

Serving Those Who Served

The Official Newsletter of the Kentucky Department of
Veterans Affairs



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

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Greetings teammates,

It's crazy to think we're in March already but we've got some great things on the horizon for you. We have three statewide events coming up, starting with our Women Veterans Program March Celebration event (March 8th) and a regional Benefits Claims Clinic in Ashland (March 13th). Furthermore, our State Programs and Benefits Division teams will be out supporting community and veterans service organizations' events throughout the state to include Vietnam Veterans Day recognition events (March 29th) throughout the Commonwealth.

I would also like to take the time to personally (as well as on behalf of KDVA) thank the past VA Secretary Denis McDonough and his team for a very successful

administration. You and your team have been great allies to KDVA and the Commonwealth. Special thanks go out to former Deputy Secretary Tanya Bradsher, former Undersecretary Mike Frueh, Zaneta Inez Adams, Henry Huntley, Lourdes Tiglao, James Albino, and many great teammates who have made our Commonwealth (all states) veterans and their families a number one priority, participated/supported KDVA events and strengthen our partnership. We wish you success in your new journey in life serving our Nation and taking care of our great veterans.

Also, on behalf of the KDVA team, I would like to congratulate the Honorable Doug Collins for his appointment as VA Secretary and his new administration. We wish Secretary and his team success in his role in taking care of our Nation's veterans and their families. KDVA is looking forward in continuing our decades long partnership with VA, and look forward in working with his new administration, as well as the various VA organizations at all levels and categories of VA services.

As always, thanks for being part of our great veteran community. Your continued support means the world to me as we wish to serve our veterans. Can't wait to share more news in the coming weeks on future events for you and our Commonwealth's veteran community. HOOAH!!!!!!!

Very respectfully,

Whitney P. Allen, Jr.

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

Latest VA News

Secretary Collins' message to Veterans and VA employees

News Release-VA, Feb. 5, 2025

It is my life's honor to serve America's Veterans as secretary of Veterans Affairs, and I thank President Donald J. Trump as well as the U.S. Senate for their confidence in me. America is the greatest nation on Earth precisely because of the Veterans willing to step forward and defend our freedom. I've witnessed this firsthand throughout my two decades in the military, as I've served with some of the finest men and women our nation has to offer.

In addition to being a Navy Veteran, I am an Air Force Reserve colonel and chaplain. During my time in the military, I've learned that leadership is about listening, serving, motivating and setting a good example for those around you. That is the approach I will bring to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

When President Trump offered me this job, he gave me simple instructions: take great care of America's Veterans. Here is how we're going to accomplish the task the president has set out for us:

- We're going to deliver timely access to care and benefits for every eligible Veteran, family member, caregiver and survivor.
- We're going to put Veterans at the center of everything VA does, focusing relentlessly on customer service and convenience.
- We're going to challenge the status quo in order to find new and better ways of helping VA beneficiaries.
- We're going to celebrate the vast majority of VA employees who do a great job every day and hold employees accountable when they fall short of the mission.
- We're going to provide Veterans with the health care choices they have earned while maintaining and improving VA's direct health care capabilities.
- And we're going to do a better job reaching Veterans at risk of homelessness or suicide – especially those who have had no contact with VA.

My commitment to my fellow servicemembers and Veterans will serve as my compass for the way ahead, and I am honored to be working with the men and women of VA to accomplish our noble and vital mission.

Together, we will strengthen VA so it works better for America's heroes. Let's get to work.

Upcoming Events

The Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs
presents

Enduring Legacy:
“Women Veterans Charting Our Path”

Save the Date

March 8, 2025

9 AM to 4 PM

We are building relationships that will take us to a new level to explore Kentucky Women Veterans legacy. Through activities, story sharing, and group developments.

SCAN ME



Keynote Speaker



Pam Stevenson
USAF Col. (Ret.) House
Minority Floor Leader
Kentucky General Assembly

Event Address
DAV Headquarters
860 Dolwick Dr.
Erlanger, KY 41018

TEAM
KENTUCKY
KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



KDVA Veterans Claims Clinic

This is an opportunity for veterans and families to file claims for veterans disability compensation, non-service connected pensions, survivor benefits, healthcare, and educational benefits.

***All services provided by
KDVA are FREE ***

**March 13, 2025
9:00 AM to 4:00PM**

**Boyd County Library-Ashland
Meeting Room 1st Floor
1740 Central Ave.
Ashland, KY 41102**

PLEASE BRING

DD214

**MEDICAL
RECORDS**

**MARRIAGE
LICENSE**

SOCIAL SECURITY





*The National Association for Black Veterans, Inc.
Fort Knox Chapter 0070
Cordially Invite you to our
13th Annual*



"Shining the Light on Military Women"

*Keynote Speaker: Army LTC Tamika Macias,
US Army Recruiting Command, Fort Knox*



Saturday, March 29, 2025

*Vendors will be available at 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Banquet and Awards Recognition 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.*



Supporters Donation for Banquet \$30.00

No Charge to Military Women RSVP Required

Eagles at Rest



New Hope Missionary Baptist Church Gymnasium 1591 Hill Street Radcliff, KY 40160



This event is open to the public!

