

Veterans Affairs Office of Lexington County



TELEPHONE: (803) 785-8400

FAX: (803) 785-0115

EDITOR: *Debbie Myers*

VET NEWS

June 2008

GARY R. BAKER
DIRECTOR

BARBARA O'CONNOR
ASST. CSO

JENNIFER HENDRIX
VETERANS SPECIALIST

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



Dates To Remember

- June 6th D-Day: Allied Invasion of Europe (1944)
- June 14th Flag Day
U. S. Army Founded (1775)
- June 15th Father's Day
- June 20th Summer Begins
- June 22nd Pledge of Allegiance Recognized by
Congress (1942)
GI Bill Signed Into Law (1944)
- June 25th Korean War Began (1950)



REMEMBER DAD ON JUNE 15TH

NEW CEMETERY CONSTRUCTION BEGINS IN JUNE

From The Fort Jackson Leader, May 1, 2008
Mike A. Glasch

Officials with Veterans Affairs say construction on the national cemetery to be built on Fort Jackson is scheduled to begin mid-June.

The cemetery's director, Gene Linxwiler, said he expects the cemetery to begin interments by November.

"Once construction begins, weather would be the biggest drawback to completing the project on time," he said.

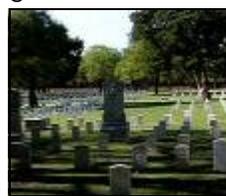
Construction will take place in several phases, the first phase has two parts (Phase 1A and 1B). Phase 1A will be an early burial area with temporary facilities while Phase 1B is being completed. The Phase 1 development will provide 5,000 full caskets (including 4,200 crypts) and 2,450 cremains niches including a 2,000-niche columbaria.

The project will also include an administration / public information facility, maintenance facility, two committal shelters for interment ceremonies, a flag / assembly area and supporting infrastructure; including utilities and irrigation.

Linxwiler said he anticipates the VA to choose a name for the cemetery soon.

Once completed, the cemetery will be bordered by Wildcat Road to the west, Spears Creek Church Road to the east, North Tower Road to the south and Percival Road to the north.

A complete list of who is eligible for burial in a national cemetery can be found on the burial and memorials page of the VA Website at



www.cem.va.gov

CITADEL HONORS WWII SOLDIERS CLASS OF 1944

[Source: The State Newspaper, May 3, 2008]

Today The Citadel honors the Class of 1944, a group of men who were denied diplomas and sent to war a year before they would have graduated. Thirty-four died in combat. Many more were wounded. Many of those who survived returned to become leaders in a nation thrust into world leadership.

Two of them were Lee Chandler, a former Justice on the South Carolina Supreme Court, and Robert Adden, who for 38 years taught and then headed the business program at The Citadel. Chandler said Friday that Adden was "the glue that held our class together all those years." "He's been an incredible friend and I'm so glad he survived," Chandler said.

In the dark days of 1943, as America struggled to defeat enemies on two fronts, military planners scoured the nation for men to send into battle. Junior officers, to lead frontline units, were scarce. The generals focused on the Reserve Officer Training Corps on college campuses.

At the end of their junior year, Chandler and Adden were among 549 who started out as freshmen and were inducted into the Army. Some left school earlier, but by the end of their junior year, about 200 remained at The Citadel. They were sent to officer's candidate school, and those who succeeded there were commissioned second lieutenants and sent to combat units.

Adden, leading a unit of the 84th Division, was wounded attacking the Siegfried Line on Germany's western frontier with Belgium. Chandler's 69th Division followed the 84th into the German Heartland.

Today, about 470 cadets will receive the degrees that were denied the class of 1944. The Class of 2008 includes 31 women and 20 active duty military personnel.

Senator Lindsey Graham will address the graduating cadets. His spokesman said he will talk about the sacrifice needed in time of war, and relate what happened to the Class of 1944 to today's challenges. Chandler said Friday his classmates "never flinched. We knew it was our duty to go when we were called."

The names of the 34 who never returned are etched onto the wall of The Citadel's chapel. Adden will receive an honorary doctorate from The Citadel for his service, added to his Bronze Star Medal and the Combat Infantry Badge.

