

Serving Those Who Served

The Official Newsletter of the Kentucky Department of
Veterans Affairs



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Year In Review

Commissioner Corner

Upcoming Events

Monthly Highlights

I Support Veterans License Plates
Military Women's Memorial "Tell Her Story"
Much, much more...

Veterans Resources

Commissioner's Corner

Commissioner's Corner

Greetings teammates,

This was a great year for KDVA with our Veteran Centers, Veteran Cemeteries and all our great staff receiving awards for their exemplary work and care, and the achievements and milestones reached this year.



This edition of the newsletter takes a look back on some of our highlight events and partnered events throughout 2024. At 26 years, KDVA is in a great position amongst the veteran community and will continue to strive to connect with and welcome more veterans to their community. I want to emphasize that this is THEIR community as we look out for each other and expand. All the great accomplishments we've had wouldn't be possible without you.

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and has a great New Year as we head into 2025!

HOOAH!,

Commissioner Whitney P. Allen, Jr.
Kentucky Department of Veteran Affairs

Upcoming Events

Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

presents

Inaugural

Veteran and Military Family Conference

February 4, 2025

10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. EST

**Founders Union Building, Shelby Campus Conference Center
University of Louisville**

450 N. Whittington Parkway, Louisville, KY 40222

Check-in plus networking at 9:00 a.m. EST - Event starts promptly at 10:00 a.m. EST

There is no charge to attend. Limited seating is available.

SAVE THE DATE
Register Here →



Sponsored By



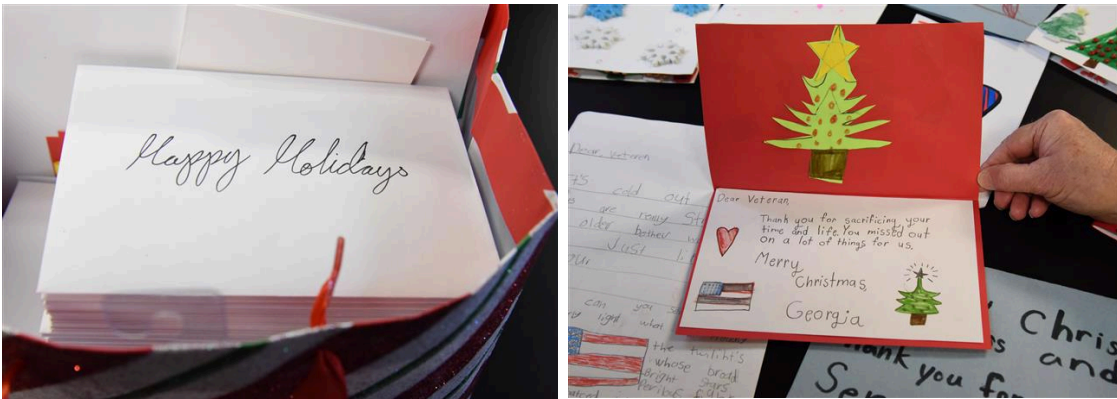
What's New at KDVA?

Women Veterans Watch Part "6 Triple 8"



On December 20, 2024, Dina Parrott, Women Veterans Program coordinator hosted a watch party for women veterans to see the Netflix debut of the film 6 Triple 8 , the all black, all women battalion who served in World War II. The event was at the Lexington VFW Post 680.

Christmas Cards for Vets in Veteran Centers





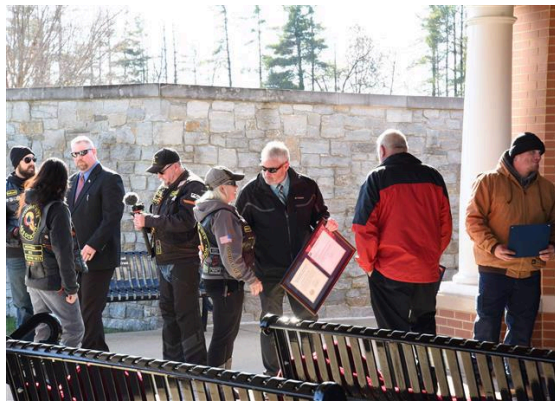
Heath Dolen and Jennifer Hubbard from the Cabinet for Health and Family Services delivered holiday cards for veterans to the Frankfort Headquarters Office for KDVA. The 904 cards came from staff members and their families at CHFS and students and staff at Stonewall Elementary School in Lexington. They will be given to residents of the four Veteran Centers in Kentucky. CHFS has been gathering cards for veterans each year since 2018.

