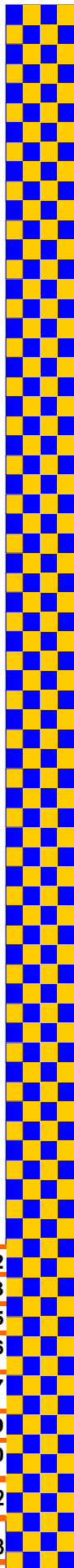




LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS NEWS

"Serving those who served and sacrificed for America"

January/February 2015



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At A Glance Calendar January/February

Weekly on Tuesdays in January	Lexington County Veterans Group Meeting @ 12 noon
Thursday, January 1st	New Year's Day County Offices Closed No Gaston Outreach
Friday, January 2nd	Chapin Outreach
Thursday, January 8th	Director will be the guest speaker at American Legion Post 193
Friday, January 9th	Batesburg/Leesville Outreach
Saturday, January 10th	Dang-it Doll Workshop
Tuesday, January 13th	County Council Meeting
Monday, January 19th	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day County Offices closed No DAV van running
Monday, January 26th	Director will be the guest speaker at American Legion Post 156
Tuesday, January 27th	County Council Meeting
Weekly on Tuesdays in February	Lexington County Veterans Group Meeting @12 noon
Monday, February 2nd	Groundhog Day
Thursday, February 5th	Gaston/Swansea Outreach
Friday, February 6th	Chapin Outreach
Tuesday, February 10th	County Council Meeting
Friday, February 13th	Batesburg/Leesville Outreach
Saturday, February 14th	Valentine's Day Dang-it Doll Workshop
Monday, February 16th	President's Day County Offices Closed No DAV van running
Tuesday, February 24th	County Council Meeting

<p>Purple—Holidays/Special Days</p> <p>Blue—Outreach dates</p> <p>Red—County Offices Closed, No van scheduled and Special Notices</p> <p>Black—Director's appearances in the County</p>	<p>Brown—County Council Meetings</p> <p>Pink—Special Events throughout the County</p> <p>Orange—Special event, Director Out of Office</p> <p>Green—Lexington County Veterans Group Meetings</p>
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**From the
Director...**

As a new year begins for all of us as Americans, we are blessed to be a free country because many countries in the world are not. Let us remember why we are free; it is because of the men and women who protect us serving on active duty and for the Veterans who served before them.

With a new year comes a new session of the U.S. Congress and a new session for the S.C. General Assembly and I hope they can all work together for all of us, but especially our Veterans and their survivors. The VA is always striving to improve services and benefits for our Nation's heroes and their survivors. The VA has made vast improvements with leadership and accountability, which are two characteristics important for the success of any organization.

In your County VA office we are continuing to scan paper files into electronic files in order to better serve our clients. It is time consuming and we are ensuring we do it right because the right way is the only way to do it. Please be patient with us until we can accomplish this and serve our clients with better efficiency. We are honored to serve you!

If you or any organization would like to receive or schedule a VA benefits presentation or have us cover what our role is in Lexington County, please contact the office and we will be happy to set this up for you. There is no charge for this and we try to accommodate your schedule during the work day or in the evening. We can brief two or two hundred and are happy to provide you with a detailed briefing that will be easy to understand. Happy New Year!

Honored to serve!





Education Benefits for Veterans



The two most common education benefits for Veterans are Chapter 30—Montgomery GI Bill and Chapter 33—Post 9/11 GI Bill. Below are highlights of these two benefits.

Chapter 30—Montgomery GI Bill

Eligibility requirements are: Honorable discharge, high school diploma or equivalent, continuously served for at least three years and entered active duty for the first time after 6/30/1985.

Benefits include:

1. Provides up to 36 months of benefits (this is 36 months of total benefits in any combination of education benefits)
2. Have 10 years from the date of discharge to use
3. Payments are made directly to the Veteran from the first day classes start
4. Veterans must work with the school and pay tuition up front and then be reimbursed
5. No Housing allowance
6. No book stipend

Chapter 33—Post 9/11 GI Bill

Eligibility requirements are: Honorable discharge and served on active duty at least 90 aggregate days beginning on or after 9/11/2001.

