



# LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS NEWS

*"Serving those who served and sacrificed for America"*

November/December 2017



Lexington, SC.

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## At A Glance Calendar November/December

For a list of events in Lexington County for November & December

See page 21 Happenings Around Lexington County

Weekly on Tuesdays in November

Lexington County Veterans Group Meeting from 10am to 12 noon

Thursday, November 2nd

Gaston Outreach

Friday, November 3rd

Chapin Outreach

Sunday, November 5th

Daylight Savings Time Ends

Tuesday, November 7th

Election Day

Friday, November 10th

County Offices Closed

Saturday, November 11th

Veterans Day

Tuesday, November 14th

County Council Meeting

Saturday, November 17th

Dang-it Doll Workshop  
For more information see page 19

Thursday, November 23rd

County Offices Closed  
Thanksgiving Day

Friday, November 24th

County Offices Closed  
Day After Thanksgiving

Tuesday, November 28th

County Council Meeting

Friday, December 1st

Chapin Outreach

Thursday, December 7th

Gaston Outreach

Friday, December 8th

Batesburg/Leesville Outreach

Tuesday, December 12th

County Council Meeting  
Hanukkah begins at sundown

Saturday, December 16th

Wreaths Across America  
For more information see page 17

Tuesday, December 19th

County Council Meeting

Thursday, December 21st

Winter begins

Friday, December 22nd

County Offices Closed  
Christmas holiday

Sunday, December 24th

Christmas Eve

Monday, December 25th

County Offices Closed  
Christmas Day

Tuesday, December 26th

County Offices Closed  
Christmas holiday  
Kwanzaa begins

Sunday, December 31st

New Year's Eve

Monday, January 1st

County Offices Closed  
New Year's Day

### From the Director...

As we prepare for Veterans Day activities both in our County and the Midlands, we are mindful of the service of all of our Veterans. We are grateful for their sacrifice and that of their families. We are honored to serve them every day. This issue is chock full of discounts, free meals, free entertainment and free or reduced hotel stays for Veterans to honor the Veterans Day holiday. Please share this information with Veterans or those still serving on active duty that you may know.

Our Lexington County Veterans Parade will be at 3pm on Sunday, November 5 and we would love to have a large crowd to honor our Veterans. Last year was a great parade with great weather. The parade marches down Main Street, Lexington and ends at the County Administration building and Veterans Monument on South Lake Drive and is always a highlight of the year. A patriotic ceremony is held at the Veterans monument immediately after the parade and the public is invited.

Our building is taking shape and we have a newly surfaced parking lot and the entire front of the building is completed with new signage. We hope to be in our new office complex in early January.

Enjoying the journey,



#### CALENDAR KEY

**Purple**—Holidays/Special Days

**Blue**—Outreach dates

**Red**—County Offices Closed, No van scheduled and Special Notices

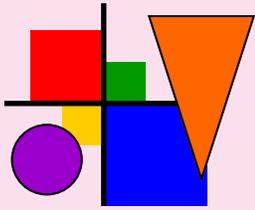
**Black**—Director's appearances in the County

**Brown**—County Council Meetings

**Pink**—Special Events throughout the County

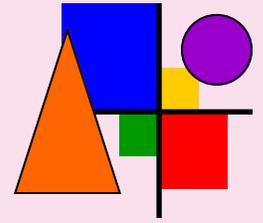
**Orange**—Director Out of Office

**Green**—Lexington County Veterans Group Meetings



# *Education Benefits*

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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](http://www.vabenefits.vba.va.gov) or call our office.



# THANKSGIVING DAY

Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday celebrated primarily in the United States and Canada as a day of giving thanks. In the United States, the modern Thanksgiving holiday tradition is commonly, but not universally, traced to a sparsely documented 1621 celebration at Plymouth in present-day Massachusetts. The 1621 Plymouth feast and thanksgiving was prompted by a good harvest. Pilgrims and Puritans who began emigrating from England in the 1620s and 1630s carried the tradition of Days of Fasting and Days of Thanksgiving with them to New England. George Washington proclaimed the first nationwide thanksgiving celebration in America marking November 26, 1789, "as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favours of Almighty God".

