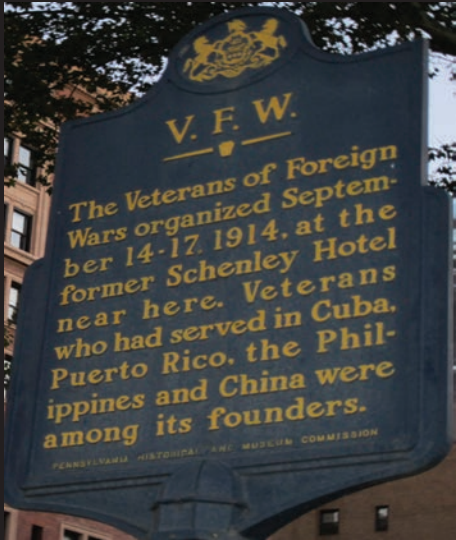


# LEADER MAGAZINE

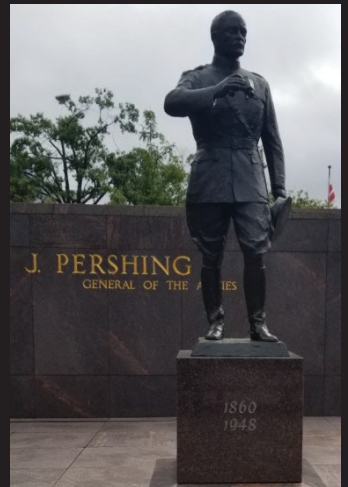


**VFW**  
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

# 125

Years of Service

1899 - 2024



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## OF INFORMATION



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# Features:

## On the cover: **HAPPY 125th BIRTHDAY VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS**

Clockwise from top left: Historical Marker in PA; Betty "Betts 1-A" Rowland, WWII, first female Dept. Commander in NC, 96-97; WWI "Harlem Hellfighters" 369th Infantry Regiment; Statue of WWI General John Pershing, in Washington D.C.; Korea MASH Unit 8055, famous for its ground breaking methods of transport & treatment, & inspiration for the book, movie, & TV show; Gulf Wars/OIF/ Kevin Holland, Navy, Tram Holland, Army, Richard Cheek, Marines, & Lee Starr, Army, at Post 1142's Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration; WWII Iris Harrison, "CODE GIRL" Navy Waves stateside intel code breaker; Vietnam Army Nurses; Vietnam, Purple Heart Recipients, (L-R) George Morgan, Foyst Blackburn, Glenn Johnson, William Griffin; & Charlie Rhodes; WWII "Mighty 8th" Army Air Corps crew in front of B24 Bomber "Axis Grinder"; WWII Sullivan S. DeMar, US Army Air Corps.



The Leader Magazine



Inside Cover: Doug Marshall, Advocate Health Advisors

3. Commanders Corner, Annie Cummings, USMC;  
From the Editor, Ryan Rogers, USMC
  4. Congratulations for All State, All American Posts & Districts
  5. Department Officers & Veterans Service Officers
  6. District Commanders & Locations
  7. Department Auxiliary Officers; About the Alvarez House, the Fall Council of Administration outreach
  8. Veteran Owned Business Spotlight: Carolina Heritage Winery;  
Special Appointment given to Leland Post Commander, Gerald Decker
  9. Around Your State: Tidbits From Post Events
  10. Scotty Medeiros, US Army, Silver Lining Life Insurance Group, LLC.
  11. Pictures from National Convention, Louisville, Ky
  12. NC Legislative Committee Report; Commanders Travels
  13. Fairways for Warriors; Mission 22 Walk
  14. Cooties: Message from Incoming Grand Commander, Jeff Friar
  15. Christopher Brown for Dept. Jr. Vice
  16. Special Appointments; Project Soldier: Korean War Veteran, Don Leu
  17. Gary Szafarski for Junior Vice Commander
  18. Happy Birthdays/Anniversaries
  19. WWI National Memorial Wreath Laying in DC; Middle Schooler, Kaus Doctor, donates to the VFW
  20. Waynesville Post 5202; Wall of Honor, Henderson County
  21. Angel Platoon; Post Visits Flanders Field on D-Day Anniversary
  22. Erica Bradley, Realtor
- Back Cover: Richard King, United Healthcare

## Dates to Remember

**NOVEMBER 7-9**  
SOUTHERN CONFERENCE  
NASHVILLE, TN

The Leader Magazine is Published Quarterly by the Department of NC Veterans of Foreign Wars

PO Box 367 Spring Lake, NC 28390 919-828-5058

**Editor: Ryan Rogers, USMC, Post 9983**      **Publisher: Heather Dean, Post 1142**

### CONTRIBUTIONS:

We would love to share your stories, pictures and events, at post and district level, for comrades & auxiliary. Send correspondence to [leaderinfo@vfwnc.com](mailto:leaderinfo@vfwnc.com)

*Submission of articles and photos implies the right to edit and publish all or in part.*

*Deadlines are 15th of June, September, December & March.*

# DEPARTMENT COMMANDER'S CORNER



*CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THE  
ALL AMERICAN RECIPIENTS FOR 2023-2024!  
Welcome to the new North Carolina Veterans of  
Foreign Wars Hall of Fame.*

You are part of the movers and shakers that wake up with purpose, stay relevant in the Missions of the VFW, and never say never, when challenged to do the next right thing! You make up the core strengths of this organization, and are truly examples to be emulated. Teach your comrades well.

Making All-American is a task that few have the intestinal fortitude to tackle, but those that do, enjoy the positive results for their posts and communities, for years to come. It becomes a habit, a must do, a part of life, and the tasks undertaken to achieve this challenge help to secure a positive future for your posts and districts.