Benefits include:

1. Provides up to 36 months of benefits (This is 36 months of total benefits in any combination of education benefits)
2. Have 15 years from date of discharge to use
3. Tuition and fees are paid directly to the school
4. Living allowance equal to basic allowance for housing amount payable an E-5 with dependents in the zip code of your school
5. A book stipend of \$1000/year based on enrollment

To apply for these benefits, you will need to complete a VA Form 22-1990. For more information on these benefits, please call the VA toll free at 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551), visit their website at www.vabenefits.vba.va.gov or call our office.

Prints for Sale

We have several copies of the Veterans Memorial and Gibson Pond prints for sale in our office. The Gibson Pond print is 32x24 and the Monument print is 24x15. Both are suitable for framing. The cost is \$10.00 each. The proceeds will be placed in our Veteran's Fund and/or Van Fund. Your donation is tax-deductible and a receipt can be provided. Please stop by the office Monday through Friday from 8-5 to get a closer look at the prints or to purchase.



Looking for Volunteer Van Drivers

The van runs on Mondays and Wednesdays taking Veterans to appointments at DORN VAMC for their scheduled appointments between 9am and 1pm. If you can volunteer to drive the DAV van at least one day a month, contact the office at 803-785-8400.



Effective September 1st, the van will no longer run on Thursdays.

County Council Needs You!

Veterans are needed to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at County Council meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. County Council meetings start at 4:30pm, so you would need to be present around 4:15pm. Contact the office at 803-785-8400 if you are interested.



OUTREACH DATES AND TIMES

Please be aware that our outreach dates and times have changed. The correct dates and times are listed below.

Appointments are strongly encouraged.



Batesburg/Leesville Outreach - 2nd Friday of the month at the Batesburg/Leesville Library from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

Chapin Outreach - 1st Friday of the month at the Chapin Library from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.



Gaston/Swansea Outreach - 1st Thursday of the month at the Gaston Library from 10 a.m. to 12 noon



****Reminder****

There will be no Gaston Outreach in January!

Veterans Crisis Line

The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call **1-800-273-8255** and **Press 1**, chat online, or send a text message to **838255** to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is also available.



The History of the U. S. Coast Guard

The U. S. Coast Guard is simultaneously and at all times, a military force and federal law enforcement agency dedicated to maritime safety, security, and stewardship missions. They save lives. They protect the environment. They defend the homeland. They enforce Federal laws on the high seas, the nation's coastal waters and its inland waterways. They are unique in the Nation and the world.



The Coast Guard's official history began on August 4, 1790, when President George Washington signed the Tariff Act that authorized the construction of ten vessels to enforce federal tariff and trade laws and to prevent smuggling. Known variously through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as the "revenue cutters," the "system of cutters," the Revenue Marine and finally the Revenue Cutter Service, it expanded in size and responsibilities as the nation grew.

The service received its present name in 1915 under an act of Congress that merged the Revenue Cutter Service with the U. S. Life-Saving Service. The latter consisted of dozens of stations placed around the nation's coastlines that were manned by dedicated crews willing to risk their lives to save those in peril on the sea, a role that meshed well with the Revenue Cutter Service's core missions. Also, the legislation creating this "new" Coast Guard expressly stated that it "shall constitute a part of the military forces of the United States," thereby codifying the service's long history of defending the country along side the nation's other armed services. The Coast Guard began maintaining the country's aids to maritime navigation, including lighthouses, when President Franklin Roosevelt ordered the transfer of the Lighthouse Service to the Coast Guard in 1939. In 1946 Congress permanently transferred the Commerce Department's Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation to the Coast Guard, which placed merchant marine licensing and merchant vessel safety under its purview. The nation now had a single maritime federal agency dedicated to saving life at sea and enforcing the nation's maritime laws.



The Coast Guard is one of the oldest organizations of the federal government and until Congress established the Navy Department in 1798 it served as the nation's only armed force afloat. The Coast Guard protected the nation throughout its long history and served proudly in the majority of the nation's conflicts. The Coast Guard's national defense responsibilities remain one of its most important functions even today. In times of peace it operates as part of the Department of Homeland Security, serving as the nation's front-line agency for enforcing the nation's laws at sea, protecting the marine environment and the nation's vast coastline and ports, and saving lives. In times of war, or at the direction of the President, the Coast Guard serves as part of the Navy Department.



VA Home Loans

The VA helps service members, Veterans, and eligible surviving spouses become homeowners. As part of their mission to serve them, they provide a home loan guaranty benefit and other housing-related programs to help buy, build, repair, retain, or adapt a home for your own personal occupancy. VA home loans are provided by private lenders, such as banks and mortgage companies. The VA guarantees a portion of the loan, enabling the lender to provide you with more favorable terms.

