fund 9 – 2:30  Service Officer 9:30 – 2:30	20
23	24  Soldiers, Sailors, Marines Fund 9 – 12	25	26  Soldiers, Sailors, Marines Fund 9 – 2:30	27
30	31  Soldiers, Sailors, Marines Fund 9 – 12		<b>Vet Center Counselor available by appointment.</b>	<b>US Family Health Plan Representative available by appointment.</b>

**The Students of St. Joseph School  
Cordially Invite You to:**

**Veterans' Appreciation Lunch**

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

11:30 am – 12:30 pm

St. Joseph Church Hall (Guild Hall)

33 Queen Street, Bristol, CT

Please RSVP to the School 860.582.8696 by Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>.

Lunch provided by Bristol Tech Culinary Program.



**New Hours of Operation:**

Starting Tuesday, January 11 the Veterans Strong Community Center will be open 8:30 am – 5:00 pm, with a ½ hour closure mid-afternoons.

I am sad to announce that the CT DOL Veterans Employment Representative has accepted a position with the US Department of Labor. While we won't have anyone performing outreach for the time being, there are still many CT DOL Veterans Employment Reps that we can reach out to for assistance. We do wish Heather Suddaby the best of luck in her new position though!

## Alibis

- ❖ We received a call from a local Army Veteran looking for a warm – winter-rated sleeping bag. If you can help, please contact Donna at the VSCC.
- ❖ Although we do not have a large amount of space to store donations, we will gladly accept hats, socks, gloves and scarves. Any other donations, we can direct you to other locations in the City or VA Newington.
- ❖ Bristol Veterans Council is looking to update the Patriot Wall in City Hall. They are asking any currently serving Service Members from Bristol to provide a photo for display. Photos can be emailed, mailed or dropped off to the Veterans Strong Community Center.



## Winter Weather Safety

As I was slip sliding away driving the kids to school this morning, and watching other children try to trek across the snow covered street dodging cars that were either sliding themselves or just not paying attention to the fact that they were in front of a school, I thought some winter weather safety “best practices” might be in order. With the help of [Nationwide.com](http://Nationwide.com) I found these helpful tips.

### Prepare yourself

- ❖ Stay indoors during the storm.
- ❖ Walk carefully on snowy, icy walkways.
- ❖ Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. It’s a serious workout, and going at it too hard can bring on a heart attack – a major cause of death in the winter. If you must shovel snow, stretch before going outside.
- ❖ Stay dry. Wet clothing loses all of its insulating value and transmits the cold rapidly.

### Cold-related injuries

- ❖ Watch for signs of frostbite: loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities. If any of these occur, get medical help immediately.
- ❖ Watch for signs of hypothermia: uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness and apparent exhaustion.
- ❖ If any of the hypothermia symptoms appear, get yourself (or the victim) to a warm location, remove wet clothing, and warm the center of the body first. Give the patient warm, non-alcoholic beverages if they are conscious. And of course, get medical help as soon as possible.

### Prepare your car

According to the Department of Transportation, 22% of all vehicle crashes in the U.S. – and 16% of the fatalities – are due to severe weather such as rain, snow, sleet and ice.<sup>1</sup> So, prepare your car for treacherous conditions and extremely cold temperatures – and know what to do if you find yourself stranded in a vehicle. When the temperatures start to drop:

- ❖ Drive only if it is absolutely necessary. If you must drive, travel during the day.
- ❖ Don’t travel alone. Keep others informed of your schedule.
- ❖ Stay on main roads and avoid back road shortcuts.
- ❖ Top off antifreeze, windshield wiper fluid, gas, oil and other fluids.
- ❖ Make sure your tires have enough tread. Consider snow tires.
- ❖ Keep bagged salt or sand in the trunk for extra traction and to melt ice.
- ❖ Clear snow from the top of the car, headlights and windows.
- ❖ Save the numbers for your auto club, insurance agent and towing service into your cell phone.
- ❖ Keep a cold-weather kit in your trunk. It should include a blanket or sleeping bag, gloves, hard candy, bottled water, folding shovel, first aid kit, flashlight and cell phone charger.

### If you’re trapped in a vehicle

- ❖ Remain inside. Rescuers are more likely to find you there.
- ❖ Run the engine and heater about 10 minutes every hour. Clear any snow from the exhaust pipe to reduce your risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- ❖ Move around to maintain heat.

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- ❖ Use maps, floor mats and seat covers for insulation.
- ❖ Take turns sleeping. Someone should always be awake to alert rescuers.
- ❖ Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.
- ❖ Turn on the inside light at night so rescue crews can find you.
- ❖ If you're stranded in a remote area, stomp out the words "SOS" or "HELP" in the snow.

**Prepare your home**

- ❖ Clean out the gutters, disconnect and drain all outside hoses. If possible, shut off outside water valves.
- ❖ Insulate walls and attics, and caulk and weather-strip doors and windows.
- ❖ Repair roof leaks and remove tree branches that could get weighed down with ice or snow and fall on your house – or your neighbor's. (Avoid liability for the latter.)
- ❖ Wrap water pipes in your basement or crawl spaces with insulation sleeves to slow heat transfer.
- ❖ Consider an insulated blanket for your hot water heater.
- ❖ If you have a fireplace, keep the flue closed when you're not using it.
- ❖ Have a contractor check your roof to see if it would sustain the weight of a heavy snowfall.
- ❖ Make sure your furniture isn't blocking your home's heating vents.
- ❖ During cold spells, keep cabinet doors open to allow warm air to circulate around pipes, particularly those in the kitchen and bathrooms.
- ❖ Keep a slow trickle of water flowing through faucets connected to pipes that run through unheated or unprotected spaces.
- ❖ If your house will be unattended during cold periods, consider draining the water system.
- ❖ **Avoid ice dams** – where water from melted snow refreezes in the gutters and seeps in under the roof, soaking interior walls. Here's how:
  - Ventilate your attic.
  - Insulate the attic floor well to minimize the amount of heat rising through the attic from within the house.
  - Consider having a water-repellent membrane installed under your roof covering.



SORRY, SON...THERE'S NO APP FOR THAT