

**Vol.5, No.1  
January 2026**

# **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 2025. At 27 years, KDVA is in a great position amongst the veteran community and will continue to strive to connect with and welcome more veterans to our 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 2026!

HOOAH!

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



## Upcoming Events

**Register now!**

## **JOB SEEKERS**

**Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs**  
*presents*

# **Commonwealth of Kentucky's Virtual Job Fair**

**Employer Cost: Zero | Job Candidate Cost: Zero**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Wednesday, January 21**

**10:00 AM - 1:00 PM EST**



**10-11 AM *Only* Veterans + Military Families**

**11 AM - 1 PM All Job Candidates**

*\*Including Veterans and Military Families*

*The future 2025 schedule is below (3rd Wednesday of each month):*

**February 18, 2026**

**March 18, 2026**

**April 15, 2026**

**May 20, 2026**

Brought to you by

**TEAM  
KENTUCKY**

**TEAM  
KENTUCKY**  
KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT  
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Employers register here: <https://pvapi.premiervirtual.com/s/dA1aYd>

Job Seekers register here: <https://pvapi.premiervirtual.com/s/8w4zZd>



# Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

*presents*

*2nd Annual*

## Veteran and Military Family Conference

### Wednesday February 4, 2026

### 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



Register by Clicking Here



“She Served. She Deserves.”

## Women Veterans Built for Bravery, Driven by Purpose

Women Veterans have unmistakable power; accelerating progress everywhere they serve. Join us in celebrating Women’s History Month with Keynote speaker: Evelyn Astrid Knight



Friday  
March 6, 2026 | Corvette Museum  
0900-1300 | Bowling Green, KY



To register, visit the eventbrite link here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/she-served-she-deserves-tickets-1606589706059?aff=oddtcreator>

**December**

## Wreath Laying Ceremony Frankfort Old Capitol





KDVA held a wreath laying ceremony to kick off the Wreaths Across America at the Old Capitol Building Dec. 11, 2025 in Frankfort, KY. Over the next few days leading up to Dec. 14th, wreaths will be lain on veterans' grave stones at national and state cemeteries across the nation.

## Operation Christmas Cards Veteran Centers



At the Radcliff Veterans Center, families and staff packed shoeboxes filled with gifts to give to children around the world for Christmas as part of Operation Christmas Child. The

goal was to get 6 shoeboxes together and they were able to get 68 boxes together. Chaplain Louis Williams is funding the shipping costs and contributed an additional 52 packed shoeboxes.

---

## Hardin County Women Veterans Outreach



KDVA's Women Veteran Ambassador, Sharon Farris held a meetup on behalf of KDVA, on Saturday Dec. 6, 2025 in Hardin County. There were 13 women veterans who attended. They enjoyed good food and fabulous conversations.

---

## Christmas Cards for Vets in Veteran Centers



Barbara Fox (Retired Veteran) and her husband Steve (Retired Army Veteran) and their friend Frank (Retired Navy Veteran) delivered holiday cards for veterans to the KDVA Headquarters Office in Frankfort, KY. They collected over 500 Christmas cards and then had friends and family sign them to be distributed to the Veterans at our Centers.

## Radcliff Veterans Center Military Awards Ceremony





Radcliff Veterans Center Service Awards Ceremony honored veterans with awards they earned during their service.

## Homeless Veterans Program donated to the Veterans Rural Outreach of Shelbyville



Tracye Estes and Andrew Edwards, Homeless Veterans Program, brought backpacks that included cold-weather gear including hats, gloves, and more to donate to the Veterans Rural Outreach in Shelbyville, KY, Dec. 3, 2025. VRO is currently helping 15 homeless veterans in their transitional housing program. To learn more about VRO visit their website at [www.VROKY.org](http://www.VROKY.org)

## U.S. Global Leadership Coalition 2025 Tribute Award Recognition for Kentucky members of Veterans For Smart Power



“Our own Commissioner Allen, Kentucky Veterans Program Trust Fund Board member Dave Jarrett and fellow Commonwealth/ national veteran members of the Veterans for Smart Power were recognized by U.S. Global Leadership Coalition as this year’s 2025 Tribute Award recipients, as part of recognizing “America’s Veterans” and their vital role in strengthening America’s global leadership. This special honor was celebrated at USGLC’s signature event, A Tribute to Partnership & Impact: USGLC at 30, on December 9,2025 in Washington, D.C.”

**November**

**250th U.S. Marine Corps Birthday**



Governor Andy Beshear joined KDVA in celebrating the 250th Birthday for the United States Marine Corps at the Kentucky Historical Society in Frankfort, KY, Nov. 10, 2025.