NCA Presents Kentucky Veteran Cemetery North with Stewardship Award



The National Cemetery Administration presented the Stewardship Award to the staff of the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery North in Williamstown, KY, Dec. 12, 2024.

NCA Presents Kentucky Veteran Cemetery Central with Operational Excellence Award



The National Cemetery Administration presented the Operational Excellence Award to the staff of the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central in Radcliff, KY, Dec. 11, 2024.

Wreaths Across America Rotunda Event



KDVA held a wreath laying ceremony to kick off the Wreaths Across America at the Capitol Building Dec. 9, 2024 in Frankfort, KY. Over the next few days leading up to Dec. 14th, wreaths will be laid on veterans' grave stones at national and state cemeteries across the nation.

November

Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association Check Presentation



The Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association of Kentucky presented donation checks to Thomson Hood Veterans Center Wilmore Fund and KDVA's Homeless Veterans Program Nov. 18, 2024, in Frankfort, KY. The checks were in the amount of \$3,000 for each.

Visit with Secretary of the VA





Executive Director Mark Bowman and members of National Association of State Veterans Homes executive committee met with the Secretary of the VA Denis McDonogh and his team to discuss critical issues that state veterans homes are facing. Brig. Gen. Les Beavers, U.S. Army retired, welcomed Secretary McDonogh as one of the Commonwealth's newest Kentucky Colonels. Beavers represented the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs and presented the certificate as a token of appreciation for the Secretary's efforts on behalf of all veterans.

Veteran's Day





KDVA was honored to attend the World War I Monument rededication at Veterans Park, Lexington, KY, Nov. 11, 2024.

October

Campbellsville Benefits Claims Clinic



KDVA held a Benefits Claims Clinic in the Taylor County Public Library, Campbellsville, KY on Oct. 25, 2024. KDVA was able to assist 24 veterans and family members with VA claims. The Taylor County Library played a huge role in the success of the event.

KDVA 5K Run Walk





KDVA held the annual 5K Run Walk at Iroquois Park in Louisville, KY, Oct. 19, 2024. To see more of the photos visit our Facebook page or view the album on our website under Gallery: [here](#).

October: Breast Cancer and Domestic Violence Awareness Month



On Friday Oct. 18, 2024, Frankfort KDVA staff wore pink and purple in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month in Frankfort, KY. The colors symbolize bringing

awareness: purple is to bring an increase of awareness to domestic violence and pink is to increase awareness of breast cancer.

Strong Women, Strong Coffee



Dina Parrott, KDVA Women Veterans Coordinator, participated in a Strong Women Strong Coffee event which the Women Business Center hosts monthly in Lexington, Oct. 15, 2024. WBC Executive Director Devanny King is working with Dina to collaborate for women veteran events.

KDVA Women Veterans Coordinator Media Outreach





Dina Parrott, KDVA Women Veterans Program Coordinator met with Susie Patrick from Fox56 on Oct. 11, 2024, in Lexington, KY. They discussed advertising and general marketing efforts to help improve KDVA's reach to veterans of Kentucky.

New Veteran Treatment Center Serving Tennessee and Kentucky Veterans





Commissioner Allen attended the grand opening of the new veteran treatment center (VTC) in Clarksville, TN, October 9, 2024. The new VTC provides drug intervention, suicide prevention and mental health care for Ft. Campbell's and surrounding KY/TN counties' military soldiers and veterans.