*Proceeds go to Chapter 0070 SCHOLARSHIP FUND and
Elizabethtown High School Junior ROTC Program*

Donna Smalls – Chairperson- 270-268-1133/msdonnasmalls@gmail.com

Committee: Selenia Hudson, Michele Jones, Judy Taylor

Fort Knox Chapter 70 Commander Irvin Lyons Jr, 270-304-6044, ilyonsjr70@gmail.com

Fort Knox Chapter 70 Vice Commander Kevin Spence, 270-304-9854

Region VI Commander Irvin Lyons Jr. (KY, TN, OH, MO, TN)

The Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs
presents

Women Veterans Conference and Retreat...

**June 6, 2025 starting at 4PM
Ending June 8, 2025 at Noon**

VA, KDVA and Women Veteran Supporting Organizations will be speaking throughout the event

Featured Activities

Lakeside Yoga
Angel Wing Legacy Proj.
Cooking
Fishing
Archery
Paint & Sip
Animal Therapy
Free Food
and much more...

Keynote Speaker



Col. Clydea Prichard-Brown



What's New at KDVA?

Marine Corps Veteran celebrates his

100th Birthday



World War II and Marine Corps Veteran Richard Kolodey celebrated his 100th birthday with his family, fellow friends, and members of American Legion Post 0243 in Sebree, KY on February 8, 2025.

Kolodey joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 1942, at 17 years old, two months after high school. His parents had to sign for him to be able to join under the age of 18.

He did five months of aviation training in Norman, OK and was shipped to New Calidona in the Pacific. Then he was stationed at New Heberdis, 300 miles south of Guadalcanal.

After, he was assigned as a radio operator and turret gunner in a Grumman TBM Avenger torpedo bomber and went to Henderson Field, Guadalcanal in 1943. From there, started bombing all Japanese airfields in the 600-mile-long Solomon Islands. Towards the end of 1943 started bombing Green Island near New Guinea.

He participated in all three major battles for the Solomon Islands. During these battles, his bombers were given cover by Pappy Boyington.

After the war he worked for 36 years at A&P and 17 years at Food Giant, being assigned across western and eastern KY as manager of several stores with both food stores.

Some of his hobbies included Golf and flying, although he says he is too old for but still loves to attend air shows.

Today, he lives in Slaughters, KY, in a house that is 102 years old that his deceased wife was born. She was born in the front bedroom in 1927. He met her after the war at Murray State University while in flight college.

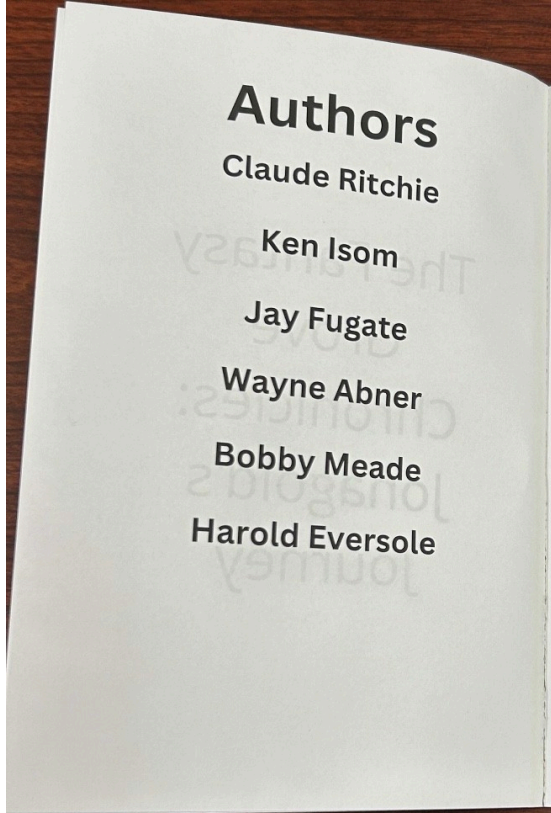
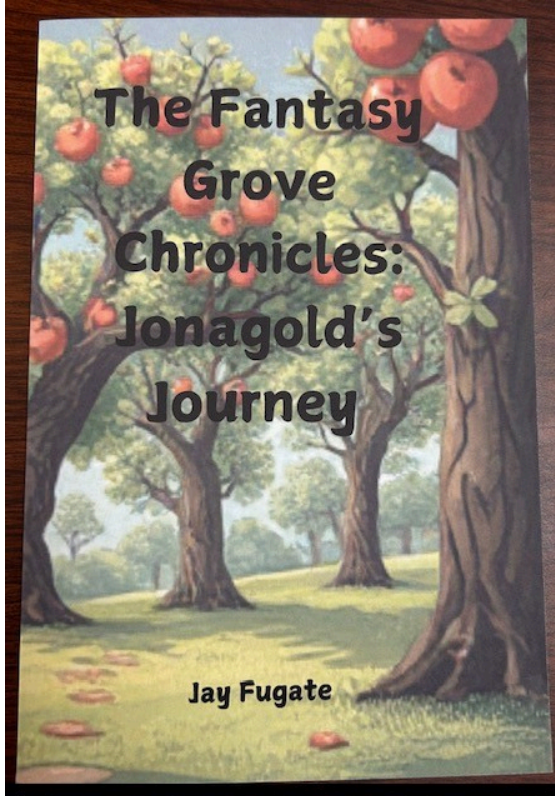
They were married on July 7, 1945.