My most sincere congratulations to you all for a job well done. Now .... let's take it all the way to the Department level this year, and take away another Triple Crown! Accountability, Action and Attitude will get us there! It all starts with you. **Operation All-In has commenced!**

*Respectfully,  
Annie Cummings*

## Letter From The Editor

Comrades,

As we move into the new season and the temperature starts to fall, let us remember that there is more that unites us than divides us. The motto is "America is Great Because America is Good." We collectively can make this a reality within our communities. We are noticed and infectious when we shed our light and strive for the higher good.

As Veterans, we are the bedrock from which this country was built. But the work is never done. Once the boots are strung up high in the trees off "River Road", and the uniform has been retired to the suit bag in the closet, the work continues. The 8-point cover is traded out for a red ball cap, and the service transforms into one of community.

Mother Theresa once said, "If you want to change the world, go home and love your family". My thoughts are in line. Start at the family and work outward to your local community. The VFW is a powerful tool, and the purpose and unity that derives from it are priceless.

**LLTB  
RYAN ROGERS  
LEADER EDITOR**



# VFW DEPT OF NC HALL OF FAME

## All American District:

CDR David Burger  
QM: Scott C. McCreery



Pamlico, Craven, Carteret,  
Jones, Onslow, Pender, Duplin  
and Sampson Counties

## All American District: 8

CDR Mickey Biggs  
QM: Amelia Smith



Cumberland, Robeson  
and Hoke Counties

## All American Posts:

- District 1:** William Clarence Jackson Post 6060 Elizabeth City; Cdr: Robert E. Snook QM: Todd M. Todd; Outer Banks Post 10950 Nags Head; Cdr: Richard A Probst QM: James E. Norrell
- District 2:** Post 2771: Kinston; Cdr: Tab Brown QM: Robert J. Stephens
- District 4:** Newport Post 8986 Newport; Cdr: Scott C. McCreery QM: William J. Sigwalt
- District 5:** Calabash Post 7228 Calabash; Cdr: Michael E. Dichiaro QM: Jackie M. Ness; Raymond W. Biglow Post 8062 Elizabethtown; Cdr: Dana R. Gill QM: James W. Lane; New Topsail Island Post 9983 Holly Ridge; Cdr: Nicholas B. Conrad QM: Michael A. Morton; Leland Post 12196 Leland; Cdr: Nathaniel D. Pringle QM: James J. Koslosky
- District 7:** Wake Forest Memorial Post 8466 Wake Forest; Cdr: Bradley C. Palmer QM: Julie A. Nix
- District 8:** Corporal Rodolfo P. Hernandez Post 670 Cumberland; Cdr: Mike A. Baker QM: Amelia A. Smith; SSg James B. Dennis Post 6018 Fayetteville; Cdr: Edward E. Beard QM: Alphonsia D. Cogdell; Lumberton-David Thompson Memorial Post 8969 Lumberton; Cdr: Angel L. Valazquez QM: Geno C. Kerns
- District 9:** Henry C. Rancke, Jr. Post 4203 Rockingham; Cdr: Eddie W. Dean QM: Vernon L. Labore; Henry C. Rancke, Jr. Post 4203 Rockingham; Cdr: Eddie W. Dean QM: Vernon L. Labore; Joe Wagner Post 7313 Pittsboro; Cdr: Christopher P. Stewart QM: Gregory C. Flood
- District 11:** Oscar L. Joyner Jr. Post 5352 Kernersville; Cdr: David D. Long Jr. QM: Timothy P. Woods; Captain Mark Garner Post 7794 State Road; Cdr: John R. Hawkins QM: William M. Golden
- District 12:** Barnee-Turner Post 6365 Locust; Cdr: Bobbi A. Sheets, QM: Nathan D. Sheets; Poston-Perkins Post 8989 Kannapolis Cdr: Tony Gulledege QM: Andrew K. Brown; Barringer-Holshouser Post 9134 Rockwell Cdr: Anthony W. Rogers QM: Elias L. Garza
- District 14:** George Loris Dover Post 4066 Shelby, Cdr: Arthur R. Gordon QM: Brandon L. Ruppe; Donald Lanford Drum Post 5305 Conover Cdr: Johnny K. Killian QM: William H. Riley; Table Rock Post 5362 Morganton Cdr: Robert D. Swink QM: Michael J. Prichard
- District 15:** Ashley-James-Roten Post 7946 Jefferson Cdr: Tim D. Hudak QM: Billy E. Eller
- District 17:** Post 5202 Waynesville Cdr: Bobby J. Rathbone QM: William H. Taylor; Macon County Memorial Post 7339 Franklin Cdr: William J. Wallace QM: Robert W. Morrow

## All State Posts:

- District 2: Lenoir Post 2771 Kinston; Cdr: Tab Brown QM: Robert J. Stephens
- District 4: Newport Post 8986, Newport; Cdr: Scott C. McCreery QM: William J. Sigwalt
- District 5: Calabash Post 7228, Calabash; Cdr: Michael E. Dichiaro QM: Jackie M. Ness  
Leland Post 12196 Leland; Cdr: Nathaniel D. Pringle QM: James J. Koslosky
- District 7: Wake Forest Memorial Post 8466, Wake Forest; Cdr: Bradley C. Palmer QM: Julie A. Nix
- District 8: SSg James B. Dennis Post 6018 Fayetteville; Cdr: Edward E. Beard QM: Alphonsia D. Cogdell
- District 9: Henry C. Rancke, Jr. Post 4203 Rockingham; Cdr: Eddie W. Dean QM: Vernon L. Labore
- District 11: Oscar L. Joyner Jr. Post 5352 Kernersville; Cdr: David D. Long Jr. QM: Timothy P. Woods
- District 12: Barringer-Holshouser Post 9134, Rockwell; Cdr: Anthony W. Rogers QM: Elias L. Garza
- District 14: Donald Lanford Drum Post 5305, Conover; Cdr: Johnny K. Killian QM: William H. Riley

