

A Life of Service: Veteran Douglas Applegate

By Brenda S. Bear

Lewis County Veteran, Douglas E. Applegate’s story doesn’t begin with medals or fanfare, it begins on a Greyhound bus leaving downtown Vanceburg in 1955. A recent college graduate with a Business Degree and no job prospects, he made the decision to enlist in the U.S. Army rather than wait to be drafted. That decision, he said, changed everything.

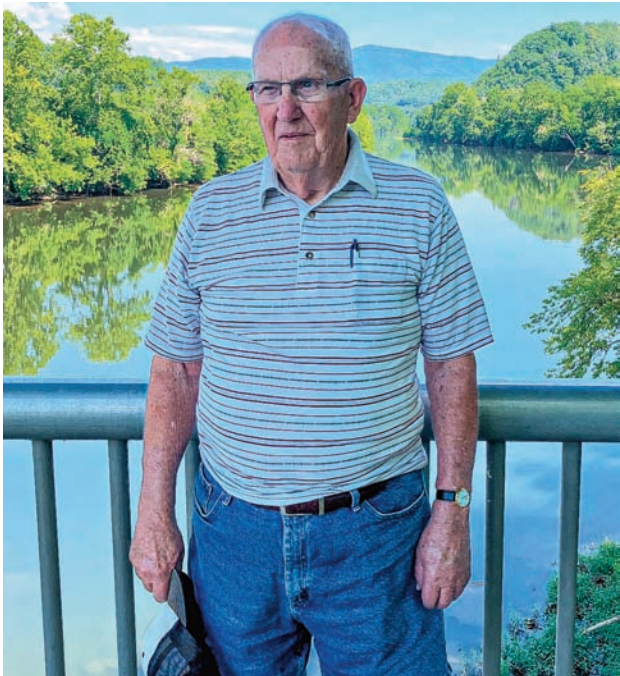
“I remember boarding that bus like it was yesterday,” he recalled. “Two of us left that day, me and Don Edington. I didn’t know Don then, but we stepped onto that bus as strangers and came back as lifelong friends. Don turned out to be one of the best friends I ever had.”

As Mr. Applegate shared his story, he grew emotional when he remembered telling his dad he was joining the Army. He didn’t offer a long speech, just a simple piece of advice: “Whatever they ask you to do, do it the best you can.” He repeated that line several times during our conversation. You could tell it had become more than advice; it was a guiding principle.

Mr. Applegate’s Army experience was a little different from most. Having already earned a degree, he stood out. But standing out didn’t mean he got off easy. “The Army didn’t test you with paper as much as they did with your actions,” he explained. One of the first things they asked was, “Can anyone type?” Mr. Applegate could, thanks to his business training. They tested his skills in a cold, empty room. “At the time, I didn’t think much of it,” he said. “But that test came back around in a big way.”

His first station was Fort Knox, where they tested the men in less conventional ways. “They had us pull grass, one blade at a time,” Mr. Applegate said, laughing softly. “They wanted to see if you’d follow orders or complain. A lot of guys got themselves in trouble trying to shortcut or talk back. I just kept pulling grass.”

Later, he was sent to Fort Bliss, Texas, what he called “an evil place.” He and three other men were crammed into a 6x8 hut, also used to house prisoners of war. The floors were wooden slats so rough and thin you could see through them. Every morning, he was ordered to mop the floor with just a bucket of water. “I never complained,” he said. “They were always watching. They wanted to know if you could



LEWIS COUNTY HERALD
Specialist 4th Class, Douglas E. Applegate.

take orders.”

Eventually, Mr. Applegate was sent to Fort Stewart, Georgia. The men were gathered to hear where they’d be shipped next. Many were headed for Korea. When the sergeant read off Mr. Applegate’s name, “It scared me to death,” he admitted. But instead of the front lines, he was asked again about his typing skills. That test in the cold room had found its way back to him. He was assigned to Battalion Headquarters as the personal secretary to a sergeant.

He finished his service as the bookkeeper at the Officers’ Club. The Army offered him a promotion and a chance to reenlist, but he declined. “I was ready to come home,” he said.

Just four days after returning to Vanceburg, Mr. Applegate heard that Lewis County High School needed a business teacher. He took the job, and stayed in the school system for over 53 years. He served as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and, even after retirement, drove a school bus. “The Army made me a person,” he said. “It gave me ideas that were right. That experience shaped everything I became after.”

