



LEFT: Participants in Redmond's Veterans Day Parade walk along 6th St. and through downtown on Nov. 11 carrying flags. BELOW: Members of the community lined up along 6th St. and through downtown on Nov. 11 to wave flags and show support for veterans during Redmond's Veterans Day Parade.

Nick Rosenberger/Spokesman photos

Redmond filled with activities for Veterans Day

BY NICK ROSENBERGER • Redmond Spokesman

A number of Veterans Day activities took place in Redmond on Friday, kicking off with a parade through downtown starting at 11:11 a.m. in honor of the World War I armistice that was signed on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month.

After the parade, free chili was offered at the VFW Deschutes Post, #4108 while General Duffy's Waterhole hosted a resource fair to help support Central Oregon and Redmond veterans.

The event included live music and a spaghetti dinner to help raise money for Central Oregon Veterans Outreach.

Resources for veterans, or those looking to get involved, are below.

Central Oregon Veterans Outreach

COVO aims to help veterans and their families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Central Oregon.

According to Erik Nelson, COVO veteran services coordinator, the non-profit can help with housing and employment and connect veterans with benefits.

To be eligible, participants must have served or have a head of household or spouse who is a veteran, they must earn less than 50 percent of the area's median income and be currently homeless or in imminent danger of becoming homeless.

Additionally, Deschutes Title, Optimal Rate Home Loans and General Duffy's are partnering with Central Oregon Veterans Outreach to collect warm clothes, camping supplies, bedding and non-perishable food from Nov. 11 to Dec. 15 for veterans.

Supplies can be dropped off at Deschutes Title, Optimal Rate Home Loans and General Duffy's.

COVO can be contacted at 541-383-2793 or at their website.

Battle Buddies of Central Oregon

Formed in August 2013, Battle Buddies focuses on preventing veteran suicide with dogs and dog training.

Kristina Olson, the founder of the organization, started the organization to help honorably discharged veterans cope with PTSD or depression for free. They offer several types of training, which can also be used as therapy for veterans.

Battle Buddies of Central Oregon can be contacted through their website, email at bbco@battlebuddiesco.org or at 541-390-7587.

Central Oregon Veterans Ranch

Central Oregon Veterans Ranch — a 19-acre working ranch located just outside Redmond — offers veterans an opportunity to help each other with peer-to-peer support as they work the land.

Formed in 2015, the ranch offers a wide range of programs including classes, farming and ranching mentoring, beekeeping, garden spaces, support groups, AA meetings and combat veteran peer support.

"(It's) really just a multi-faceted resource for veterans," said Nate Cox, the ranch's veteran outreach coordinator. "(It) makes me feel like I have purpose."

The ranch has been featured in an upcoming documentary film titled "Cover Me: The Path to Purpose" which has already won two awards from New York-based film festivals.

Information can be found on their website or at 541-706-9062.

Save a Warrior

An Ohio-based organization, Save a Warrior is a suicide prevention program for veterans and first responders with

a 2,000-person alumni base.

Save a Warrior partners with clinicians and holistic health providers to address Complex Post-Traumatic Stress and Military Sexual Trauma through a model of meditation and peer-to-peer programming.

According to Toby Rey, the Pacific Northwest ambassador for alumni affairs and community outreach, the organization has a 99.6% efficacy rate and over 60 alumni in Central Oregon.

"We have a pretty thriving community here," Rey said. The group meets every Friday morning at Northwestern Home Loans in Bend and is open to non-veterans as well. More information can be found at their website.

Central Oregon Suicide Prevention Alliance

An organization covering Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson County, COSPA focuses on programs to encourage wellness and prevent suicide and related behaviors. The organization uses a four-step action plan to promote suicide prevention, provide care and support, increase community knowledge and promote supportive environments.

They also offer trainings for parents, youth and students, teachers, veterans and more with programs such as Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training and Mental Health First Aid.

More information can be found at their website. For mental health emergencies, call 988.

Homes for Heroes

A national organization, Homes for Heroes focuses on assisting veterans and first responders with real estate and home-buying. The organization helps firefighters, EMS, law enforcement, military, healthcare professionals and teachers.

Amanda Laird, a loan officer at Guild Mortgage who participates in Homes for Heroes, said the organization helps give cash back to veterans and can find discounts on lending, appraisal and house inspections for veterans and first responders.

"(It's) an easy way for us to give thanks," she said.

According to Jennifer Graham, a licensed broker for Keller Williams Realty Central Oregon, the organization saves the average Redmond veteran or first responder about \$5,000.

More information can be found on their website or at 866-443-7637.

The Shield

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit, The Shield provides free mental health services, counseling and therapy to veterans and first responders in Central Oregon.

According to Dan Anderson, co-founder of The Shield, they aim to eliminate all barriers to mental healthcare. Anderson said it only takes one phone call and one email to get an appointment and that it can be a lot easier and less intimidating than going through the VA.

"It's great to see people get the help they need," he said. The Shield can be contacted at info@shieldcentraloregon.com or at 541-390-3133.

Vet Center

An organization that offers counseling, referrals and community engagement, the Vet Center uses veterans to help veterans.

According to Greg Ford, veteran outreach specialist, the services are confidential and can be used no matter how an individual was discharged from the military.

"Come on in — we'll figure out where you need to go," he said.

More information can be found by calling 877-927-8387.

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