Thanksgiving in the United States was observed on various dates throughout history. From the time of the Founding Fathers until the time of Lincoln, the date Thanksgiving was observed varied from state to state. The final Thursday in November had become the customary date in most U.S. states by the beginning of the 19th century. Thanksgiving was first celebrated on the same date by all states in 1863 by a presidential proclamation of Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln proclaimed the date to be the final Thursday in November in an attempt to foster a sense of American unity between the Northern and Southern states. Because of the ongoing Civil War and the Confederate States of America's refusal to recognize Lincoln's authority, a nationwide Thanksgiving date was not realized until Reconstruction was completed in the 1870s. On December 26, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a joint resolution of Congress changing the national Thanksgiving Day from the last Thursday in November to the fourth Thursday.



## Lowe's Expands Support Of The Military With Enhanced Discount

Lowe's Companies, Inc. recently announced it will expand its military discount program by offering 10 percent off personal purchases every day to current and honorably discharged members of the U.S. Armed Forces. The new program uses a MyLowe's card for quick identification, is available both in U.S. stores and on Lowes.com and offers easy online enrollment. The discount is effective immediately.



"Lowe's was founded by Carl Buchan, an Army Veteran who wanted to make home building and home improvement affordable for returning GIs and their families," said Robert A. Niblock, chairman, president and CEO. "The values and leadership instilled through his military service formed the foundation of our company. Enhancing our discount program honors his memory and the commitment servicemen and women and their families make to our country."

Lowe's has offered discounts to Veterans and military servicemen and women for more than a decade. Current and former servicemen and women can follow these easy steps to enroll in the discount program:

Visit [Lowe's.com/military](http://Lowe's.com/military) and complete a short personal profile. Check the box to receive a free MyLowe's card.

After the one-time enrollment, U.S. military customers can present their MyLowe's card at the store cash register, scan their card at self-checkout or sign in to their account at [Lowe's.com](http://Lowe's.com) and receive the discount. In addition to simple checkout in stores and online shopping, the MyLowe's card offers free parcel shipping for purchases ordered online with no required minimum purchase. For additional details about the discount, visit [Lowe's.com/military](http://Lowe's.com/military).

# 2017 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts

*Two things to always remember during Veterans Day when using any of the free meals or discounts listed below:*

1 - Proof of Military Service: First, most companies require some form of military ID – including a U.S. Uniform Services ID Card (active/reserve/retired), Current Leave and Earnings Statement (LES), photograph in uniform, be wearing uniform (if your service permits), Veterans Organization Card (e.g., American Legion and VFW), DD214, discharge paperwork, or other form of identification. Other restaurants and companies may only require a photo of you in uniform, or go by the honor system.

2 – Participation: Second, always call ahead to verify locations, times, and participation. Many of the listed companies are franchises and may have different policies. We will do our best to keep this page updated as we find new information.



## Discounts at Restaurants

**54th Street Grill** - Veterans and active duty military get a free entree on November 11.

**Applebee's** – Veterans and active duty military receive a free meal from a limited menu on November 11.

**Arooga's** - Veterans and active duty military get a free meal from a fixed menu on November 11.

**Bakers Square** - Veterans and active duty military get a free breakfast from a set menu on November 11.

**Bar Louie** – Veterans and active military personnel get a free appetizer or entrée on November 11.

**Ben's Soft Pretzels** - Veterans receive a free Jumbo Soft Pretzel at participating locations on November 11.

**BJ's Restaurant** - Active duty military and Veterans receive a complimentary entree under \$12.95 on November 11.

**BLT Steak** - On November 11, parties of two or less receive a 50% discount and parties of three or more receive a 25% discount for Veterans and active duty military.



**Bob Evans** - Veterans and active military personnel receive a free meal from a select menu on November 11.

**Bonanza Steakhouses** - Active duty and retired military get a free buffet on November 11.

**Bonefish Grill** – Veterans and active duty service members receive a free Bang Bang Shrimp appetizer on November 11.

**Boston Market** - Active duty or retired military personnel and their families can receive one free brownie or cookie with any purchase on November 11.

**Bubba's 33** - Veterans and active members of the military get a free lunch on November 11.

**Buffalo Wild Wings** - Veterans and active duty military personnel receive one small order of wings and a side of fries free on November 11 all day.

**Burntwood Tavern** - Veterans and active military get a free lunch or dinner on November 11.

**Calhoun's** - Veterans and active duty military get a free meal on November 11.

*Continued on page 6*

## 2017 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts continued from page 5



**California Pizza Kitchen** – Veterans and active military receive a complimentary entrée from a special menu on November 11.

