The Expositor

November 2026



Salute to Veterans

VETERANS DAY

November 11



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The roles of the various branches of the U.S. military

Each November, people across the United States and its territories honor the brave men and women who serve and have served in the various branches of the country's military.

Veterans Day is observed annually every November 11 and honors the service of all U.S. military veterans. The day should not be confused with Memorial Day, which is celebrated each year in May and honors all military personnel who have died in service.

Veterans Day is a great time for anyone to learn more about the various branches of the U.S. military.

Army

The U.S. Department of Defense notes that the Army is the largest and oldest service in the country's military. The Army provides the ground forces that protect the United States. Members of the Army are trained to defeat enemy ground forces and to seize and control enemy lands and resources. Army also are trained to control and interact with the general population in countries where members are stationed.

Marine Corps.

It might surprise some to learn that the Marine Corps. is a component of the Department of the Navy. That's one reason why maintains amphibious and ground units for contingency and combat operations. The Marine Corps. is divided into four groups: the operating forces that fight; the headquarters for leadership; the supporting establishment that provides logistical support; and the Marine Corps. Reserve.

Navy

The Navy protects America at sea. Despite its massive land mass, the United States is a maritime nation, which underscores how important a strong Navy is to the safety of the country and its residents. The Navy works alongside American allies and partners to keep the seas open and free.

Air Force

The Air Force has five core missions: air superiority; global strike; rapid global mobility; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; and command and control. The Air Force defends the country and its residents in air, space and cyberspace and is capable of delivering forces anywhere in the world within hours.

Space Force

The existence of the Space Force may come as a surprise to many Americans. Organized under the Department of the Air Force and established in 2019, this branch of the military organizes, trains and equips space forces in order to protect the interest of America and its allies in space.

Coast Guard

During peacetime, the Coast Guard is part of the Department of Homeland Security. In times of war, it operates under the Navy. The Coast Guard provides law and maritime safety enforcement as well as environmental protection. In addition to promoting national security, border security and economic prosperity in the maritime environment, the Coast Guard saves those in peril on the sea.

National Guard

The National Guard is comprised of the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard. The National Guard has a diverse array of responsibilities that range from supporting combat missions to responding during domestic emergencies to assisting in humanitarian efforts and more.

The U.S. military is made up various branches, each with its own unique missions and responsibilities. Veterans Day marks the perfect occasion to celebrate the many individuals who have served and continue to serve in the U.S. military.



8 ways to honor veterans for Veterans' Day

Millions of people make considerable sacrifices to protect the freedoms of their fellow citizens. According to the Pew Research Center and data from the Department of Veterans Affairs and the U.S. Census Bureau, there are currently more than 18 million living veterans in the United States. The 2021 Census counted 461,240 veterans in Canada, according to Veterans Affairs Canada.

The term "veteran" refers to a person who served in the active military, naval, air service, or space service and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. In the U.S., there are actually five types of protected veterans, according to the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974. Under VEVRAA, a veteran may be classified as a disabled veteran, recently separated veteran, active duty wartime or campaign badge veteran, or Armed Forces service medal veteran.

Veterans deserve respect and admiration all year long, but also get their own holiday each November. Veterans Day celebrates veterans' patriotism and willingness to sacrifice and serve. This Veterans Day, people can consider these eight unique ways to honor the veterans in their community.

1. Attend events.

Organize or participate in local Veterans Day celebrations, such as parades and ceremonial events.

2. Get involved with veterans' affairs.

Support veterans by volunteering with organizations that assist them, such as the VA, local veterans' groups, VA hospitals, or charities dedicated to veteran services.

3. Petition for veteran speakers.

Reach out to schools, scout troops, or other groups and arrange opportunities for veterans to share their stories and contributions. Learning about the sacrifices these men and women made can heighten individuals' appreciation for veterans.

4. Support the families of veterans.

Reach out to veterans' families, who also must make sacrifices and concessions. Anything from shopping, babysitting, doing chores, or making a meal can help the families of veterans.



5. Donate.

If finances allow, make contributions to reputable charities that provide services for veterans, like those that offer mental health counseling or job placement services. If there isn't a charity that fits with your vision, begin one.

6. Hire veterans to work.

If you are a business owner or hiring manager, consider hiring veterans for open positions at your company. It can be challenging to re-enter the workforce after service, so make it known that your firm welcomes veterans.

7. Offer personal acknowledgements.

Take the time to speak to veterans and thank them for their service. If possible, when dining out, ask the server if you can pay for the meal of a veteran who is also dining that day.