Types of Loans or Grants

1. **Purchase Loans** - helps with the purchase of a home at a competitive interest rate often without requiring a down payment or private mortgage insurance.
2. **Cash-Out Refinance Loans** – allows you to take cash out of your home equity to take care of concerns like paying off debt, funding school, or making home improvements.
3. **Interest Rate Reduction Refinance Loan (IRRRL)** - also called the Streamline Refinance Loan can help you obtain a lower interest rate by refinancing your existing VA loan.
4. **Native American Direct Loan (NADL) Program** - helps eligible Native American Veterans finance the purchase, construction, or improvement of homes on Federal Trust Land, or reduce the interest rate on a VA loan.
5. **Adapted Housing Grants** - helps Veterans with permanent and total service-connected disabilities purchase or build an adapted home or to modify an existing home to account for their disability.



Note: Many states offer resources to Veterans, including property tax reductions to certain Veterans.

Eligibility Requirements and How to Apply (for each type of loan or grant)

The length of your service or service commitment and/or duty status may determine your eligibility for specific home loan benefits.

1. **Purchase Loan and Cash-out Refinance Loans** are VA guaranteed loans that are available for homes used for your own personal occupancy. You must have a good credit score, sufficient income, a valid Certificate of Eligibility (COE), and meet certain service requirements. These loans are obtained through a lender of your choice once you obtain a COE. You can obtain a COE through eBenefits, by mail, and often through your lender.
2. **The Interest Rate Reduction Refinance Loan (IRRRL)** is a “VA to VA” loan, meaning it can only be applied to refinance an existing VA loan. An IRRRL can be done only if you have already used your eligibility for a VA Loan on the property you intend to refinance. A new COE is not required. You may take your COE to show the prior use of your entitlement or your lender may use our email confirmation procedure in lieu of a COE.
3. **The Native American Direct Loan (NADL)** helps Native American Veterans purchase, construct, improve, or re-finance a home on Native American trust lands. Your tribal organization must participate in the VA direct loan program. You must have a valid COE and meet certain service requirements. NADL loans are obtained through a lender of your choice once you obtain a COE. You can obtain a COE through eBenefits, by mail, and often through your lender.
4. **Adapted Housing Grants** help Veterans with certain total and permanent disabilities related to your military service obtain suitable housing with either a Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) or Special Housing Adaptation (SHA) grant. You can apply for an SAH or SHA grant by with downloading and completing VA Form 26-4555 (PDF) and submitting it to your nearest Regional Loan Center, or by completing the online application.



If you have specific questions regarding VA home loan eligibility, please contact the Eligibility Center, located at the Atlanta Regional Loan Center toll-free at 1-888-768-2132. You may also contact them through their secure online inquiry system at <https://iris.va.gov>. Click on “Ask a Question” and follow the prompts.

Their mailing address is: Atlanta Regional Loan Center, Attn: COE (262), PO Box 100034, Decatur, GA 30031.

Medical Expense and Eligibility Verification Reports

Medical Expense Report (MER)

For Veterans and Surviving Spouses not receiving the maximum Non-Service Connection Pension Benefits, the VA may be able to pay you at a higher rate if you identify expenses the VA considers allowable. Medical and dental expenses paid by you may be deductible from the income VA counts when determining your benefit entitlement.

Any medical or dental expense that you paid for a member of your household (self, spouse, child, etc.) for which you were not reimbursed may also be counted. Below are examples of expenses you should include, if applicable:

- Hospital expenses • Doctor's office fees • Prescription/non-prescription drug costs • Vision care costs • Medical insurance premiums • Monthly Medicare deduction • Nursing home costs • Hearing aid costs • Dental fees • Home health service expenses • Expenses related to transportation to a hospital, doctor, or other medical facility.

These expenses may be listed on a **VA Form 21P-8416 – Medical Expense Report (MER)** - and submitted anytime for the previous year. For example: Medical Expense Reports for 2014 may be submitted anytime during the calendar year of 2015.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- Do not include any expenses for which you were reimbursed. If you receive reimbursement after you have filed a MER, promptly notify the VA office handling your claim.
- If you are not sure whether a particular expense can be allowed, furnish a complete description of the purposes of the payment. The VA will let you know if an expense cannot be allowed.
- You may be asked to verify the amounts you actually paid. Keep all receipts or other documentation of payments for at least three years after the VA makes a decision on your medical expense claim. If you are unable to provide documentation of the claimed medical expenses when asked to do so by the VA, your benefits may be retroactively reduced or terminated.