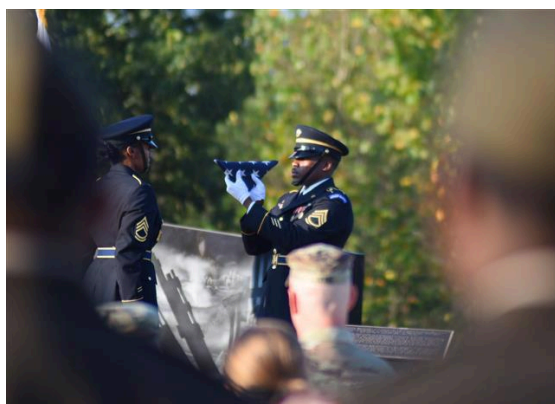
Klekamp Open House



The Klekamp Open House in Cincinnati reached Northern Kentuckians on Oct. 2, 2024, during the reveal of the renovated Klekamp Family Military and Veterans Center. Over 20 women veterans stopped by the KDVA table to learn what their state VA does for them.

September

Patriot Day Ceremony



A Patriot Day Ceremony was held at the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central in Radcliff, Kentucky, September 11, 2024 to pay respects and honor those who died in the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001. Fort Knox service members performed a flag fold and wreath laying during the event.



The KDVA Benefits Field Representative II, Sherrie Sellers, along with two fellow employees, Hope King and Amber Roy, attended the Fort Campbell Annual Retiree Appreciation Day hosted by Fort Campbell Personnel Services Division at the Soldier Support Center, Ft. Campbell, KY on September 21, 2024. The purpose of this event was to keep retired service members, and their Families informed about any changes to their benefits and privileges.

There were dozens of agencies and vendors there to provide information and services, such as, DEERS/ID Cards, VA claims and benefits, veterans treatment courts, veteran cemeteries, patient advocate, and healthcare needs to include: flu, pneumonia, RSV, shingles vaccinations and more. According to the stats, there were over 300 retirees/veterans present. KDVA representatives were able to answer numerous questions and give direction for other resources.

Flag Presentation to Radcliff Veterans Center



World War II and D-Day Veteran, SGM (Ret) William Facemire's daughter and family presented a flag which flew over Normandy on June 6, 2024, the 80th anniversary of DDay. They presented the flag to the staff of Carl M. Brashear, Radcliff Veterans Center (RVC) as a token of their appreciation for the great care provided to Mr. Facemire.

August

2024 KDVA State Commanders Conference





On August 29th and 30th, KDVA held its annual State Commanders Conference at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Lexington, Kentucky. The conference had several federal, state and local leaders as well as Veterans Affairs and Veteran Service Organization leaders in attendance. Panels and speakers discussed various topics and challenges veterans face and benefits available to them.

Kentucky State Fair





KDVA, Hyperbaric Oxygen Treatment for Kentucky Veterans (HBOT), Brain Injury Association of America, attended the Kentucky State Fair to connect with veterans on the Military Appreciation Day August 19, 2024.

July

VFW National Convention





The Veterans of Foreign Wars celebrated their 125th National Convention at the international convention center in Louisville, KY, July 29, 2024. Keynote speakers during the convention include Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough, Governor Andy Beshear, Senator Rand Paul, and Representative Morgan McGarvey. VFW National Commander Duane Sarmiento recognized Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., the last Vietnam veteran in the Senate, with the Commander-in-Chief Gold Merit of Achievement and others during the session.

Women Veterans of Radcliff Veteran Center: Spa, Tea and Cupcakes





Dina Parrott, KDVA Women Veterans Program Coordinator, visited the Radcliff Veteran Center with women veteran volunteers to provide spa packages and conversation over tea and cupcakes to women veteran residents July 16, 2024. The women veterans they visited are Dorothy "Dottie" Malone and Barbara Boylan. Malone is 93 years old; she served 23 years in the Army and had many stories to share about her challenges being female and black in the service when it was still segregated. Boylan is 81 years old and she served in the Army reserves for 2 years.

