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ON POINT Newsletter

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September 2017

N.C. Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA)

"Helping military families and veterans get the support and services they need."



Secretary Larry Hall
U. S. Marine Veteran

Message from Secretary Hall

Welcome to our new quarterly newsletter **"ON POINT"**.

This newsletter will serve as your guide for information regarding military and veterans' issues in NC and throughout the country. We hope that you will welcome this addition to your email and encourage you to share with your family, friends and colleagues.

Our goal with this newsletter is to create a resource that is not only informative but also beneficial to you. We welcome and appreciate all materials that you share with us. **"ON POINT"** is only one of many tools that we will provide to you to ensure that you are even more knowledgeable regarding issues that impact those in our military and veteran community.

Sec. Larry D. Hall

Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability (SERPPAS)



In 2005, state environmental and natural resource officials from across the southeast partnered with the Department of Defense and other federal agencies to form the Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability (SERPPAS). The region covered by SERPPAS includes the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi. The conversion of land into developed communities has resulted in the loss of agricultural land, important wildlife habitats, working landscapes such as farms, forests, and fisheries, and increased encroachment on military installations. This rapid urbanization presents challenges to the sustainability of defense and natural and economic resources throughout the Southeast region.

SERPPAS works to prevent encroachment around military lands, encourage compatible resource-use decisions, and improve coordination among regions, states, communities, and military services. The mission of SERPPAS is to seize opportunities and solve problems in ways that provide mutual and multiple benefits to the partners, sustain the individual and collective mission of partner organizations, and secure the future for all the partners, the region, and the nation. This mission will be accomplished through identifying opportunities for mutual gain among all partner groups, effectively addressing differences among the partners, and focusing on identifying solutions to complex problems.

SERPPAS partners have identified objectives that support the mission of SERPPAS. These objectives include:

- Promote improved regional, state, and local coordination;
- Develop and complete regional sustainability projects supporting the sustainment of natural, economic, and national defense resources related to base realignment planning in the southeast region as well as other identified sustainability needs; and
- Develop a GIS Sustainability Decision Support Tool that integrates federal, DoD, military services, and state data for use in regional planning by SERPPAS and individual states.

If you are interested in learning more about SERPPAS, visit www.serppas.org/ or contact Jeremy Collins, Interagency Coordinator at Jeremy.Collins@milvets.nc.gov.

2017 NC General Assembly Legislative Wrap Up



The 2017 long session of the North Carolina General Assembly has adjourned. During the legislative session, numerous bills passed into law. A few bills that directly impact the military and veteran community include the following:

[S.L. 2017-65](#) – Veterans’ History Awareness. Establishes Veterans’ History awareness month in November.

[S.L. 2017-90](#) – Veteran-Owned Small Business/Annual Report. This law requires the office of the N.C. Secretary of State to annually compile information about the number of veteran-owned and service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses in the state, and to provide this information to the N.C. Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

[S.L. 2017-29](#) – Veterans’ Affairs Commission/Strategic Plan. This legislation requires the N.C. Veterans’ Affairs Commission to adopt a comprehensive strategic plan to enhance benefits for veterans and their dependents and to require the N.C. Department of Military and Veterans’ Affairs to study program outcomes for military veterans and their families.

[S.L. 2017-64](#) – Military Affairs Commission/Strategic Plan. This act obligates the N.C. Military Affairs Commission to adopt a comprehensive strategic plan to enhance N.C. military installations and their missions.

[S.L. 2017-57](#) –Appropriations Act of 2017 Section 19.1(g). The language in the budget compels the North Carolina Military Affairs Commission to report funds spent from the Military Presence Stabilization Fund.

[S.L. 2017 - 192](#) – Competitive Energy Solutions. The bill amends various laws related to energy policy and creates an 18-month moratorium on wind farm permits in the State.

The General Assembly also passed a \$23 billion budget which Governor Cooper vetoed and the legislature overrode. Highlights of the budget included a \$1,000 salary increase for state employees, a 1% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for retired state employees, and the elimination of retiree lifetime health benefits for new state employees hired after January 1, 2021. Unfortunately, in this budget the DMVA did not receive funds for the operation and maintenance of the N.C. Veterans Cemeteries. Despite numerous request by Secretary Hall, the final version

of the House and Senate budget included zero dollars for the Department; however, Governor Cooper did include funds for the Department in his proposed budget which the General Assembly did not pass. To learn more about the legislative session, and to read the entire budget, click this link: [Senate Bill 257, Appropriations Act 2017](#).