# DEPARTMENT OFFICERS



Commander  
Annie Cummings



Sr. Vice Commander  
Edward Beard



Jr. Vice Commander  
Mickey Biggs



Quartermaster  
Jenn Hutt



Adjutant  
Alecia Judd



Chaplain  
Dolphus Troy



Judge Advocate  
Josh Holt



Inspector  
Bud Stauffer



Surgeon  
Dave Martin



Chief of Staff  
Tab Brown



Asst. Quartermaster  
Charlie Cable



Aide De Camp  
David Long

Not Pictured: Victor Letourneaut, National Council Representative

# DEPARTMENT SERVICE OFFICERS



Tab Brown  
252-933-2040



Michisa Zahorski  
919-616-1223



Cindy Hathaway  
336-631-5457



Brad Blackburn  
910-740-2285

# DISTRICT COMMANDERS



**1. Graham Leaver**  
6060



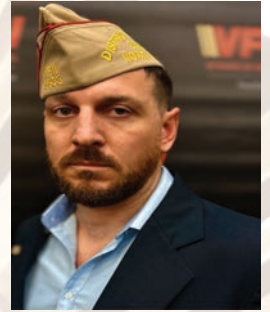
**2. Robert Bock**  
9841



**3. Jimmy Baugham**  
3702



**4. David Burger**  
9960



**5. Nicolas Conrad**  
9983



**6. Christopher Brown**  
1920



**7. Robert Kennedy**  
9103



**8. Jerry Moser**  
670



**9. Craig Armstrong**  
7318



**10. John Marion**  
2972



**11. Eric Brown**  
5352



**12. Bobbi Sheets**  
6365



**13. Nathaniel Drisker**  
1160



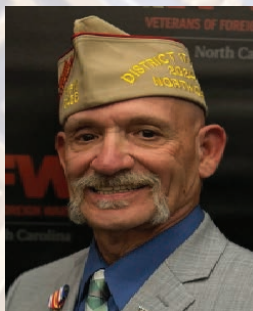
**14. Art Gordon**  
4066



**15. Kevin Ross**  
7946



**16. David Collins**  
9116



**17. Robert Morrow**  
7339

1- Currituck, Pasquotank, Chowan, Gates, Hertford, Bertie, Martin, Washington, Tyrel, Dare, Perquimans and Camden

2-Hyde, Beaufort, Pitt, Greene, Lenoir and Wayne

3 - Northampton, Halifax, Warren, Franklin, Nash, Edgecombe and Wilson

4 - Pamlico, Craven, Carteret, Jones, Onslow, Pender, Duplin and Sampson

5- Bladen, Columbus, Brunswick, New Hanover and Topsail Island

6- Caswel, Person, Granville, Vance, Durham, Alamance and Orange

7- Chatham, Wake, Johnston and Harnett.

8- Cumberland, Robeson and Hoke.

9- Montgomery, Moore, Le, Anson, Richmond and Scotland.

10 - Rockingham, Guilford, Davidson, and Randolph.

11 - Surry, Yadkin, Stokes, Forsyth and Davie.

12 -Rowan, Cabarrus and Stanly.

13 - Gaston, Mecklenburg, Union, and the Kings Mountain 9811

14 - Burke, Lincoln, Catawba, Alexander, Iredel, Cleveland and Rutherford, except Kings Mtn Post 9811.

15 - Avery, Watauga, Ashe, Alleghany, Wilkes, Caldwell and Mitchell. District 16 - Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, Polk, Yancey and McDowel.

17 - Haywood, Transylvania, Cherokee, Graham, Clay, Macon, Jackson and Swain.

# DEPARTMENT AUXILIARY OFFICERS



**President**  
*Sandra Jeffries*



**Senior Vice**  
*Anna Holm*



**Junior Vice**  
*Lin Moore*



**Chaplain**  
*Wendy Rachels*



**Conductor/Secretary**  
*Tracy Armstrong*



**Treasurer**  
*Sandra Johnson-Leu*



**Guard**  
*Theresa Billips*

*Not Pictured:  
Chief of Staff  
Julia Stancil-Warren*



## The Alvarez House

This fall session donations of socks, coats, and warm hats for The Alvarez House are being taken up. Commander Annie Cummings chose this non-profit because of their success in helping homeless veterans.

Alvarez House 0600, located in Greensboro, is a shelter for NC's homeless veterans, and continually strives to be a catalyst for positive change. Since 2000, they've been driven by the ideas of Veteran support, empowerment, and progress. The structured program eases them back into society, while teaching them everyday life skills and renewing their Heart, Mind and Spirit.

At their Veteran Stand Down in Robeson County last October they fed 385 veterans, sent groceries home with nearly 400 veteran families in our drive thru line, and clothed an unknown number of families in Robeson County as well as Scotland counties.

One must understand that not all wars are left on the battlefield. Veterans return home from, some of their worst nightmares play out for them on their own soil. AH0600 is more than a "contact" with the veteran; Veterans are offered resources and contact information with regards to benefits that are available to them. Along with assisting veterans with transportation to and from doctor appointments, they work with the VSO on information they need.

Each veteran is treated with respect and the same is hoped for in return.

"The very catalyst that set me on this mission was because I thought "someone" should do something about all these homeless veterans in the street.

These men and women have served our country, it was in one of those moments my heart heard... be the someone who does something. After that I never looked back or questioned that thought since, knowing that in God's time, this would happen. His way, his time. As a survivor of a widow maker (heart attack) and a 3 time broken neck, I believe my job here is not done, providing shelter for our homeless veterans is in the beating of my heart, literally. I want the legacy of AH0600 to be one that many will look back upon as a place of healing, a place to grow in whomever they choose to be. We see the veteran, we assist the veteran. We are here to offer the veteran the dignity of a hand up, not just a hand out" said Alvarez.