8. Don't forget the homeless veterans.

Ask the local homeless organizations for assistance in honoring some of the homeless veterans that may be within the community. This can include a ride to obtain a free meal on Veterans' Day or another needed activity.

Veterans Day is celebrated on November 11, marking an opportunity to express one's gratitude and support for the scores of veterans who have served honorably.





A local look at Veterans Day through the eyes of JROTC

CALLIE BOWMAN
WCHS Student Writer

November 11 is a day celebrated all across the country to honor and recognize the individuals who have served in the United States Armed Forces. Veterans Day is a day to show your appreciation for the sacrifices veterans have made to protect the rights and freedom Americans have today.

All military veterans who served are honored on this day for their dedication, courage, and commitment to serving the United States and making an impact on our nation.

White County High School's JROTC works hard to put on the annual ceremony on Veterans Day. JROTC, or Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps, helps students understand the importance of military service, leadership, and the sacrifices veterans have made to protect the nation.

During Veterans Day, these values take on special meaning as communities recognize those who have served. "I don't think of myself as somebody to be honored during Veterans Day, but I feel like those that came before, those that paid the ultimate price, and for sacrificing themselves for our country. I feel like it's a way to honor them, to show respect to them, and try to uphold their legacy as best as we can," said Sergeant Jason Moore.

JROTC First Sergeant Douglas Romero said, "Veterans Day is one of my favorite days of the year, not because I'm a veteran but because so many people are veterans and they pay the ultimate price for us to have the freedoms we do today."

JROTC leaders and cadets also play an important role in understanding the significance of the day. They set an example, demonstrate leadership, and recognize the contributions of those who came before them.

John Hawco ('27), senior Sergeant Major, is looking to continue a career in the United States Marine Corps. Hawco said, "I think serving for our country means putting yourself out there to do the best you can."

He added, "Veterans Day is to recognize those who have served in the past, to learn from them, and see how maybe what they've experienced could help you in your life."

Students participating in the JROTC can provide a deeper understanding of the values when serving in the military.

Lindsey Richmond ('27), the JROTC Lieutenant Colonel, explains, "To me, being an everyday person means taking responsibility for guiding and supporting a team toward a shared goal. It is less about holding a position or title and more about empowering others, listening actively, and leading by example through accountability, integrity, and clear communication."

As Veterans Day is approaching and the annual WCHS Veterans' Day program is in the works, the JROTC works hard to put together a spectacular event.

"Our students work hard to honor all the vets from the area. This year we had a team go and interview veterans to find out what we can do to help the veterans more in the community and to tie in the school and the JROTC program to the veterans in the community," said First Sergeant Romero.

For many families, Veterans Day holds a personal meaning because of family members who have served in the Military. Grandparents, parents, siblings, and other relatives have helped shape lives through their sacrifices and dedication.

Having a relative close to them can foster a deeper appreciation for the armed forces.

Richmond ('27) said, "My grandfather, Paul Demont, served in the Coast Guard for over 20 years, and his influence had a profound impact on my life and continues to this day. Growing up, seeing his dedication, strong work ethic, and patriotism inspired me from a very early age."

"His lifelong commitment to serving others and his country is the primary reason I developed a strong interest in a military-style environment. I heard countless stories growing up of him helping strangers he didn't know and him doing incredible things that took courage. I would say I am who I am today because of him," Richmond added.

Although Veterans Day is observed once a year, the appreciation shown to veterans should continue throughout the year. Taking time to listen to their stories, thank those who served, and learn about their history and our country.

Through its emphasis on leadership, citizenship, and service, JROTC helps remind students that honoring veterans is not just about remembering the past, but also about teaching future generations to respect those who have served.

As the community gathers on November 11 and recognizes those who served our country through the program, the school honors local veterans, acknowledges their sacrifices, and gives gratitude and respect.

As we celebrate these men and women, always remember: their service should never be forgotten, and their sacrifices deserve recognition not just on Veterans Day, but every day.





Mental health issues that may affect combat veterans

Veterans have served their countries in various capacities. All military personnel work to preserve the freedoms of their fellow citizens, and some risk their lives in combat to do so. But the fight for combat veterans does not always end when they return home, and everyone must recognize that and support efforts to ensure veterans get the help they need after serving.