Military & Veteran Resources

As a means of keeping you informed regarding military and veterans' issues, DMVA is pleased to provide access to a variety of resources to our military and veteran population. As part of our efforts to make information easily accessible and readily available, we publish an annual Resource Guide, which contains countless pages of beneficial information [NCDMVA Resource Guide](#). In addition to our Resource Guide, we partner with organizations that have a core mission of improving the quality of life for military personnel, veterans and their families. Some of these organizations meet on a monthly or quarterly basis and provide a wealth of valuable tools and resources for the military and veterans' community. A few of these organizations are listed below. Please note that this list is just an example of the many groups focused on the needs of military and veterans. If you would like to know more about each organization, or to view a much more extensive listing, please visit our [website](#).

- [✦ N.C. Governor's Working Group](#)
- [✦ N.C. Military & Veterans Affairs Commission](#)
- [✦ N.C. Veterans Affairs Commission](#)
- [✦ N.C. Veteran's Business Association](#)
- [✦ NC4ME](#)
- [✦ N.C. American Legion](#)
- [✦ Disabled American Veterans](#)
- [✦ US Department of Veterans Affairs](#)
- [✦ Veterans of Foreign Wars of NC](#)

N.C. Military Affairs Working Group

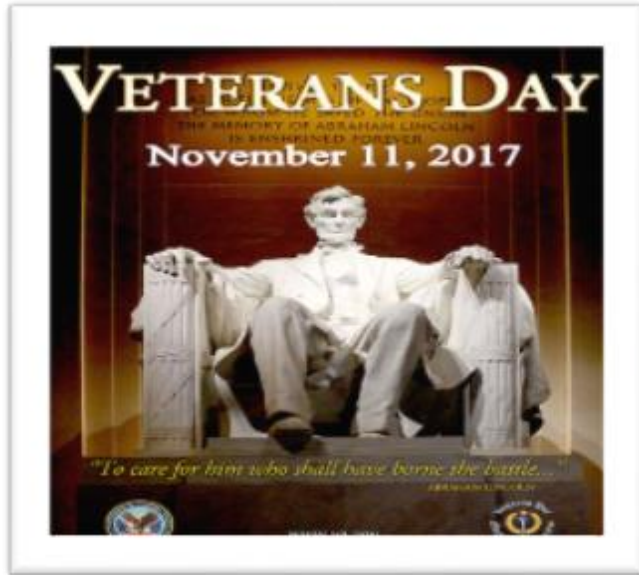
The N.C. Military Affairs Working Group is an informal standing collaborative between The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and all State agencies who employ positions that work directly with and support the military in North Carolina. This is an informal opportunity for state agency representatives to become better acquainted with us, share information and brainstorm ways to improve our coordination in support of the military mission in North Carolina. If your State agency has a position providing direct service to military service members and their families, please feel free to join us at DMVA Headquarters, N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh NC, every 2nd Wednesday at 8:00am.

Veterans Day Observance

Annual Joint Fall VSO/VST Training

“Back to the Basics”

On October 23-27, The North Carolina Division of Veterans Affairs and the NC Association of County Veterans Service Officers will hold a joint training conference in Atlantic Beach, NC. Throughout the week, attendees will have an opportunity to gain valuable information and resources to assist veterans. To register for the conference before the September 29th deadline, contact Martin Falls, Deputy Director for the NC Division of Veterans Affairs at martin.falls@milvets.nc.gov or by calling 984-204-2980.



Veterans Day is intended to honor and thank military personnel who served in all wars on behalf of the United States. Veterans Day is officially observed on November 11th and is often remembered through parades and community awareness events. It is the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice that ended the World War I hostilities between the Allied Nations and Germany in 1918. On November 11th and throughout the year, be sure to thank a veteran for his or her service.

For questions or to contact DMVA, e-mail: angella.dunston@milvets.nc.gov

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