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# Army Veteran Turned Wine Maker And Philanthropist

If you are in the mood to get out and experience North Carolina's Wine Country while supporting veterans and first responders, visit Carolina Heritage Organic Winery, Brewery and Vineyard in Elkin, NC, boasting the esteemed title of being the state's premier certified organic vineyard. This picturesque, veteran, and family-owned establishment by Patrick and Wendy McNabb stands as a beacon of admiration and support for local heroes.

Patrick, an esteemed Army Veteran, and Wendy, a dedicated retired teacher, have seamlessly blended their passions to create a haven for giving back to the brave hearts of the veteran and first responder communities. Their unwavering commitment to ensuring that those who selflessly serve our country receive the support they deserve is truly commendable.

At Carolina Heritage Winery and Brewery, philanthropy knows no bounds. The dynamic duo consistently organize fundraisers with the noble intention of raising essential funds for the Captain Mark Garner Post 7794 and other veteran-friendly organizations across North Carolina. With each event, they draw the community closer, embodying the spirit of unity, support, and unwavering gratitude.

Join us in raising a glass to Patrick and Wendy McNabb, the driving forces behind Carolina Heritage Winery and Brewery - a testament to the power of dedication, generosity, and the profound impact of giving back. Cheers to these local heroes!

Visit them at 170 Heritage Vines Way in Elkin and know that you are helping support the following charities and non-profits: Elkin VFW Post; Yadkin Riverkeeper's Yadkin River paddle; Neuse River Golden Retriever Rescue; Farmer Food share; Give a Kid a Christmas - Surry County Sheriff's Office and Surry County Schools Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation (ALSF) to help cure childhood cancer; The Longest Day® supporting Alzheimer's Association®; North Carolina Fallen Firefighters Foundation - The North Carolina Fallen Firefighters Foundation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, more specifically to lead the effort to remember North Carolina's fallen firefighters and their families; Outdoor Heritage NC Youth Outdoor Engagement Fund; Farmers Veteran Coalition; Elkin Valley Trails; Explore Elkin; Heart of Hugh Chatham Team Member Fund; Old Yeller for service dogs for veterans who suffer from combat PTSD and/or TBI with no cost to the veteran.



Submitted by  
Derrick Cordova, Commander,  
VFW Post 7794

## Post 12196 Commander Receives Appointment



On August 21, 2024, Post Commander Gerald Decker received an honorary appointment as Aide-de-Camp to the National VFW Commander-in-Chief Al Lipphardt. North Carolina Department Commander Anne Cummings nominated Commander Decker in recognition of his outstanding efforts in helping veterans.

"This recognition is a product of the hard work of the small band of brothers (and sisters) in the Leland Veterans of Foreign Wars who make things happen," says Decker.

Decker is a Navy veteran who earned eligibility with the VFW by serving four tours to Vietnam between 1968 and 1971. Petty Officer 2nd Class Decker served as a Quartermaster aboard the USS Merrick (LKA-97) and the USS Point Defiance (LSD-31). For his service, he was awarded the National Defense Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with three stars, the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with the device, and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with a Palm ribbon.

Commander Decker is the founder of VFW Post 12196 in January 2020. He has also been instrumental in establishing the Post Auxiliary under the leadership of Brandi Hinshaw. After three consecutive years of earning All-State and All-American honors, Post 12196 is now working to develop a Veterans Creative Arts Program (VCAP) for veterans and first responders who experience the effects of post-traumatic stress. The VCAP is just one of several programs for assisting veterans in which the Post participates.

More information on membership in Post 12196 or the Auxiliary and the assistance it offers veterans can be obtained by calling 910 408 1934, visiting [www.facebook.com/Leland-VFW-Post12196](http://www.facebook.com/Leland-VFW-Post12196), or visiting <https://vfw12196.org>.

Submitted by Leland VFW Post 12196 and Auxiliary

# Around Your State



At the District 15 Meeting held in Boone on 15 September, District Auxiliary President, Sandra Jeffries, was presented with a check of \$300 for her Special Project, from N. Wilkesboro Post 1142 Auxiliary, by President, Maebelle Nance.



VFW comrades and auxiliary members from Post 670 with Mrs. Fayetteville. They attended a fundraising auction for Kids Peace. One of the primary goals of this organization, besides foster care/placement, is the health and education of children in foster care. The money raised at this event goes to send deserving kids to different educational programs that might not otherwise be able to attend. Almost \$1000 was raised.



During their town meeting, Elizabeth City's Mayor Rivers honored VFW 6060 William Clarence Jackson Post for their exceptional service to both the local area and the Veterans of Elizabeth City and the surrounding region. Pictured L-R are: Scott Sedeon, Robert Snook, Commander Allen Cortney, Daniel M. Serik



District 13 recently participated in the Veteran Benefit Live event held on August 23-24, 2024, in Charlotte, NC. Meals were provided to 800 veterans, their families, dependents, caregivers, and homeless veterans. The event, hosted by the VBA Regional Office and the Mecklenburg County Veteran Service Office, was a great success, featuring numerous resources and support services. This was a collaborative effort with District 13 and local Posts, including Post 7775, Post 9337, Post 1160, Post 13, and others who contributed and stopped by. District Commander Jake Drisker, Sr. Vice Jeff Goldberg, Jr. Vice Bridget Lightner, with Miss Charlotte. NC House Representatives Cunningham and Nasif Majeed, who is a Vietnam Veteran, also assisted & donated to the event. More pictures on Leader Facebook



Boone Post 7031 Veteran Commemorative Brick Project is a fundraising effort for building maintenance. Bricks will be displayed at the Watauga Veterans Memorial, located at the post. Bricks are \$50. Email [VFW7031@gmail.com](mailto:VFW7031@gmail.com) for application or questions.





