

**VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE
OF LEXINGTON COUNTY**



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VET NEWS

605 WEST MAIN STREET
SUITE 101
LEXINGTON, S.C. 29072

JUNE 2005

CEREMONIAL BUGLE

The Lexington Veterans Affairs Office has purchased an electronic ceremonial bugle to be used at deceased veterans' funerals or ceremonial occasions. The accompanying manual explains how Funeral Honors should be performed as well as operation and maintenance instructions. This bugle may be reserved by authorized personnel through this office at: 803-785-8400.



History of Taps

Of all the military bugle calls, none is so easily recognized or more apt to render emotion than Taps. Up to the Civil War, the traditional call at day's end was a tune, borrowed from the French, called Lights Out. In July of 1862, in the aftermath of the bloody Seven Days battles, hard on the loss of 600 men and wounded himself, Union General Daniel Adams Butterfield called the brigade bugler to his tent. He thought "Lights Out" was too formal and he wished to honor his men. Oliver Wilcox Norton, the bugler, tells the story, "...showing me some notes on a staff written in pencil on the back of an envelope, (he) asked me to sound them on my bugle. I did this several times, playing the music as written. He changed it somewhat, lengthening some notes and shortening others, but retaining the melody as he

first gave it to me. After getting it to his satisfaction, he directed me to sound that call for Taps thereafter in place of the regulation call. The music was beautiful on that still summer night and was heard far beyond the limits of brigade. The next day I was visited by several buglers from neighboring Brigades, asking for copies of the music which I gladly furnished. The call was gradually taken up through the Army of the Potomac."

This more emotive and powerful Taps was soon adopted throughout the military. In 1874 it was officially recognized by the U.S. Army. It became standard at military funeral ceremonies in 1891. There is something singularly beautiful and appropriate in the music of this wonderful call. Its strains are melancholy, yet full of rest and peace. Its echoes linger in the heart long after its tones have ceased to vibrate in the air.

JUNE OUTREACH PROGRAM

June 7 th :	8-12	Batesburg-Leesville
June 14 th :	9-12	Chapin
June 21 st :	8-12	Swansea
June 13 th :	7:00 p.m.	Vet Advisory Committee Meeting, Kroger Building

NEW PHONE NUMBERS

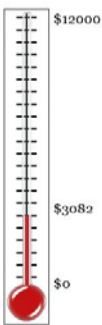
The new phone numbers for the Lexington Veterans Affairs Office are:
(803) 785-8400 Main office
(803) 785-0115 FAX

VETERANS' VAN

Donations to the Veterans' Van Fund are growing but we need everyone's help to make this goal a reality. The van will be purchased through a program of the DAV at a cost of \$10,000-12,000 each. The vans are titled to the VA Medical Center which then accepts responsibility for maintenance, fuel, and insurance.

The Advisory Committee is asking each veterans' organization to contribute \$500 or more to the program between now and July 1. Personal donations also can be made.

Donations can be made to the Lexington County Veterans Van Fund, 605 West Main Street, Lexington, SC 29072.



The thermometer graph shows the current status of funds collected, \$3,082 as of this writing.

Army Announces Criteria for Iraq, Afghanistan Campaign Medals

Soldiers can begin putting on the new Iraq and Afghanistan campaign medals after the Department of the Army approved the final implementation rules for them April 8.

Soldiers are eligible for the Afghanistan Campaign Medal if they served in direct support of Operation Enduring Freedom on or after October 24, 2001 until a future date to be determined by the Secretary of Defense or the cessation of the operation. The area of eligibility includes all the land area of Afghanistan and all the air space above the land.



Soldiers are eligible to receive the Iraq Campaign Medal if they served in direct support of Operation Iraq Freedom on or after March 19, 2003, to a future date to be determined by the Secretary of Defense or the cessation of the operation. The area of eligibility encompasses all land area of the country of Iraq, the contiguous water area out to 12 nautical miles and all air spaces above them.

Soldiers must serve 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days in either area, or be engaged in combat during their service and be wounded or injured requiring evacuation from the area.