## KDVA recognized by Governor Beshear for receiving 5th Pillar Award



Governor Andy Beshear recognized KDVA during the Team Kentucky Update Nov. 13, 2025, for receiving the VA Abraham Lincoln Pillar of Excellence Award for the fifth year in a row. KDVA's Benefits team is the recipient for this year's Pillar Award.

## Veteran's Day



KDVA hosted a Veterans Day Celebration at the Catholic Enrichment Center in Louisville, KY, Nov. 5, 2025. The event featured several vendors and booths information and education on resources available to veterans as well as some healthcare services.



KDVA held a Homeless Veterans Standdown event in Shepherdsville, KY, at the American Legion KY Post 157, Nov. 15, 2025. The event brought together several resources, services, and partners to assist those at risk of homelessness.

**October**

**Trunk or Treat**





Check out some of the pictures from our Veterans Centers' staff and residents. Always a great time to be had.

## KDVA 5K Run Walk



Oct. 11, 2025, KDVA held the 5th annual 5K Run Walk for the Homeless Veterans Program in the E.P. Tom Sawyer State Park in Louisville, KY. A heartfelt thank you to all the runners, volunteers, and supporters who made the 5K for our veterans a success.

## Homeless Veterans Program receives donations ahead of Shepherdsville Standdown



The Homeless Veterans Program received various donations in the form of clothing, hygiene products and more on Oct. 29, 2025, in Frankfort, KY. Special thanks to Gina Mickelson (center), Director of Growth Initiative- Lifeline Homecare who provided the donations.



## September



## Women Veterans Health Open House





The Robley Rex VA Medical Center hosted its annual Women’s Health Open House on September 27, welcoming more than 50 women Veterans from across the region. The event featured informational sessions, health resources, and opportunities for Veterans to connect directly with providers and community partners. Dina Parrott, Women Veterans Program Coordinator for the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs (KDVA), greeted attendees and hosted a resource table to share information about KDVA’s programs, benefits, and upcoming events.

“This open house is a wonderful opportunity to connect with women Veterans where they are,” Parrott said. “It’s always powerful to see women come together, learn about the resources available to them, and know they are supported by both KDVA and the VA.”

The open house reflected the VA’s commitment to providing comprehensive, womencentered care and underscored KDVA’s mission to advocate for and serve Kentucky’s women Veterans.

## Patriot Day Ceremony





For the 24th anniversary of the September 11th attacks, a Patriot Day ceremony was held at the 9/11 Memorial at the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central, in Radcliff, KY, September 11, 2025.

## Lethal Means Safety Summit



KDVA held a Lethal Means Safety Summit at The Parklands in Louisville, KY, Sept. 24, 2025. The event focused on suicide prevention, methods to aid in prevention and clinicianonly classes driven to improve care for veterans across the Commonwealth.

## Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West, Missing in America Project





Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West interred nine veterans in coordination with the Missing In America Project (MIAP) on Sept. 24, 2025, Hopkinsville, KY.

"The purpose of the MIA Project is to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations. To provide honor and respect to those who have served this country by securing a final resting place for these forgotten heroes." (Website mission statement)

For more information, visit their website here: <https://www.miap.us/>

## KDVA Earns Fifth Straight VA Abraham Lincoln Pillars of Excellence Award



The KDVA team and Commonwealth of Kentucky received its fifth consecutive award for customer service during the 2025 National Association of State Directors of Veteran Affairs (NASDVA) Annual training Conference in Chyenne, WY. KDVA received the award for its regional benefits claim clinics initiative. The claim clinics are KDVA latest outreach event initiative which allow KDVA Benefits Division's Veteran Benefits Field Representatives (VBFRs) and federal/state partners to go out and meet veterans and families and bring VA services to their local area. The "Pillar Award" is a Department of Veterans Affairs program that recognizes state and territory programs for their outstanding support and service to veterans and their families. KDVA has received at least one award every year since 2021. In addition to the award ceremony, the KDVA delegates participated in several activities to include: Commissioner Allen participated as panelist in a Department of Defense SkillsBridge/Veteran Employment Panel, Women Veteran Program Coordinator received "Most Improved" award from Women Veteran Memorial (WVM) for efforts to register

women veterans into WVM historical registrar, and Executive Director Mark Bowman, and past NASVH president, participated in a signing of Memorandum of Agreement ceremony between NASDVA and National Association of State Veterans Homes.

## August

### 2025 KDVA State Commanders Conference





On August 28th and 29th, 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.

## Ambassador Award Recipients



KDVA is honored to recognize seven outstanding organizations and community partners and their remarkable contributions to the veteran community at the 5th Annual State

Commanders Conference in Lexington, KY on August 28, 2025. These recipients have not only significantly impacted the Commonwealth's veteran community but have also exemplified the spirit of being true "Ambassadors" for Team KDVA every day.

