DOUGLAS COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TOM KRESS CHRIS BOICE TIM FREEMAN

Douglas County Courthouse, Room 217
1036 SE Douglas Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon 97470

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 28, 2026

Commissioners Honor Veterans, Veterans Day, and Military Families Month

(Douglas County, Oregon) – The Douglas County Board of Commissioners issued a proclamation today, Wednesday, October 28, 2026, at the Weekly Business Meeting calling upon all citizens of Douglas County to celebrate and honor **Veterans Day**, **Military Families Appreciation Month** and our **71st Annual Douglas County Veterans Day Parade**. Commissioner & Board Chair Tom Kress welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated, **"*It is always a great day when we have the opportunity to recognize and honor our veteran community. Each year, we set aside time to celebrate the men and women who have served our nation, the military families who stand beside them, and the volunteers who help make our annual Douglas County Veterans Day Parade such a meaningful community tradition*."**

Commissioner Chris Boice presented the proclamation, on behalf of the Board and acknowledged that, "…***throughout our nation's history, courageous men and women have worn the uniform of the United States Armed Forces, upholding a proud tradition of honor, courage, and dedicated service. The freedoms we enjoy as Americans have come at an immeasurable cost, borne by those who have served and continue to serve in defense of our nation, our Constitution, and the principles of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."*** A copy of the video presentation can be found on the Douglas County Government Facebook page **https://www.facebook.com/DouglasCountyeGovernment**, and on our meeting broadcast on our YouTube Channel at **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-EseIMB3cKg**.

Commissioner Boice presented proclamation certificates to U.S. Military Veterans, Veteran Service and Support Groups, Military Family Members and the Douglas County Veterans Day Parade Committee. In attendance was Eric Bagwell (USAF & VDay Parade Chair), Jim Little (US Navy, DCVF, DCVAC), Rick Sciapiti (US Army & Military Order of the Purple Heart), Michael Kurtz (US Army), Jim Barnett (US Marine Corps); Larry Hill (US Army); Kai Rodriguez (US Army); Mary Newman (DC Veterans Service Officer), Cecilia McMillian (National Guard & AWVA President), Rusty Lininger (US Army & Source One Serenity), Elena Lininger (Source One Serenity), Jerry Anderson (US Navy, VAC & DCVF), Heidi Wood (VVA Honorary Member, Military Family); Shawn Johnson (US Navy Source One Serenity); Reno Rains (DC Veterans Service Office); Pat Plourd (DC Veterans Service Office); Daron Patton (DC Veterans Service Office); Nikol Hansen (Roseburg VA Healthcare Center); Brodie Minter (US Navy, RUSA); Devin Freeman (US Coast Guard, RUSA); Kyle Bartlett (US Air Force, RUSA); Stephen Lusch (US Army, RUSA); Jim Baird (RUSA). Veteran service groups and supporters represented were Douglas County Veterans Forum; Douglas County Veterans Advisory Committee; Douglas County Veterans Day Parade Committee; Douglas County Veterans Service Office; Vietnam Veterans of America – Chapter 805, Auxiliary & Honor Guard; American Legion Post 16 & 123 & Auxiliaries; Veteran of Foreign Wars Post 2468 & 4039 & Auxiliaries; Roseburg Veterans Administration; American Women Veterans Association; Military Order of the Purple Heart; Wreaths Across America – Douglas County; SourceOne Serenity; War Birds; Roseburg Urban Sanitary Authority; and Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

"***It's hard to believe that it has been a year already. We are so ready for this year's Veterans Day Parade, and it has come together so well. The support we get from the community every year just amazes me. I have even more help this year. I want to give a shout out to Sheriff Hanlin. We had an idea come up and I reached out to the Sheriff. He said he was on board with it and then he took care of all the arrangements. For the first time that I am aware, we are going to have a multi-department law enforcement escort this year for our parade. The Sheriff took care of this, and I appreciate it so much! This year's parade showcases America's 250th years of American independence and freedom, and it is going to be good. We have something very special planned in front of the judges stand this year. It is a surprise and I want people there to see it. Commissioner's, I appreciate the support and we appreciate the proclamation***," – Eric Bagwell, US Air Force and Douglas County Veterans Day Parade Chair.

