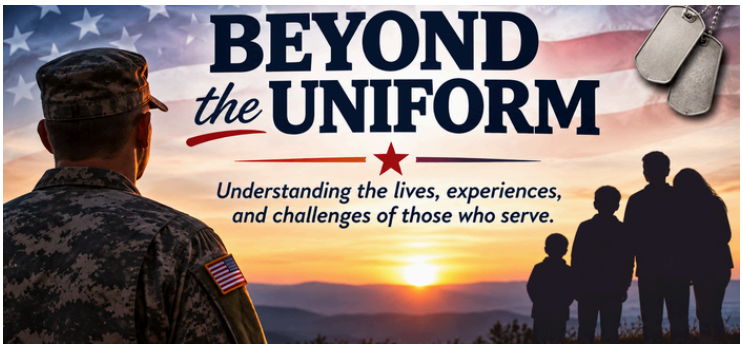
STRONGER TOGETHER

Celebrating 15 Years of Service

November 2026 | Issue 11



Beyond “Thank You for Your Service”

Honoring Veterans Takes More Than One Day

Every November, communities across the country come together to honor the men and women who have served in our Armed Forces. Flags are raised, ceremonies are held, and the words “Thank you for your service” are spoken with genuine appreciation.

But what happens after Veterans Day?

For many veterans, the challenges of military service don't simply disappear when the uniform comes off. The transition to civilian life can bring unexpected obstacles, from finding employment and navigating benefits to rebuilding connections and discovering a new sense of purpose. For others, the challenges may be less visible, carried quietly long after their military service has ended.

And behind many veterans are families who have served in their own way, through deployments, separations, missed milestones, and the uncertainties that come with military life.

While a simple thank-you is meaningful, true appreciation extends beyond words.

It can look like taking the time to listen to a veteran's story without making assumptions. It can mean helping someone navigate available resources, checking in on a military family, supporting veteran-owned businesses, or volunteering with an organization that serves those who have served.

Sometimes, it is as simple as making sure a veteran knows they are not alone.

At Southern Tier Veterans Support Group, we believe honoring service means standing beside veterans and their families not just on Veterans Day, but every day. Through community partnerships, resource connections, outreach, and support, we work to ensure that those who have served know their community continues to stand with them.

This November, as we recognize Veterans Day and National Veterans and Military Families Month, we encourage everyone to think beyond the traditional expressions of gratitude.

Ask questions. Listen to stories. Build connections. Learn about the challenges veterans face. And when an opportunity arises to make a difference, take it.

Because “Thank you for your service” should never be the end of the conversation. It should be the beginning.

Read our full digital edition at **STVSG.org**
Featuring more stories, resources, and events supporting local veterans

Introducing Beyond the Uniform

Military service is only one chapter in a veteran's story. Each month, our new Beyond the Uniform feature will explore the experiences, challenges, contributions, and perspectives of veterans and military families. Our goal is simple: to encourage understanding, strengthen connections, and remind our community that there is always more to the story than the uniform.

Stories of Service



Next Town Hall:
November 18th
5-8PM
VFW Post 1371
Owego

Veterans, Family Members and the community is invited to attend.

Stories of Service: The Conversation Continues
Giving veterans and their families a voice, one story at a time.
Last week, Southern Tier Veterans Support Group hosted Stories of Service: Veterans Town Hall at the Broome County Veterans Resource Center in Binghamton. The evening provided an opportunity for veterans, military families, and community members to come together, share experiences, and, most importantly, listen.
Every veteran has a story, and not every story is easy to tell. These gatherings are about creating a welcoming space where experiences can be shared, connections can be made, and understanding can grow.
As STVSG founder and past president Al Eaton shared:
"To me, this town hall is an opportunity to hear the people behind the service—to listen to our veterans' stories, better understand their experiences, and show them that their community cares. Through my work with STVSG, I've come to value these connections deeply. My hope is that everyone leaves feeling heard, supported, and a little more connected."
— Al Eaton, STVSG Founder and Past President
The conversation continues on Wednesday, November 18, at VFW Post 1371 in Owego, when we bring Stories of Service to Tioga County.
Veterans, service members, military families, and community members are all welcome. Whether you have a story to share or simply want to listen, your presence matters. No one is required to speak.
Because sometimes the most meaningful way to honor someone's service is simply to listen.



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Beyond the Uniform: Finding Purpose, Connection, and Belonging

Military service may end, but the need for purpose, connection, and belonging doesn't.