**MONEY BACK TOWARD YOUR PART B MONTHLY PREMIUM**

**VISION ALLOWANCE FOR GLASSES OR CONTACTS**

**DENTAL ALLOWANCE FOR MOST DENTAL TREATMENTS**

**GYM MEMBERSHIP (YOU'RE NEVER TOO OLD FOR PT)**



**ENROLLEES IN VA HEALTHCARE, TRICARE, OR CHAMPVA AND HAVE MEDICARE PART A & PART B SHOULD CONTACT ME TO SCHEDULE A BRIEFING. LET ME KNOW WHAT TIME FORMATION WILL BE.**

**I CALL THESE ADDITIONAL BENEFITS, "OPERATION GIVEBACK."**

DEPENDING ON MEDICAID ENROLLMENT & OTHER FACTORS, YOU MAY BE ENTITLED TO EVEN MORE BENEFITS.



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# Scenes From The 125th National Convention Louisville, Kentucky



Top L-R: Congratulations Circle of Excellence Winner, NC Aux President Connie Holt, with National Aux President Carla Martinez (submitted by Jade Testerman); NC All American Post winners in attendance with Commander Annie Cummings are Post Commanders Mickey Biggs, Ed Beard, Mike Baker, & Tab Brown; Below middle: Kernersville Auxiliary took 2nd place in Buddy Poppy Display Category 3.



**WFW**  
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.  
**126th NATIONAL CONVENTION**  
—  
AUGUST 9-13, 2025  
COLUMBUS, OH

# FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

To My Fellow Comrades,

I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to share an update on my recent trip to the Nation's Capital, where I was honored to be appointed as a National Legislative Committee member for North Carolina, joining Troy Dolphus as our state's representatives for the VFW.

From September 9th to 12th, we attended the Fall National Legislative Committee Conference, meeting new appointees from across the country. During our time there, we were briefed on the VFW's priority goals for 2024-2025 and had the opportunity to meet with our constituents. Despite a hectic schedule, we successfully connected with 9 out of 12 senators and congresspersons, either directly or through their representatives.

Troy and I worked closely together, with him serving as a mentor to guide me through the meetings. I was particularly pleased with my discussions with representatives from Senator Thom Tillis and Congresswoman Alma Adams' offices. They were well-prepared and engaged with the issues we presented, including the critical Elizabeth Dole Act and the urgent need to address toxic exposures from military service.

Here are some of the key priorities we advocated for:

**Toxic Chemicals:** Urged Congress to recognize and address the toxic chemicals our service members were exposed to, such as benzene and solvents.

**Fire Training:** Highlighted the risks associated with toxic smoke and firefighting foam, pushing for better oversight and funding for research.

**Noise Exposure:** Discussed the long-term effects of noise exposure and advocated for support for affected veterans.

**Water Quality:** Raised concerns about contaminated water supplies on ships and their impact on veterans' health.

**Mental Health Support:** Called for funding for innovative PTSD treatments currently used in the private sector.

**Cracking Down on Predatory Claims Companies:** Advocated for legislation to protect veterans from unauthorized fees and ensure fair treatment in claims processes.

It was a humbling experience to represent our veterans, families, and caregivers, and to lobby for necessary funding and support for the VA. We learned that the VA is currently facing a budget deficit of \$2.8 billion, which could impact all veterans receiving benefits.

Our final day included a reception hosted by VFW headquarters, where I had the privilege of meeting National Commander Alfred "Al" Lipphardt and Senior Vice Commander Carol Whitmore.

Thank you all for your service. Let's continue to support each other and grow our membership. Have a safe and productive week.

Submitted by:  
Commander Bridget Lightner  
VFW Sgt. William E. Robinson Post 7775  
Jr. Vice District 13 Commander  
VFW National Legislative Committee Member



## Commander's Travels



At a recent event, Commander Annie Cummings met Big Kenny And John Rich, of the musical duo Big & Rich, and pinned them both; At Darlington, Commander Cummings and Past Department Commander Woods were thumbs up with Darryl Fisher, Founder and President of Dream Flights, before they took a ride in the Bi-Plane; Later they hung out in Victory Lane with Sports Clips Driver Christopher Bell, winner of the days VFW Help A Hero 200 Xfinity Race.

# Fairways for Warriors Strives to Reduce the Suicide Rate Among Veterans

*“We believe in leaving no combat wounded veteran behind.”*

Founded in 2010, Fairways for Warriors is a non-profit providing hope, healing, and camaraderie for combat-wounded veterans and their families. Our mission is to help with mental and physical rehabilitation. We have found that the invisible wounds of war are often more difficult to overcome than the physical ones. Family members are included in all activities because they are also affected by the post-traumatic stress of the veteran.

With 12 chapters in seven states, approximately 400 new members are added every year. We have two chapters in NC: Charlotte and Raleigh. Raleigh covers Fayetteville and Jacksonville, NC.

Fairways for Warriors has developed an effective way to heal over 3,000 veterans from their post-traumatic stress by providing physical therapy using golf and camaraderie with other veterans, and we hold golf outings for our veterans and their families monthly. Fairways for Warriors strives to reduce the suicide rate among veterans by providing a therapist who is trained in healing PTSD using Accelerated Resolution Therapy and other therapy methods, is paid for by Fairways for Warriors and is included for family members.

The Warrior Connection is a Bible/support group that meets every Monday at the American Legion / VFW building in Wake Forest. It has been very successful in creating a safe place to heal spiritually.