Mr. Applegate believes military service should be required for everyone. “It teaches you discipline, humility, and how to do things well, even if you don’t want to.”

A Teacher Shaped by Teachers

Mr. Applegate didn’t just teach, he inspired. And he never forgot the teachers who shaped him. One of the most impactful was Teddy Applegate. “He told me two things,” Mr. Applegate said. “First, get

control of your classroom. Second, put the fodder down where the calves can eat it. That stuck with me.”

Another unforgettable figure was Miss Carrie Goldenberg, an English teacher. “I dreaded her class,” he confessed with a smile. “Especially when she’d assign book reports. She had this way of pointing that finger, and you knew, you were next.” But Miss Goldenberg, he said, pushed him in all the right ways. “If it hadn’t been for her, I wouldn’t have amounted to a hill of beans. She made me stand up in front of the class. That moment is what steered me toward becoming a teacher.”

Years later, when Mr. Applegate was a principal, he arranged a graduation ceremony but chose to sit quietly in the back, while his teachers gave out the diplomas. Carrie Goldenberg was in the audience, long since retired. The next day, she called him and told him to come to her house. “She looked me straight in the eye and said, ‘Don’t you ever do that again.’ She told me, ‘You belong on that stage. You hand out those diplomas and do your duty.’ And from that day on, I did just that.”

A Life of Service

Mr. Applegate was married for 63 years and raised four children, Kendall, Steve, Mike and Holly, along with raising a granddaughter, Amanda. His life, whether in the Army, the classroom, or the community was marked by quiet strength, humility, and service. Through it all, he carried the lessons of his youth and his time in uniform: Do your duty. Don’t complain. Show up and do your best. Simple lessons. Lifelong impact.

Legislative Update

State Representative Patrick Flannery



Week in Review: Lawmakers prepare next budget

While legislative committees tackle a variety of issues in the months between legislative sessions, without a doubt the most important is the state budget. The legislature is the only branch of state government with the constitutional authority to allocate money, and we do so on a two-year cycle with a budget passed in even-numbered years. Budget proposals generally originate in the House, where they are analyzed by the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee.

The work of writing our next budget really starts the minute the previous budget passes. We immediately begin monitoring how the state is spending the money allocated, as well as how money is coming in from taxes and fees. Soon after, we enter the phase we are in now as we begin looking at individual parts of the budget, including specific programs and agencies, to determine if funding needs are changing. Much of this task is completed by budget review subcommittees, including one I serve on as an ex-officio member, the Budget Review Subcommittee on General Government, Finance, Personnel, and Public Retirement. This is an important step and requires us to determine if the program is operating as efficiently as possible and if it is serving its purpose.

In July, members of the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations and Revenue heard from the legislature’s budget staff about budget trends and disaster response, as well as an analysis of our current economy. Presenters highlighted the need for long-term stability, saving enough for the future, and making smart investments, while also keeping up with changes in how money is being spent. In recent budgets, the most substantial portion of general funds is directed towards K-12 education and Medicaid, with the latter seeing a total per-person increase of \$615 to \$1,034 since the pandemic began.

For clarification, the term “general fund” refers to the state’s main account, which is used to pay for most public services. It holds the majority of taxes and fees collected by the state, including income taxes, sales taxes, and business

taxes. General Fund money is used to fund things like public education, the Kentucky State Police, disaster preparedness, military affairs, and other state agencies. Think of it like the state’s main checking account. Unlike restricted funds, which are reserved for specific purposes, the general fund supports a wide range of programs based on the state’s priorities each year. For example, we restrict the use of motor vehicle fuels taxes for the maintenance and construction of our roads, bridges, and transportation infrastructure. Some programs – like Medicaid – are paid for with general and restricted funds.

We talk a lot about spending, but we cannot forget that almost every dollar we spend – including money we receive from the federal government – was collected through a fee or tax. That is why it is so important we budget wisely. Increasing spending in one area means the money has to come from somewhere and I for one believe Kentuckians are taxed enough. After all, common sense tells you that no government ever taxed itself to prosperity. That is one reason we are working to eliminate the state’s individual income tax (the legislature has lowered it four times from 6% in 2017 to 3.5% in January of 2026) and make all taxes and fees more equitable. We have seen what Kentuckians can do with this money as they invest in their communities, save and spend it on items they want.