A 2013 study published in the journal Psychiatric Services found that 43 percent of veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan had probable post-traumatic stress disorder, major depression or alcohol misuse. Those are just some of the issues combat veterans may confront upon returning home. Recognition of those conditions and how to spot them may increase the chances veterans get the help they deserve and need.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

The Committee to Evaluate VA Mental Health Services found that 23 percent of veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) experienced PTSD. PTSD is different for each person, but American Addiction Centers notes that some common symptoms include flashbacks, nightmares, hypervigilance, emotional distress, or avoidance behaviors. Veterans with PTSD may experience difficulty sleeping, relationship troubles, struggles related to work, and challenges regulating their emotions.



Depression

More than 16 percent of OEF/OIF/OND veterans were found to be suffering from depression. The AAC notes that persistent sadness, hopelessness, fatigue, and social withdrawal are some symptoms of depression. Some veterans experiencing depression also may experience a loss of motivation that can affect their ability to function each day and take care of themselves. Depression can affect veterans at work and adversely affect their quality of life.

Substance dependency

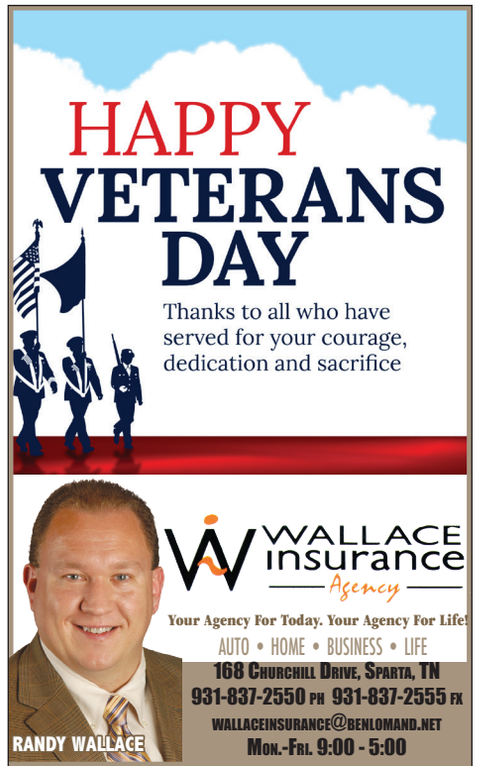
Committee findings found that more than 5 percent of OEF/OIF/OND veterans had alcohol dependency while nearly 3 percent had drug dependency. Veterans with substance use disorders may grow to rely on drugs or alcohol to cope with trauma resulting from their service. Others may look to drugs or alcohol to alleviate chronic pain or stress related to their service. Substance use disorders can exacerbate existing mental health issues, and veterans also may engage in risky behaviors while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Psychological distress

The committee found that 13 percent of OEF/OIF/OND veterans experienced psychological distress. Such distress can make veterans feel like they are in crisis, which can lead to feelings of hopelessness, emotional numbness, or isolation. According to the AAC, when experiencing severe distress, some veterans may entertain thoughts of self-harm. In such instances, veterans may require emergency mental health support.

Veterans bravely serve their countries, and people must support efforts to ensure these brave men and women get the help many may need after returning from combat.





Honoring Our HOMETOWN HEROES

Cindy Hobbs - Women's Army Corps

CALEB ANDREWS
Editor/Writer

Cindy Hobbs, a local White County resident, joined the Army at age 19 as a member of the Women's Army Corps. At the time, Basic Training was completely different than that of the males' Basic Training.

Within a year and a half, the United States military merged the Women's Army Corps with the regular Army. This created the now-known one Basic Training standard for men and women.

Cindy said, "Throughout 28 years, I had several jobs. They put me where they needed me." One of those jobs included Radar Air Traffic Controller. She maintained this field for 3 years while in California. This created the opportunity for Cindy to do flight following for two years in the California National Guard.

The Army then asked Cindy to be part of the recruitment team as a recruiter. She put many females into the Army during this time.

Another job on Cindy's military resume is a finance and accounting sergeant with an assignment in Haiti and Kosovo. After some time, she was selected for the Sergeant Major Academy, requiring a year of training in El Paso, Texas.

After many years, Cindy was promoted up the chain of command and retired as a Sergeant Major, as one of two in her field. She retired in 2002 with 28 years of service. Cindy stated, "I wouldn't change anything".

Thank you, Cindy, for your years of dedication and service to this nation.













How to lend veterans a helping hand now and year-round

Members of the military play an important role in keeping the peace and preserving the freedoms that democracy enables. Veterans of the United States Armed Forces are celebrated each November 11 on Veterans Day. Residents in communities big and small must take time on Veterans Day to recognize their brave neighbors who served in the Armed Forces. But support for veterans should not begin and end in mid-November. Indeed, there's much anyone can do to lend veterans a helping hand all year long.