Congratulations to the following organizations:

- American Legion Post #67
- AMVETS Post #61 Riders
- Coldwell Banker McMahan
- Home Depot Store #2315
- National Veterans Legal Services Program
- Lifeline Homecare, Inc.
- NABVETS Tri-County Chapter #125

Each of these organizations have made a lasting impact on the veteran community and has shown unwavering dedication to serving our veterans. Thank you for your exceptional service and commitment.

## Pillar Award Recipients



Honored to recognize seven outstanding individuals and their remarkable contributions to the veteran community at the 5th Annual State Commanders Conference in Lexington, KY on August 28, 2025. These recipients have not only significantly impacted the Commonwealth's veteran community but have also exemplified the spirit of being true "Ambassadors" for Team KDVA every day.

Congratulations to the following awardees:

- Donna Borres
- LTC (Ret) John C. Gregory
- LTC (Ret) Robbin Higgins
- Karl Kealing
- Tim Martinez
- David Jarrett
- Lt. CDR (Ret) David Rummler

Each of these individuals has made a lasting impact on the veteran community and has shown unwavering dedication to serving our veterans. Thank you for your exceptional service and commitment.

## Kentucky State Fair



The Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs attended the Kentucky State Fair for Military Day on Aug. 17, 2025, in Louisville, KY. Staff shared information with veterans and military family members in attendance at the fair.

## Repatriation of PFC Rodger Fields



On Aug. 14, 2025, Private First Class Rodger Engle Fields was laid to rest in a repatriation service at Kentucky Veterans Cemetery South East in Hyden, KY.

**July**

# Bath County WWII/Korean War Veteran Recognition



Bath County's World War II/Korean War Veterans Recognition Ceremony, Owingsville, KY, Saturday, July 19, 2025. Citizens of Bath County gathered in Owingsville, KY to recognize the county's WWII/Korean War Veterans during Bath County's first annual veterans recognition ceremony. Governor Andy Beshear sent a personal letter to each family recognizing their veteran's service, representatives Senator Rand Paul, Senator McConnell offices as well as several state/local officials presented citations and letters of recognition honoring 71 of the county's war veterans. KDVA Commissioner Allen presented the families of the veterans a KDVA recognition certificate honoring each veteran's wartime service. The event was organized by Mr. and Mrs. Mike Cassidy.

## Commonwealth of Kentucky's Virtual Job Fair and the Secretariat Center





On July 22, 2025, Kentucky Edition on KET aired a segment talking about our growing Virtual Job Fair and featured one of the employers hosting job openings through the platform. Check out the story here (Time stamp 18:28 - 21:59):

<https://ket.org/program/kentucky-edition/july-22-2025/>

## Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central Under New Management



After 33 years in uniform, retired U.S. Army Command Sergeant Major Sherman Waters has found a new calling—one grounded in reverence, reflection, and service to those who've gone before him.

Waters has taken on the role of Veterans Cemetery Manager for the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Central in Radcliff, KY.

Waters joined the Army Reserve at just 17 years old. Although he briefly explored civilian opportunities, he quickly realized the structure, challenge, and camaraderie of active duty was where he belonged.

“There was just something missing in civilian jobs,” he said. “I didn’t feel that purpose.”

That changed in 1994 when he committed to fulltime active duty, setting in motion a distinguished military career spanning over three decades. Along the way, he raised a family—now grown, with children in both college and military service—and discovered a passion for mentorship, leadership, and personal discipline, especially through fitness.

When asked about the most pivotal moment in his career, Waters didn’t hesitate: Alaska.

From 1998 to 2001, stationed in what he described as a tight-knit, family-like community, Waters found mentorship and a sense of direction during a time when he was unsure of his future.

“I was on the fence. I didn’t have a plan,” he said. “But the people there embraced me. They told me the truth: it wasn’t the Army holding me back—it was me.”

That moment sparked a transformation. Waters committed himself to professional development, sought out challenging roles, and developed a mindset that propelled him through the ranks. “I decided I wouldn’t wait for opportunity—I’d go out and earn it.”

After retiring from Fort Knox on May 31, 2025—where he served as Garrison Command Sergeant Major—Waters used the Army’s Career Skills Program to intentionally shift from leadership to learning. For three months, he worked under a junior enlisted leader in a civilian role, embracing humility and transition.

“I needed to learn how to be a great follower again,” he said.

Seeing a job opening at the cemetery, he took it as a sign—and what started as unfamiliar territory has quickly become a role filled with purpose.

“I truly feel honored to help lay veterans to rest with dignity,” he said. “It’s not just a job—it’s a responsibility.”

Waters is quick to praise the team at his cemetery—both administrative staff and caretakers in the field—who treat every service with the solemn respect it deserves.

“The motto here is simple: ‘You only get one chance to do it right,’” he said. “And we live by that.”

