



# DMVA

North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

## ON POINT NEWSLETTER

## July 2021 Newsletter

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### #ICYMI

#### VA Secretary Denis McDonough Visits Charlotte to Support NC Veteran Initiatives

On July 2, NC DMVA Director of Veterans Programs, Terry Westbrook, and leaders from Charlotte Mecklenburg veterans community support services, joined Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Denis McDonough toured the Charlotte VA Health Care Center for a briefing from local and network senior leaders. McDonough addressed the massive growth of Veterans seeking care in the Charlotte area. “We need to take a hard look at how we can keep up with that growth and get the Vets everything they need.”



Featured in the above picture is VA Secretary Denis McDonough with the Charlotte NC Veterans Bridge Home mobile vaccination clinic team.

View photos from the visit [here](#).

Click [here](#) for a [message from VA Secretary Denis McDonough](#).

#### NC State Veterans Nursing Homes Celebrate Independence Day

North Carolina's State

Veterans Nursing Homes celebrated Independence Day with fruit kabobs, hand written thank you cards, festive decorations, and Independence day songs and activities. Essential EMS, nursing home staff and fire and rescue workers got in on the action by giving thanks to our beloved veteran in the form of over 700 hand written, 4th of July thank you cards. Some residents, including staff, wore patriotic attire to commemorate the occasion. A big thank you goes out to all staff, personnel and volunteers, who pour their hearts into ensuring that our beloved veterans live their lives to the fullest each and every holiday!



### Independence Day Cookout and Operation Gratitude – NCSVH Black Mountain

As part of Independence Day weekend celebrations taking place across the state, Veterans Services of the Carolinas gave away free On Cloud Athletic shoes to the veterans and staff at the State Veterans Nursing Home in Black Mountain as part of Operation Gratitude which has donated 5,000 pairs of shoes to front line workers and Service Members across the state. The veterans enjoyed trying on the shoes and received hand-written cards from staff and local first responders.



NCSVNH - Black Mountain resident gets some assistance with fitting of his new Cloud sneakers

NC DMVA continues to partner with Veterans Services of the Carolinas who has donated 5,000 pairs of On Cloud sneakers to first responders, nursing home staff, and veterans as part of Operation Gratitude.

### NC State Veterans Homes Earns Bronze Quality Award

CONGRATULATIONS to our award-winning State Veterans Nursing Homes in Kinston & Salisbury for being recognized for their outstanding care for North Carolina's Veterans! Let's take time to reflect, honor and celebrate our State Veterans Nursing Homes' long-term care staff member for their timeless commitment to caring and protecting our Veterans. Click [here](#) to learn more about this program.



## NCDMVA Celebrates U.S. Army's 246th Birthday

On June 14th, the NC Department of Military & Veterans Affairs was thrilled to join the Association of the United States Army (Braxton Bragg Chapter), Fort Bragg, the City of Fayetteville, and Cumberland County for a cake cutting ceremony at Segra Stadium in Downtown Fayetteville to celebrate the U.S. Army's 246th birthday. Thanks to everyone who joined us in making this event possible. Check out a few highlights from the ceremony [HERE](#).



## DMVA At Work



### Coastal Carolina Veterans Cemetery Honored for Service

We congratulate Coastal Carolina State Veterans Cemetery for receiving a plaque from the Patriot Guard Riders, in recognition of the cemetery staff's stellar work. Patriot Guard Riders stated that the work performed is both "honorable and invaluable," and recognized the cemetery grounds for always being pristine and the atmosphere solemn in honor of those that have served our nation. We are grateful to Coastal Carolina State Veterans Cemetery for a continued job well done!

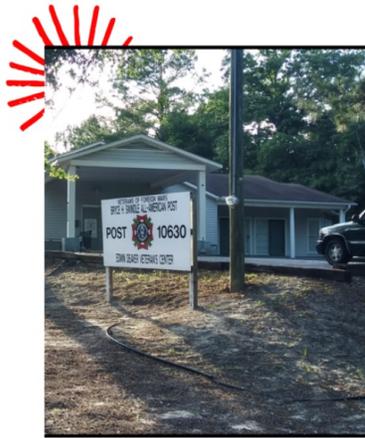
## NC Vets Witness Senate Passage of HB83

NC DMVA Secretary Walter Gaskin

recently joined Veterans from across the state as the N.C. General Assembly voted to pass HB83. If passed by the N.C. Senate the bill would exempt military retirement pay from state income taxes. NC DMVA will continue to support legislative efforts that further cement our state as the friendliest in the Nation to military service members, Veterans, and their families.



## Cumberland County Veterans Council Host Meeting at Post 1630



In June, Cumberland County Veterans Council met at Post 1630 to learn more about State Veterans Nursing Homes, the VA Claims process, and the Department's mission to serve North Carolina Veterans.

