

NC VFW *The Leader* Magazine Spring 2023



Official Publication of the Department of North Carolina Veterans of Foreign Wars



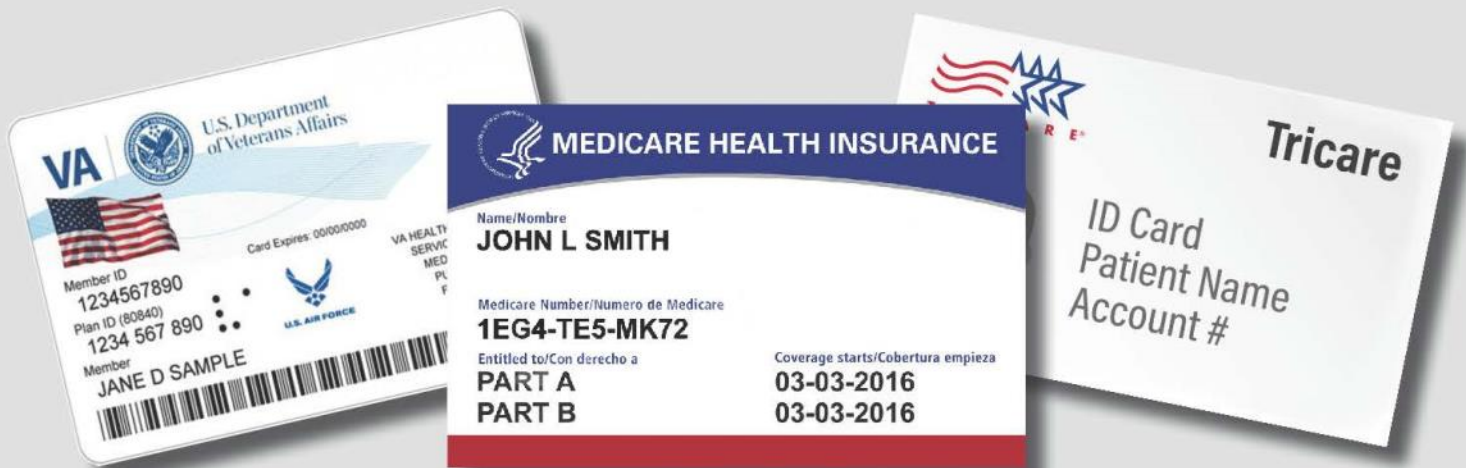
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WINNERS**

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VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

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The Leader Magazine is Published
Quarterly by the Department of
North Carolina

Veterans of Foreign Wars

917 New Bern Ave. PO Box 25337

Raleigh, NC 27611

919-828-5058

Editor.....Russ Chambers

Publisher.....Clark Hunter

CONTRIBUTIONS

Letters, stories, materials or photographs
are welcomed, but cannot be returned un-
less sender provides SASE.

VFW of NC will not be responsible for un-
solicited materials. Submission of articles
and photos implies the right to edit and
publish all or in part.

Please send your comments, suggestions,
articles and photos to:

leaderinfo@vfwnc.com

editor@vfwnc.com

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ON THE COVER
BUDDY POPPY WINNERS

DEDICATION

**This Magazine is Dedicated to The Men and Women of the Armed Services
Who Honor, Protect and Defend This Great Nation.**

Magazine available online at vfwnc.com

STATE COMMANDER'S MESSAGE



COMRADES, COOTIES, & AUXILIARY MEMBERS

As we come to a close of the year let's make sure all Post and District election reports are submitted. Also ensure that proper transitions are made if new personnel are elected.

We had a good week in Washington, D.C. speaking with all of our state Congress and State Senators on the Hill. We have informed them of our national policies and what we need in our state to help all of our fellow Veterans.

As always, membership is key to our organization and we have until the end of June to make 100%. Let's go out there and get them!

Although we have hit some rough waters this year we have managed to stay on course and hopefully will have smooth sailing for the rest of the year. We will keep the ship on course!

It has been a busy year with the Southern Conference and some personnel changes in headquarters, but have powered through thanks to all who have assisted with the transition.

The Department Convention is right around the corner the second weekend of June in Greensboro. Make sure to book your hotel rooms and let's have a great convention and support our new Commander Helen Nelson as her year starts.

Again, thank you to all my fellow comrades and auxiliaries for your unwavering support this year. We are only as strong as our weakest link. Let's continue to keep moving "full speed ahead" into the future.

