

FEBRUARY

# Newsletter

## Welcome!

We are proud to be kicking off 2026 with strong momentum at the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs. January was marked by meaningful progress toward our FY2026 goals, including the opening of several new positions within ADVA and the continued success of Operation Gratitude in bringing Alabama's citizens and veterans together in impactful ways.

As we move forward, we remain steadfast in our commitment to honoring service with action. This season of new beginnings reminds us to lead with purpose, embrace opportunity, and remain grateful for the veterans, families, and communities we are privileged to serve.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeff Newton".

*Commissioner, Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs*



## > In this edition.

Senior Bowl Visit  
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and more





# Senior Bowl @ William F. Green State Veterans Home

Several players with the Senior Bowl visited with the veteran residents of William F. Green State Veterans Home in Bay Minette. These young men from across the country who have excelled on the field brought cheer and happiness to the veteran residents and staff. Along with the Senior Bowl for making this visit possible, we would also like to thank Wind Creek Hospitality for the gift bags for our veteran residents!

For the full album of photos: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjCJuxb>



## District 3 Visit

Deputy Commissioner Sandra Lucas recently traveled across District 3 and wrote the following summary to capture her visit and insights.

It is always good to get out of the office. Fresh air and freezing cold temperatures did not dampen a trip to District 3 offices.

After a talk about women veterans' health with the Enterprise Chamber and other distinguished guests, Lynda Jenkins, Director of Field Operations, and I headed to Geneva County. Robert Gautney's office is in the Geneva County Courthouse. Robert runs a one-person office serving the county's veterans with poise and a calm demeanor. Like many of our Veteran Service Officers, Robert has a hobby to keep him busy during his off hours. This photo of Robert and Lynda shows the judge's bench, tables, and a bench – all made by Robert!



Next stop, Dale County, to see Robbie Ray and Roy Howell. If you are looking for Valentine's Day decorating tips, call Robbie. The office is decorated and welcoming to veterans. On the corner of the desks, I spotted a feedback card for veterans and their families to complete and drop into a container. Robbie explained that the feedback helps improve services. The comments also offered encouraging words for a job well done. I like this idea!

A trip to Southeast Alabama is not complete without a visit to Davy Daughtry and his team in Houston County. This office has a real 'homey' feel, and that is not an exaggeration. The office was busy with veterans coming and going. Everyone was in good spirits, smiling and laughing. I enjoyed my visit with this team of Alabama fans – War Eagle!



Before retrieving my vehicle and admiring the progress at the Bennie G. Adkins home, I spent a moment with James Brandt in the Coffee County office. James is supported by the outstanding citizens of Enterprise, Fort Rucker, and other cities in the area.

It is great to get out and see firsthand how our VSOs are doing. What is my one takeaway?

Phones, phones, phones – the ever-ringing, always full of voice messages – phones.

Commissioner Newton has requested that we review options, assess pricing, and propose a solution. It won't be a fast fix, but your angst has been heard, and we are committed to making improvements.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



### State Veterans Homes Executive Director, Kim Justice

Kim Justice, Executive Director of the ADVA State Veterans Home Program, met with members of Alabama's congressional delegation this week during the 2026 National Association of State Veterans Homes Winter Conference in Arlington, Virginia. These meetings are essential to strengthening relationships, sharing on-the-ground perspectives, and helping align policy decisions with real-world needs. They also reinforce a unified commitment to effective service and accountability. We are grateful for to the congressional delegation for taking time to meet with Ms. Justice and Scott Hurst, HMR Veteran Services Inc. Senior Vice President of Operations, for meaningful discussions that strengthen our shared commitment to serving Alabama's 400,000 veterans.



## Did You Know...2-1-1

Dialing 2-1-1 connects you to a trained operator 24/7 that has access to a comprehensive database with a multitude of services in your community.



United Ways of Alabama

You can text for help too. Text your zip code or 211KNOW to 898-211 and message one of our live 2-1-1 specialists for help.

They also have a website! You can visit [211connectalabama.org](https://211connectalabama.org) to search their database of community resources to find ones suitable for your needs.

# ADVA Community Highlights



## The Cruisers Unlimited Cars and Trucks Club of Atmore

In continued support of the local veteran community, the Cruisers Unlimited Cars and Trucks Club of Atmore selected the William F. Green State Veterans Home as the recipient of its annual donation for the fourth consecutive year. Each year, the club chooses organizations that make a meaningful impact in our community. As a club member and ADVA Veterans Service Officer, Gene Moore said he was honored to present this year's donation check to Director Charlie Allen on behalf of the organization.



## S.A.F.E.R. Together Welcomes its Newest Partner

ADVA Commissioner Jeff Newton joined the S.A.F.E.R. Together team yesterday in Guntersville to welcome its newest partner, Command Tactical LLC. As the safe storage initiative continues to grow, its reach broadens to more communities and strengthens its impact across the state. We are grateful to everyone for their commitment and partnership in supporting this important effort promoting veterans suicide prevention. To learn more about S.A.F.E.R. Together, including the mission, participating locations, and how to get involved, visit: [www.safertgetheral.org](http://www.safertgetheral.org)

# ANNOUNCEMENTS New Veterans Service Office Location



**Location:** Alabama National Guard  
Joint Force Headquarters, 1730 Cong  
W L Dickinson Drive, Montgomery,  
AL 36109 **Service Officer:** Takeo  
Coleman **Hours of Operation:**  
Monday through  
Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
**Phone:** (334) 274-6337

## Temporary Office Relocation Morgan County

The Morgan County ADVA office will be temporarily relocated to the Sheriff Office building on Lee Street, Decatur, due to renovation in the courthouse. The office will be closed Monday 2/9/26 for the move, then will work at the temporary location for about 4-5 weeks starting Tuesday.



## Vets For Hope

View crisis intervention resources, find a crisis center or service provider near you, and read more about support and warning signs today at [VetsForHope.com](https://VetsForHope.com)



**If you or a group would like to participate in Operation Gratitude, please contact the ADVA at: [va.alabama.gov/contact](https://va.alabama.gov/contact)**

**INSTRUCTIONS: MAKE A MINI THANK YOU CARD!**

1. Print this page.
2. Use scissors to carefully cut along the dashed line.
3. Color the front of the card however you like.
4. Fold the card in half on the straight line.
5. Write a message inside the card for a Veteran.
6. Deliver the card to a Veteran you know!



**Thank You For  
Your Service!**