Discharged from the Army in 1946, Adden returned to The Citadel as a veteran student and graduated in 1947. A week after receiving his bachelor's degree in Business Administration, he began teaching at The Citadel. He earned a master's from the Wharton School of Business. Adden also earned a doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. But he said the degree he'll receive today "will be very special. Not many former faculty receive such a degree."



MEETING NOTICE

The next meeting of the Wives of Vietnam Veterans is scheduled for **Monday, June 16th, 2008, at noon.**

The meetings are hosted by David Cox of the Columbia Vet Center and are open to wives / significant others of Vietnam veterans. The meeting location is the auditorium of 605 West Main St., Lexington. New attendees are always welcome.

Call 785-8400 for more information.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

"We contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket and trying to lift himself up by the handle."

- Winston Churchill



Blue Star Mothers,

Good morning. I would like to thank your organization for the care and support you gave my group as we started our journey departing from Columbia, SC on 30APR. It was a pleasure talking with some of you in the hangar and the snacks and treats you provided were appreciated by all in my group. It was an extra surprise to find a box of Girl Scout cookies sitting in my seat on the plane. I was able to save them until I got here in the desert and shared them with those in my work tent. Your gestures are by no means small and their impact goes beyond the physical. The little snack pack was extremely clever and symbolic. Your group is appreciated by all who serve. Thank you for your support. Take care.

Very respectfully,

John Oliver
LCDR USN
Expeditionary Combat Readiness Center
Warrior Transition Program Kuwait

8 ARMY BASES TO BE REPAIRED

[From article in The State Newspaper, May 10, 2008]

Washington—The U.S. Army said Friday that it will immediately repair barracks at eight facilities in the wake of inspections at bases worldwide.

The inspections were done the last week of April and covered nearly 150,000 barracks rooms. They found that 45 repairs needed priority attention, including new heating and cooling equipment, repainting, mold removal and other work.

In Columbia, Fort Jackson—the Army’s largest training base, already is three years into an eight-year, \$1 billion plan to upgrade quarters. It was not among the eight bases targeted by the Army on Friday.

The Fort Jackson projects range from completely gutting 50-year-old “rolling pin” style barracks to building two more modern centers that will go with one the base opened three years ago.

Army Secretary Pete Geren has said that \$248 million in emergency funds has been appropriated to fix problems found during the inspections.

The Army on Friday identified eight installations that will get priority attention:

- ◆ Fort Polk, LA.—\$166 million
- ◆ Fort Gordon, GA.—\$50 million
- ◆ The U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.—\$9 million
- ◆ Fort Lewis, WA.—\$7 million
- ◆ Fort Stewart, GA.—\$6 million
- ◆ Fort Bragg, N.C.—\$3 million
(in addition to the \$2.6 million spent on the barracks there, triggered by the video)
- ◆ Tripler Army Medical Center, HI.—\$1.7 million
- ◆ Aberdeen Proving Grounds, MD.—\$1 million



FREEDOM TEAM SALUTE

Freedom Team Salute is an official program sponsored by the Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff. The program is funded through the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA).

Recipients of a Freedom Team Salute Commendation package will receive:

- Official Army Lapel Pin (mounted on a card)
- Official Army Decal
- Certificate of Appreciation signed by both the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Army
- Letter of Thanks signed by both the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Army
- Freedom Team Salute newsletter

[In addition, parents receive “Proud Parent of a Soldier” bumper stickers.]



The Freedom Team Salute Opportunity

Freedom Team Salute gives Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers the opportunity to recognize and honor a parent's service, a spouse's commitment, and an employer's long-standing support with a Commendation tailored to their contribution.

Freedom Team Salute also gives everyone the opportunity to recognize U.S. Army Veterans with a Commendation for their dedicated service and continued support of today's Soldiers. The general public and civilians, as well as all service members, can submit the names of an unlimited number of U.S. Army Veterans to Freedom Team Salute.