The medals replace the former Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal.

Denise Harris, assistant chief of the policy section, military awards, U.S. Army Human Resources Command, said the currently serving soldiers need no orders to receive the medals, and the battalion-level commanders generally determine eligibility.

Soldiers who already have the GWOT Expeditionary Medal for service in Iraq or Afghanistan may apply for the medal in lieu of the earlier one, Harris said.

"All they have to do is take their orders to their personnel office, and the personnel center will change the records," she said.

Once a soldier elects to receive a campaign medal in lieu of the GWOT-E, then the GWOTA-E will be removed from the soldier's records and they will only be authorized to wear the new campaign medal. However, it is possible for a soldier to wear

The Lexington County Veterans' Affairs Office will be closed July 4, 2005 as will other county offices

VETERANS AFFAIRS EMPLOYEE RECOGNITIONS

Shirley Jean Frick, Asst. CSO, was recognized for 10 years of county service.

Barbara O'Connor, Veterans Affairs Specialist, was recognized with a plaque and citation for "Employee of the Quarter award."

both the GWOT-E and one of the campaign medals simultaneously. For this to occur, the soldier must have been deployed to theater on two different occasions to earn the two awards independently.

Harris said the ribbons for the new awards are in the supply chain now, but the medals won't be available for issue until May 1. For the initial issue, the soldiers should be able to go to their supply clerks; they shouldn't have to buy them out of their own pockets.



Marion Truscello of Leesville, the newly-installed Commander of the SC Department of Disabled Veterans, presents the DAV's Outstanding County Veterans Affairs Officer Award for 2004-2005 to Gary R. Baker, Lexington County Veterans Affairs Officer.

Ms. Truscello was installed as Commander of the SC Department of Disabled American Veterans at the group's convention May 19-22 held at the Columbiana Hotel.

Truscello is a former Air Force nurse who served during the Korean War. She is the first woman to head up the state's largest disabled veterans organization.

"THE GRAND OLD FLAG"

Between the fields where the flag is planted, there are 9+ miles of flower fields that go all the way to the ocean. The flowers are grown by seed companies. It's a beautiful place, close to Vandenberg AFB.

Check out the dimensions of the flag. The 2002 Floral Flag is 740 feet long and 390 feet wide and maintains the proper Flag dimensions, as described

in Executive Order #10834. This Flag is 6.65 acres and is the first Floral Flag to be planted with 5 pointed Stars, comprised of White Larkspur. Each Star is 24 feet in diameter; each Stripe is 30 feet wide. This Flag is estimated to contain more than 400,000 Larkspur plants, with 4-5 flower stems each, for a total of more than 2 million flowers. You can drive by this flag on V Street south of Ocean Ave. in Lompoc, CA.



INFANTRY MUSEUM PLANS CONTINUE TO MARCH ON

The National Infantry Foundation seeks support to break ground September 21 on a National Infantry Museum and Heritage Park in Georgia to honor and preserve the legacy of the American foot soldier for all generations. With more than 25,000 objects and a 150,000 square-foot museum on a 200- acre site near Fort Benning, the facility expects to have 400,000 visitors a year.

For more information visit:

www.Nationalinfantryfoundation.org



EVENTS – JUNE 26
10 a.m. Patriotic Sunday- Grace Baptist Church, West Columbia
4 and 7:30 p.m. Celebration of Liberty, First Baptist Church, Columbia

VA DISTRIBUTES 2005 INSURANCE DIVIDENDS

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently announced its distribution of more than \$440 million in dividends to 1.4 million active policyholders of veterans' life insurance.

Over the next year, veterans will receive payments on the anniversary date of their policies, with the specific dividend amount varying according to age, type of insurance, and length of time the policy has been in force. Veterans will automatically receive their annual dividend through one of the nine payment options available to them.

Dividends cover only veterans with government life insurance policies who served between 1917 and 1956. Veterans of subsequent eras are covered by VA life insurance programs that do not pay dividends.

Only those with policies that have been kept in force are eligible for the payout. Dividends are automatically sent to eligible policyholders.