"***I can never pass up an opportunity to talk about veterans. It is always such a pleasure to be here on this occasion honoring veterans. There is a saying, "To those who fought for freedom, there is a taste that the protected will probably never know." I am saying that because all of us veterans at one time raised our hand and said we would protect the constitution of the United States and we went to foreign lands and we fought against communism. This last year I have had the honor to be part of the Oregon Department of Veteran Affairs Advisory Committee. I am always so proud to tell the state committee and whoever will listen about what goes on in Douglas County. Frankly, I am having so much fun, because I feel like a rockstar. I am always telling them about our local events and the fact that our Commissioners recognize our veterans with proclamations. And the other counties are silent. They are starting to look upon us as a premier county in Oregon for veterans. I am happy I chose to live here, because I feel it is the best place not only in Oregon, but in the United States to live. All of those accolades bear on you three gentlemen, our Commissioners for what you have done to honor veterans and the citizens of this great County. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. May God Bless Douglas County, and may God Bless the United States of America***," - Jim Little, US Navy Retired, Douglas County Veterans Forum, Douglas County Veterans Advisory Committee and ODVA Advisory Committee member.

"***I have been involved with Veteran Services for over 40 years. It is the best job in the world! Our veterans are the salt of the earth. Anytime we can help a veteran get the benefits that they really deserve because they signed on the dotted line to serve our nation – that is just the ultimate that we can do for them. This group of veterans in Douglas County, as Jim Little said, is the best veteran's group, not just in Oregon, but probably in the country. They come together to help other veterans and they are just wonderful. I would like to thank the Board for supporting our office the way you do, because you are helping more and more veterans by doing so. And that is very special as well***," – Mary Newman, Douglas County Veteran Service Officer.

"***Good morning. I just want to thank you for all that you guys do for our veterans. It is always an honor to get to come down and be with this group of veterans and veteran supporters. It is quite an honor for me and for the Tribe to be part of these events that honor our veterans***," – Robert VanNorman, Cow Creek Tribe of the Umpqua Band of Indians.

"***Thank you so much for hosting this proclamation and honoring our veterans. We are with SourceOne Serenity and VetNet and we provide opportunities for veterans to engage with our community through service projects and activities. We have just completed another trail refurbishment in the Umpqua National Forest in the Mount Thielsen Wilderness Area. Oregon Equestrian Trails (OET) received a grant from the state to open up a bunch of dilapidated trails for off-roading, hiking and equestrian use. A group of veterans and community members, supported by pack mules from OET were able to open up trails up Tolo Mountain and Tolo Creek area. We were able to recruit and train two new younger veterans into our program who are not too long out of the military. They were looking for community and a purpose. We brought them into our loop and know that they are going to be very good citizens of Douglas County***," – Rusty and Elena Lininger, Source One Serenity.

"***I first of all want to thank the Commissioners for your deep involvement and belief in getting a veteran home here. Since 1893 there has been an attempt to get a veterans' home here in a viable fashion. Even Herbert Hoover promised it to Earl B. Stewart, and guess what, he didn't even deliver. So, we have got a task ahead of us. Commissioners, without your support, your interest, time, effort, fiscal support and everything else - what is happening now could not have been done without you and all of us in the veteran community. We appreciate you. Because we stand up on our hind legs and wave the flag about wanting a veteran's home. Something we deserve. So, with your continuing support, your love and your time, we will get a Veterans home***," – Larry Hill, Veteran US Army, Douglas County Veterans Advisory Committee, Veterans Day Parade Committee, Legion and VFW.

"***Thank you, I appreciate you three (Commissioners) for doing this for veterans. I spent 9 years active duty and several years in the reserves. RUSA, that's who I work for, and I have been there 29 years. It was pretty busy in the reserves, and I kind of felt guilty because I was leaving my job at RUSA to go do reserve work. I want to publicly thank my boss Jim Baird and the RUSA administration - they talked me into re-enlisting and they supported me without question. I was able to retire out of the military. I want to thank RUSA and you three Commissioners for being so supportive of veterans. Douglas County is a great place to live, great place to raise kids and it is going to be a great place to retire***," - Stephen Lusch, Veteran US Army, Roseburg Urban Sanitary Authority.

