

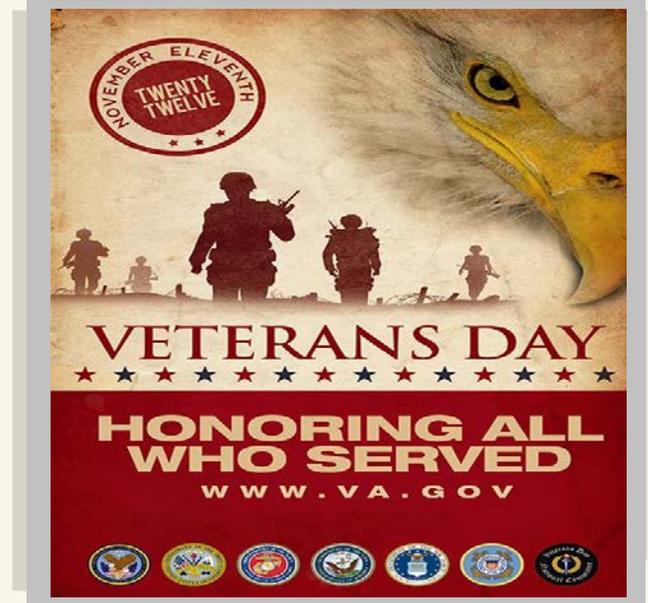
HOUSE TAKES STEPS TO AVOID LOSS OF BENEFITS FOR VETERANS

. The House of Representatives has recently passed two bills that are aimed at ensuring important VA programs aren't allowed to expire at the end of the fiscal year, and also to ensure that veterans are protected from fraud within the VA.

The bills passed by the House are the VA Major Construction Authorization and Expiring Authorities Extension Act of 2012 (H.R. 6375, as amended) and the Veterans Fiduciary Reform and Honoring Noble Service Act (H.R. 5948, as amended) passed by voice vote.

H.R. 6375 provides authorization for funding by the VA to complete construction projects at VA medical facilities throughout the country, and the legislation also provides for the one year extension of existing authorities that provide important services to veterans, which would otherwise expire this year. Services include those for veterans who are severely mentally ill or homeless.

H.R. 5948, the Veteran's Fiduciary Reform and Honoring Noble Service Act, calls for measures that would provide protections for veterans under VA's Fiduciary Program. The program is one that the has been found to have a great deal of fraud. If the bill is signed into law, it would mandate that all VA fiduciaries submit to a full background and credit check and would also put an appeals process into place so that veterans would have a means of recourse if veterans or their families lose faith and trust in their VA-appointed fiduciary. Veterans will no longer be subject to a broken system that allows dishonest people to oversee their financial matters.



VETERANS DAY OPEN HOUSE

Please join us on Monday, November 12, in the 2nd Floor Meeting Room of the Government Center for our annual Veterans Day Open House.

We will be serving from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. There will be lots of food and plenty of fellowship. Don't forget to drop your name in the box for a chance to win some great door prizes.

Among some of the door prizes this year are 4 \$25 gift cards to Everett Chevrolet, 2 Free Oil Changes to Hendrick Honda, and 2 Grandstand Tickets to the NASCAR Sprint All-Star Race on May 18, 2013.

Hope everyone has a wonderful Veteran's Day!

NOVEMBER 2012

VA APPROVES 45,000 VETS FOR VRAP

The Department of Veterans Affairs has reported that all 45,000 slots for the fiscal year program Veterans Retraining Assistance Program, VRAP have been filled. The VA is currently in the process of approving applications for 54,000 slots that will be available in FY 2013.

VRAP is a newly created job training and education program that is aimed at serving the needs of unemployed veterans. The goal of the program is to upgrade the skills of veterans, to make them competitive for high demand jobs. The VA says the goal of VRAP is to train 99,000 veterans over a two year period. Training will be provided in more than 200 job skills, determined by the Department of Labor (DoL) to be the most in-demand and sought after by employers.

To be eligible for VRAP, a veteran must meet the following criteria:

- Be 35-60 years old, unemployed on the day of application, and not dishonorably discharged
- Not be eligible for any other VA education benefit program such as the Post 9-11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, or Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment
- Not be enrolled in a federal or state job training program within the last 180 days; and
- Not receive VA compensation at the 100% rate due to individual unemployability (IU).





“VETERAN’S DAY”

Veterans Day originated as “Armistice Day” on November 11, 1919, the first anniversary of the end of the World War I. Congress passed a resolution in 1926 for an annual observance, and November 11 became a national holiday beginning in 1938. President Dwight D Eisenhower signed legislation in 1954 to change the name to Veterans Day as a way to honor those who served in all American wars. The day honors military veterans with parades and speeches across the nation. A national ceremony takes place at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

There are more than 21 million veterans in the United States. There are more than 1 million female veterans. There are close to 44,000 veterans who served during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. There are 3.5 million veterans in the United States with a service-connected disability. Of that number, 810,245 have a rating of 70 percent or higher. There are 9.2 million veterans who are age 65 and older and there are 1.8 million who are younger than 35. North Carolina has 760,544 veterans with Catawba County having over 11,000 veterans. Wake County has the most veterans with 53,060. In 2011, the VA spent \$56.5 million dollars in Catawba County on benefits for veterans.