The largest group receiving 2005 payments will be 1.1 million veterans of World War II with National Service Life Insurance ("V") policies. Total payments are expected to reach \$354.1 million.

Dividends totaling \$1.45 million will be paid to nearly 10,000 veterans holding U.S. Government Life Insurance ("K") policies.

More than 190,000 Korean War era veterans who maintained Veterans Special Life Insurance ("RS" and "W") policies can expect to receive dividends totaling \$80.7 million.

Veterans from the World War II era who hold Veterans Reopened Insurance ("J," "JR" and "JS") policies, currently numbering about 49,000, will share a \$12.9 million dividend.

Although the VA administers a special life insurance program for disabled veterans and a program offering mortgage life coverage, neither pays dividends.

ORIGIN OF THE POW/MIA FLAG

On August 10, 1990, the 101st Congress passed Public Law 101-355, designating the POW/MIA flag "the symbol of our nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and

unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, thus ending the uncertainty for their families and the nation."

Few know the artist behind that flag. In 1971, World War II veteran Newt Heisley sketched the now-famous black and white image of a gaunt young soldier, barbed wire and tower. Recognized in every community in America, the flag design appears on bumper stickers, coins, flasks, magnets, T-shirts, and even shot glasses. It hangs in the New York Stock Exchange. The POW/MIA banner is the only flag ever displayed in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda, and it flies year-round at the nation's veterans memorials. The flag's design is not copyrighted; thus, it belongs to every American.



UPDATE ON HOMELESS VETERANS REINTEGRATION PROGRAM (HVRP) GRANT

The Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) grant was awarded in July 2003 to the South Carolina Employment Security Commission (SCESC) in conjunction with the Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program. HVRP is the only federal program that focuses exclusively on employment of veterans who are homeless. This partnership with the SCESC provided two outreach workers to the HCHV/CWT program and three job developers to SCESC to educate homeless veterans in Richland and Lexington counties about the work therapy program.

This program opened the door for short-term training programs, timely direct competitive job placement through the Richland and Lexington County One-Stops, and opportunities to participate in an expanded number of partnerships that the Employment Security has developed over many years.

The goal was to assess 200 homeless veterans with 60 of these individuals obtaining competitive employment. This goal was reached and the grant was renewed for 2005. As of March 31st, **424** homeless veterans have been assessed and **60** placed in competitive employment since July 1, 2004.

ANNOUNCING NEW ELIGIBILITY WEBSITE

The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Chief Business Office (CBO) has recently announced a new re-engineered health eligibility Internet website. Launched in January 2005, this site is VA's authoritative source on the Internet for information on veterans' health benefits eligibility. The site provides easy access to VA's comprehensive health benefits, eligibility and enrollment and can be accessed at www.va.gov/healtheligibility.

PRISON OUTREACH

South Carolina Department of Corrections

Providing outreach to the local correction centers/prisons is an important component of the Homeless Veterans (HCHV) program. Many veteran inmates have little or no knowledge of the services available to them upon their release.

Mr. Stamps, one of the Outreach Workers, currently visits Watkins, Campbell, Walden, Lee, Evans, and Kirkland Correctional Institution. He coordinates his visits through the Chaplain or case manager, who are usually the most familiar with the needs of the veterans since he/she has direct contact with them.

Mr. Stamps talks to a group of veterans who have been assembled by the staff. He explains the HCHV and CWT programs by telling them who the programs are intended to serve and clarifying how one can apply and use the program upon release from the Department of Corrections.

Mr. Stamps provides the necessary form to request a copy of their discharge (DD-214) or the form to request an upgrade of their discharge (DD-293). Also, an X form is completed on each veteran who attends the briefing.

FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONY LEXINGTON VFW POST 8738 May 14, 2005

Lexington VFW Post 8738 held their quarterly Flag Retirement Ceremony at the Post Saturday morning, May 14, 2005.

They were assisted by the Lexington Boy Scout Troop 425.