• Volunteer with local veteran assistance organizations and programs. Serving in the military is not easy, and many veterans who serve or served confront serious issues upon returning from combat or leaving the military. The Committee to Evaluate VA Mental Health Services found that 23 percent of veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) experienced PTSD, while roughly 16 percent suffered from depression. Various organizations work to help veterans in numerous ways, and volunteering with such groups can be a great way to lend active and retired Armed Forces personnel a helping hand. The Wounded Warrior Project is one such organization, and people can help to raise funds for WWP-backed fundraisers like 5Ks and galas that are held across the nation each year.

• Reach out to neighbors who served. Simply reaching out to neighbors who served in the military can be a great way to lend a helping hand. According to the American Community Survey, more than 2.5 million veterans ages 18 and over reported having a military service-connected disability rating of 70 percent or more. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs assigns disability ratings based on the severity of a disability (or disabilities), and that percentage-based rating represents how much a disability (or disabilities) decreases a veteran's overall health and ability to function. That millions of veterans are rated at 70 percent or more reflects a population in need, and not all of those needs are necessarily met by the VA. Those looking to lend a helping hand to veterans can offer to help those with disabilities manage daily life. Offers to shop for a disabled veteran's groceries, drive a veteran to doctor's appointments, help a veteran with lawn care or other household chores, or even invite a veteran over for dinner once per week are great ways to show veterans their sacrifices are appreciated and not forgotten.

• Propose and gather support for community events celebrating veterans. There's no end to the ways communities can recognize the veterans who live among them. Community-based events recognizing local veterans ensure residents know who among their neighbors served and helped to secure and protect their freedoms and way of life. When communities host events to honor local veterans, volunteer to serve at such events and work to promote them through word-of-mouth and avenues like social media. Residents can even propose new events that raise awareness about local veterans and encourage them to share their stories with their neighbors.

Veterans Day can serve as a catalyst that encourages residents to make a concerted effort to lend a hand to veterans in need throughout the year.







Frequently Asked Questions about Veterans Day

Each November, millions of people recognize the service and sacrifice of military veterans on Veterans Day. Initially commemorated as Armistice Day but renamed Veterans Day in the United States in 1954, the holiday is a federal holiday throughout the country.

The first Armistice Day was observed in 1919. Despite that lengthy history, the general public may still have questions about Veterans Day.

When is Veterans Day observed?

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs notes that Veterans Day is always observed officially on November 11, regardless of which day of the week that happens to be. In 2023, Veterans Day is Saturday, November 11. Because Veterans Day falls on a Saturday in 2023, the federal observation date is Friday, November 10.

Why is November 11 so significant?

November 11 is a significant day in world history because it marks the signing of the armistice between the Allies of World War I and Germany at 5:45 a.m. on November 11, 1918. Though the formal peace treaty, the Treaty of Versailles, was not signed until 1919 and hostilities between the sides continued for hours after the armistice was signed, the day is still viewed as the end of World War I.

What distinguishes Veterans Day from Memorial Day?

The VA notes that Veterans Day honors all those individuals who served honorably in the military during both wartime and peacetime. Memorial Day is a day to honor and remember military personnel who died in the service of their country, particularly those who lost their lives in battle or as a result of wounds sustained in battle.

What is the significance of red poppies?

Red poppies are ubiquitous on Memorial Day, but they're also visible on Veterans Day. Though it's not taboo to wear red poppies on Veterans Day, it's a tradition that aligns more with Memorial Day. That's because the poppies are typically worn to honor fallen military personnel. A 1915 poem written by a Canadian Lieutenant Colonel named John McCrae referred to the fields of poppies growing around the graves of World War I soldiers in Flanders.

Do other countries honor their military veterans?

Many countries across the globe honor their military veterans, and many do so on November 11 as well. For example, Canadians and Australians observe Remembrance Day in honor of their nation's respective veterans on November 11. Great Britain observes Remembrance Day on the Sunday nearest to November 11.





Veterans Day is a day to honor and commemorate the brave men and women who have honorably served in the U.S. military during wartime and peacetime.



FUN & ENTERTAINMENT

MILITARY SERVICE WORD SEARCH

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C O A L I T I O N Q O V L D Y V Y H L L
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Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

ARTILLERY
BARRACKS
BATTALION
CAMOUFLAGE
COALITION
COMMANDEER
DEPLOYMENT
FORTIFICATION
GARRISON
INFANTRY
LIEUTENANT
LOGISTICS
MANEUVER
ORDNANCE
PROTOCOL
RECONNAISSANCE
REGIMENT
SKIRMISH
SQUADRON
STRATEGY
TACTICS
UNIFORM
VANGUARD
VETERAN

VETERANS DAY

WHAT ARE THE SIX BRANCHES OF THE MILITARY?