NABVETS/Louisville VAMC

Joint Town Hall Event



The National Association of Black Veterans Chapter 125 (NABVETS #125) hosted a joint townhall event with the Louisville Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) team at the John Black Community Center in La Grange, KY, July 23, 2024. The event consisted of regional VA, VAMC and outreach keynote speakers, VA benefits and medical outreach representatives as well as local community partners and KDVA veterans benefit field years helping veterans find and retain their homes in their time of vulnerability and need. representatives. The townhall was coordinated by NABVETS Chapter #125 Commander Alma Wooley and Louisville VAMC outreach coordinator Mark Childress.

June

2024 Women Veterans State Conference



KDVA held the annual Women Veterans State Conference at the University of Louisville Shelby Campus Conference Center in Louisville, KY, June 25, 2024. With choice words of motivate, elevate and celebrate at the core of the conference, KDVA had several speakers and activities to celebrate our Kentucky Women Veterans. The topics covered included everything from benefits for women to concerns they face.

80th anniversary of D-Day



18 World War II veterans had the opportunity fly in a 1944 B-25 Bomber to commemorate the 80th anniversary of D-Day. The event was held at Bowman Field in Louisville, KY,

June 6, 2024. Honor Flight Bluegrass sponsored the event through a grant of \$25,000 from the Kentucky Veterans Program Trust Fund and with the help of community volunteers and sponsors like Mission BBQ and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

Military Related Students Success Forum





As a part of a partnership between KDVA and the Council on Postsecondary Education, we hosted a Military Related Students Success Forum at UoL on Jun 18, 2024. Eleven public institutions, and three private institutions participated in this event. The forum's aim was to enhance and equip military related students directors/coordinator's for every public university or college in Kentucky. Many organizations shared relevant resources and information to help students lead to success including employment, wellness, training, free books and more.

May

2024 Memorial Day Weekend Salute



KDVA and the Asian American/Pacific Islander ERG hosted a wreath laying ceremony at the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort, KY, May 24, 2024. Governor Andy Beshear as the keynote speaker, spoke about the importance of Memorial Day paying our respects to the veterans no longer with us.

Radcliff Veterans Center Military Awards Ceremony





Radcliff Veterans Center Service Awards Ceremony, Tuesday, April 9, 2024 honoring veterans with awards they earned during their service.

KDVA sponsors and attends 9th Annual Kentucky Workforce Summit



Everett Bracken, acting director State Programs, Dina Parrott, Women Veterans Program coordinator, attended the 9th Annual Workforce Summit in Lexington, KY, May 14, 2024. KDVA was a sponsor for this event. This was a great networking opportunity to learn about the job market for transitioning veterans from military to private sector as agencies across the state sponsored and attended the event. Additionally, U.S. Army Danny Jennejohn and U.S. Army Karl Fratzke joined KDVA at the event as special guests.

Miss America visits Radcliff

Veterans Center Veterans



The 2024 Miss America, Madison Marsh, visited veterans of the Carl M. Brashear Radcliff Veterans Center, May 2, 2024. Marsh is an Active Duty Air Force member and was able to honor the two Air Force women veterans at RVC and meet and greet with all the veterans in attendance.

April

KVCSE Received NCA Stewardship Award





On April 15, 2024, Glenn Powers, Deputy Under Secretary for Field Programs, presented Kentucky Veteran Cemetery South East (KVCSE) the National Cemetery Administration's (NCA) Stewardship Award in recognition of superior performance results as verified during the NCA-led compliance review on April 25, 2023. NCA recognizes State and Tribal Veterans Cemeteries that meet specific targets for applicable operational requirements. To qualify for the Stewardship Award, a cemetery must meet 100 percent of applicable critical priority standards, at least 90 percent of high priority standards, and at least 85 percent of medium priority standards. Kentucky Veterans Cemetery South East achieved this high performance and is one of the few state veterans cemeteries in the country to be awarded this recognition.



