



CORTLAND RURAL CEMETERY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18th, *SALUTING BRANCHES* WILL RETURN
TO THE CORTLAND RURAL CEMETERY FOR THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR**

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, this nationwide annual effort honors U.S. servicemen and women by bringing volunteer arborists, tree, and landscaping companies together for a day of tree-care in military cemeteries and veteran-dedicated properties.

Cortland, NY, September 9, 2024 -- The Cortland Rural Cemetery (CRC) announced today that the [Saluting Branches](#) Annual Day of Service will be returning for its third consecutive year on September 18, 2024. Each year since 2015, Saluting Branches has rallied over 4,500 arborists, tree climbers, and other professionals -- representing 3,500 companies -- nationwide to provide critical care to these sites, ensuring they remain beautiful, safe, and respectful. More than 65 veteran-dedicated properties benefit from the effort, including national cemeteries; Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals, medical centers, clinics, nursing homes; and local cemeteries with veterans sections.

“Here at the Cortland Rural Cemetery -- where we have both a dedicated veterans sections and military graves from all U.S. wars and conflicts distributed across our grounds -- we’ve had companies

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from across Central New York, the Southern Tier, and even northern Pennsylvania donate their time, talent, and equipment to this effort,” said Kathy Cincotta, President of the CRC’s Board of Trustees. “It’s saved us thousands of dollars, enhanced the beauty of our grounds, improved employee and visitor safety, and helped prevent future damage to graves and grounds.”

Looking back at several severe windstorms during the 2024 season, Cincotta added “I hate to think how much worse the damage we endured could have been if *Saluting Branches* hadn’t proactively removed dead trees and branches over the last two years.”

As was the case in 2022 and 2023, this year’s Saluting Branches effort is being spearheaded by Jim Malone, a highly experienced and well-credentialed arborist and forestry expert at Niagara Mohawk, who also consults with the City of Cortland’s tree management efforts. Mr. Maloney has again extended invitations to several companies across the region and expects a good response.

“We won’t know exactly how many companies will be sending crews this year, as weather and workloads can and do have an impact on their availability,” said Maloney. “In years past, we’ve been lucky to have so many talented companies in our area step up, make the trip here, donate many thousands of dollars of their time, and provide access to some pretty big and specialized equipment, so I’m pretty confident we’ll again have a good turnout. These companies absolutely ‘get’ the mission and want to honor our military.”

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ABOUT THE CORTLAND RURAL CEMETERY

Located just moments from the heart of the Cortland, NY, the Cortland Rural Cemetery is a 44-acre, non-profit, non-denominational cemetery established in 1853. The cemetery features winding drives, lawns, shrubs, and trees amid islands of individual graves, family mausoleums, and monument groupings, and honoring the original, 19th century concept of a "rural" or "garden" cemetery. Visits are encouraged. Plots remain available for sale for new interments. And beautiful, peaceful, and inspirational settings are available throughout the park-like grounds for multiple graves, cremation burials, family plots, and private estate mausoleums. Additionally, one hillside has been dedicated to burials for Veterans and their spouses. In agreement with Cortland's Temple Birth Sholom, two sections are reserved for Jewish burials. And the intimate, newly restored Gibson Chapel is available for memorial services or group visits, with seating arrangements for up to sixty people. More information can be found on the cemetery's website at: www.cortland-rural-cemetery.com or its [Facebook page](#).

ABOUT SALUTING BRANCHES

Saluting Branches is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to honoring American servicemen and women by organizing volunteer tree and landscape care for properties dedicated to U.S. veterans, including cemeteries, nursing homes, medical centers, hospitals, monuments, and more. Founded in 2015 by Rainbow Treecare, Saluting Branches has grown into a significant national effort, engaging over 4,500 volunteers and having an impact of nearly \$5 million in services provided across all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. The organization extends its gratitude to the National Department of Veteran Affairs and the V.A. District Agronomists for their invaluable partnership in making this day possible. More information can be found at: www.salutingbranches.org, emailing nfo@salutingbranches.org, or calling 844.922.1151.

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