The **71st Annual Douglas County Veterans Day Parade** is scheduled to take place in downtown Roseburg on **Wednesday, November 11, 2026**, beginning at **11:00 am**. The Douglas County Veterans Day Parade has a long-standing tradition of honoring our veterans on the Veterans Day Holiday and has been held in Roseburg every single year since 1955. The worthy and steadfast tradition has a well-earned title as "**Oregon's Greatest Veterans Day Parade.**" The theme for the 2026 Douglas County Veterans Day parade will be "**1776-2026 – America's 250th Anniversary**."

The **71st Annual Douglas County Veterans Day Parade** will follow the traditional route through downtown Roseburg starting on the corner of NE Fowler Street and NE Diamond Lake Blvd, turning left onto NE Jackson Street, which becomes SE Jackson Street, turning left onto SE Lane Street, left onto SE Main Street, right onto SE Douglas Avenue and concluding in front of the Douglas County Courthouse. We encourage citizens to make sure they fill **ALL** spaces along the entire parade route (both sides of the street and sidewalks) to make sure that our participating veterans receive ample accolades for their dedicated service to our county as they move along the parade route. Douglas County Veterans Day Parade applications can be downloaded from the county website **here** or picked up in the Douglas County Veterans Service Office (VSO) at the Douglas County Courthouse located at 1036 SE Douglas Avenue in Roseburg. Applications can be returned to the VSO. **The parade application deadline is Friday, October 30, 2026, for those that want their entry to be judged.**

"***Thank you, Jim Little for the good news. What I mean by that is – as you drive around Oregon, several counties have signs that say, "We honor veterans." I know Douglas County does, and I want that to mean something. Hearing the report from you today, that says that we stand out and do that well – is meaningful to me. I know that there is more that we can do, and if we know what those things are, we will do them. And to hear that we are honoring our veterans well - is really important!***" – Commissioner Chris Boice.

"***Thank you to all of our guests, veterans, military families, parade organizers, and volunteers for being here today and for coming to spend this time and making it special. I would like to encourage everyone in Douglas County to thank a veteran. You don't have to do it just today, let's do it every day. I also want to encourage people to participate in Operation Green Light throughout the month of November. In Douglas County, we do honor veterans. Thank you, veterans, for your service***," – Commissioner and Board Chair, Tom Kress.

In addition to the proclamation, the Commissioners are proud to announce that Douglas County will once again be participating in Operation Green Light. During the month of November - Veterans and Military Families Month - the front of the Douglas County Courthouse will be illuminated with green lights to show our appreciation and support for veterans and their families. We encourage everyone to shine a light of hope and support for veterans by placing a green light on their porch or outside light fixture. The green lights on the courthouse will remain on display through the end of

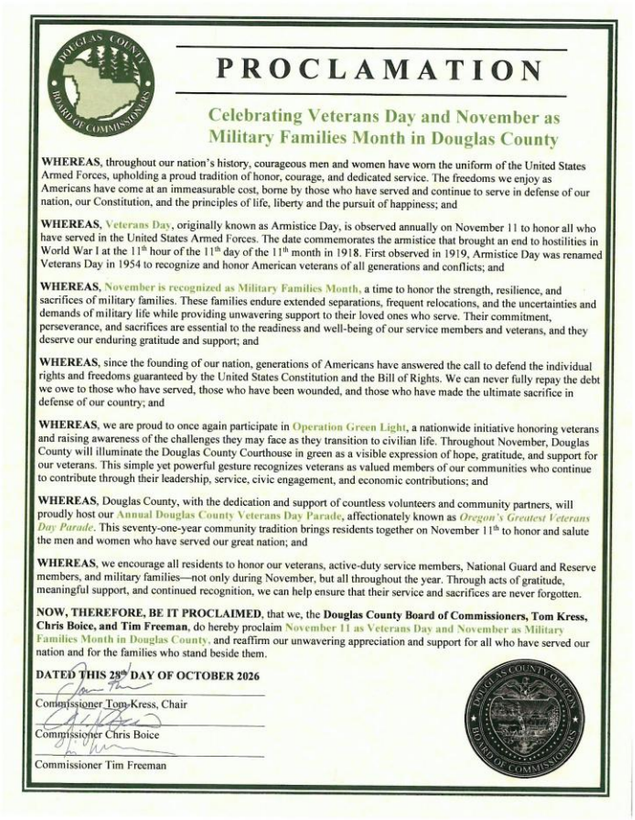
November. Along with the proclamation this gesture provides credence of our commitment to our county motto, "***In Douglas County, We Honor Veterans***!"