"FULL SPEED TOWARDS THE FUTURE"

YOURS IN COMRADESHIP

Tim Woods

VFWNC Commander

(Sadie Approved)



2022/2023 Department Officers



VFW of North Carolina

State Commander.....Tim Woods
Senior Vice Cdr.....Helen Nelson
Junior Vice Cdr.....Annie Cummings
Quartermaster.....Jenn Hutt
Judge Advocate.....Josh Holt
Surgeon.....Johnny Taylor
Chaplain.....Alicia Judd
Chief of Staff.....Pat Tompkins



Commander Tim Woods



Senior Vice Cdr/Adj.
Helen Nelson



Junior Vice Cdr.
Annie Cummings



Quartermaster
Jenn Hutt



Judge Advocate
Josh Holt

Department Service Officers

Jay Wood 980-866-1328 (West) jerry.wood1@va.gov
Tab Brown 252-933-2040 (East) tab.brown318@va.gov
Cindy Hathaway 336-631-5457 cynthia.hathaway@va.gov
Winston Salem Office

District Commanders

DISTRICTS

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Graham Leaver | 10. John Marion |
| 2. Robert Brock | 11. Dolphus Troy |
| 3. Jimmy Baughman | 12. Bobbi Sheets |
| 4. Barbara Chance | 13. Robert Pate |
| 5. Bradley Lauver | 14. Art Gordon |
| 6. Christopher Brown | 15. William Carter |
| 7. David Martin | 16. Robert Sumner |
| 8. Mike Baker | 17. Robert Morrow |
| 9. Craig Armstrong | |



Surgeon
Johnny Taylor



Chaplain
Alicia Judd



Chief of Staff
Pat Tompkins



Dept. Mascot
Sadie



The Veterans Foundation of NC has had a busy year! More and more, groups who aid Veterans and their families, are coming out of the “covid slump” and beginning to become active again. The Foundation is proud to support a number of programs of the Department of North Carolina VFW. Those programs include **NC Disaster Relief**, **Veterans Relief Fund**, and **Voice of Democracy**. For over 3 years the Foundation has fully funded the Voice of Democracy Essay Scholarship Program, guaranteeing that each District winner will receive a minimum of **\$1,000** in scholarships to help further their higher education. Over the next 3 years, we have **\$150,000+** designated for these VFW programs, and just recently the Foundation voted to increase our contribution for NC Disaster Relief by an additional **\$16,000+**, making our total commitment to NC Disaster Relief approximately **\$60,000**. These totals do not include the thousands of dollars the Foundation has already given to NC VFW programs over the past 5 years.

We fund **Guitars for Vets** which provides lessons and a free guitar to each NC Veteran who completes the 1-10-lesson course. **Veterans Healing Farm in Hendersonville, NC** provides NC Veterans the opportunity to work on an actual farm as well as attend numerous workshops on topics as diverse as “Starting Your Own Farm”, working on an active farm, partnering with **Warrior Canine Connection** to train service dogs for NC Veterans, and “Depression and How to Deal with It”.

The Foundation also supported **Footbridge Free Dental Care** for Vets in NC providing exams, x-rays, cleanings, fillings, extractions and crowns. In 2022, Footbridge held 2 Dental Clinics and served **580** patients all at no charge.

In 2023 the Foundation will help support **4 Honor Flights in NC to Washington, DC** to visit the memorials at no cost to the Veterans. In addition to the 4 Honor Flights, the Foundation is honored to support 2 additional non-profits who offer help to NC Veterans: **The Joel Fund** (the joelfund.org) in Wake Forest, NC and **Peace Reins** (peacereins.org) in Chapel Hill, NC.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ken Sellers, Board President



NC DEPARTMENT

CONVENTION

JUNE 8-11-2023

EMBASSY SUITES

GREENSBORO, NC

SEE YOU THERE!

EDITOR'S COMMENTS



GREETINGS COMRADES!

The nomination process for the election of the 2023-2024 post, district and department officers is under way, and by the time you read this will probably be completed at some levels. Thanks to all the candidates at all levels for your interest and willingness to serve in our organization. I wish you all well.

By our National Bylaws and Manual of Procedure, Posts must conduct their election in April,

Districts must conduct their elections at the District Convention, (yes, Convention) and Departments must conduct their elections at the Department Convention. In all cases, nominations and elections are to be conducted during New Business and, in some cases, may be taken in sessions or meetings prior to the session or meeting that the election is conducted. However, in all cases nominations are open until the start of elections. District and Department level voting should be conducted by delegate voting, not individuals.