**Carraba's** – Veterans and active duty service members receive a free appetizer of your choice on November 11.

**CentraArchy Restaurants** - Veterans and active duty service members get a free entrée and 25% off to their accompanied family on November 11 at participating restaurants.

**Chevys Fresh Mex** - On November 11 from 11am-10pm, all active and retired military personnel can select one complimentary item from a special Veterans Day menu.

**Chicken Salad Chick** - On November 11, Veterans and active duty military receive one sandwich or scoop of their choice of chicken salad, one side, a pickle spear, a cookie and a drink.

**Chili's** – Veterans and active duty military receive a free meal from a special menu on November 11.

**Chipotle** - Active duty military, Reserves, National Guard, Veterans and spouses get a buy-one-get-one (BOGO) deal from 3pm to close on November 11.

**Chuck E. Cheese's** - Active and retired military members can enjoy a free individual 1-topping pizza on November 11.

**Cici's** – Veterans and active duty members receive a free buffet that includes pizza, salad, desserts and more on November 11.

**City Barbecue** - Veterans and troops get a free sandwich platter on November 11.

**Claim Jumper** - On November 11, all Claim Jumper locations will provide Veterans with a complimentary meal from a special menu.

**Country Cookin** - Veterans receive a free meal from 2 pm – 8 pm on November 11.



**Cracker Barrel** - Veterans get a complimentary slice of Double Chocolate Fudge Coca-Cola Cake on November 11.

**Dairy Queen** – Veterans and active duty military receive a free Blizzard treat on November 11.

**Denny's** – Active, inactive and retired military personnel get a free Build Your Own Grand Slam on November 11, from 5am to noon.

**El Torito** - Active and retired military personnel can select one complimentary item from a special menu on November 11 from 11am -10pm.

**Famous Dave's** - On November 11, former and current military personnel will receive a free Two Meat Combo.

**Farmer Boys** - Veterans and active duty military receive a free Big Cheese burger on November 11.

**FATZ** – Veterans and active duty military receive one free world famous Calabash Chicken entrée.

**Fazoli's** - Veterans get a free Build Your Own Pasta Bowl on November 11.

*Continued on page 7*

## 2017 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts continued from page 6

**Figaro's Pizza** - Veterans and active duty service members get a complimentary medium 1-topping pizza on November 11.



**Firebirds Wood Fired Grill** - Active duty military and Veterans get a free lunch or dinner entrée on November 11.

**Fogo de Chão** - Veterans and active duty personnel will receive 50% off their meal on November 11, and up to three additional guests will receive 10% off their meals.

**Freddy's Frozen Custard and Steak Burgers** – Veterans and active duty service members receive a free combo meal card on November 11.

**Friendly's** - Friendly's is treating Veterans and active military to a free breakfast, lunch or dinner from a limited menu on November 11.

**Glory Days Grill** - Veterans get a free appetizer on November 11.

**Golden Corral** – Golden Corral Restaurants' Military Appreciation Night free dinner will be available on November 14 from 5 to 9pm. Military retirees, Veterans, active duty, National Guard and Reserves are all welcome.

**Green Mill Restaurant and Bar** - Veterans and active duty military get a free meal on November 11.

**Hickory Tavern** – Veterans and active duty military get 50% off all food and non-alcoholic beverages all day on November 11.

**Hooters** – Hooters invites all Veterans and current service men and women to enjoy a free meal, up to \$10.99 in value with any drink purchase, by presenting a military ID or proof of service at any locations across the country.

**Houlihan's** - Active military and Veterans receive one free entrée, valued up to \$15, with purchase of an additional entrée on November 11.

**Hurricane Grill and Wings** - Veterans and active duty personnel get a complimentary entrée and non-alcoholic beverage on November 11 from a limited menu.

**Hy-Vee** - Veterans and active duty military members get a free breakfast buffet on November 11.

**IHOP** - On November 11, participating IHOP Restaurants offer Veterans and active duty military free Red, White and Blue pancakes from 7am to 7pm.

**IKEA** - Veterans get a free entrée from November 7 through 11.

**JJ's Red Hots** - Veterans and active duty get a free meal including unlimited hot dogs, sausages, sides and non-alcoholic drinks all day on November 11.

**K&W Cafeteria** – Anyone with a valid military ID can have a free meal on November 11, which includes meat, vegetables, bread and a refillable drink.

