



## Reporting Meeting of JULY 22, 2019

### Calendar of Events.

**This Week:** 7/22 Veterans Housing – Cheryl Hague-Perez

**Next Week:** 7/29 Charlton School Picnic

**Coming Up:** 8/5 BOD; Apple run Work Night

8/12 Picnic at the Whettens'

8/19 District Governor Larry Jones

8/26 no meeting

8/29 Chicken BBQ @ HS meet the coach's night

(9/16 Flu Shot Clinic will be our meeting)

**Check us out:** bhblrotary.org and on Facebook

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- President Elect Gregg, stepping in for President Silas, led the Pledge and Four Way Test. Dan Stec read a thoughtful invocation following a rousing chorus of America the Beautiful.
- Our special guest for the evening was Cheryl Hague-Perez, the executive Director of the Veterans and Community Housing Coalition
- Mary A. told us that the Town in Bloom card she showed us last week, asking for donations to TIB and with the Flu Shot Clinic notice showed up in her mail box this week, demonstrating that the community at large has received it.
- Gregg announced upcoming meetings.
- As he did last week, (a new tradition?) Mike Brewster collected Happy Dollars following the program presented by Cheryl Hague-Perez. The preponderance of folks expressed their thanks to Cheryl for an inspiring, in-depth overview of what the Veterans and Community Housing Coalition (and in particular Cheryl) does. We were all moved by her passion and commitment to her work. In response, Cheryl thanked us for inviting her to come and said "I felt so welcome here. You all made me feel as comfortable as though I was with friends in my own living room."

### VETERANS AND COMMUNITY HOUSING COALITION Cheryl Hague-Perez, executive Director

The mission statement of the Veterans and Community Housing Coalition is as follows:

- To provide housing and support services to all homeless military veterans and their families
- To advocate on behalf of all military veterans and their families
- To provide housing opportunities for low income households

Cheryl began by telling us, "The fastest growing segment of homeless veterans is women. At The Guardian House, the only program in New York for female

veterans, we provide transitional housing and support services to homeless female Veterans with children. *The Veterans Administration provides neither payments nor facilities to accommodate this growing population.* (italics – editor)

"When Americans are asked to picture a homeless veteran they seldom think of a woman, and even more rarely, a single Veteran Mom with young children. A woman Veteran with children who is homeless faces the fear and threat that youth protective services may assess her situation as dangerous and take her children from her. These Moms will either not receive the help and support needed, or possibly lose custody of their children. Either way, these patriotic, brave women who wore the uniform of our Armed Services, and their children, lose. Until now, no program has been available to serve single moms with kids, because available programs will not accept kids."

This year the proceeds from the Veterans Ball\* will be used to kick off a campaign to build **Foreverly House**, a two family home on 4 ½ acres for our Veteran Moms and their children while they make the transition from military to civilian life. This will be a place for Veteran Moms and their children to call home. *It is not paid for by the VA. It is completely paid for by donations.*

VCHC operates 2 houses here, has 22 full time staff, 24 additional on call.

In addition, VCHC helps by having 16 "housing units" available, completely paid for. VCHC provides job training, including help practicing job interview skills. For vets who have been evicted or face threat of eviction, they provide temporary financial aid. VCHC has recently purchased property in need of renovation. With help from a Saratoga Springs architect working pro pro bono, they are partnering with a for profit developer to create 24 new units of housing. It will become available at 50% of average market cost to vets.

Volunteers collect household items – furniture, kitchen ware, bikes etc Gift cards at holiday times are welcome so the vets can buy gifts for family.

The deployments these veterans have served are not the deployments of their fathers, and they have returned changed, with greater physical and mental problems. VCHC helps with family reunification and even temporary child care.

There are 50,000 homeless veterans in our country. 400 vets are in our area. Currently VCHC serves 21 in our immediate community.

Thanks to the program chair for bringing this remarkable and important program to the club.



Gregg presents the Speaker's Mug

Reported by Gini

Serve with us. The world is waiting.

(\*Steve Caine learned that VCHC is a 501 c3, so donations are tax deductible. Mail or take donations to the office of VCHC at 29 Prospect St bldg. 2 Suite 313 Ballston Spa, NY 12020

\*(Veterans Ball Sun., Nov. 3. 2019 - Hall of Springs in Saratoga).

**JULY SET UP:** Ken, Bill L. Pete P. **CLEAN UP:** Darlene, Suzette, Fred, Steve **Greeter** – Mike

**AUG SET UP:** Silas, Dan, Bill **CLEAN UP:** Pete S., Alec, Steve G. **Greeter** - Mike