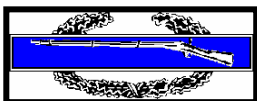
VIETNAM CERTIFICATES PRESENTED AT VFW POST 8738, LOYALTY DAY, MAY 1, 2005

VFW Lexington Post 8738 held their annual Loyalty Day program on May 1, 2005. After the Loyalty Day presentation, approximately 80 Vietnam Veterans were awarded a certificate and a commemorative pin in recognition of their service to our country.



COMBAT INFANTRYMAN BADGE AWARD PRESENTATION

The Combat Infantryman Badge, U.S. Army, was presented to Ira C. Carney, SSG, Retired, in a ceremony held on May 19, 2005 at the Lexington County Veterans Monument for his dedicated service, 7 September 1949 – 1 October 1969.



The Chronological Record of Military Service shows Mr. Carney was “Enroute to FECOM” from 1 August 1950 to 4 September 1950 and was then assigned to Co. G, 21st Infantry, 24th Infantry Division from 5 September 1950 to 10 October 1950. He was a replacement who was sent to the front lines as soon as his ship landed.

According to General Orders Number 124 from Osaka Army Hospital, dated 11 September 1950, Mr. Carney was awarded the Purple Heart Medal for being WIA on 3 September 1950 near Pohang, Korea. Mr. Carney was assigned as a replacement, engaged in combat and was awarded the Purple Heart before the official records show his assignment to a unit.



**Presentation by Stanley Thornburgh,
CSM, Retired**

Mr. Carney’s listing from the National Archives’ US Army Korean War Casualty File, 1950-1953 shows his MOS as 4745, Light Weapons Infantry. He was an infantryman when assigned in

Korea, and was under hostile fire from which he was awarded the Purple Heart Medal.



**Presentation of U.S. flag that has flown over the
D.C. and state capitals by Lily Cogdill, Secretary
to Senator Jake Knotts.**



**Tom McAndrews, Commander Military of
the Purple Heart Chapter 402, swears in the
charter members of Ladies Auxiliary, Military of
the Purple Heart Unit 402-Midlands Unit, at the
recent charter installation at American Legion
Post 6. Rhunette Haywood is the Unit's First
President.**

A newly-organized group, the Ladies Auxiliary, Military Order of the Purple Heart – Midlands Unit 402, was chartered at a meeting on April 26 at American Legion Post 6. The Auxiliary supports the work of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, an organization of combat-wounded veterans.

Mrs. Rhunette Haywood was installed as the charter President.

Information on joining the organization can be obtained from Mrs. Haywood at (803) 438-1779 or Dorothy Johnson, Membership Chairperson at (803) 754-7529.

VFW, VETERANS GROUPS PUSH CONGRESS FOR ASBESTOS LITIGATION REFORM

A Victims' Trust Fund is the Only Answer For Veterans

Washington, April 13, 2005 -- The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and 16 other national veterans service organizations today called on the Senate Judiciary Committee to take the first step towards fixing the nation's broken asbestos litigation system by adopting no-fault victims' compensation fund legislation.

"The compensation fund approach is the only solution that will provide veterans suffering from asbestos-related illnesses with fair and certain compensation," the groups said in their letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee, which came as Senator Arlen Specter, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee members, was reportedly circulating a draft version of an asbestos victims' compensation fund bill.

The VFW was joined by the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Blinded Veterans Association, Veterans of the Vietnam War, Inc., Women in Military Service for America, Non Commissioned Officers Association, National Association for Uniformed Services, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Jewish War Veterans of the United States, Fleet Reserve Association, The Retired Enlisted Association, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, Military Officers Association of America, Marine Corps League, American Ex-Prisoners of War, National Association for Black Veterans, Inc., and the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association.

Asbestos was used widely by the military during and after World War II and many veterans were exposed to this deadly substance. Veterans with asbestos-related illnesses are in a unique situation because they have virtually no avenue for compensation under the current system. Sick veterans are prevented by law from seeking compensation from the U.S. government through the courts.

"Since most of the companies that supplied the U.S. military with asbestos are long gone, seeking relief from the suppliers is also a dead end," the groups said.