Gov. Beshear recognizes Pillar of Excellence Award for RVC's Red Carpet Program



Governor Andy Beshear recognized some of Carl M Brashear Radcliff Veteran Center veteran residents during the weekly Team Kentucky update April 11, 2024. This recognition was in relation to the Abraham Lincoln Pillar of Excellence Award RVC received for their Red-Carpet Program which greets new residents with a warm welcome upon arriving to their Veteran Center



2024 Governor's Minority Management Trainee Program Graduation

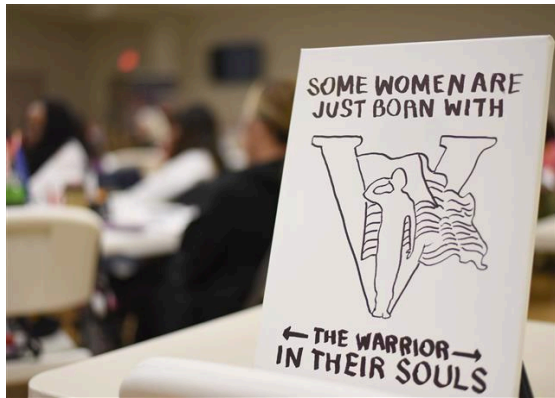




KDVA had two GMMTP candidates graduate from the 2024 Governor's Minority Management Trainee Program which held its Graduation Ceremony in Frankfort, KY, April 24, 2024. They are US Army Veteran/Sergeant First Class (Retired) Stephen Buford, Benefits Division Director, and Ms. Hope King, Benefits Division's West Regional Administrators. Both individuals are KDVA's first GMMTP graduates.

March

KDVA "She is a Veteran" Event



On Saturday March 2, 2024, KDVA held the "She is a Veteran" women veterans event at the American Legion Hardin Post 113 in Elizabethtown, KY. The event had guest speakers and interactive discussions on issues women veterans face. The event ended with a "Sip and Paint" activity and throughout the day allowed women veterans to network and connect with one another. With more details to come, the next event is our Women

Veterans State Conference which will be June 25. Follow our page for updates and or join the private Facebook group pinned on our page if you're a woman veteran.

February

"A Veteran's Forum" *Ashland, KY*





KDVA in partnership with the VA Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (CFBNP) hosted "A Veteran's Forum" on February 24, 2024, in Ashland, KY. This event offered several resources and discussions to veterans including small business startups, suicide prevention, KDVA and VA benefits available to them and how to apply for them, and more. During the event there were clothing and cold weather giveaways to veterans, free haircuts, and several tables with information on various resources available to veterans.

NASVH





National Association of State Veterans Homes (NASVH) Past President Mark Bowman meets with VA Secretary McDonough to discuss challenges that state veterans homes are facing as well as top priorities requiring the VA's collaboration.



January



Women Veterans Outreach Event Hardin County



Dina Parrott, KDVA Women Veterans coordinator, did a women veterans outreach event in Hardin County, January 17, 2024. These outreach events allow women veterans to come together and connect with each other and discuss issues facing women veterans. If you're a woman veteran and would like to learn more about the program and events please join the private Kentucky Women Veterans Facebook Group pinned at the top of our Facebook Page or click [here](#).

I Support Veterans License Plates



Who is eligible

Any owner of a noncommercial motor vehicle required to be registered for use on Kentucky Highways.

Steps Requirement

Application must be made at your local County Clerk's office. Upon receipt of this plate, your regular (special) issue license plate must be turned in or issued to another vehicle.

Decal Expires Customer's Birth Month

\$10.00 of the initial and \$5.00 of the renewal registration fee goes to the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs. For more information, please visit <http://veterans.ky.gov> . This plate is available for personalization with an additional \$25.00 fee annually. Personalization is limited to a maximum of 5 characters.

Relevant KRS [186.162](#)

Military Women's Memorial "Tell Her Story"



The Military Women's Memorial (MWM) is the only major national memorial honoring all servicewomen – past, present and future. The MWM honors more than 3 million women who served and continue to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces since the American Revolution.