1. A _ _ _
2. N _ _ _
3. A _ _ F _ _ _ _
4. M _ _ _ _ _ C _ _ _ _
5. C _ _ _ _ G _ _ _ _
6. S _ _ _ _ F _ _ _ _

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VETERANS!



These states are home to the greatest percentage of U.S. veterans

By the end of 2023, the United States was home to more than 18 million individuals who had served in the country's military. That figure, based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Department of Veterans Affairs and surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center, represents individuals from all walks of life.

Veterans come from diverse personal backgrounds, and they also call a wide range of states home. The USCB reports that some state populations feature a greater percentage of veterans than others. The share of the adult population that has served in the U.S. military is highest in these 10 states.



1. Alaska

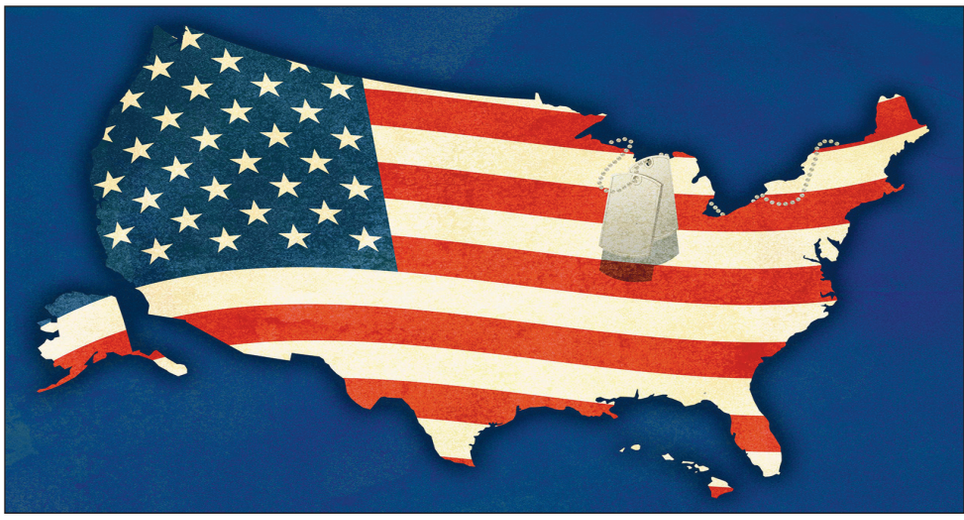
More than 10 percent of Alaska's 533,000 adult residents have served in the military.

2. Wyoming

The 2020 U.S. Census indicated Wyoming is the least populated state in the country. Despite that, the Equality State is home to a veteran population of just over 42,000, which accounts for roughly 9.4 percent of the state's adult population.

3. Virginia

Perhaps not surprising given its proximity to the nation's capital, Virginia is home to a sizable veteran population that accounts for 9.2 percent of its roughly 6.68 million adults.



4. Maine

Though it's another state like Wyoming that does not boast an especially large adult population (a little more than 1.1 million individuals), Maine is home to more than 101,000 veterans.

5. Montana

The Treasure State features an adult population of just under 884,000, and 8.9 percent of those individuals (roughly 79,000 people) served in the U.S. military.

6. South Carolina

The Palmetto State is home to more than 344,600 veterans, and those individuals make up just under 8.5 percent of the state's adult population.

7. Nevada

Among the roughly 2.5 million adults who call Nevada home, nearly 206,000 (roughly 8.3 percent) are veterans.

8. New Mexico

More than 136,000 veterans live in The Land of Enchantment, accounting for 8.3 percent of the state's adult population.

9. South Dakota

Like Alaska, Wyoming and Montana, South Dakota does not boast a particularly large adult population (roughly 685,000). However, more than 8.2 percent of adults who live in The Mount Rushmore State are U.S. military veterans.

10. Hawaii

The Aloha State rounds out the top 10, as the island state in the Pacific Ocean is home to nearly 90,000 U.S. military veterans, which accounts for 8.2 percent of its total adult population.

This Veterans Day, individuals in all 50 states are urged to thank local veterans for their sacrifices and service.

HAPPY VETERANS DAY!

Thank you, for your selfless sacrifice, endurance, and priceless service.

The Expositor Team

Our Team Who Served



Rhonda Smith



Kendra Conley



Caleb Andrews