A victims' trust fund is the only solution that will ensure that veterans receive the compensation they deserve, quickly and fairly, the groups said in their letter to the Senators. They also pointed out that the medical criteria bill approach, favored by some opponents of the victims' compensation fund approach, would do "little, if anything to provide certainty for victims."

The veterans organizations signing the letter urged Senators not to let special interests hijack veterans' only chance to receive the just compensation for their asbestos-related illnesses.

LEXINGTON VETERANS AFFAIRS NEWS UPDATE

Mr. Gary R. Baker has been appointed Veterans' Affairs Officer by the Legislative Delegation for Lexington County for another two years. Other staff members include: Jean Frick, Assistant County Service Officer; Barbara O'Connor, Claims Specialist; and Betty J. Carson, Veterans Affairs Clerk.

The Lexington Veterans' Affairs Office will remain in the same office space. There has been much renovation and moving of departments during the past months but this office will remain in the Lexington Auxiliary Building at 605 West Main Street, Suite 101, Lexington, SC 29072 (formerly known as the Kroger Grocery Store).

Please call ahead to schedule an appointment so we can better serve you. If you just walk in, you may have to wait for an extended period of time or even come back. It is vacation time and our employees are going to visit relatives or just relax at the beach.

Thank to the veterans, families, relatives, and others for their patience and understanding. If we can help you, please call:

(803) 785-8400

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE RESERVE GI BILL?

New Education Benefit for Activated Reservists

H.R. 4200 authorizing the creation of a new education benefit was signed into law on October 28, 2004. The new benefit, Chapter 1607, makes certain individuals who were activated after September 11, 2001 either eligible for education benefits or eligible for increased benefits.

The Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and VA are working on an implementation plan for this new benefit and at this time we are unable to provide more than general information about the Reserve GI Bill (RBIB chapter 1607).

The New Benefit Amount:

The full-time rate in the table below is the rate for full-time institutional training under chapter 1607 on or after October 1, 2004. If your training was before October 1, 2004, your monthly rate will be a percentage of the Ch 30 (3-year rate) in effect at the time of your training.

Time Reserve Member Serves on Active Duty	Full-time Rate (Eff. 10/01/2004)
90 days but less than one year	\$401.60
One year but less than two years	\$602.40
Two years or more	\$803.20

Reduced rates will apply for correspondence, flight, apprenticeship/OJT and licensing and certification training.

Eligibility:

Each military service, Department of Defense, and Department of Homeland Security (Coast Guard) will determine eligibility.

A member of a reserve component who serves on active duty on or after September 11, 2001 under Title 10 U.S. Code for a contingency operation and who serves at least 90 consecutive days or more is eligible for chapter 1607. National Guard members also are eligible if their active duty is under section 502 (f), 32 U.S.C. and they serve for 90 consecutive days when authorized by the President or Secretary of Defense for a national emergency and is supported by federal funds. Individuals are eligible as soon as they reach the 90-day point whether or not they are currently on active duty. DoD will fully identify contingency operations that qualify for benefits under chapter 1607.

Disabled members who are injured or have an illness or disease incurred or aggravated in the line of duty and are released from active duty before completing 90 consecutive days are also eligible.

How to Apply:

You can apply now; however, Department of Defense (DoD), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have not yet determined when full implementation will begin. Computer programs will have to be reprogrammed to pay the benefits, documents and forms will have to be rewritten, and a Memorandum of Understanding will have to be negotiated between DoD, DHS and VA.

The VA Regional Processing Offices in Atlanta, St. Louis, Buffalo, and Muskogee will accept applications and supporting documents for Chapter 1607 claims. However, the VA cannot take action on your claim at this time, but the VA will store your documents and will notify you when full implementation has been approved. Your claim will be processed at that time.

You can start the application process by filling out and following the instructions on [VA Form 22-1990](#), Application for Education Benefits. For more details, see [How to Apply for GI Bill Benefits](#) at www.Military.com.

SCHOOL IS OUT & SUMMER VACATION IS HERE--WATCH OUT FOR THOSE KIDS!