While we look forward to the upcoming year, we must not lose focus on the current year and the tasks at hand. We must continue to support our Post, District and Department Officers in the ongoing daily tasks of taking care of our Veterans. We must continue contributing to achieve our stated goals and increase our membership levels. Through your efforts and hard work we can achieve and fulfill our Mission!

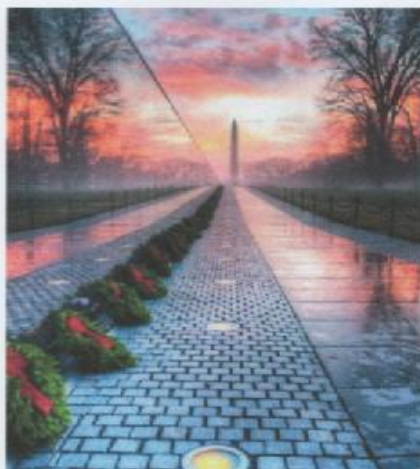
RUSS CHAMBERS, Editor

THE MOVING WALL



"The Moving Wall" is the half-size replica of the Washington, DC Vietnam Veterans Memorial and has been touring the country for thirty plus years. When John Devitt attended the 1982 dedication in Washington, he felt the positive power of "The Wall." He vowed to share that experience with those who did not have the opportunity to go to Washington.

John, Norris Shears, Gerry Haver, and other Vietnam veteran volunteers built The Moving Wall. It went on display for the first time in Tyler, Texas in October of 1984. Two structures of The Moving Wall now travel the USA from April through November, spending about a week at each site.



VFW
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.
POST 5352
618 Edgewood St.
Kernersville, NC 27284
P.O. Box 792
Kernersville, NC 27285



The Wall Dates:

April 28 – May 1, 2023

Location:

VFW Post 5352
618 Edgewood St.
Kernersville, NC 27284

Hours:

You may visit The Wall 24 hours per day.

*Please remember that this is a memorial, and it is important to maintain a dignified and respectful mood. We ask that you be thoughtful to the other visitors.



Opening Ceremony

We invite you to attend the opening ceremony on **Friday, April 28, 2023; 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.**



The Museum

Personal uniforms, pictures and artifacts of our Vietnam veterans will be on display at the "Museum" located in the event center on site. The hours of the museum will be:

Daily 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

OTHER INFORMATION:

There is no fee to visit The Wall



Etching materials will be available

THE MOVING WALL IS SPONSORED BY VFW POST 5352 KERNERSVILLE, NC

DONATIONS ARE APPRECIATED: CONTACT STEVE AMOS @ samosvfw@embarqmail.com

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Kyle is a ten-year veteran of the United States Army and a VFW member.

Since Kyle's honorable separation from service, he has been in the financial services industry for 22 years.

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DATES TO REMEMBER



2023

JUNE 8-11

**DEPARTMENT CONVENTION
EMBASSY SUITES
GREENSBORO, NC**

JULY 22-27

**VFW NATIONAL CONVENTION
PHOENIX, AZ**

SEPTEMBER 28-Oct 1st

**COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION
EMBASSY SUITES
GREENSBORO, NC**

NOVEMBER 2-5

**SOUTHERN CONFERENCE
TULSA, OK**

SPRING ARRIVES





Edward Beard
Candidate for Junior Vice Commander
2023-2024

Silver Legacy Life Member
US Army Retired (23 Years)

Desert Shield / Desert Storm Veteran

Commander, VFW Post 6018 (Largest Post in North Carolina with over 1100 members)

5 Time All American Commander

5 Time All State Commander

District 8 All American Commander

District 8 All State Commander

2020-2021 Post Community Service Award Winner

2020-2021 / 2021-2022 National Recruiter Award Winner

3 Time National Aide-De-Camp

Past Department of North Carolina Chief of Staff

Past Convention Council Committee Member

Past Public Affairs Officer Central Representative

Current Chairman Past District Commanders Club

Current Veterans & Military Support Chairman – 5 years

“Less Talk, More Action”

FOLLOWING HIS GRANDFATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

This story begins with a little boy who wanted to follow his grandfather's footsteps and become a soldier. SPC4 Brian Alan Barnes assigned to the 187th infantry regiment of the 101st Airborne Division became a proud "Rakkasan. Brian served honorably in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Brian returned home with a mind tormented by trauma and a body slowly being destroyed by toxic exposure. Brian would not live to see old age, he would not see his two daughters becoming women or his nephew Isaiah Perkins follow Brian's own footsteps to boot camp. On September 3, 2020, Brian took his last breath. His death was the result of a rare form of leukemia doctors linked to burn pit exposure. For the family he left behind there will always be a deep grief that will never fully heal.