Eligibility Verification Report (EVR)

Historically, beneficiaries have been required to complete a **VA Form 21-0510 - Eligibility Verification Report (EVR)** - each year to ensure their pension benefits continue. However under an initiative released December 20, 2012, this requirement no longer exists. Under the new initiative, the VA works with the Internal Revenue Service and the Social Security Administration to verify eligibility for Non-Service Connected Pension Benefits for Veterans and Surviving Spouses.

Eliminating these annual reports reduces the burden on Veterans, their families and survivors because they will not have to return these routine reports to the VA each year in order to avoid suspension of benefits.

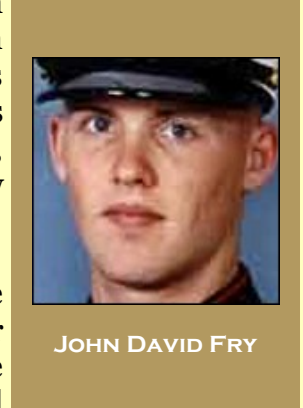
IMPORTANT NOTE: If there is a significant increase or decrease in your family income or net worth, or if there is any change in your marital status or the status of your dependents, you must notify the VA immediately. Fully describe the change and furnish your name, VA claim number and Social Security number. If you do not promptly notify the VA of these changes, you may end up in an overpayment in your account.

***You can contact our office now at 803-785-8400
to schedule your appointment for us to help you complete your 2014 MER.***

Changes to the Fry Scholarship

The Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (“Choice Act”) was recently signed into law. Most of the Act pertains to Veterans health care but it also included a provision affecting GI Bill benefits, specifically the Fry Scholarship.

The Fry Scholarship was created to honor Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry, 28, of Lorena, Texas. Sergeant Fry had one week left in his tour in Iraq in 2006, when he volunteered to continue working for seven more hours disarming explosive devices, despite having already sustained an injury to his hand. He made the ultimate sacrifice on March 8, 2006, in Anbar province, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated. He left behind a widow and three children.



Section 701 of the Choice Act expands the Fry Scholarship to include the surviving spouses of service members who died in the line of duty after September 10, 2001. Prior to this law, only children of those who died in the line of duty were eligible for this benefit. Over 1,275 children were helped under the Fry Scholarship in FY 2013.

The new law states eligible spouses are entitled to receive:

- 36 months of full benefits, equal to 100% level of the Post-9/11 GI Bill; this includes tuition and fee payment, a monthly housing allowance, and a stipend for books and supplies.
- Training must start on or after January 1, 2015. Training prior to January 1, 2015, is not eligible to receive benefits under Section 701.
- A spouse has 15 years from the date of the service member’s death to utilize benefits. If a spouse remarries, benefits end the date of the remarriage.

Some spouses, currently eligible for or already receiving benefits under the Survivors’ and Dependents’ Educational Assistance (DEA) program, may now be eligible for the Fry Scholarship. DEA is an educational program offering up to 45 months of education benefits to eligible dependents of Veterans who died while on active duty, as well as dependents of Veterans who died as a result of a service-connected condition or are permanently and totally disabled due to a service-related condition. Surviving spouses of service members who died in the line of duty after September 10, 2001, will have to make a one-time irrevocable election to receive either the Fry Scholarship or Dependents’ Educational Assistance.

"Never give in--never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy."

- Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill



ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Did you know that the following events occurred during the months of January/February ...



January 3, 1959 – Alaska was admitted as the 49th US state.



January 7, 1714 – A patent was issued for the first typewriter, designed by British inventor Henry Mill.



January 8, 1935 – Elvis Presley was born in Tupelo, Mississippi.

January 11, 1964 – The US Surgeon General declared cigarettes may be hazardous to your health.



January 12, 1991 – Congress authorized use of military force against Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait.

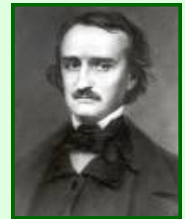


January 15, 1870 – The donkey was first used to symbolize the Democratic Party in America.



January 19, 1809 – Edgar Allan Poe was born in Boston, Massachusetts.

January 20, 1945 – Franklin D. Roosevelt was inaugurated to an unprecedented fourth term as the President of the United States.



January 24, 1848 – The California gold rush began.

January 25, 1961 – President John F. Kennedy conducted the first live televised presidential news conference.