She passed on July 4, 1997. She was buried on what would have been their 52nd Anniversary.

Kolodey received a birthday video message and letter from the Governor, Kentucky flag flown over the capitol, Governor and KDVA challenge coins, made a Kentucky Colonel.

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 world-building, 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.

RVC and Veteran Resident helps son get Married on Valentine's Day



A Happy Valentine's Story for one of our Veteran Center residents, Pat McCormick Jr., son of Pat McCormick Sr. who is a resident at the Radcliff Veterans Center, got married in the Radcliff Veterans Center February 14, 2025.

In the words of RVC Staff,

"Pat McCormick Jr. talked with his father, Pat McCormick Sr. (RVC resident) about wanting to get married. He didn't know anyone to ask to officiate. Pat Sr. said why don't you ask Chaplain Amanda to perform the ceremony. Pat Jr. asked "do you think she will do it" and Pat Sr. said "I know she will". Pat Jr. called the Center to speak with Chaplain and had to leave a message. Chaplain returned the call and spoke with Chrissy on Wednesday 2/12/25 and told her, "I would be happy to marry you."

"Chaplain asked what date and Chrissy said this Friday, 14th. She asked how much would it cost. Chaplain said nothing."

Brig. Gen. Charles Young Memorial Hospital Corridor Update Event



Superintendent Ernie Price poses with members from the KY Assembly Black Caucus, National Association of Black Veterans Service Organizations, state and local government leaders at the Camp Nelson National Monument Museum.

Camp Nelson is the story of people who were self-determined to change their future and the future of their children. This is a place to study and appreciate the process of Emancipation, but it's also about the on-going legacy of that Emancipation. Charles Young was a direct product and beneficiary of that self-determination and how fitting it is for our sites to come together to recognize and celebrate that legacy.

Here at Camp Nelson National Monument, we continue to adjust to some changes that are happening quickly around the federal government. We will keep you posted about the

Freedom Festival on June 21 here at the park. Again, this is a one-day event to highlight the importance of Emancipation and its legacy and to showcase all the members of the Brig. General Charles Young Memorial Historical Corridor.

Ernie Price
Superintendent
Camp Nelson National Monument

Governor's Challenge, KDVA, sharing info at the National Farm Machinery Show



Silas Session, Office of Kentucky Veterans Services executive director and the co chair for the Governor's Challenge, shared information on KDVA and suicide prevention with veterans and farmers at the Raising Hope booth during the National Farm Machinery Show, Feb. 15, 2025.

In Memory of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War

The Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial is one of the largest granite memorials in the nation and contains 327 custom panels weighing more than 215 tons. The lettering of the names and dates is the same style used for official government grave markers throughout the nation, including Arlington National Cemetery.

Helm Roberts (1931-2011), a Lexington, KY architect and Veteran, designed the memorial so every day is Memorial Day for a Kentucky Vietnam Veteran.

In the plaza made of granite you will find the names of the 1,109 Kentucky individuals who gave their lives for the conflict. The

memorial contains 237 custom panels weighing more than 215 tons.



Groundbreaking for the memorial was held November 7, 1987 with a completion date in late summer of 1988. After its official dedication on November 12, 1988, the memorial has been open daily and is one of the most visited landmarks in Kentucky.

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

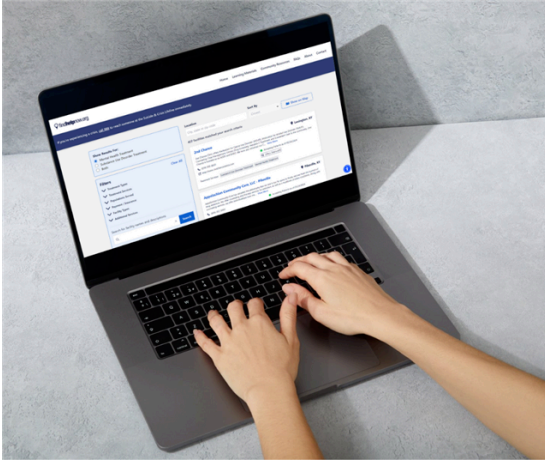
- **VA Housing Assistance Page** - Information about home loans, eligibility, interest rates reductions and other related topics: <https://www.va.gov/housing-assistance/>
- **National Center for PTSD** - Provides information and resources to veterans, care providers and organizations relating PTSD: <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 Dates and Events

- Navy Reserve Birthday (**March 3**)
- Hug a GI Day (**March 4**)
- Seabee Birthday (**March 8**)
- Women Veterans Event (**March 8**)
- Benefit Claims Clinic (**March 13**)
- K-9 Veterans Day (**March 13**)
- American Legion Birthday (**March 15**)
- Medal of Honor Day (**March 25**)
- National Vietnam War Veterans Day (**March 29**)

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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