*“Fairways for Warriors saved my life. I am a United States Army SFC (Ret), medically retired. My experience with Fairways for Warriors has been nothing short of excellent. Following my separation from the Army, like most, I fell into a dark funk. Almost three (3) years of being lost, I was introduced to Fairways for Warriors in January 2022. Before this, I had very little exposure to golf. What I found was a blessing. The approach that Fairways for Warriors uses, helps me greatly. The use of golf as therapy provides ways for our combat veterans to leave their homes, interact with like-minded people, expend energy in useful and productive ways, fellowship, camaraderie, and a family. In addition to what the program has done for me, my wife has also been able to do many of the events that Fairways for Warriors offers, because our family members are also encouraged to participate. The result is that I can participate in therapy sessions while learning to play golf, building human connections and interactions, and building self-confidence and self-worth, all while continuing to process my past. Thank you so much Fairways for Warriors for providing our combat veterans and our families a way to restore hope.”*



**FAIRWAYS FOR WARRIORS NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER**  
**RALLY FOR THE WARRIORS**  
GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISING AWARENESS OF VETERAN SUICIDE

**★ WHEN**  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2024  
REGISTRATION: 11:30 AM  
SHOTGUN START: 1:00 PM

**★ WHERE**  
FALLS VILLAGE GOLF CLUB  
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Fairways for Warriors is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to providing a better quality of life for our wounded veterans by using golf as a platform to promote camaraderie, fellowship, and healing. Our mission is to help combat-wounded veterans and their families cope with the invisible wounds of war. The funds we raise will go to support our "Warrior Connection" (VFW) and Veterans' Book Sign (VBS) program. We are not a charity and do not have a tax-exempt status. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. For more information, please contact us at [tom@fairwaysforwarriors.org](mailto:tom@fairwaysforwarriors.org) or call us at (407) 399-0977.

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[rich@fairwaysforwarriors.org](mailto:rich@fairwaysforwarriors.org)

# BUDDY CHECK

UNITED IN THE WAR AGAINST VETERAN SUICIDE



Saturday, November 2, 2024

Registration Day Of: 10:30 a.m.

2.2 mile walk: 11:00 a.m.

**\$22 per person**

t-shirt available for first 20 to register

Greenway Trailhead at Smoot Park

106 Chestnut Street, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659

Hosted by VFW Post 1142 Auxiliary, N. Wilkesboro

Proceeds benefit Mission 22

# Military Order of the Cootie

Greetings from MOC Grand of NC Commander:

Pictured below are your representatives from the Grand of NC receiving recognition at Supreme for our hospital work and efforts in recruiting. Immediately past Grand Commander Woods was recognized for having the highest recruiting numbers of all the Grand Commanders. All the cooties from NC had a truly lousy time at the Supreme Convention.

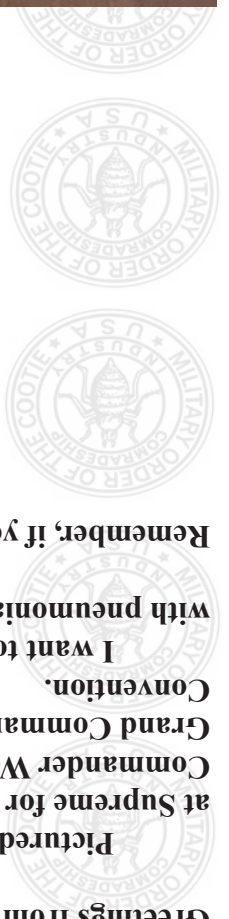
I want to thank you for your understanding and prayers while I was in the hospital with pneumonia. Luckily, I was discharged shortly before the Grand Installation.

Remember, if you're itching to have a good time, cooties know how to scratch.

In LOTCS,  
 Jeff Friar, Grand Commander  
 NC Grand

## Schedule of Events 2024-2025

MOC EVENT	LOCATION	DATE
89th Tomb Trek	Arlington, VA	8-10 November 2024
95th Grand of Michigan Cootie Christmas	VFW National Home Eaton Rapids, MI	6-8 December 2024
President Patches' Presfield's Homecoming	TBA	TBA
Seam Squirrel Normand's Homecoming	TBA	TBA
41st Grand of Ohio Easter Treat	VFW National Home Eaton Rapids, MI	11-13 April 2025
105th Supreme Scratch	Columbus, OH	13-17 August 2025





# Chris Brown



**Bridging The Gap!**

## THE VISION

Bridging the gap between our generations of veterans. Foster a sense of camaraderie & belonging for our younger generations. Empower them to become future leaders in the Dept of NC.

The mission of the VFW & Dept of NC must continue & the torch must be passed to the generations following.



Expanding our horizons and Bridging the Gap for the future!

Positively representing the VFW & the Dept of NC in a myriad of settings through actions and demeanor.



## MY PLEDGE

**I will work, I will save, I will sacrifice, I will endure, I will fight cheerfully & do my utmost as if the issue of the whole struggle depended on me alone.**

Pvt. Martin Treptow of WWI



# SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS



**VICTOR LETOURNET**  
NATIONAL BUDGET CHAIR, NC COUNCIL MEMBER



**GREG STAFFORD**  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

## Project Soldier Visits NC Veteran

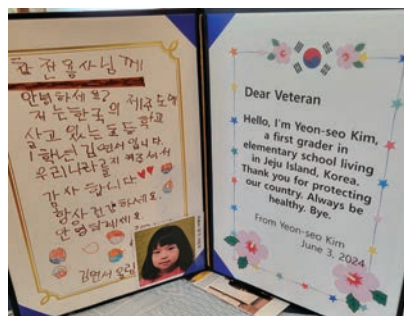
Project Soldier is an organization dedicated to documenting the history of Korean War Veterans who served from 1950 to 1953. To date, over 4000 Veterans have been interviewed and photographed.

On 5 July, 2024 Project Soldier, along with David Lee, a local High School student who created a non-profit called Heroes of the 8th, visited, SFC Donald J. Leu in his home to interview him about his service in Korea.

Don is a 90-year-old who served in both Korea and Vietnam. He was able to talk about his time in Korea. That he was 17 years old when he enlisted in the Army to serve his Country. Don spoke very little of the conditions in Korea at the time, as it is difficult at his age to remember.