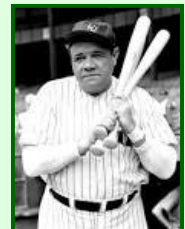
January 28, 1915 – The US Coast Guard was created by an Act of Congress, combining the Life Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service.

February 3, 1870 – The 15th Amendment to the US Constitution was ratified, guaranteeing the right of citizens to vote, regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.



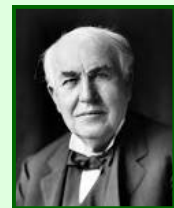
February 6, 1895 – Legendary baseball player George Herman “Babe” Ruth was born in Baltimore, Maryland.

February 8, 1910 – The Boy Scouts of America was founded by William Boyce in Washington, DC.



February 11, 1847 – American Inventor Thomas Edison was born in Milan, Ohio.

February 17, 1865 –Fort Sumter was returned to the Union after nearly a year and a half under Confederate control.



February 22, 1732 – George Washington was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia.

February 26, 1846 – American frontiersman “Buffalo Bill” Cody was born in Scott County, Indiana.





Lions Clubs International

Make plans now to reach out to Veterans and offer them the opportunity to continue to make a difference and change lives in their community.

The **Involve a U.S. Veteran** program waives the charter or entrance fee for any qualifying Veteran who joins a new or existing Lions club. Eligible Veterans include retired U.S. military personnel or honorably-discharged members of the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard Services, Marines, National Guard, Navy or Reserves. Those currently serving in the National Guard or Reserves are also eligible. This special pilot program is offered only in the United States.

As service members leave the military and come home, Lions clubs provide them an opportunity to get involved in their communities and serve. Visit the "Involve a U.S. Veteran" Web page to learn more about this special program. You can download a fact sheet, promotional flyer, certification form and a sample press release to help promote your Lions club.

For more information, visit the Lions Clubs website at <http://www.lionsclubs.org>.

PICTURES FROM THE 2014 LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS PARADE



ROTC Color Guard



Fly over



Lexington County Veterans Group



Grand Marshalls



DAV Members



Ladies Auxiliary of the Military Order of the Purple Heart



Members of Blue and Gold Star Mothers

Lexington County Veterans Group

All Lexington County Veterans are invited to attend the weekly meetings. The group meets weekly on Tuesdays from 12 noon to 2:00 pm in the auditorium at 605 West Main Street in Lexington. The group meets for Health Issues and PTSD counseling with a licensed counselor.

Our Veterans also participate in various social activities such as group lunches, group dinners with wives/significant other, boat trips on Lake Murray, participation in the Lexington County Veterans parade and other general group tours.

For further information, please contact the Lexington County Veterans Affairs Office at 803-785-8400.



Flu Shots for Veterans enrolled in VA healthcare



The William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center is now offering the seasonal flu vaccine at no cost to Veterans to help keep them healthy.

Veterans can visit their Primary Care Clinic to get their flu shot, including their outpatient clinics during scheduled appointments or on a walk-in basis, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Flu shots are also available at Dorn's Mental Health Clinics on a walk-in basis on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Specialty clinics are providing flu vaccines during regularly scheduled appointments.

If a Veteran has not applied for VA health care, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll. For more information on the flu and benefits of immunization visit <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/flu/> or call the flu hotline at 803-695-6701.

According to the Center for Disease Control, flu is a respiratory illness that spreads easily from person to person and getting a flu vaccination is the best protection against the flu. Flu season usually begins in the fall and can continue through late spring. The flu causes more than 225,000 hospitalizations and about 36,000 deaths annually.

Dang-it Dolls Workshop

Hope everyone is ready to get back to work making Dang-it Dolls for our service men and women! The January workshop will be held at the Cayce Masonic Lodge, 1701 12th Street, Cayce, SC 29033 on Saturday, January 10 2015, from 10:00AM until 3:00PM. The Lodge Brothers will be preparing their famous Hot Dog Lunch for everyone.

Mark your calendar as there will be another workshop on Saturday, February 14, 2015, same time and place. So grab a friend and come join in with the stuffing and decorating of the dolls so we can bring smiles and stress relief to our service men and women. To date, with your help, over 140,000 Dang-it Dolls have been shipped all over the world. We have volunteers ranging in age from 5 to 90 years of age. There is something for everyone to do and this is the one place where **THE MORE THE MERRIER** really counts.