For veterans and families considering the use of our state veterans cemetery, Waters offers both reassurance and pride: “We will treat your loved one with honor. This is sacred work. And we do not take it lightly.”

---

**National Association of County  
Veterans Service Officers**



National Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO) National Convention/VA-KDVA Benefits Veterans Claims Clinic, Louisville, KY, Sunday-Wednesday, July 13-16, 2025. NACVSO held their annual convention in Louisville, KY. Over 500 NACVSO members were attendance, along with another 500 attending virtual. Keynote speakers for the convention included VA Deputy Secretary Lawrence and top VA federal officials, a video message from Governor Beshear, and a welcome from KDVA Commissioner Allen. NACVSO partnered with KDVA, along with the Louisville's VA Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration offices, to conduct a three-day veteran claims clinic during the convention. Over 100 veterans participated in the claims clinic. KDVA Office of Kentucky Veterans Services (OKVS) and its Benefits Division worked with NACVSO Convention leadership and planning team to prepare for the upcoming NACVSO national convention. KDVA looks to partner with NACVSO in the future.

**June**

# 2025 Women Veterans State Conference and Retreat



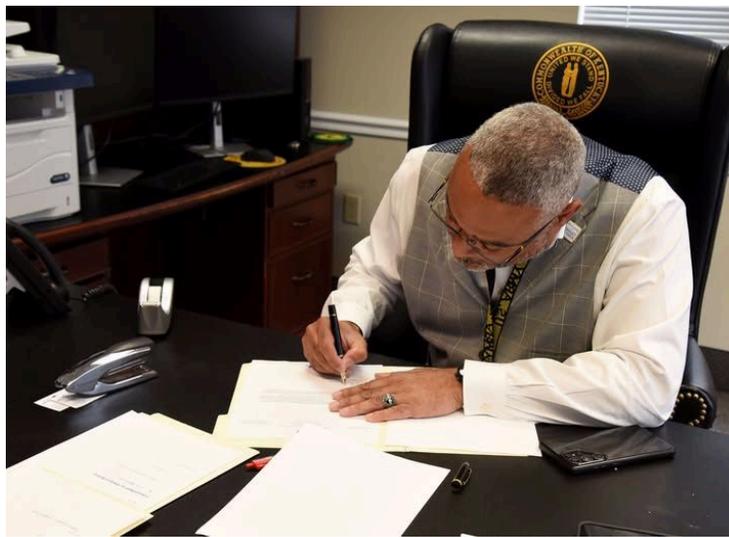
From June 6 to June 8, 2025, KDVA held its Women Veterans Conference and Retreat at the General Butler State Resort Park, in Carrollton, KY. There were several activities including yoga, hiking, paint & sip session, animal therapy and more for the women to partake in. It was a great networking opportunity for all who attended. (Photos by Olivia Adkins park photographer, and KDVA Staff)



Tracye Estes and members of Corning showcase some of the items Corning has gathered to donate to the program in Harrodsburg, KY, June 30, 2025. Corning donated clothing and hygiene products to the Homeless Veterans Program to contribute to care kits for the veterans in need.

**May**

**\$151K Student Loan Repayments  
Granted to 18 KDVA Nurses**



On Thursday, May 29, 2025, Commissioner Allen signs congratulatory letters to 18 KDVA Veterans Centers nurses receiving a total of \$151,613.29 in student loan repayments. KDVA offers a Veterans Affairs Nurse Loan Repayment Program (VANLRP) for registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) employed by KDVA. This program purpose is to help recruit and retain nurses within the KDVA system, specifically within state veterans' nursing homes as well as assisting dedicated KDVA employees to repay their student loans. The program provides up to \$10,000 per year, or 25% of the qualifying applicant's loan balance, whichever is less, for a maximum of four years.

For more information about the program, or employment opportunities at KDVA, reach out to a representative at (502) 564-9203 or visit our website: [veterans.ky.gov](http://veterans.ky.gov)

## 2025 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 22, 2025. Lt. Governor Jacqueline Coleman as the keynote speaker, spoke about the importance of Memorial Day paying our respects to the veterans no longer with us.

## Community and Faith-Based Veterans Forum



On May 17, 2025, KDVA hosted the annual Faith-Based Veterans Forum in Louisville, KY. The event hosted several local community leaders as speakers, breakout sessions on suicide prevention, financial practices, legal resources and more available to veterans. Additionally, Deputy Commissioner Juan Renaud presented a challenge coin to a Vietnam Veteran in attendance.

## Memorial Day State Veteran Cemeteries

Check out some of the pics from our State Veterans Cemeteries for Memorial Day!