Anyone in the general public as well as all service members can submit the names of an unlimited number of U.S. Army Veterans to Freedom Team Salute by registering on the website and submitting a name. After you register, you can submit someone's name and they will receive a Freedom Team Salute Commendation in four to six weeks. Go to the website <http://www.freedomteamsalute.com> to register and submit names.

Colonel David Griffith, FTS director, said that 1.2 million people have been recognized to date. “The Freedom Team Salute is all about supporting the people who support our Army,” Griffith said, adding that parents, spouses and employers of our active, reserve and National Guard Soldiers are a vital component of the Army mission. “We couldn't accomplish our mission without those folks,” he said.

Getting Ready For A Doctor's Visit

Tips and Suggestions from the National Institute on Aging

A basic plan can help you or a loved one make the most of a doctor's appointment, whether you are starting with a new doctor or continuing with the doctor you've seen for years. The following tips will make it easier for you and your doctor to cover everything you need to talk about:

- ◇ **Make a list of your concerns and prioritize them.**- Make a list of what you want to discuss. For example, do you have a new symptom you want to ask about? Do you want to get a flu shot? If you have more than a few items of concern, prioritize them. Don't put off the things that are really on your mind until the end of your appointment-bring them up right away!
- ◇ **Take information with you.**- Some doctors suggest you put all your prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal remedies or supplements in a bag and bring them with you. Others recommend you bring a list of everything you take. You should also take your insurance cards, names and phone numbers of other doctors you see, and your medical records if the doctor doesn't already have them
- ◇ **Make sure you can see and hear as well as possible.** - Many seniors use glasses or hearing aids. Remember to take your eyeglasses to the doctor's visit. If you have a hearing aid, make sure that it is working well and wear it. Let the doctor and staff know if you have a hard

time seeing or hearing. For example, you may want to say: "My hearing makes it hard to understand everything you're saying. It helps a lot when you speak slowly."

- ◇ **Consider bringing a family member or friend.** - Sometimes it is helpful to bring a family member or close friend with you. Let your family member or friend know in advance what you want from your visit. Your companion can remind you what you planned to discuss with the doctor if you forget, she or he can take notes for you, and can help you remember what the doctor said.
- ◇ **Plan to update the doctor.** - Let your doctor know what has happened in your life since your last visit. If you have been treated in the emergency room or by a specialist, tell the doctor right away. Mention any changes you have noticed in your appetite, weight, sleep, or energy level. Also tell the doctor about any recent changes in any medications you take or the effects they have had on you.

Remember: Being prepared helps you or your loved one take an active role in your health care.



KOREAN POW'S FAMILY GETS CLOSURE AFTER NEARLY 58 YEARS

Nearly 58 years after he died during a 30-mile march as a POW in North Korea, U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class George Koon of Leesville came home for a proper burial. Koon - who was taken captive by Chinese forces after the Battle of the Ch'ongch'on River, a fierce conflict between Chinese and American forces - was positively identified Feb. 26th of this year through DNA, military records show. Sgt. 1st Class Koon died in a North Korean prison camp in April of 1951.



He was buried May 17 in the cemetery at Old Lexington Baptist Church, with full military honors.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LEXINGTON COUNTY VAN RIDERS

To ride the Lexington County DAV van:

You must be a resident of Lexington County and have an appointment at the WJB Dorn VA Medical Center between the hours of 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM on Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday.

When you schedule your appointment, make sure you mention that you will be riding the DAV van from Lexington County. The hospital will try to work your appointments into the above van schedule.

To arrange the van ride to your appointment:

Call Debbie Myers at the Lexington Co. Veterans Affairs Office at (803) **785-8400** between the hours of 8 :00 AM and 11 :00 AM Monday through Friday. You may provide a copy of your future appointments at the VA Medical Center to Debbie to place on the log for you. This should save you time and many telephone calls and will help the office better coordinate scheduling.

Make arrangements no later than **2 business days** prior to your appointment at the VAMC. Emergency issues will be considered on a case by case basis.

Please make sure our office has your current address and contact information.

The van log schedule is set at 12:00 the prior business day, and all calls have been made by this time to all riders and the driver. Changes to the schedule are very difficult once the schedule has been set.