Don't forget that Wal-Mart on Highway 1 in West Columbia carries the Morning Glory stuffing. This is the only stuffing that is used for the dolls as the other brands are too soft and silky for our purpose. We can always use stuffing donations. We are also in need of funds to ship the dolls. With the over 1500 dolls we have shipped out since our May workshop, we are really short of funds right now. Any help you can give will be appreciated. The average cost to ship a box of 25 to 30 dolls is \$35.00. Also, we have our Dang-it Doll T-shirts in black or white. Youth sizes are \$15.00, adult sizes up to 2X are \$20.00 and 3X and above are \$25.00.



New rules & regulations from the SCDNR on hunting/fishing licenses

1 - Disabled Veterans who are residents of SC and receiving disability benefits from the US Veterans Administration are eligible to apply for a three year disability license at no cost.

2 - Disability license holders who are at least 65 years of age are no longer required to provide a disability benefit statement when they renew a disability license. Proof of SC residency is still required.

You will need to complete a Disability Recreational Hunting and Fishing License Application located on the SCDNR website at <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/licensing.html>. Along with this application you will also need to submit a copy of your unexpired SC driver's license or ID card and a current copy of your disability rating letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs.



**Lexington County Offices
will be closed on the following dates
during the months of
January & February:**

-
- Thursday, January 1st—New Year's Day*
- Monday, January 19th—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*
- Monday, February 16th—President's Day*



VETERANS TRANSPORTATION SERVICES



Veteran Transportation Services (VTS) is a new program offered by the Dorn VAMC in Columbia. Our office at 605 West Main Street in Lexington, has been deemed a shuttle-stop for the "Park and Ride" service on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays only. These are the days that our van does not run. The shuttle runs 8am-4pm except on holidays and will be at our location at 7am. They will pick up in the emergency lane at the front of the building and leave promptly at 7:10am. A Veteran living within a 25 mile radius of the hospital are picked up at their home. Any Veteran with appointments at the VAMC Dorn may ride; they can be handicapped, in a wheelchair or on oxygen. For more information on this new program, please contact Steven Torres at 803-776-4000 ext 6398.



Please do not contact our office
all inquires should be directed to Mr. Torres.

Featured Medal:

Air Force Cross

The Air Force Cross is the second highest military award that can be given to a member of the United States Air Force. The Air Force Cross is the Air Force decoration equivalent to the Distinguished Service Cross (Army), the Navy Cross (Navy and Marine Corps), and the Coast Guard Cross (Coast Guard). The Air Force Cross is awarded for extraordinary heroism not justifying the award of the Medal of Honor. It may be awarded to any individual who, while serving in any capacity with the U.S Air Force, distinguishes him or herself by extraordinary heroism in combat.

Originally entitled the "Distinguished Service Cross (Air Force)" the Air Force Cross was first proposed in 1947 after the creation of the United States Air Force as a separate armed service. The medal was designed by Eleanor Cox, an employee of the Air Force, and was sculpted by Thomas Hudson Jones of the Institute of Heraldry. The Air Force Cross was established by Congress in Public Law 88-593 on July 6, 1960, amending Section 8742 of Title 10, U.S. Code to change the designation of "Distinguished Service Cross" to "Air Force Cross" in case of awards made under Air Force Authority.

The Air Force Cross consists of a bronze cross with an oxidized satin finish. Centered on the obverse of the cross is a gold-plated American bald eagle, wings displayed against a cloud formation, (as used on the seal of the Air Force). This design is encircled by a laurel wreath in green enamel, edged in gold. The reverse of the cross is blank and suitable for engraving.

The service ribbon has a very wide center stripe of Brittany blue with narrow stripes of white and red at the edges. The ribbon is almost identical to that of the Distinguished Service Cross, except for the lighter blue center stripe, indicating the close connection of these awards.



Picture of the Air Force Cross and Ribbon



It's More Than Saying I Love You

We give on this day candy and flowers,
But we never stop to say thank you for the many hours.
You have stood by my side and gave a smile,
As if to tell our hearts it's been worth every mile.
No need to buy a teddy bear or even a card,
It's pretty simple and not at all hard.
Just put your arms around me and hold me tight,
And say without words that in your heart all is right.
You may say I Love You throughout the year,
But on this day you need to make sure.
The words so sweet and straight from your heart,
That your life would be lonely without my part.
So put forth the effort and take the time,
Look me in the eye and say I'm glad you're mine.



Coming in the Next Issue... Death/Burial Benefits and VA Life insurance