On June 8th the Cumberland County Veterans Council met at Post 1630 to discuss the pressing issues facing area veterans and their families. NC DMVA Regional III Manager, Robert Johnson, and Terri Kane briefed the Council on the eligibility admittance for veterans and their families at the Fayetteville State Veterans Nursing Home, briefed attendees on the VA Claims process and passed out printed [Resource Guides](#). Participants walked away

with more knowledge on our State Veterans Nursing Homes and a better understanding of the programs and services the Department offers to North Carolina's Veterans and their families.

Download the NC DMVA Resource Guide [HERE](#).

## Executive Order Directs NC DEQ and NC DMVA to Designate Offshore Wind Coordinators and Take Steps to Support Offshore Wind



State of North Carolina

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

June 9, 2021

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 218

ADVANCING NORTH CAROLINA'S ECONOMIC AND CLEAN  
ENERGY FUTURE WITH OFFSHORE WIND

On June 9th Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order No. 218 highlighting North

Carolina's commitment to offshore wind power as the state transitions to a clean energy economy. The Executive Order highlights the economic and environmental benefits of offshore wind and directs actions to help North Carolina secure the jobs and economic development associated with the industry's estimated \$140 billion investment over the next 15 years to develop projects from North Carolina up the Atlantic Coast. The Department looks forward to continued coordination to help NC meet its renewable energy goals while maintaining our military readiness and ensuring our national security. [Click here](#) to learn more.

## DMVA Public Service Announcements

### Veterans Service Centers Reopen to General Public

After more than 15 months, all 12 Veteran Service Centers across North Carolina reopened for public contact on July 1st! Veterans may now schedule in person appointments and offices may accept walk-in traffic. Personnel will continue to exercise good personal protective practices with sneeze guards installed at every person's work station and disinfecting hand wash stations across facilities. These safe practices continue with the wearing of masks, face shields, and gloves for anyone who has an in-office visit and wishes to glove up. The Department continues to monitor employees for symptoms of COVID-19. Please call **844-624-8387** to schedule an appointment.

[Click here](#) for more information about Veterans Service Centers across North Carolina.

### Slow internet? No internet?

**Trouble paying for internet?**  
You can get help.

**Who Can Get Help?**

Some people who may get the discount:

- Have income at or below 135% of federal poverty guidelines
- Receive Lifeline benefits through SNAP, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, Federal Public Housing Assistance, or Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit
- Lost a job or significant amount of income since February 29, 2020

**Want Help?**

Many households are struggling to afford internet service during the pandemic. But the federal Emergency Broadband Benefit Program provides:

- \$50 a month for internet services
- \$75 a month for those living on tribal lands
- \$100 discount for a laptop, computer or tablet bought through a participating provider

**How Do I Get Help?**

You can apply online or by mail beginning May 12, 2021. For application and eligibility requirements visit [GetEmergencyBroadband.org](https://www.fcc.gov/efiling/EBBP)

For questions, call 833-511-3011.

**SLOW internet?  
NO internet?**  
We need to know.

The N.C. Broadband Survey is designed to gather information on locations without adequate internet access and speeds in our community.

✓ For Homes & Businesses **WITH** Internet Service  
Visit [NCBroadband.gov/Survey](https://www.ncbroadband.gov/survey) to take the survey now.

✗ For Homes & Businesses **WITHOUT** Internet Service  
Text "internet" to 919-750-0553. Standard text messaging rates will apply.

Your feedback directly impacts grant and infrastructure funding in your community.

**NCDIT**  
Broadband Infrastructure Office

The NC Broadband Survey is designed to gather information on locations without adequate internet access and speeds in our community. Please take the survey and pass this information along! <https://ncbroadband.gov/survey>

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## Leaderboard

### **#NC4VetsSpotlight: *Kathleen Howell and Richard Beekman***

#### **Kathleen “Kate” Howell**

Kate Howell was born in Medford, Oregon, the niece of a Vietnam War, Air Force veteran and the granddaughter of a World War II, Army Air Corp veteran. Their service continues to be an inspiration to her. She followed in their footsteps by joining the Air Force in 1990, becoming a Crew Chief on F-4E Phantom and A-10 aircraft. She was stationed at George AFB, CA and Pope AFB, NC and is a Gulf War veteran. Throughout the years she has endeavored to assist military and veteran families whenever possible. She has been a North Carolina state employee for 16 years, having begun her career with the Department of Public Safety as a Correctional Officer at Johnston Correctional Institution, then working as a Detainer Clerk and Administrative Assistant to the Director of Combined Records at the Yonkers Road facility. She and her husband were both working for DPS when they met and married. Together they have five children and eight grandchildren. She is continuing to serve both the State of North Carolina and the military and veteran communities through her position as the Executive Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Military Affairs, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