**Krispy Kreme** – Veterans and active duty military receive a free doughnut and a free small coffee on November 11.

**Krystal** - All guests with their military ID may receive a complimentary breakfast Sausage Biscuit from opening until 11 am on November 11.

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## 2017 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts continued from page 7

**LaMar's Donuts** - Veterans and active duty military get a free donut and 12oz coffee at participating locations on November 11.

**Little Caesars Pizza** - Veterans and active military members get a free \$5 Hot-n-Ready lunch combo on November 11 at participating stores nationwide.



**Longhorn Steakhouse** – Active duty military, Veterans and their families get a complimentary appetizer or dessert on November 11. Guests that dine with a Veteran will also receive 10 percent off their meal.

**Max & Erma's** – On November 11, participating Max & Erma's locations are offering Veterans and active military personnel a free Best Cheeseburger in America.

**McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurants** – On November 6, participating McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurants will offer a complimentary entrée to Veterans and Gold Star Families from a special menu.

**Menchie's** – All active and retired military personnel will receive a free 6oz frozen yogurt on November 11.

**Mimi's Cafe** - All Veterans and active duty military will receive a complimentary entrée with the purchase of any non-alcoholic beverage on November 11. On November 12 and 13, Veterans and active duty military receive their choice of breakfast, lunch or dinner entrees on the 'Veterans Day' menu for \$5.99.

**Mission BBQ** - Veterans and active duty military get a free sandwich and a slice of cake on November 11.

**Native Grill & Wings** - Veterans and active duty service members receive any menu item up to \$11.99 free all day on November 11.

**Ninety Nine Restaurant and Pub** - On November 11 from 11am to 4pm, Veterans and active military get a free lunch with purchase of an entree.



**O'Charley's** – Veterans and active duty service members get a free meal on November 11.

**Olive Garden** – Active duty military, Veterans and their families get a free entrée from a special menu on November 11.

**On the Border** – Veterans and active duty military can enjoy a free meal from the "create your own combo" menu on November 11.

**Outback Steakhouse** – All active and retired service members receive a free Bloomin' Onion and a beverage on November 11. Outback is also offering active and former service members 15% off their meals November 12 through December 31.

**Perkins** - Active duty military and Veterans get a free Magnificent Seven meal on November 11.

**Pizza Schmizza** - Veterans and active duty service members get a free slice of pizza on November 11, between 1 and 4pm.

**Ponderosa Steakhouse** - Active duty and retired military get a free buffet on November 11.

**Primanti Bros.** - Veterans and active duty military get a free sandwich from 4pm to close on November 11.

**Quaker Steak & Lube** – Veterans and active duty military receive a free meal on November 11.

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## 2017 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts continued from page 8

**Red Hot & Blue** - Veterans receive a free entrée with the purchase of a second entrée on November 9, 10 and 11. Coupon required.

**Red Lobster** – Veterans, reserve and active-duty military personnel receive a free appetizer or dessert from a limited menu on November 10 and 11.

**Red Robin** – Veterans and active duty military get a free Red's Tavern Double Burger with Bottomless Steak Fries on November 11.



**Rib Crib** - Veterans and active military personnel receive a free meal on November 11.

**Rock and Brews** - Veterans and active military personnel receive a complimentary pulled pork sandwich on November 11.

**Rosebud Restaurants** - All currently serving and retired Veterans get half off a second entrée purchase for lunch with the purchase of an entrée on November 11.

**Ruby Tuesday** - Veterans, active duty and reserve service members get a free appetizer on November 11.

**Sheetz** – Veterans and active duty military personnel get a free 6 inch turkey sub, regular size fountain drink and a carwash at all Sheetz locations on November 11.

**Shoney's** – Shoney's will offer a free All-American Burger to Veterans and active duty service members on November 11.

**Spaghetti Warehouse** - From November 11 through November 13 buy one entrée and get the second entrée free. Coupon required.

**Steak 'n Shake** – Veterans and active duty military receive a free breakfast skillet & coffee from 6am to 11am on November 11.

**Sticky Fingers** - Veterans and active military get a free pulled pork sandwich with baked beans and coleslaw all day on November 11.

