

Tidewater Veterans Day Parade 2026 Grand Marshal



NCCS(SW) John R. Cooper, USN Retired Past Commander American Veterans Post 69

Senior Chief John R. Cooper began his Naval service on July 12, 1966 as a Storekeeper and retired on August 31, 1993 as a Command Career Counselor. A qualified Surface Warfare professional, he was recognized for his expertise in surface ship operations and for his leadership in Sailor development and readiness.

Throughout his 27-year career, Senior Chief Cooper earned the Navy Commendation Medal (two awards), Navy Achievement Medal (two awards), Navy Good Conduct Medal (five awards), National Defense Service Medal, and the Kuwait Liberation Medal. He conducted extensive Suicide Awareness and Prevention training and played a key role in implementing Navy suicide-prevention programs fleet-wide.

Following retirement, he served seven years at the Navy Family Service Center Norfolk, continuing his work in Suicide Prevention education. In 1999, he authored legislation for the Commonwealth of Virginia that secured more than seven million dollars for the Department of Veterans Services to establish statewide Suicide Prevention and Opioid Addiction programs. Today, more than 40 organizations provide these critical services to Virginia's Veterans.

In 2024, he submitted legislation requiring the Chief Medical Examiner of Virginia to provide suicide-related data to the Department of Veterans Services to strengthen training and prevention efforts. This bill has passed both the House of Delegates and the Senate.

Community Involvement:

Past National District Commander (7 states), AMVETS, Current National Executive Committeeman, AMVETS, Past Commander, AMVETS Post 69

Member: HRCVO, VFW, FRA, American Legion, Air Force Sergeants Association

Member, Virginia Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations

Member, Governor's and Mayor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Committee

Key contributor to AMVETS' role as Co-Sponsor 2019 Veterans Day program

Senior Chief Cooper resides in Virginia Beach, Virginia.