#### **Richard “Dick” Beekman**

Dick Beekman is a senior at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte double majoring in History and Political Science, with honors in both programs. He was selected as a 2021 Marian Drane Graham Scholar through the UNC System Offices and is focusing his capstone research on mental health accessibility for student veterans within the UNC System. A five-year veteran of the United States Marine Corps, Dick is passionate about serving the needs of military and veteran communities. As a result of his background and research interest, Dick has been placed in the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs as part of his scholars program. In addition to his research, Dick has been fulfilling various publicity and outreach roles through the writing of proclamations, official correspondence, speeches, and remarks for the department. With a father who retired after 20 years of service in the Marine Corps and a brother who spent 8 years in the Marine Corps, Dick comes from a family that believes in service to country and service to others. He has carried this passion over to UNC Charlotte, where he currently serves as Student Body President. Following graduation, Dick hopes to attend law school in order to pursue a professional career in advocacy for disadvantaged communities.

**Nominate a Service Member or Veteran for #NC4VetsSpotlight**



Do you want to light up the face of a special Service Member or Veteran? You're in luck!

#NC4VetsSpotlight is an opportunity to highlight your favorite Service Member or Veteran and his/her service.

It's easy. All it takes is one email to [publisher@milvets.nc.gov](mailto:publisher@milvets.nc.gov) with as much background information on your nominee as you can put together and 1-3 photos.

**Pictures:** Everyone loves pictures, so the better the quality, the better the tribute will be. The images should be larger than 200kb. Please note: If the photo is grainy, it probably won't work. Email [publisher@milvets.nc.gov](mailto:publisher@milvets.nc.gov) with any questions.

## In the News

### **CAPITAL TONIGHT: Meeting the new N.C. Military & Veterans Affairs secretary**

The N.C. Department of Military & Veterans Affairs has a new leader. Loretta Boniti talks with Sec. Walter Gaskin, a former U.S. Marine Corps lieutenant general, about his goals for the department and keeping North Carolina the most military-friendly state in the union.



## Special Attention

## Community Calendar

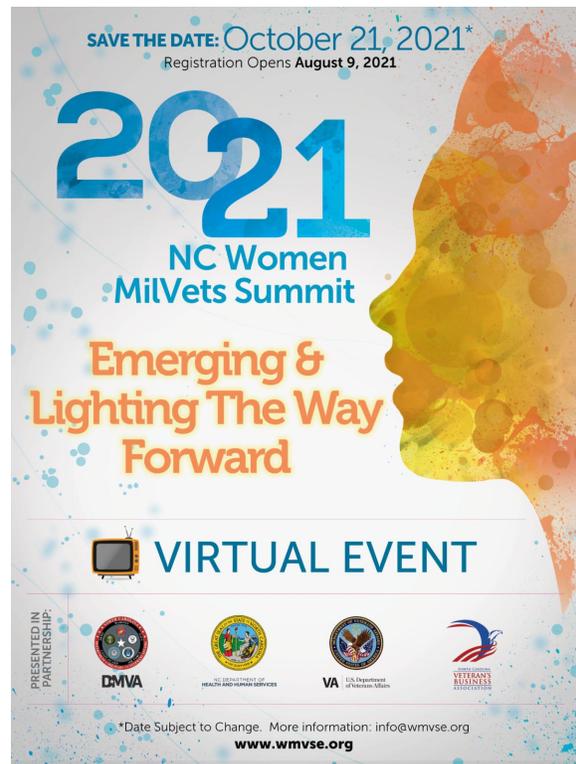
## NC Women Milvets Summit

**Educate, Empower, Enrich: Emerging & Lighting the Way Forward**

**Thursday, October 21, 2021, 9:00 am – 12:30 pm**

The North Carolina 2021 Virtual Women Military/ Veteran Summit is a biennial event aimed at empowering military and veteran women to live healthy and happy lives, become successful leaders in their communities, and to advocate on behalf of military and veteran women when necessary. The intent of the summit is to capture an audience of women that are Active Military, Veteran, Reserve and NC National Guard.

Women veterans, active military, and civilians will participate in this event. These presenters will provide information regarding federal and state benefits and resources. There will also be an exchange of ideas emphasizing business, entrepreneurship, education, career opportunities and health and wellness. The event will feature breakout sessions of presenters and a panel providing more information and a Q&A session.



## The Hall of First

On October 9, 2021, a formal ceremony will be held at the North Carolina Museum of History located at 5 Edenton Street in Raleigh, North Carolina. The DMVA Military Affairs Division has selected and will introduce the inductees of the inaugural class for the North Carolina Military Hall of Firsts.