DO NOT CALL THE VAN DRIVER TO SCHEDULE YOUR RIDE.

On the business day prior to your appointment, Debbie or another staff member will call you to confirm that you are on the van log. If you have not received a call confirming your appointment to ride by 11:00 AM the business day before your appointment, please call Debbie at the above number BEFORE 12:00.

It is not possible to give you an *exact* time the van will arrive to pick you up; you will be given a one hour window. If you have received a call from Debbie, this means you are on the log and will be picked up. Be at your pickup location when the van arrives and ready to go, the van will not wait for you and will not search for you. Failure to be ready when the van arrives for pickup may result in loss of van riding privileges.

DO NOT CALL THE VAN DRIVER OR VA OFFICE TO VERIFY THE VAN PICK UP SCHEDULE.

The van driver is not allowed to lift or attend to any patient medically. All riders must be ambulatory (capable of boarding and departing the van without the driver's aid and attendance.)

No individuals, other than the veteran, will be permitted to ride the van unless:

He/she is the veteran's spouse/caregiver who is authorized in writing by the VA physician to render the veteran "Aid and Attendance" and has been issued a written "Permission to Travel" slip by the patient's VA physician . (NOTE: You must secure this slip from a VA medical facility.) Veterans with appointments have priority. Spouses/Caregivers may be removed from the passenger list up until the last minute and will be replaced only by qualified veterans with scheduled appointments.

The van driver has the right to refuse transportation to any passenger who he/she feels is too ill to ride the van, or the driver may request a written statement from the patient's VA physician stating it is permissible for the veteran to ride without aid or attendance.

Passengers whose conduct is inappropriate or whose hygiene or health impacts other passengers will be refused permission to ride the van.

The van driver is only permitted to stop the van for rest stops and/or emergencies, or to pick up and discharge passengers at designated pick-up points. The van driver will refuse any requests to make side trips to take care of personal business.

Failure to meet above requirements may result in loss of privilege to use this transportation.

TASK FORCE MARSHALL : FROM "AHOY" TO "HOOAH"

Fort Jackson may be miles and miles away from the Atlantic Ocean, but hundreds of sailors come to the Army training facility to prepare for combat duty on land. They report to Fort Jackson for training that will prepare them to join Army units in several locations overseas.



Lt. Commander Gordon Jones, right, leads Naval Reservists and active-duty personnel in an urban warfare training scenario.

Task Force Marshall, named in honor of Citizen-Soldier and trainer **General George C. Marshall**, was formed with the sole mission of providing basic skills refresher training to mobilized Individual Ready Reserve Soldiers. It is a battalion-sized training force comprised of mobilized Army Reserve units across the United States and operates now as a member of Victory Brigade, United States Army Training Center, Fort Jackson, SC. Task Force Marshall is based at Camp McCrady in Eastover, SC.

Sailors training at Fort Jackson will be deployed to several different locations including Iraq and Afghanistan, most of them serving to "round out" Army units.

During the 12-day training program, sailors are taught lessons that range from the proper way to carry weapons to basic warfare marksmanship, convoy operations, urban operations, battlefield first aid and land navigation.

"We greet sailors arriving in theater, check to make sure they have all the proper equipment, send them to counter-IED (improvised explosive device) training and close quarters marksmanship training, then we send them to their assigned locations," said Cronin, Naval Forces Central Command Detachment Kuwait command master chief.



VA EMERGENCY CARE UPDATE



When a veteran needs emergency medical treatment, the VA allows that veteran to go to the nearest private or community hospital. Once the veteran is stabilized, the veteran must then be transferred to a VA hospital for any necessary continued care. The problem arises when there is a wait for a bed in a VA hospital. Current law "authorizes" but does not require the VA to reimburse the hospital for the care given after the point of stabilization.

The Veterans Emergency Care Fairness Act (H.R.3819) introduced by Rep. Zack Space (D-OH-18) would simply close that loophole and require VA reimbursement for care. In rural areas, this problem is particularly pronounced. Often, a patient may be deemed "stable" but is not stable enough to make ambulance trips traveling long distances.