For many service members, military life provides more than a career. It offers structure, responsibility, shared experiences, and a sense of belonging. The people serving beside you become part of your daily life, and the mission often becomes part of your identity.

When that chapter ends, the transition to civilian life can bring unexpected challenges.

While some veterans adjust with relative ease, others may find themselves searching for the sense of purpose or camaraderie they once knew. The routines are different. The connections may change. And the question of "What's next?" isn't always easy to answer.

These experiences don't mean someone is struggling with a mental health condition. They are reminders that major life transitions can affect emotional well-being, even when those transitions are welcomed.

The Importance of Feeling Connected

One of the most valuable things we can offer veterans is a sense of connection.

That connection may come from fellow veterans who understand military experiences without needing an explanation. It may come through family, friendships, volunteering, community activities, or discovering new interests and goals.

Sometimes it begins with something as simple as a conversation.

Connection doesn't erase challenges, but it can help reduce feelings of isolation and remind people that they have a place where they belong.

Support Goes Beyond Appreciation

During November, communities across the country recognize the sacrifices of our veterans. Ceremonies, flags, and expressions of gratitude are meaningful ways to honor service.

But supporting veterans means carrying that appreciation into everyday life.

It means recognizing veterans as individuals, not defining them solely by their military experiences. It means understanding that asking for help is not a weakness. And it means creating opportunities for veterans and their families to connect with people and resources that support their well-being.

We don't have to share someone's experiences to make them feel valued. Sometimes being willing to listen, include, and show up is enough to begin building that connection.

Our Mission Continues

At Southern Tier Veterans Support Group, we believe honoring service and supporting veterans go hand in hand. Through community partnerships, resource connections, outreach, and opportunities to share experiences, we work to remind veterans and their families that support doesn't end when military service does.

This November, as we honor those who have worn the uniform, let's also recognize the individuals beyond it—their stories, their futures, and their continued place in our communities.

Because the uniform may come off, but the need for connection, purpose, and belonging remains.

No veteran stands alone when a community stands together

Check out our digital version for more features:

Board Spotlight: Anthony Pedro

Service, leadership, and a commitment to supporting local veterans.



From Military Service to Community Leadership
With 11 years of Army service and a firsthand understanding of the challenges veterans face, STVSG President Anthony Pedro leads with purpose, compassion, and a commitment to making a lasting difference in the lives of those who served.

For Anthony Pedro, serving veterans isn't simply a responsibility that comes with being President of the Southern Tier Veterans Support Group (STVSG). It's personal. As a combat veteran who understands firsthand the challenges that can follow military service, Anthony brings experience, compassion, and a deep sense of purpose to his leadership.

Anthony served 11 years in the U.S. Army as an infantryman, holding leadership positions as a team leader, squad leader, and platoon sergeant. He also served as an instructor at the Army Sniper School. His military career helped shape his leadership style and reinforced the importance of teamwork, resilience, and looking out for those beside you.

Following his military service, Anthony built a professional background in business operations and development. He has served on the STVSG Board of Directors for two years and became President in January 2026.

When asked why he joined the organization, Anthony's answer was simple: to continue serving in whatever capacity he could while providing purpose and assistance to veterans in need.

"I understand the need for resources like ours because I've faced my own struggles as a combat veteran."
— Anthony Pedro, STVSG President

Just for Fun

Coffee or Tea?
Coffee

Early Bird or Night Owl?
Early Bird

Book or Podcast?
Podcast

Mountains or Beach?
Beach

As a combat veteran, Anthony understands that the transition from military to civilian life can bring challenges that aren't always visible. Having experienced his own struggles, he recognizes just how important organizations like STVSG can be.

That personal understanding drives his commitment to ensuring veterans have access to resources, assistance, and a community that stands behind them.

One of the most meaningful parts of his time with STVSG has been working alongside fellow volunteers. Anthony appreciates being surrounded by individuals who willingly give their personal time to make a difference in the lives of veterans and their families.

He is equally motivated by the positive impact the organization can have throughout the community. Looking toward the next five years, Anthony hopes to see STVSG expand its ability to provide long-term planning and assistance for veterans experiencing financial crises, helping create lasting stability rather than simply addressing immediate needs.

Anthony's own life experiences have also shaped his outlook. Having faced significant adversity during childhood, he has learned to channel difficult experiences into something positive. That resilience continues to influence how he approaches challenges, leadership, and service to others.