## Women Veterans Outreach in Bullitt County

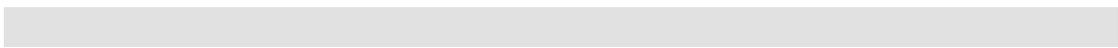




On April 25, the Bullitt County Chamber of Commerce hosted its Women in Business Luncheon in Shepherdsville, Kentucky, with the theme "Balancing the Race of Life – Derby Style." The event brought together local professionals for an afternoon of networking and inspiration centered around managing the fast pace of modern life. Among the panelists was Dina Parrott, representing the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs Women Veterans Program. She shared valuable insights on achieving work-life balance and highlighted the unique challenges and strengths of women veterans navigating career and personal commitments.



## April



### Homeless Veterans Program Receives Blankets, Donates to Little Homes of Shelbyville





Tracye Estes, KDVA Homeless Veterans Program coordinator, delivered the donations and care kits to Brady Wright, Veterans Rural Outreach program director, in Shelbyville, KY. The VRO has Transitional Housing for homeless veterans.

## Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West and Missing in America Project reclaimed 4 Veterans



Monday April 28th, Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West, in Hopkinsville, Kentucky had the honor of interring 4 individuals that were discovered unclaimed at Haley-McGinnis Funeral Home & Crematory, in Owensboro, Kentucky by Fred & Claudia Behnke with the Missing in America Project.

- Army Captain George M. McCulloch (06/07/1921 – 01/11/2003), a World War II veteran sat unclaimed for 22 years, 3 months and 17 days. He was 81 years old at the time of his death.

- Navy Seaman Apprentice FrankGolfinos Jr. (09/12/1955 – 03/04/2024), a Vietnam veteran who served on the USS Stein, sat unclaimed for 1 year, 1 month, and 24 days. He was 68 years old at the time of his death.
- Army Private Richard Albert Sherk (06/12/1950 – 10/12/2018), a Vietnam era veteran, sat unclaimed for 6 years, 6 months and 17 days. He was 68 years old at the time of his death.
- Tameka Schroader Newton (05/24/1961 – 08/03/2020), the spouse of Navy Cryptologic Technician Second Class Roger Paul Newton (deceased, location unknown), who served with the US Naval Security Group, sat unclaimed for 3 years, 8 months and 5 days. She was 59 years old at the time of her death.

Patriot Guard Riders of Kentucky, as well as various groups from Kentucky and Tennessee escorted the hearse carrying these veterans and dependent to the committal shelter at Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West. They then lined the sidewalks with American flags as they were escorted by military personnel to the service under the shelter.

These 4 individuals were honored by having custom wooden urns made for them by students of the Henderson County High School Career & Technical Education Unit Carpentry Class. They each had a custom brass nameplate, and emblem identifying their respective branches of service, with an American flag representing the dependent.

The service included guest speakers, KDVA Commissioner, LTC (RET) Whitney P. Allen Jr., State Representative J.T. Payne, & Army Chaplin CPT Donald Howard, alongside Fred Behnke, of the Missing in America Project, and Kim Ebeling, Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West Manager. The 101st Airborne Division honored these individuals with full military honors, as well as a live bugler, SSG Jeremy Rhoades, from the 101st Airborne Band.

The 101st Airborne Division, along with Active-Duty Navy Chiefs, honored these veterans by completing flag folds. Accepting the flags, with no family present, Funeral Director Kamryn Losgsdon, of Haley-McGinnis Funeral, Henderson County High School Army Instructor SGT (RET) Ashley Wolfe, J.T. Payne, State Representative, & Tony Rutledge Henderson County High School Carpentry Instructor.

## Women Veterans Outreach Event





Dina Parrott, Women Veteran Program Coordinator for the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs (KDVA), recently hosted a Women Veterans' Meet-Up in Shepherdsville, KY. The event was held at the scenic Active Heroes retreat center, generously opened by Cortney Burden, President of Active Heroes.

Cortney, a passionate advocate for veterans and a dedicated leader in Bullitt County, welcomed attendees to the peaceful camping grounds, setting the tone for a day filled with connection and camaraderie. She and fellow veteran Debi Baldwin formed a meaningful bond during the event, inspiring plans to continue building a strong, supportive community for women veterans in the area.

Mayor Jose Cubero of Shepherdsville also attended the meet-up and shared his enthusiasm for the work being done by KDVA's program coordinator, ambassador team, and the president of Active Heroes. He pledged his support for honoring local women veterans by working toward the installation of banners throughout the county, celebrating their service and sacrifice.

This powerful gathering marked a step forward in recognizing and uplifting women veterans in Bullitt County—and it's only the beginning.

**March**

# Vietnam War Veterans Day Ceremony at Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial



Vietnam Veterans, Gold Star Families and members of the Frankfort community gather at the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial to celebrate Vietnam Veterans Day on Saturday, March 29, 2029. VFW 4075 and Ms. Edna Taylor organized the annual event to recognize the Commonwealth's Vietnam War veterans, both living and deceased. VFW 4075 Commander Ronnie Conquest served as the event's master of ceremonies.