**Stir Crazy** - Veterans and active duty military get a free chicken or steak fresh market bar on November 11.

**Tap House Grill** - Active, inactive and retired military personnel get a complimentary meal on November 11.

**Texas Roadhouse** – Texas Roadhouse locations nationwide will offer Veterans a free lunch on November 11 from 11am to 2pm. Offer is good for active duty, retired and former US military.

**T.G.I. Friday's** – Veterans and active duty military get a free lunch on November 11 from 11am to 2pm.

**Tijuana Flats** – Veterans and active duty military receive a free meal on November 11.

**Travel Centers of America** - Military Veterans who are CDL holders receive a free meal with beverage on November 11.

**Twin Peaks** - Active duty and Veterans get a free menu item from their Annual Veterans Day Appreciation Menu on November 11.



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## 2017 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts continued from page 9

**Uno Chicago Grill** – Veterans and active duty military receive a free entrée or individual pizza with an entrée or pizza purchase of equal or greater value on November 11.

**Village Inn** - Veterans and active military personnel receive a free Inn-Credible V.I.B. Breakfast on November 11.



**White Castle** - Veterans and all members of the military receive a free combo meal on November 11.

**Wienerschnitzel** - Veterans and active duty military receive a free Chili Dog, small fries and a 20oz drink on November 11.

**World of Beer** - All Veterans and current service members receive a free select draught beer on November 11.

**Yard House** - Veterans and active duty military receive a complimentary appetizer on November 11.

## Retail Stores and More

**AARP** - Get 20% off membership for veterans and their families.

**Alfred Angelo** - Military brides get a free wedding gown on Veterans Day. Must make an appointment for November 11 to qualify.

**Amazon.com** - Get 20% off select clothing on Veterans Day using the promotion code: 20veterans.

**Army Corp of Engineers Recreation Areas** - Free use at more than 2,400 recreation areas nationwide for Veterans and active duty service members and their families.



**Bellhops** - Veterans and active-duty service members can order free service for moving and lifting jobs that will take place between November 13 and December 15.

**Bed, Bath & Beyond** – 20% off in store purchases, November 10 through 11.

**Big Lots** – 10% off all purchases on November 11 for Veterans, active duty, Reservists and their dependents.

**Brides Across America** - Military brides can get a wedding dress during the month of November through the Brides Across America program. The group partners with salons across the nation. You must register online.

**Dell** - Military members get 15% off on select PCs and electronics from Veterans Day through November 15.

**Dollar General** - Get 11% off on November 11 if you are a Veteran or active duty military.

**Great Clips** - A free haircut for military members and for those not in the military, a card for a free haircut to give to military members.

**Home Depot** - Get a 10% discount with military ID.

**Jockey** - Veterans, active-duty and families get 25% off using the promo code MILITARY.

**JDog Junk Removal & Hauling** - Half-off services for Veterans if you book before Nov. 11.

**JC Penney** - Get 20% off for Veterans and active-duty military on in-store purchases.

## 2017 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts continued from page 10

**La-Z-Boy Furniture Gallery** - An additional 5% off the Veterans Day sale for active-duty, Veterans, retirees and reservists.

**Lowes Home Improvement** - Get 10% off for anyone who has served in the military with proof of service.

**Meineke** - All Veterans receive a free Basic Oil Change at participating Meineke locations on November 11.

**Publix** - Active and retired military personnel and family members receive a 10% discount on Veterans Day. Proof of service required.

**Rack Room Shoes** - Get 10% off for retired and active-duty service members for your the entire purchase on Veterans Day.

**Red Roof Inn** - Retired and active-duty service members get 15% off a stay during the month of November.

**Sleep Number** - Save \$500-\$700 on selected Sleep Number mattress sets.

**Sports Clips** – Veterans and active duty US service members can stop in on November 11 to get a free haircut.

**Under Armour** - Retired and active-duty service members get 15% through November 12.



### Free Park Admissions for Veterans Day

**Colonial Williamsburg** – Veterans, service members and dependents of currently deployed troops can get free admission tickets to the park from November 7 through 11.

**Free Entrance Into National Parks** – This freebie is in honor of Veterans Day but everyone can take part in it. Over 100 national parks will waive admission fees on November 11 in honor of Veteran's Day.