Outside of STVSG, Anthony enjoys spending time with his family, exercising, and playing golf. His favorite way to unwind after a busy week is through family activities, and when it comes to local favorites, he's happy with just about any Southern Tier pizza shop.

A quote from Jim Carrey reflects Anthony's approach to life:

"Remember that you can fail at what you don't want to do, so you might as well take a chance on doing what you love."

For Anthony, continuing to serve veterans is more than a leadership position. It's an opportunity to turn personal experience into meaningful action, support those who have served, and help build a community where no veteran has to face life's challenges alone.

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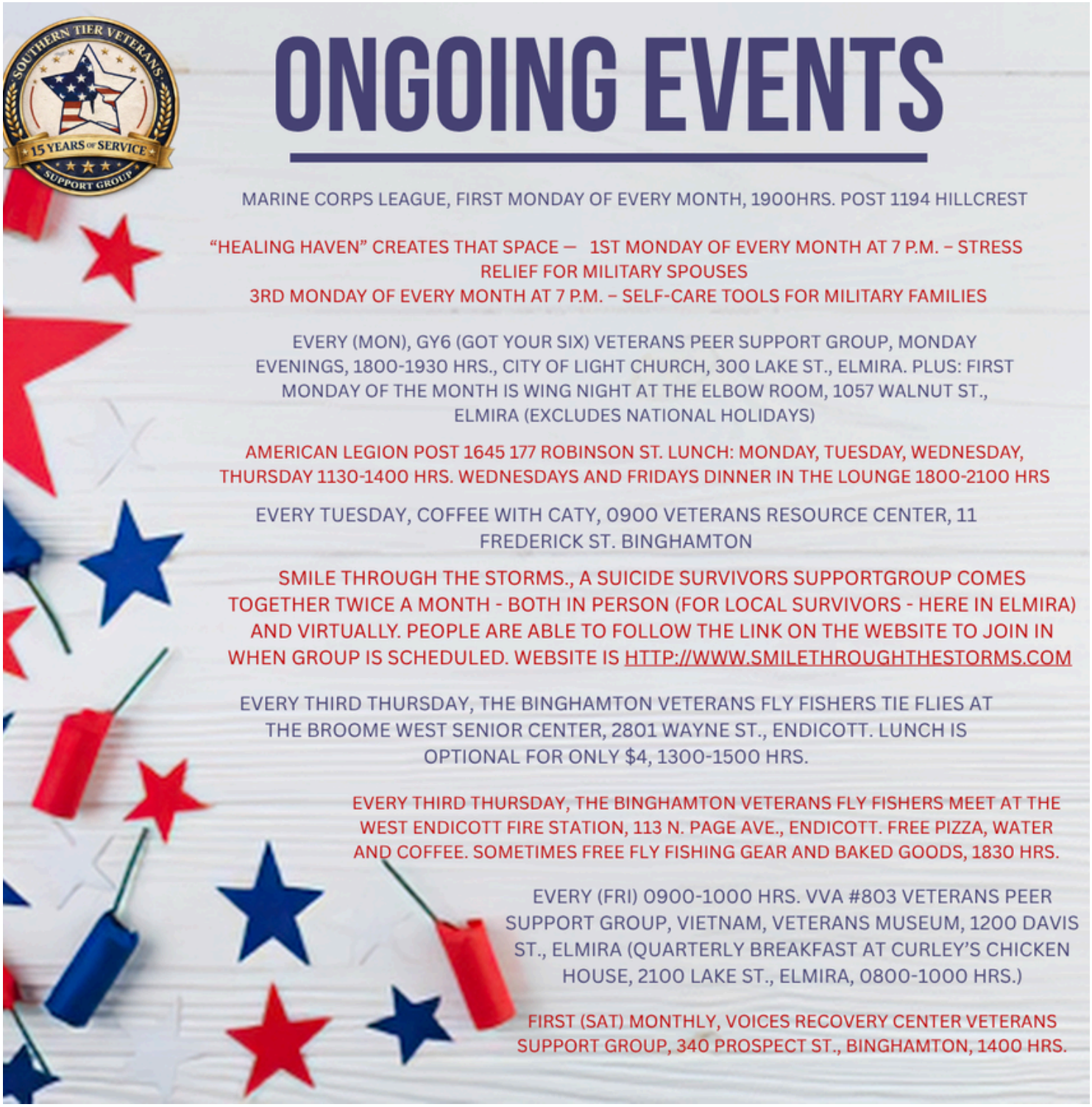
Community Events

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