As Brian's cousin I was trying to find a positive place to channel that grief by helping someone else. At VFW Post 2031, Statesville, NC I hosted the first blood-drive in Brian's memory. What I did not realize then was that this blood drive was the beginning of something bigger and that the VFW was the door to my family finding some healing. VFW Post 2031 gifted Brian's Mom a lifetime Auxiliary membership. We are truly grateful for the love and support the VFW has given.

A Memorial Scholarship was established through The Blood Connection of the Carolinas. It began at VFW Post 2031 with other posts in District 14 joining us. To date, six posts have held blood drives in Brian's honor. Collectively, we have had 123 donors with the potential of each donation helping three patients. The Blood Connection donated \$20 for every donation raising nearly \$2500 in Scholarship Funds. We welcome any community college or trade school student to apply. We also welcome any VFW post to join District 14 to host a blood drive in Brian's memory to help us create a long-lasting Scholarship for NC students. For more information on the scholarship or how you can help, call VFW Post 2031 at 704-873-9126 or Lisa at 828-502-9334.

Thank You for Honoring Brian and Helping others. Sincerely, Lisa Hildebrand



COUNCIL OF ADMINISTRATION FEBRUARY 2023



BUDDY POPPY WINNERS ON THE COVER

(L to R)Alice Billips (VFW Post 2098), Charlotte Bell (VFW Post11119), William Bell (VFW Post11119), David Preston (VFW Post 10349)



“I’m a Doctor and an Army Veteran. Here’s Advice I Give to Veterans.”

By Danny Westphal, MD, Medical Director, Humana

As a U.S. Army Veteran and physician who treated Vietnam War Soldiers, I can attest that our brave service men and women have unique health needs. There are many health conditions that affect Veterans at higher rates, ranging from traumatic brain injuries, amputations and hearing loss to various social needs and mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Here’s what I tell my Veteran patients:

Know the Health Risks Associated with Your Service History

In some cases, Veterans have specific health issues related to service history. Vietnam Veterans can be at higher risk for diseases related to Agent Orange, and Korean War Veterans often see higher incident rates in diseases related to extreme cold. Depending on your illness and time of service, you may qualify for benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Talk to your doctor and check the VA website for health issues related to service history.

Address Mental Health Issues

Mental health is an extremely important part of overall health and wellbeing. If you or a loved one is experiencing suicidal thoughts, contact a mental health professional and review resources such as the Veterans Crisis Line. You can also consider services such as the Give an Hour program, which helps connect Veterans with local mental health providers who donate their time.

Be Proactive with Doctor Visits and Preventive Screenings

Veterans have a higher prevalence of multiple chronic conditions, especially seniors. Schedule regular appointments with your doctor to diagnose and manage chronic conditions, and communicate with your pharmacist to ensure you adhere to medications. I recommend annual physicals, blood tests and cancer screenings to detect chronic conditions early.

Don’t Neglect Vision and Hearing

Military members often rely on their eyesight for accuracy in the line of duty, but many experience a decline in vision as they age. Additionally, Veterans are at greater risk of hearing problems. Issues may include hearing loss from exposure to loud noise, sensory impairment due to traumatic brain injury or tinnitus. Knowing they are at higher risk, patients may consider a health insurance plan that covers vision and hearing.

Maximize Supplemental Benefits

It’s important for Veterans to understand the benefits they have both through the VA and any additional healthcare plan. Those eligible for Medicare may have access to a wide variety of supplemental benefits through a Medicare Advantage plan. Plans may include dental, vision and hearing care and allowances; transportation to medical appointments; fitness programs at local gyms; social programs to help combat loneliness; in-network local doctors; prescriptions at pharmacies close to home; and even allowances to purchase over-the-counter products. Many benefits can save you time and money, so maximize what is available to you.