**Knotts Berry Farm**– Knott's Berry Farm continues its tradition of honoring the brave men and women who have served in the U.S. military, both past and present, with free admission during its annual Military Tribute. The free-admission offer applies to all U.S. Veterans, retired and active military personnel and one guest. Up to six additional tickets may be purchased at Knott's Ticket Booths for only \$24 each from November 2 through 21 and for \$29 each from November 22 through January 4, 2017. U.S. Veterans, retired and active military personnel must present military ID or proof of U.S. military service at Knott's ticket booths to receive the complimentary tickets. Veterans, retired and active military personnel must be present.

**Seaworld Parks** - Veterans and active-duty military receive discounts or free admission. Seaworld properties include SeaWorld Orlando, SeaWorld San Antonio, SeaWorld San Diego, Busch Gardens Tampa, Busch Gardens Williamsburg, Sesame Place Langhorne. The program does not include Discovery Cove in Orlando or Aquatica, SeaWorld's Waterpark.

**Veteran Ticket Foundation** – Get free tickets to sporting event, movies, shows and more by visiting [www.vettix.org](http://www.vettix.org).





**IMPORTANT**  
**DAV VAN**  
**INFORMATION**

**The Lexington County  
DAV Van is suspended  
until further notice.**

**For transportation issues  
contact the  
Veterans Transportation  
Services at 803-776-4000  
ext. 6398.**

## ***The Road Not Taken***

By Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;  
Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,  
And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way lead on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.  
I shall be telling this with a sign  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.



The U.S. Department of Treasury, in partnership with the SC State Housing Finance and Development Authority and SC Housing Corp., has made over \$295 million available to help eligible South Carolina homeowners avoid serious first mortgage delinquency and foreclosures.

### **Qualifications**

SC Help is intended to assist borrowers who are facing first mortgage delinquency or possible foreclosure. There is no household income limit, the property must be an owner occupied primary residence, applicants must have a minimum 24 months homeownership history and applicants do NOT have to be delinquent.

### **How to Apply**

Applicants are encouraged to apply electronically at: [www.schelp.com](http://www.schelp.com). Applicants without the internet may call 1-855-435-7472, toll free number for assistance. There is NO FEE required at any point during the SC HELP process.

## **November is National COPD Awareness Month!**



## **December is National Food Safety Month!**





eBenefits is a joint VA/Department of Defense (DoD) web portal that provides resources and self-service capabilities to Veterans, service members, and their families to research, access and manage their VA and military benefits and personal information. eBenefits uses secure credentials to allow access to personal information and gives users the ability to perform

numerous self-service functions. It also provides a list of links to other sites that provide information about military and Veteran benefits. It is an essential way for Veterans, service members, and their families to receive access to and service from the VA and the DoD.

Some of the features within eBenefits allow Veterans and service members to access official military personnel documents, view the status of their disability compensation claim, transfer entitlement of Post-9/11 GI Bill to eligible dependents (service members only), and register for and update direct deposit information for certain benefits.

eBenefits is located at [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov). Before Veterans can access and use eBenefits they must be listed in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) and obtain a DS Logon. Service members can access eBenefits with a DS Logon or Common Access Card (CAC). They can choose from two levels of registration, DS Logon Level 1 (Basic) and DS Logon Level 2 (Premium). Note: If Veterans attempt to register and are informed they have no DEERS record, the VA will first need to verify their military service and add them to DEERS. All VA Regional Offices have staff familiar with procedures for adding a Veteran to DEERS.

A DS Logon is a secure identity (username and password) that is used by various DoD and VA websites, including eBenefits. If you are already registered in DEERS, you are eligible for a DS Logon. Once you have a DS Logon, it is valid for the rest of your life.

You can register for an eBenefits account online using the eBenefits DS Logon Account Registration Wizard. There are two types of registration, Basic and Premium. You will be walked through a series of questions to assist you in obtaining a Premium eBenefits Account, which gives you the highest level of access to eBenefits features. With a Premium Account you can view personal data about yourself in the VA and DoD systems, apply for benefits online, check the status of your claims, update your address records, and more. To get a Premium eBenefits Account, you must verify your identity.

Many people will be able to verify their identity online by answering a few security questions. Service members may verify their identity online by using their CAC. Military retirees may verify their identity online using their Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) Logon. For those unable to verify their identity online, you will instantly receive a Basic Account. A Basic eBenefits Account lets you customize the site and access information you enter into eBenefits yourself; however, you cannot see your personal information in the VA or DoD systems. However, there are other options available to you. Veterans in receipt of VA benefits via direct deposit may have their identity verified by calling 1-800-827-1000 and selecting option 7. Others may need to visit a VA Regional Office or TriCare Service Center to have their identities verified in person.