Commissioner Whitney Allen and Vietnam Veteran Larry Montgomery were the keynote speakers, Retired Brigadier General Les Beavers read Governor Beshear's proclamation honor Vietnam Veterans and local school and JROTC programs served as color guards and ceremonial roles at the event. Following the event, the community was invited to VFW Post 4075 for lunch and refreshments. Pictures courtesy of Mr. Andrew H. Drane and KDVA Vietnam Veterans, Gold Star Families and members of the Frankfort community gather at the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial to celebrate Vietnam Veterans Day on Saturday, March 29, 2029.

VFW 4075 and Ms. Edna Taylor organized the annual event to recognize the Commonwealth's Vietnam War veterans, both living and deceased. VFW 4075 Commander Ronnie Conquest served as the event's master of ceremonies. Commissioner Whitney Allen and Vietnam Veteran Larry Montgomery were the keynote speakers, Retired Brigadier General Les Beavers read Governor Beshear's proclamation honor Vietnam Veterans and local school and JROTC programs served as color guards and ceremonial roles at the event. Following the event, the community was invited to VFW Post 4075 for lunch and refreshments. Pictures courtesy of Mr. Andrew H. Drane and KDVA

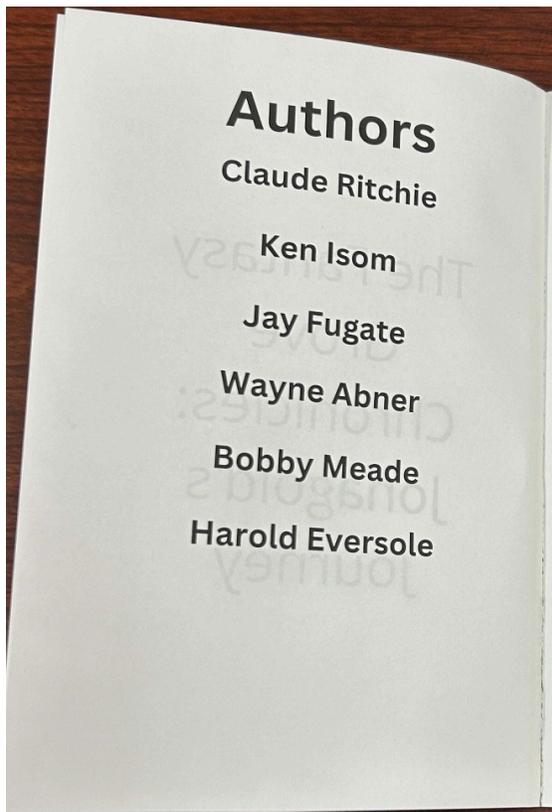
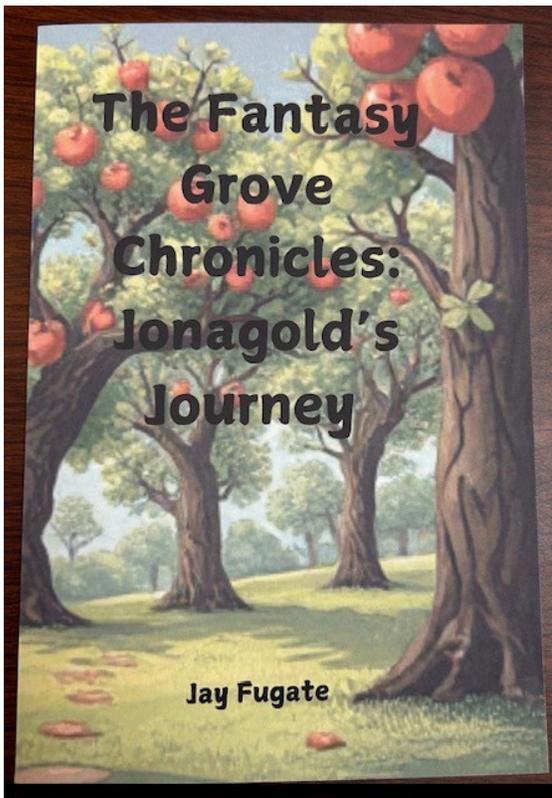
## Women History Month



Dina Parrott, KDVA Women Veterans Program Coordinator, gathered 10 women veterans to attend and be recognized by the Lt. Governor at the Women History Month Ceremony at the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort, KY, March 10, 2025. Governor Beshear signed a proclamation designating March as Women History Month in KY.