This was a positive experience for Don. Normally, he doesn't like having so many people in his home, but he enjoyed this time. At the end of his visit, Project soldier present Don with several pictures to honor his service and to thank him for his allowing them to meet with them.

Don is the husband of Past Auxiliary Dept President (and current Dept Treasurer) Sandra Johnson-Leu.



# Gary Szafarski

USA(Ret)

Candidate for Junior Vice Commander

2025 – 2026

- *Post Quartermaster*
- *Post Trustee*
- *All-State Post Commander*
- *District Trustee*
- *All-American Dist. Commander*
- *Hospitality Committee*



A proven leader with over 35 years military experience, I believe together, we can work to sustain the great work accomplished by our Veteran leaders and move forward to ensure the VFW is a place for members to enjoy, build relationships and mentor the next generation of Veterans. The VFW is not going away and with our support, hard work, dedication and spirit, we can address the issues that face many of us today, including Veteran suicide awareness, a difficult subject to discuss.. As an organization, VFW members must be courageous and willing to tackle this challenging topic, facing many of our Comrades. Since 2020, Veteran suicides have increased by 11.6%. This is an unacceptable figure that we must help curtail by becoming more involved in our communities, reaching out to younger Veterans and providing necessary support. Remember, we are all in this together and no one, does more for Veterans!

# Birthdays & Anniversaries



Annie Cummings  
USMC  
Dept Commander  
October



Jenn Hutt  
US Army  
Dept Quartermaster  
November



Heather Dear-Woods  
Auxiliary Life Member  
Leader Publisher  
November



Mike & Norma Unruh  
Post 607, Fayetteville  
Happy 50th anniversary!



Barbara & Ed Beard  
Post 6018, Fayetteville  
Happy 43rd anniversary!



John (Past Dept Commander) & Linda Shelander  
Post 607, Fayetteville  
Happy 59th Anniversary & Get Well Soon John!



Kim & Linda Flora  
Post 1142, N. Wilkesboro  
Happy 59th Anniversary!

# Wreath Laying at the National WWI Memorial



Department Chaplain, Dolphus Troy, attended the wreath laying ceremony while in his DC travels as National Legislative Representative. L-R: Sandra Dunlap, from Wilmington, NC; The bugle being played is not a replica- it has, in fact, been handed down since 1919; The Doughboy Foundation wreath; Even the smallest of Soldiers stood at attention; Ms. Dunlap & another lays the wreath; Red Cross Nurse & WWI soldier “Doughboy” Reenactors.

# Middle Schooler Honored at Purple Heart Ceremony



Left: Kaus Doctor & his family with a friend, at his mock tail stand. Above: Dave Martin, Purple Heart Recipient & Department Surgeon, gave Klaus one of the Purple Heart Medals, & explained to him the solemn meaning & history behind it.



Above: Rich Heroux introduces Klaus to the crowd; Below: Rich & Dave with Kaus & his family: Jimmy, Kash, Daena, & Benaisha Doctor.

What started out as a refreshing patriotic mocktail stand on a hot day in the neighborhood, turned one middle schooler into a budding philanthropist. Kaus Doctor made so much money, he decided to share it with a deserving organization. A chance meeting his mom made in the community farmers market sealed the deal. He found out about the VFW & donated a substantial amount, considering his age & business venture. Neither he nor his family could foresee that a packed auditorium with some of America's finest heroes would be giving him a standing ovation as he stood on stage, but that's exactly what happened. His parents & siblings beamed as his story was told to all in attendance by Rich Heroux, Retired Army Colonel. He was thanked for his generosity, patriotism, & kind heart. “We need more kids like this one!” was shouted out from the audience.



L-R: Sandra Johnson-Leu, embraces her old friend Patti Elliott, guest speaker & President of the American Gold Star Mothers. Jeff Rowland, US Army, with his wife Kristy (far right) son Jakeb, and cousin Heather, at the Wake Forest Purple Heart Banquet.



# Post 5202, Waynesville

Post 5202 has been busy with events and updates to the Post over the last few months.

We held our inaugural Jeep Show in August 2024 with over 80 registered Jeeps.

We held a pinning ceremony for our Commander, Sam Cahill, who was recently promoted to Major in the U.S. Army Reserves. Post Quartermaster, John Snider (COL, Ret.), presided over the ceremony.

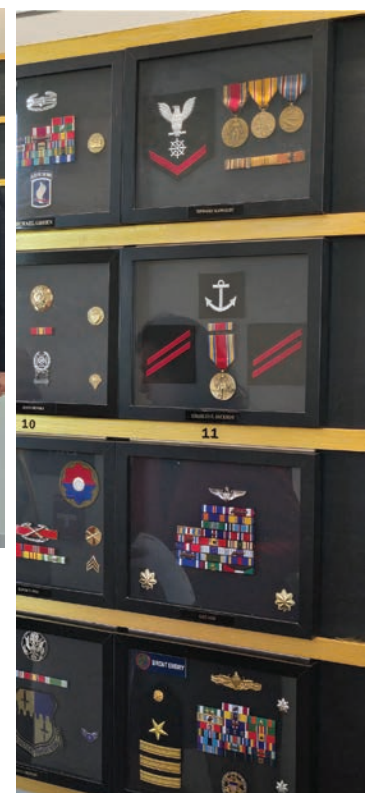
Comrade and Auxiliary Members of the Post came together to build a new covered outdoor seating area.

Our Honor Guard presented the Colors in the Canton Labor Day Parade; Comrades and Riders members recruited new members and spoke to the community about the VFW at the Canton Labor Day Festival.