Women's military service should be no less recognized than men's but historically the focus of history and preservation has been on men.

Why it's Important to Register?

EVERY STORY is important, EVERY STORY deserves to be told. Yet we have lost most of our WWI women veterans and our WWII women are fast coming to their final chapter. What history we have not recorded will be lost with them. We absolutely CANNOT let another generation go by without ensuring that our collective contributions are captured and remembered.

Please REGISTER HERE : www.womensmemorial.org

There is no cost to register! You can register any woman you know who is in or has served in the military. Let's keep "HER-Story alive!"

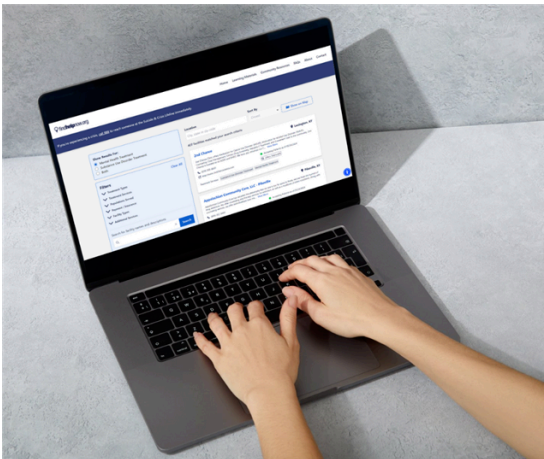
Useful VA Links

- **VA Housing Assistance Page** - Information about home loans, eligibility, interest rates reductions and other related topics: <https://www.va.gov/housing-assistance/>
- **National Center for PTSD** - Provides information and resources to veterans, care providers and organizations relating PTSD: <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/>
- **Covid-19 Vaccine Updates** - Latest updates on Covid-19 guidance and vaccinations: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/>
- **VA Life Insurance (VALife)** - <https://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/valife.asp>
- **Veterans Readiness and Employment (VR&E)** - job training, education, employment coaching, etc.: <https://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/index.asp>

Upcoming Veterans Dates and Events

- National Veterans & Military Family Month (January)
-

Resources for Veterans



At the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs, we are committed to supporting our veterans with the resources they need.

Discover a wealth of services and support options through [FindHelpNow.org](https://www.findhelpnow.org) - your go-to resource for immediate assistance.

Whether you're looking for mental health support, housing assistance, or employment resources, [FindHelpNow.org](https://www.findhelpnow.org) has got you covered! Be sure to look for the "Veterans/Military" population filters

available. The website displays near real-time available openings at substance use disorder and mental health facilities, recovery houses, naloxone distribution sites, and social services resources. Visit [FindHelpNow.org](https://www.findhelpnow.org) today to explore these enhanced resources and find the support you need! See YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWfaLHz_kk



Telehealth Urgent Care Services are available:

Monday thru Friday From 8AM-6PM

502-287-4000 / 800-376-8387

Select Option #3, then 1 for primary care nurse

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
Robley Rex VA Medical Center
Louisville, Kentucky

Be seen at home or on-the-go

Telehealth Urgent Care Service at the Robley Rex VA Medical Center

Care you can get with Telehealth:

- Influenza, Covid-19
- Prescription Management
- Urgent care issues like colds, coughs, and stomach aches
- Back pain
- Urinary symptoms
- Dental Pain
- Sore throat
- Ear pain
- Arthritis
- Gout

Telehealth Advantages

- Can be seen anywhere if you have internet or access to a phone.
- Time flexibility
- Avoid the ED waiting room
- Friendly and professional staff

 **Veterans
Crisis Line**
DIAL 988 then PRESS 1

Be seen at home or on-the-go with Robley Rex VA Medical Center Telehealth Urgent Care Service. Available Monday thru Friday from 8AM - 6PM. Call (502) 287-4000 or (800) 376-8387. Select Option “#3”, then Option “1” for primary care nurse.

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