**February**

**Veterans and Staff of EKVC Co-Author Book**



*Article by: James Fugate and Nikki Begley, EKVC Staff*

The journey of creating our story began on a series of Saturdays, when a small group of residents gathered to brainstorm ideas for a new book. At first, it was just a handful of us, but as we continued meeting, more and more residents became interested in joining the process. Even those who typically didn't engage in group activities found themselves drawn in by the creative energy and camaraderie of the group. By the end of our meetings, five residents had contributed the majority of the ideas, shaping the worldbuilding, conflicts, and resolutions that would form the backbone of our story.

It was fascinating to see how the process brought together people who might not usually interact. Some residents who typically kept to themselves began participating actively in

the discussions, offering suggestions and feedback. This collaboration forged new relationships between people, as the shared experience of creating something together created a sense of connection that extended beyond the meetings.

As we worked through the ideas, we developed the format of the book over several more Saturdays. The group had a strong sense of ownership over the process, from brainstorming the plot and characters to fine-tuning details and resolving the story's central conflicts. We debated and refined ideas, offering input on everything from character motivations to the overall theme of the book. It was a truly collaborative effort, and everyone involved felt like their voice had been heard.

Once the initial drafts were written, the editing phase began. The residents reviewed the manuscript, providing feedback and suggestions to improve the flow and clarity of the story. This careful process of proofreading and revising helped us polish the manuscript into something we were all proud of. When the final version was ready, I took on the task of formatting the book using Canva, ensuring that the layout was visually appealing and ready for publication.

To celebrate the completion of the project, we organized a reading session where everyone involved, as well as other residents who had shown interest, could hear the finished story. There was a palpable sense of pride and accomplishment in the room as we read through the book. The residents who had participated were especially proud, seeing the story take shape from rough ideas to a fully realized, polished book.

The culmination of our collective effort came when we submitted the book for publication via Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP). It was an exciting moment for all of us. The entire process—from the initial brainstorming sessions to the finished book—had brought us closer together as a community. It wasn't just about creating a book; it was about building connections.

## Veteran and Military Families Conference





On Feb. 4, 2025, KDVA in held its Inaugural Veteran and Military Family Conference at the University of Louisville, Louisville, KY. The conference focused on three areas: health finance and education. Covering topics like KDVA initiatives, financial empowerment, and more.

## **KDVA welcomes the new General Counsel: Lily Chan Patteson**



Lily Chan Patteson is a seasoned legal and public service professional with a strong background in child support enforcement, policy development, and leadership. As the Commissioner of the Department of Income Support for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, she oversees a team of over 130 employees and manages an annual budget of \$80 million. Under her leadership, the Department has made significant strides in supporting families, collecting over \$323 million in child support annually and establishing over 202,000 child support orders each year.

Before becoming Commissioner, Lily served as the Deputy Commissioner and IV-D Child Support Director at the same department, where she played a key role in modernizing the state's child support database and navigating a critical data breach response. She has coordinated child support programs across all 120 counties in Kentucky and developed statewide policies impacting more than 240,000 cases. Her leadership has been instrumental in ensuring the financial support of Kentucky's children while fostering partnerships with non-profits and national organizations to further enhance services.

A passionate champion of diversity, Lily has been a vocal advocate for inclusive practices throughout her career. She chaired Kentucky's inaugural Employee Resource Group for Asian-American Pacific Islanders, creating a supportive network for minorities within state government. Her efforts have helped shape a more equitable and inclusive workplace, providing a platform for underrepresented groups to thrive in public service.

Lily's legal career began as an Assistant County Attorney in the Jefferson County Attorney's Office, where she prosecuted child support cases, before being promoted to Civil Circuit Division Chief. She later worked as an Associate Attorney at Bahe, Cook, Cantley & Nefzger, PLC, specializing in complex child support litigation, asset redistribution, and family law matters. Lily is also an adjunct law professor at the University of Louisville, where she taught trial and mediation skills. She is deeply committed to fostering diversity in legal education and public service, shaping the next generation of leaders who value inclusion and justice.

A graduate of the University of Louisville's Brandeis School of Law, Lily also holds a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from San Francisco State University. In addition, she is a certified mediator with extensive training in family law and general mediation.

Outside of her professional life, Lily is a devoted mother of three daughters who attend public school in Jefferson County, where she resides. Her husband, who has also dedicated much of his career to public service, has worked in areas including child protection services, environmental protection, and as a staff attorney for the Court of Appeals. Together, they are deeply committed to their community. Their shared passion for public service and advocacy for families shapes Lily's work and inspires her to fight for policies that support children and families across Kentucky.

Lily is passionate about serving Kentucky's families and advancing policies that promote fairness, inclusion, and support all residents of the Commonwealth.

---

**January**

---

**Homeless Veterans Program receives clothing  
donation from  
Daughters of the American Revolution**



The Crestwood Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution donated winter clothing: hats, scarves, gloves, socks and coats to the Homeless Veterans program, Jan. 16, 2025, in Frankfort, KY. The donations will be distributed throughout 52 counties in Eastern Kentucky to veterans in need of winter attire.

