

## DRAGON PULSE



### What does Veterans' Day mean to you?



"Veterans' Day is a time when we can reflect on all our services and what they have done for our country."

— Edward Clark, Retired Military



"Respecting all those who went before us. Never forgetting what we're fighting for and we have fought for."

— Staff Sgt. Lisa Williams, 65th Military Police Company, 16th Military Police Brigade



"It's to honor those who have been in the military."

— Sgt. Richard Martinez, Company B, 319th Military Police Battalion, 525th Military Police Brigade



"Just what it is. To honor those who fought for our freedom."

— Sheena Wilson, Military Spouse

## Reflections of a grateful nation

by Lt. Gen. John R. Vines

XVIII Abn. Corps Commander



Vines

Veterans' Day is a time to thank and honor every American who has answered the call to duty and served in the military, especially those who have served during times of war.

Theodore Roosevelt once said, "This country will not be a permanently good place for any of us to live in unless we make it a reasonably good place for all of us to live in."

For 231 years, it has been the men and

women of our armed forces, who have come together to fight for a common cause.

They've defended America when our borders, our people and our way of life have been threatened. When others turned away, it was our veterans who were willing to stand up, be counted and put their boots on the ground.

This weekend, Americans throughout the world will gather to remember and pay tribute to our veterans. It is a chance to thank those who have selflessly answered the call to duty, and to remember those who have served. It was the men and women of our armed forces who protected our citizens when they desegregated schools and registered to vote. Troops have gone to faraway places in

countries torn apart by conflict to stand in the middle and maintain peace. Now they're building roads and bridges, schools and hospitals and providing water and electricity to the people of Afghanistan and Iraq ... providing them the opportunity to choose their own destiny.

The mission and the theater of operation may change, but throughout the world, these service members are still the ones who answer the call to duty when there's a job to do. It is not only the service member who answers the call to duty. Our families' service is marked by the unwavering support to their loved ones who are in harm's way. They may not carry a rifle on their shoulder, but they have carried

the weight of worry. They carry that burden until their loved one returns home. Tragically, some never do. Whenever a service member falls in combat, it is the families who suffer most. Just as our veterans have made sacrifices, these families have made sacrifices as well.

When we honor veterans, it is only right that we thank family members and honor them for their sacrifices too. So as you are enjoying your Veterans' Day activities, make sure you remember those who went before you, those who are at your side and those who wait for their reunion with loved ones.

God bless you, your family and the United States of America.

## VA headquarters announces 'Veterans Pride Initiative'

### American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Leaders of major veterans organizations joined Veterans Affairs Secretary R. James Nicholson here today in launching an effort to "kindle a new spark of patriotism" by asking men and women who have served in the military to wear their medals on Veterans Day.

"We are announcing a "Veterans Pride Initiative" to remind Americans of the pride and honor in the hearts of those who have served," Nicholson said at a news conference at VA headquarters. "We expect Americans will see our decorated heroes unite in spirit at ceremonies, in parades and elsewhere as a compelling symbol of courage and sacrifice on

Veterans Day, the day we set aside to thank those who served and safeguarded our national security."

The campaign is modeled after a tradition in Australia and New Zealand, countries who honor the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps on April 25 each year, VA officials said.

Nicholson said he hopes a U.S. tradition will ensue to emulate this pride in being a veteran and in honoring the nation's veterans.

VA is offering information about the campaign on a Web page, <http://www.va.gov/vet-erspride/>, where veterans can also obtain information about how to replace mislaid medals and learn how to confirm the decorations to which they are entitled.

## Veterans' Day — a day of honor

by Spc. Wes Landrum

50th PAD

I was 26 when I first got the call. I was going overseas to take part in Operation Enduring Freedom. I packed my things and boarded the plane and began a six-month odyssey where I began to learn a lot about myself. In October 2003, I returned home and for the first time realized that I was a veteran of a war.

### History of Veterans Day

World War I, also known as "The Great War" ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919. Now while that officially ended the war, the actual fighting had ceased seven months earlier when an armistice between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. So while the war ended in June 1919, Nov. 11, 1918 is generally known as the day the war ended. In 1919, the first Armistice Day was observed. President Woodrow Wilson said of the first Armistice Day, "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations ..."

The original plan was to observe the day with parades and public gatherings and a halt to all businesses starting at 11 a.m. An act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, officially made the Nov. 11 a legal holiday — a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day."

The day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I. However in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen in the nation's history and American forces had fought in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans' service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by replacing the word "Armistice" with "veterans." With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, Nov. 11 became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

### Remember the Heroes

Veterans' Day is a special day to my family. My father and father-in-law served in Vietnam with the Marines. My grandfather served in World War II and the Korean Conflict with the Army. I found a greater appreciation of Veterans' Day while stationed in Washington D.C. in 2004. I was given the chance to escort media to Arlington Cemetery for the annual Veterans' Day speech given by the president. While at the cemetery, I saw vets from every war come together in a time of reflection and remembrance. Walking from the Lincoln Memorial to the newly built World War II Memorial, I saw a man who was inside a bamboo cage. He had been a prisoner of war in Vietnam and for seven years, that cage was his home. I stopped to talk to him and he told me he dons ragged clothes and steps into the cage to honor and remember his friends who did not come home from that war.

This weekend, the Soldiers and families here at Fort Bragg will enjoy a four-day weekend. While you enjoy the sunshine and pleasant temperatures, I ask you to do one thing — take time to think and remember the fallen who have given the ultimate sacrifice for this proud nation. Happy Veterans' Day from one veteran to many others.



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARINE CORPS

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Editorial Office: Public Affairs Office, XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg, N.C. 28310-5000, Telephone (910) 396-6817 or 6991; DSN 236-6817; Fax 396-9629; E-mail Address: braggparaglide@conus.army.mil. Office located on the first floor of the XVIII Airborne Corps Headquarters Bldg. 1-1326. Subscriptions are available at (910) 323-0701. Circulation is 25,000 copies.