Please join us in honoring our veterans, today, every day, and especially throughout the month of November. We invite you to celebrate with us on Veterans Day and at the **71st Annual Douglas County Veterans Day Parade** in downtown Roseburg on **Wednesday, November 11, 2026**. For more information about the parade, please click the link **here**. The proclamation presented today serves as a reminder for all citizens to recognize the valor, courage, and sacrifice of these patriots and their families. It is also a time to reaffirm our commitment to preserving the liberties guaranteed to us under the Constitution of the United States.

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Proclamation Attached. Photos © K.Rodriguez/Douglas County. Individual photos are available upon request.



PROCLAMATION

Celebrating Veterans Day and November as Military Families Month in Douglas County

WHEREAS, throughout our nation's history, courageous men and women have worn the uniform of the United States Armed Forces, upholding a proud tradition of honor, courage, and dedicated service. The freedoms we enjoy as Americans have come at an immeasurable cost, borne by those who have served and continue to serve in defense of our nation, our Constitution, and the principles of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and

WHEREAS, Veterans Day, originally known as Armistice Day, is observed annually on November 11 to honor all who have served in the United States Armed Forces. The date commemorates the armistice that brought an end to hostilities in World War I at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918. First observed in 1919, Armistice Day was renamed Veterans Day in 1954 to recognize and honor American veterans of all generations and conflicts; and

WHEREAS, November is recognized as Military Families Month, a time to honor the strength, resilience, and sacrifices of military families. These families endure extended separations, frequent relocations, and the uncertainties and demands of military life while providing unwavering support to their loved ones who serve. Their commitment, perseverance, and sacrifices are essential to the readiness and well-being of our service members and veterans, and they deserve our enduring gratitude and support; and

WHEREAS, since the founding of our nation, generations of Americans have answered the call to defend the individual rights and freedoms guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights. We can never fully repay the debt we owe to those who have served, those who have been wounded, and those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our country; and

WHEREAS, we are proud to once again participate in Operation Green Light, a nationwide initiative honoring veterans and raising awareness of the challenges they may face as they transition to civilian life. Throughout November, Douglas County will illuminate the Douglas County Courthouse in green as a visible expression of hope, gratitude, and support for our veterans. This simple yet powerful gesture recognizes veterans as valued members of our communities who continue to contribute through their leadership, service, civic engagement, and economic contributions; and

WHEREAS, Douglas County, with the dedication and support of countless volunteers and community partners, will proudly host our Annual Douglas County Veterans Day Parade, affectionately known as *Oregon's Greatest Veterans Day Parade*. This seventy-one-year community tradition brings residents together on November 11th to honor and salute the men and women who have served our great nation; and

WHEREAS, we encourage all residents to honor our veterans, active-duty service members, National Guard and Reserve members, and military families—not only during November, but all throughout the year. Through acts of gratitude, meaningful support, and continued recognition, we can help ensure that their service and sacrifices are never forgotten.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that we, the **Douglas County Board of Commissioners, Tom Kress, Chris Boice, and Tim Freeman**, do hereby proclaim November 11 as Veterans Day and November as Military Families Month in Douglas County, and reaffirm our unwavering appreciation and support for all who have served our nation and for the families who stand beside them.

DATED THIS 28th DAY OF OCTOBER 2026

Commissioner Tom Kress, Chair

Commissioner Chris Boice

Commissioner Tim Freeman