## Women Veterans Meetup at the Gathering Bakery in Radcliff



Women Veterans Meetup at the Gathering Bakery in Radcliff, Jan. 30, 2025. KDVA WV Ambassador for Hardin County, Sharon Farris organized a women veterans meetup. Dina coordinated for Tamara McIntosh, KDVA Legal Rep to discuss legal support for veterans. Dr. Roy Berwick and Jeff who work for the Legal Aid Society added to the legal conversation to assist women veterans to better understand legal services available to them and their families.

## Newscasts and Videos

--Governor Beshear's Weekly Update – KDVA Abraham Lincoln Pillar Award:  
<https://youtu.be/7vRW3sEN6mA?t=927>

--Military Funeral/Interment Ceremony of Korean War Veteran/MIA Repatriation Private First Class (PFC) Rodger Engle Fields, Kentucky Veterans Cemetery Southeast (KVC-SE), Haden, KY, Thursday, August 15, 2025: [MIA Korean War Veteran laid to rest in EKY](#)

--Honor Flight Bluegrass B25 Bomber Honor Flight for WWII/Korean War Veterans, Bowman Airfield, Louisville, KY, Saturday, August 09, 2025: [World War II B-25 bomber 'Miss Mitchell' lands in Louisville | whas11.com](#)

--WDRB Louisville Coverage of KDVA Inaugural Veterans and Military Families Conference: <https://youtu.be/7fAODlhSxDM>

--Union Soldier Statue Dedication, Madisonville, KY, Friday, November 07, 2025: [Union soldier statue unveiled in Madisonville](#)

--Commonwealth of Kentucky Virtual Job Fair  
<https://ket.org/program/kentucky-edition/july-22-2025/>

--Commonwealth's Wreaths Across America Ceremony (Frankfort): WYKT News - [https://youtu.be/O9lafagF\\_B8](https://youtu.be/O9lafagF_B8)

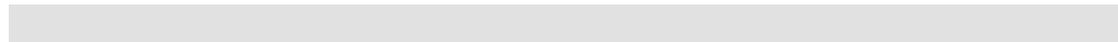
--Commonwealth's Wreaths Across America Ceremony (Frankfort): WYMT News - [Wreaths Across America ceremony honors Kentucky veterans](#)

--KY Veterans Cemetery West (Hopkinsville): Christian Count Now - [Over 5,000 wreaths to be placed at Kentucky Veterans Cemetery West in Hopkinsville - Christian County Now](#)

--KY Veterans Cemetery West (Hopkinsville): WKDZ - [Community Lays 4,500 Wreaths at Veterans Cemetery | WKDZ](#)

--KY Veterans Cemetery Central (Radcliff): KCEC TV - <https://youtu.be/1FzFxRE4UUY>

--Defense Visual Information Distribution Service (Frankfort): [DVIDS - News - Kentucky honors Veterans with wreath laying ceremony](#)



## 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](http://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!"

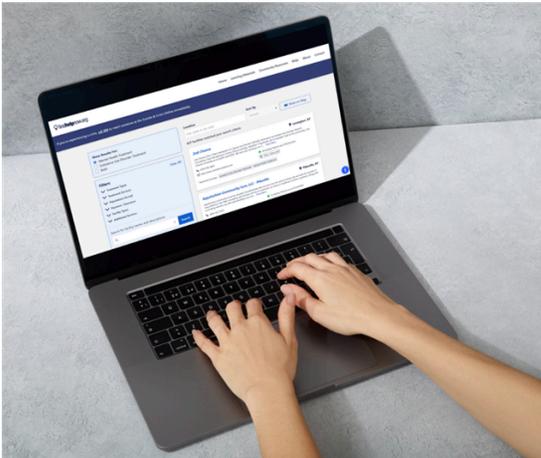
### **Useful VA Links**

- **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/>
- **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 2026

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Army Nurse Corps Birthday (January 2)
- U.S. Naval Academy Birthday (January 10)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (January 18)
- Veteran and Military Families Conference (February 4)
- 

## 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=SWfaLHnz\\_kk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SWfaLHnz_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



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.

[View this email in your browser](#)

You are receiving this email because of your relationship with Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs. Please [reconfirm](#) your interest in receiving emails from us. If you do not wish to receive any more emails, you can [unsubscribe here](#).

This message was sent to danjminton@gmail.com by KDVA.PIO@ky.gov  
1111 Louisville Rd Suite B Frankfort, KY 40601

**Verified**Unsubscribe<sup>SM</sup> [Unsubscribe](#) | [Manage Subscription](#)



**This is a Test Email only.**

This message was sent for the sole purpose of testing a draft message.