About the Author

Danny Westphal, MD, a healthcare executive, is a U.S. Army Veteran who served at Fort Knox, Kentucky, where he evaluated and treated soldiers returning from Vietnam. Today, he serves as a medical director for Humana, one of the nation’s largest Medicare Advantage companies, where his team focuses on improving health outcomes for Humana members in South Florida. For more information on Humana’s Medicare Advantage plans designed with Veterans in mind, visit www.Humana.com/Medicare/Veterans.



For more information, visit www.Medicare.gov or call **1-800-MEDICARE (800-633-4227)**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can go to www.Humana.com or call **1-800-213-5286 (TTY: 711)** from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. local time, seven days a week. You also can call the dedicated VFW toll-free number at Humana at 1-800-213-3404 to talk with a specially trained agent or arrange an in-person consultation.

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REMEMBERING RICHARD



NC VFW Chaplain Richard Edward Rice Sr. is well remembered by his fellow comrades as a dedicated man doing God's work as well as being a great family man .

His devotion to duty included serving in the US Air Force and Army Reserve for 31 years, Chaplain to Clemmons VFW Post 9010, and VFW Department Chaplain. His community service included the Meals on Wheels Ministry, Boy Scout Leader, member of the Beauty Of The West Eastern Star and Ionic Lodge #72 Prince Hall Masons.

Richard left us on January 23, 2023 but his memory is strong in the hearts of his family, comrades, and everyone who new him. Enjoy Heavenly Peace Comrade.



QUILTS OF VALOR

Quilts of Honor were awarded at the February COA to (L to R) Cdr Tim Woods, Past Cdr Victor Letourneaut, Past Cdr Allen Payne, Past Cdr Greg Stafford and Past Cdr Elree Smith. Local Grateful Quilters members Cathy Solomonson (back) and Susie Strohschein (front) made the presentation. Website QOVF.org has link to nominate Veterans.



COOTIES

The Military Order of the Cootie held its Grand Scratch on 27-28 January 2023 in Havelock, NC. We had the pleasure of presenting a MOC Charter to the Newly Instituted Pup Tent 11, Kernersville, NC named the Hog Heads. We also did a nursing visit and presented small love gifts to our Veterans and brought comfort and smiles. We continue to do our work in partnership with our State VFW in supporting our youth with the Patriot Pen Essay Contest.

As with all organizations, we are small in numbers but we are working diligently to increase and multiply. **If you are interested in starting a new Pup Tent in your area please reach out to grandcdr@vfwnc.com. For more information about membership in the Military Order of the Cootie reach out to your local Pup Tent. A listing of NC Pup Tents is on the state website vfwnc.com.**





GRAHAM LEAVER

CANDIDATE FOR STATE SURGEON

2023-2024

LIFE MEMBER

US Navy retired (34-1/2 Years)

Siege of Beirut/Desert Shield/Desert Storm

Operation Enduring Freedom Veteran

All State Commander Post 4809 Norfolk Virginia (2005-2006)

Post Commander Post 3160 Ocean View Virginia (2013-2014)

Grand Commander Virginia Military Order of the Cootie (2010-2011)

After Moving to North Carolina

Judge Advocate Post 6060 Elizabeth City (2016-2023)

Veteran Service Officer Post 6060 Elizabeth City (2016-2023)

All American District 1 Commander (#5 in the Nation (2021-2022)

Current District 1 Commander (2022-2023)

Current District 2 Veterans Service Officer (2022-2023)

Current Member Military Order of the Cootie

"Like A Good Neighbor Graham Leaver Is There"

FAYETTEVILLE VFW POST 6018 ACTIVITIES



VFW Post 6018 were well represented at this year's Fayetteville Parade This is "How We Do It"



A Special Thanks to our granddaughter Alaina and Blythe Elementary School, Charlotte, NC for the invitation to the Veteran's Day Program. It was a great program and we appreciate all of the time and effort to honor our Veterans.



The Post and Auxiliary partnered with United Way of Cumberland County for the 2022 Community Homeless and Hunger Stand Down Information & Resource Fair. It was cool but a beautiful day in our community. As always, it is a pleasure to serve our community.



Today, VFW Post 6018 and Auxiliary were on hand for the 82nd Sustainable BDE family day celebration. The Brigade took this opportunity to honor all of the units new mothers and mothers-to-be. We were honored to serve the troops and their family members.

“WATERING THE MULES”

In keeping with the opening sentence of the Veteran of Foreign Wars Mission’s Statement.....

