

A showcase for veterans and their art

John W. Barry, Poughkeepsie Journal 3:31 p.m. EST November 19, 2014

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A piece of property that maintains an enduring link to U.S. military victory will this weekend host a showcase for artwork created by veterans and their family members.

The Veteran Arts Showcase is set for the Henry A. Wallace Center on the grounds of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park. FDR, who was born, lived and is buried on the Route 9 Roosevelt property, served as assistant secretary of the U.S. Navy and, as commander-in-chief, oversaw the nation's entry and years-long

involvement in World War II.

The arts showcase is designed to highlight the role the arts can play in helping veterans manage trauma related to their military service, as well as give them an opportunity to share a side of themselves that stretches beyond their service, said Lori Arella of Hopewell Junction, an event organizer. Arella's mother served in the U.S. Navy. Her father served in the U.S. Army Air Corps, the predecessor of the U.S. Air Force.

Painting, sculpture, photography, writing and knitting are among the means of creative expression set for display this weekend. The event will showcase the work of 44 veterans and 10 members of military families.

Joe Rist of the Town of Poughkeepsie will be displaying the flies he ties for fly fishing.

"Not only is it an art to me" said Rist, who served in the U.S. Navy from 1976-80, "but I like to think of it as an art to the trout's eye when he comes up for it."

Arella, a psychologist and founder of the organization Veteran Family Support Alliance, said art can help someone affected by trauma. She added, "There is such a terrible separation between vets and the civilian world. This is an opportunity to bridge that."

Rist said he has seen firsthand how the art he will be displaying this weekend has helped fellow veterans. He has worked with disabled veterans, taking them fishing in the Catskill Mountains and offering instruction on tying flies.

"When they are in the water, they leave their issues behind," Rist said. "Fly-tying is the same thing — sitting down behind the vise, becoming creative, getting in tune with what you're doing."

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IF YOU GO

What: Veteran Arts Showcase

When: Opening reception: 5:30 p.m., Nov. 21; 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Nov. 22-23

Where: Henry A. Wallace Center, Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, 4079 Route 9, Hyde Park

Admission: Free

Information: Call 845-226-4218 or visit www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu or www.vetfamsa.org

DID YOU KNOW:

The United States in 2013, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, was home to 19.6 million veterans

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