Our current budget continues to provide the necessary funding to meet our needs. And, our financial health is further strengthened by the Budget Reserve Trust Fund, which has grown from a zero balance in 2011 to roughly \$3.5 billion today. Setting this money aside means we are not only better prepared for a crisis, but also enabled major one-time investments across various sectors, including transportation projects (nearly 25%), economic development (14%), sewer and water grant programs, local government support, hospitals, post-secondary education, and a substantial allocation of \$3,110,031,900 over three fiscal years to address unfunded liabilities in the state retirement system. Additionally, committee members discussed budget changes requested by the executive

branch and heard from the Council on Postsecondary Education.

The budget process is a meticulous, multi-stage undertaking designed to ensure fiscal responsibility and investment. Soon after we convene the 2026 Regular Session in January, the budget will be filed as several bills to reflect subject areas like the judicial, legislative, and executive branches, as well as the plan for road construction and maintenance. Each of these measures must be approved by the committee, then sent to the full House for consideration.

Upon House passage, the budget measure moves to the Senate, often resulting in changes presented as a committee substitute. The different versions from both chambers then necessitate a crucial step: a free conference committee. Here, representatives from both the House and Senate engage in discussions and negotiations to reconcile differences and reach a consensus agreement before the final bill passes both chambers.

When the General Assembly passes the budget, it will embody our core mission: funding crucial state services and making sure every dollar spent genuinely helps all Kentuckians. A budget plan is designed to empower us, no matter what challenges or opportunities lie ahead.

As always, I can be reached anytime through the toll-free message line in Frankfort at 1-800-372-7181. You can also contact me via email at Patrick.Flannery@kylegislature.gov and keep track through the Kentucky legislature’s website at legislature.ky.gov.

REUNION NOTICE
O’Cull, Davenport, and Sellers Reunion to be held on Sunday, August 17, 2025, at the Fleming Energy Building, 1449 Elizaville Rd., Flemingsburg, KY 41041. The potluck dinner will be approximately 12:30 p.m. Doors will open at about 11:30 a.m. Chicken, ice, and paper products will be furnished. Please pass the word to all family. Hoping to see you there.

Tollesboro Lions Club

By Craig Stanfield



Friday night Demolition Derby a “smashing” success!

Late afternoon sunny skies and heat worked to dry the fairgrounds after an early Friday morning rain (which caused the Horse Show to be



canceled; it will be postponed until a later date, likely August 1st and 2nd) worked in the favor of the Tollesboro Lions Club and permitted them to host a great demolition derby (the early rains acted to just dampen the track, cutting down on dust and limiting the amount of water that would have had to be added to the demolition derby pit surface). Ultimately, the event was well attended by a good-sized crowd who lined the bleachers to watch a significant number of cars and drivers to participate in the always popular Demolition Derby event!

Friday night at the Tollesboro Lions Club Fair brought out a huge crowd to watch and cheer on their favorite drivers in the always popular Demolition Derby! A large number

of cars/drivers participated and put on a great show! When it was all over, the win went to a vehicle that hammered and crashed into his competitors without mercy until he could finally claim the victory! The

crowds were in place and the bleachers were full with fans of the event urging the competitors to “hit ‘em, hit ‘em, hit ‘em!!!” with shouts of glee!

The Tollesboro Volunteer Fire Department and the Lewis County Ambulance Service were there throughout the entire event to be of assistance if needed, as were a number of law enforcement officials from the Lewis County Sheriff’s Office. The concession booths were mobbed by hungry spectators and participants, and tickets were sold by the Lewis County Chamber of Commerce, the Trinity Fish & Game Club, and Lewis County Shooting Sports (all of whom were selling chances on a firearm - the rifle being offered by the Lewis County

Shooting Sports is a custom engraved 68th Annual Tollesboro Lions Club Fair Special Edition!), and a number of persons purchased tickets to support the Tollesboro Lions Club Cow Bingo (where \$500 will be given away at the fair Saturday, July 26th. Persons need not be present to win).

Rains and overcast skies definitely impacted the Saturday crowd at the Tollesboro Lions Club on hand to watch the Mud Sling, but a good show was put on nonetheless!

Trucks commanded the most attention, rumbling and spinning through mud and throwing it high in the air while attempting to head straight through the muck towards the finish line. However smaller suburban models, Jeeps, and Side-by-Sides took their turns as well, in the timed event where competitors drove their vehicles through the soupy, muddy surface, trying for the fastest time to insure a commanding victory.



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