To foster camaraderie among United States Veterans of overseas conflicts. To serve our Veterans, the military and our communities. To advocate on behalf of all Veterans.

Members of the **Captain Mark Garner VFW Post 7794** had their inaugural “Watering the Mules” Breakfast in February. The Post doesn’t hesitate to gather for events for the betterment of the local community, the many fundraisers throughout the year, or monthly VFW business meetings.

During the recent holiday seasons a few members had discussions concerning a noticeable void.

“We were working our members too hard (like mules) and just weren’t having enough camaraderie Hence....it was time to “Water the Mules”.

So at your next meeting take a minute to look around at the Veterans in your group. If they are like our Post, and like any other Veterans that I know....like a Mule, they will work until they drop - and most will never complain. But some may just stop showing up - if all there is just work, and nothing else stop and read the first line of the VFW Mission Statement. Find what will foster camaraderie in your Post. For the Captain Mark Garner VFW Post 7794 our “Water the Mules” Monthly Breakfast seems to have hit the spot. So now, **every month on the second Thursday at 0800 hours** we “Water the Mules”. Perhaps your Post could stand a meal and fellowship without work or business attached. Good Luck!



**Captain Mark Garner
VFW POST 7794
Elkin, NC**



“WATERING THE MULES”



VFW POST 9010 CLEARS THE LAND

Landlocked on a busy intersection in Forsyth County, **Clemmons VFW Post 9010** purchased an adjacent 1.3 acres of land to expand. The only drawback, the land had sat vacant for years. Trees and underbrush covered the lot along with trash that the former owners had left behind or that others dumped. When all estimates to clear the lot came in too high, Comrades of the post jumped in to do it themselves. Along with a neighbor, who just happened to have a tractor suited to move timber and dig stumps, Post members cut trees, removed trash, removed stumps and burned undergrowth to clear the lot for future use. Tentative plans call for the expansion of the existing post, sewer to support additional bathrooms, a covered pavilion for post picnics and activities with a memorial site to honor fallen comrades. A special thanks to our neighbor Norman Walker for his help and assistance. Norman isn't a veteran but he said: "we stood up for him through our military service and he was returning that by standing up for us through helping with our expansion project."



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- Medicare plans provide benefits that are not typically available to all Veterans and their eligible spouses.
- Our Veterans Initiatives Program specialists are trained and certified in the combination of military and Medicare benefits.

DID YOU KNOW that you could be missing out on benefits such as:

- Dental, Hearing, Vision
- Transportation
- Over the Counter Benefits
- Gym Membership
- Medicare Part B Giveback
- And more...

As Veterans, we saw too many of our fellow Veterans and family members struggling with the complexity of both Medicare and Military benefits (VA, Tricare for Life, and CHAMPVA). You have earned both benefits. It can be complicated to navigate the combination of these health care systems in maximizing the benefits and care you deserve. Advocate Health Advisor's Veteran's Initiative Program can help. Our trained and certified representatives provide a no obligation review of your benefits.

For more information, please contact

Advocate Health Advisors, Doug Marshall

336-416-3320 or 1-800-709-5513

Doug.Marshall@advocatehealthllc.com



By calling this number, you agree to speak with an independent health insurance agent about Medicare Advantage products. Medicare has neither reviewed or endorsed this information. I do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information I provide is limited to those plans I do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE (TTY: 18774862048) 24 hours/7 days a week to get information on all of your options. This is an advertisement.



BALTIMORE VILLAGE SCHOOL

The Baltimore Village School located at 575 Baltimore Drive in Cramerton, NC was built by Stuart Cramer in late 1920 for the children of African American men and women who worked in Cramer Mills and Cramer's dairy farm and orchards. In 2003 Fred Glenn purchased the school from Burlington Industries after finding out the town's fire department was going to use it for a control burn. "That school was our everything, our all-in-all, our community center, our theater" Glenn said. The Glenn family and the Baltimore Village School, Inc. plan to restore the school to its former self and use the building as a community center and museum focusing on the history of the Baltimore Village neighborhood, the school itself and the role that African Americans played in the history of Cramerton. In 2013, the school was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places Study List. In 2020 the school was designated as an historic structure by the Gaston County Historic Preservation Commission. Fred is a Life Member of VFW 7775 and is very active in his community. Pictured below are Fred Glenn and his wife Ernestine.

(Special Thanks to VFW Post 7775 Commander Bridget Lightner for this article)



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