Specifically,H.R.3819:

- Requires (under current law, authorizes) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to reimburse certain veterans without a service-connected disability en-

rolled as active participants of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care plan for the cost of emergency treatment received in a non-VA facility until such time as such veterans are transferred to a VA facility.

- Requires (under current law, authorizes) the Secretary to reimburse certain veterans with a service-connected disability or a non-service-connected disability associated with or aggravating a service-connected disability for the value of emergency treatment for which such veterans have made payment from sources other than the VA.

As of May 2, 2008, HR 3819 has 49 co-sponsors. If your Representative has not co-sponsored you are encouraged to contact him/her with you concerns on the subject. This can easily be done utilizing a preformatted message found at <http://capwiz.com/usdr/issues/bills/?bill=11330076&alertid=11330081>

All you need do is enter your zip code and fill in your contact data. You can also personalize the message in any manner you desire. [++Source: USDR Action Alert May 2, 2008 ++]

LONG TERM CARE WITH MEDICARE

Medicare alone may not meet your long term care needs. While Medicare covers some home health, skilled nursing and hospice care, it generally does not cover custodial care, such as cleaning or cooking, at home or in a nursing home. Medicare will help pay for your home care **if**:

- Your doctor certifies that you are homebound, meaning it takes a considerable and taxing effort to leave your home; **and**
- You need skilled physical, speech or occupational therapy services, or skilled nursing on an intermittent (less than seven days a week) or part-time (less than eight hours a day) basis. If you only require skilled nursing, you must either need it fewer than seven days a week or daily for a short period of time; **and**
- Your doctor certifies your need for home care, **and**
- You receive your care from a Medicare-certified home health agency (HHA).

If you qualify for the home health benefit, Medicare will cover the following types of care:

- 1.) **Skilled nursing services.** Medicare pays in full for skilled nursing, which includes services and care that can only be performed safely and effectively by a licensed nurse. Any service that could be safely performed by a non-medical person (or one's self) without the direct supervision of a licensed nurse is not covered.
- 2.) **Skilled therapy services.** Medicare pays in full for physical, speech and occupational therapy. Medicare will pay for therapy services to maintain your condition and prevent you from getting worse; you do not need to have the potential to improve.
- 3.) **Home health aide services.** Medicare pays in full for a home health aide if you require skilled services. A home health aide provides personal care services including help with bathing, using the toilet, and dressing. If you **ONLY** require personal care, you do **NOT** qualify for the Medicare home care benefit.
- 4.) **Medical social services.** Medicare pays in full for services to help you with social and emotional concerns you have related to your illness. This might include counseling or help finding resources in your community.
- 5.) **Medical supplies.** Medicare pays in full for medical supplies provided by the Medicare-certified home health agency, such as wound dressings and catheters needed for your care.
- 6.) **Evaluation services.** Medicare pays for evaluation services if performed by a skilled nurse or therapist.
- 7.) **Durable medical equipment.** Medicare pays 80% of its approved amount for certain pieces of medical equipment, such as a wheelchair or walker.

The Medicare home health benefit covers a wide range of skilled nursing services as long as you need them fewer than seven days a week, or daily for a finite and predictable period of time. Regional Home Health Intermediaries (RHHIs) handle home health and hospice claims. You can call your intermediary for claim issues, and questions about coverage, complaints or denials. For additional information and a complete glossary of medical terms refer to <http://www.medicareinteractive.org/page2.php?topic=counselor&page=glossary>. [++Source: Medicare Rights Center www.medicareinteractive.org ++]

VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE OF LEXINGTON COUNTY 605 West Main Street, Suite 101 Lexington, SC 29072 (803)785-8400

JUNE OUTREACH PROGRAM

June 3rd	9-12	Batesburg/Leesville
June 10th	9-12	Chapin
June 17th	9-12	Swansea
June 24th	9-12	West Columbia

TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Lexington Main Office:	785-8400
From Batesburg/Leesville:	332-8400
From Chapin:	941-0231