Submitted by: Sam Cahill, Commander, VFW Post 5202

# WALL OF HONOR IN HENDERSON COUNTY



Bob Johnson, (far right) Post 5206 Trustee, developed the idea of having a Wall of Honor, similar to a tradition from his Military Academy. Others pictured are: Post Jr Vice Commander Mike Perini, who did the roll call during the ceremony and has a shadow box on the wall; Department Jr Vice Commander Mickey Biggs; Post Quartermaster William Mankee; Post 5206 Commander, Edward Skrivanek; District 16 Commander David Collins.

At no cost to the veteran, Shadowbox Eligibility is: Henderson County resident, former or current, Honorably discharged, active reserve or National Guard service, Peace or Wartime service, Next of Kin may sponsor a deceased veteran. For more information contact Post5206@VFWNC.COM

Submitted by Mickey Biggs, Dept Jr Vice Cdr

# ANGEL PLATOON



Rick Leslie  
Fayetteville Post 670  
Gold Life Legacy Member



Larry David Crews  
US Navy 1965-1971  
Past Commander, Yadkin Post 10346  
Honor Guard Captain.

## Hope Mills Post 10630 Members Visit Normandy

On a recent trip to Belgium, VFW Post 10630 Commander Jim Morris and his wife, Post 10630 Auxiliary member, Martine Morris visited the Flanders Field American cemetery. While there, they presented Buddy Poppy wreaths at the cemetery's memorial chapel along with graves within the cemetery.

Of the 368 graves in this cemetery, there are 17 Soldiers from North Carolina interred in this cemetery. Additionally, there are 21 American Soldiers who lay in "Unknown" graves, and the names of 43 Missing are inscribed on the Memorial Chapel wall.

Later in the evening, they participated in the "Last Post" ceremony at the Menin Gate Memorial. A ceremony that has taken place every night at 8 p.m. since the Memorial opened in 1927 (except for a brief period during World War II). The "Last Post" ceremony honors the 54,896 Allied Soldiers who, during World War I, were killed in action in the Ypres Salient and, their remains have never been recovered.

For more information regarding these important Memorials, please visit:

Flanders Field American Cemetery – <https://www.abmc.gov/Flanders-Field>

The Last Post Association – <https://lastpost.be/>

In Flanders Field Museum – <https://www.inflandersfields.be/en>

The National World War I Museum – <https://www.theworldwar.org/>

The U.S. WWI Centennial Commission – <https://www.worldwar1centennial.org/>

Submitted by  
10630 Post Commander  
Jim Morris



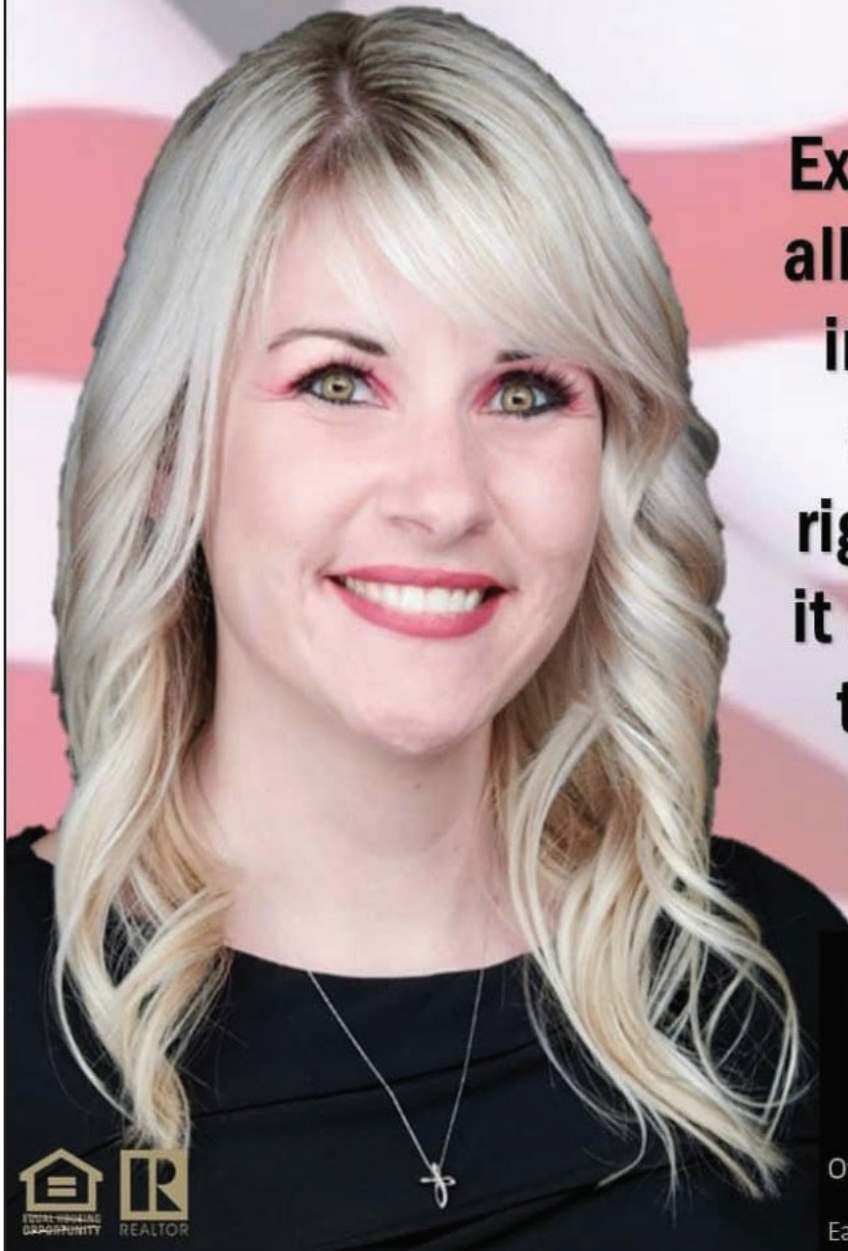
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