The Hall of Firsts, in partnership with the North Carolina Museum of History, represents the State of North Carolina's ongoing commitment to honor the contributions of our nation's heroes who proudly represent our great state. The mission of the NORTH CAROLINA MILITARY HALL OF FIRSTS (NCMHOF) is to publicly emphasize the honor brought to our state and nation by the sacrifice of North Carolina Military Veterans and their families; to promote equal and inclusive opportunities for veterans and their families in all aspects of society; and to identify and support all individuals and organizations that contribute to this important mission.

## Elizabeth City Coast Guard City Recertification Ceremony

On August 4th, the North Carolina Coast Guard Fifth District Commander will be presenting the City of Elizabeth City with its re-certification as an official Coast Guard City. The Elizabeth City Coast Guard City Recertification Ceremony will be held on the Coast Guard Base Elizabeth City, MWR Pavilions, and start promptly at 11:30 AM. The event will begin with remarks, prayer, the national anthem, followed by brief remarks from Coast Guard Commander District 5, Rear Admiral Laura M. Dickey, DMVA

Secretary, LtGen Walter E. Gaskin, and Elizabeth City Mayor, the Honorable Bettie J. Parker. A reading of the Coast Guard Birthday proclamation from Governor Roy Cooper will ensue with concluding remarks from base CO/AIRSTA CO. Attendees will be invited to enjoy lunch with an exciting flyover by AIRSTA in celebration of the Coast Guard's 231st Birthday. This is an RSVP event.

#### UPCOMING OBSERVANCES

- Jul 25 National Parents Day
- Jul 26 Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act
- Jul 27 Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
- Jul 29 Anniversary of the Army Chaplain Corps

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jul 12-16 Patriots Path Workshop
- Jul 13 Hire Heroes USA Employer Spotlight: Amazon Transportation, Risk and Compliance
- Jul 14 Veterans Coffee, South Piedmont Community College
- Jul 17 Billy Graham Library Military Appreciation Day, Charlotte
- Jul 19 ReCAST Summer Learning Experience-Posttraumatic Growth
- Jul 20 Hire Heroes USA Success After Service: 5 Steps to Get Hired
- Jul 21 NC4ME Hiring Event
- Jul 21 Hire Heroes USA Federal Employment: Strategy Session
- Jul 22 NC Governors Working Group, Raleigh
- Jul 24-25 USO NC Spouse Reset, Fayetteville
- Jul 27 Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
- Jul 27 Hire Heroes USA Success for Military Spouses: Leveraging LinkedIn
- Jul 28 Joel Fund Virtual Veteran Coffee Connection
- Jul 29 Army Chaplain Corps Anniversary
- Jul 30 Veterans Bridge Home PGA 2K21 Virtual Golf Tournament
- Jul 30 WholeVet - O2O Military Transition Day

Click [here](#) for the most up-to-date event information.

Share your photos, stories, and events with us for consideration at [Publisher@milvets.nc.gov](mailto:Publisher@milvets.nc.gov)

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#### State Veterans Cemeteries update COVID-19 guidance

The Department will revisit changes to operations as Governor Cooper's Road to Recovery Plan updates.

#### Cemeteries

Interments are offered the option of a committal service at the time of interment. Military funeral honors, customarily provided by the Department of Defense and volunteer honor guards will be based on local availability.

Listed below are guidelines to follow until further notice.

- Services are 30 minutes, Monday – Friday, at 10am, 12pm, 2pm. Family and attendees must exit the cemetery at the conclusion of the service at half past the

hour.

- Caskets & urns must be thoroughly disinfected before entering the cemetery.
- There is no limit on the number of attendees at a committal service.
- Cemetery chairs or podium will not be placed at the committal area.
- Next of Kin information will be given to funeral staff.
- Attendees aren't permitted to handle or touch caskets or urns before, during or after the service.
- Attendees who are not vaccinated should wear a mask and maintain distance when they cannot maintain six feet of distance.
- Funeral flower arrangements are not permitted to be left during the committal service, but, families or funeral staff may place one arrangement on the gravesite after all services for the day have concluded.



North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

The North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (NC DMVA) supports both active and reserve uniformed military personnel and their families; military installations and communities; and military veterans and their families in North Carolina. The Department seeks to provide timely and responsive engagement to enhance NC's current military and veteran friendly environment. In addition, the Department also seeks to foster and promote business, technology, transportation, education, economic development, and healthcare for the above communities. Lastly, the Department works to accomplish these services by providing assistance and coordination between the Federal Government, the State of NC, its political subdivisions, and collaborative and supporting agencies.