

Ashe County Schools Students and Staff Unite to Salute Our Veterans

On Friday, Nov. 7, Ashe County Schools held a heartfelt Veterans Day celebration to proudly honor the brave men and women who have served our country.

The day began with a drive-thru parade at Westwood Elementary and continued with refreshments and a special program at Ashe County High School, where students and staff came together to say **thank you** in a big way.

The program featured outstanding performances that reflected both patriotism and gratitude:

- Choruses from **Blue Ridge Elementary, Mountain View Elementary, and Westwood Elementary**
- The **Ashe County Middle School chorus and band**, along with the **ACMS Lighthouse Team**, who shared their moving original poem, *“The Flag’s Deepest Fold”*
- The **Ashe County High School JROTC Color Guard**, who proudly presented the colors
- And the **Husky High School Band**, whose stirring rendition of the National Anthem set a powerful tone for the day

A highlight of the event was guest speaker **Andrew (“Andy”) Cerillo**, U.S. Army Veteran and 1968 Bronze Star recipient for distinguished service during the Vietnam Conflict. Mr. Cerillo attended a military high school and, through the ROTC program, graduated from college as a commissioned officer. He trained as a paratrooper and, as he likes to say, *“jumped out of many perfectly good planes while in flight — with a parachute, of course.”*

After leaving the Army, Mr. Cerillo worked for many years as an electrical engineer before retiring and settling here in Ashe County with his family. His powerful message on service and sacrifice reminded everyone in attendance of the true meaning of Veterans Day. Adding to the day’s significance, Mr. Cerillo is the father of **Andy Cerillo**, a math teacher at Ashe County Middle School — making his message even more special to our school community.

Ashe County Schools extends our deepest gratitude to all who made this meaningful day possible — from our elementary, middle, and high school students to every staff member and community partner who helped plan and participate.

To our veterans: thank you for your courage, your sacrifice, and your service — today and every day.

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See photos on following pages. More photos and videos can be found at [Ashe County Public Schools](#) and [Ashe County High School](#) Facebook pages.

Westwood Elementary Drive-thru Parade

