



Honoring Their Service

The Keowee Fire Department had a special setup for veterans entering the south gate at Keowee Key on Friday morning for the Honoring Their Service event. After a hiatus since before the COVID-19 pandemic,

Honoring Their Service returned as a one-day event on Friday, offering local residents a chance to bond with combat veterans and show their appreciation and giving the veterans a chance to relax with a day of fun on Lake Keowee and other recreational activities. To read more about the event and see more photos, turn to page **A8**.

PHOTOS SPECIAL TO THE JOURNAL



'We love you'

"You are a gift. If we don't get anything else across today, it's that we love you," Honoring Their Service event chairman Phil McLain told a group of combat veterans in Salem on Friday morning.

McLain and others with Honoring Their Service hosted more than 20 vets and some of their family members for a day of fun on Lake Keowee and outdoor recreational activities. Friday started off with a meet-and-greet breakfast at the Keowee Key Event Center for host families to get to know their guests, some holding up specially crafted signs to commemorate the event.

From 2009-19, some Keowee Key residents opened their homes to Camp Lejeune Marines for a weeklong reprieve. COVID-19 hampered the event, and a chain of command at the camp also threw off the summer gathering, but Friday marked the return of the tradition, which was condensed to one day.

The event was put on in partnership with the Roger C. Peace Rehabilitation Hospital and Upstate Warrior Solution.

"We were just looking for ways to say, 'thank you,'" Honoring Their Service board chairman Larry Druffel said. "Our motto is saying, 'Thank you, face-to-face, heart-to-heart.'"

There were veterans representing the Air Force, Army, Marines and Navy in Salem, with one a Purple Heart recipient.

"We want them to know that we appreciate what they have done," McLain told The Journal.

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