For more information visit [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov) or call ebenefits Customer Service Support at 1-800-983-0937, 8am to 8pm EST Monday-Friday.

## November is National

### Pepper Month!



## December is National

### Tomato Month!



## **Medical Expense Reports**

For Veterans and Surviving Spouses not receiving the maximum Non-Service Connection Pension or Survivor 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 deducted from the income the 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. 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 2016 may be submitted anytime during the calendar year of 2017. Remember you only have until December 31, 2017 to submit 2016 reports.

**You can contact our office at 803-785-8400 to schedule an appointment for us to help you complete your 2016 & 2017 MER.**

**Reports**

**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**; you can 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.

**IT'S YOUR CALL**

## **Direct Deposit**

What is the fastest way to enroll or make a change to your Direct Deposit? The fastest way is to call 1-800-827-1000. They will be able to change it over the phone. To enroll you will need to know your routing and account number along with the amount that is being deposited. If you are changing your direct deposit, you will need to know your old routing and account number along with your new information.



## **Free counseling for war time Veterans & their dependents**

The Columbia Vet Center offers a wide range of services to help you make a successful transition from military to civilian life. You have earned these benefits and there is no cost to you or your family members.

Services provided are:

- Individual & group counseling
- Family counseling for military related
- Bereavement counseling for families
- Military sexual trauma
- Outreach & education
- Substance abuse assessment & referral
- Employment assessment & referral
- VBA benefits explanation & referral
- Screening & referral for medical issues

The Columbia Vet Center is located at 1710-A Richland Street, Columbia. Their telephone number is 803-765-9944.



### **Job Hunting?**

The VA medical center and regional office is hiring Veterans.

Visit **USAjobs.com** for more information.



## *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 certain Veterans, including property tax reductions.

### 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.



## ***Veterans Identification Card***

The Veterans Identification Card Act of 2015 was enacted on July 20, 2015. The Act requires the VA to issue an identification card to Veterans upon their request. The Veterans Identification Card (VIC) will not take the place of a healthcare enrollment card, a Choice Card, or any additional identification card that confers VA benefits upon the cardholder – the card would simply confirm Veteran status, and is intended to be used to obtain discounts from retailers. The VA will begin issuing the cards in November 2017. Veterans must log into [www.vets.gov/](http://www.vets.gov/) to apply for the card. If eligible, the Veteran will receive the card in the mail within 3 weeks. Below is a list of common questions on this program.

**WHEN WILL THE NEW ID CARDS BE AVAILABLE?** The VA will begin accepting applications for the Veterans Identification Card in November 2017.

**IS THE NEW VETERANS ID CARD THE SAME AS THE ONE I HAVE FROM THE VA MEDICAL CENTER?** No. The new ID card does not confer access or authorization to any VA benefits. It simply verifies the Veteran status of the individual.

**HOW CAN THE NEW VETERANS ID CARD BE USED?** The new VIC cards will serve as proof of service in the Armed Forces and can be used to obtain discounts on goods and services offered to Veterans from retailers.

**WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA IN ORDER TO QUALIFY FOR THE VIC?** In order to qualify for the VIC Veterans must present a copy of their DD-214 or other official military personnel file that describes service and have a character of discharge of other than dishonorable.

**ARE RESERVISTS AND NATIONAL GUARDSMEN ELIGIBLE FOR THE VIC?** Individuals that served in the Army Reserve, the Navy Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air Force Reserve, the Coast Guard Reserve, the Army National Guard of the United States, or the Air National Guard of the United States *may* qualify for a VIC.

**WILL VA CHARGE A FEE TO ISSUE THE CARDS TO VETERANS?** Veterans will not be charged a fee for the VIC. VA has partnered with Office Depot to cover the cost of printing and shipping the ID Card directly to Veterans.

**WILL THE VIC GIVE ME ACCESS TO ANY OTHER BENEFITS, GOODS, OR SERVICES THAT I DON'T ALREADY GET WITH MY STATE-ISSUED ID WITH VETERAN ENDORSEMENT, VETERAN HEALTH IDENTIFICATION CARD (VHIC), OR DOD RETIRED IDENTIFICATION CARD?** No, if you have a driver's license with a Veteran designation, a VHIC card, or a retirement card issued by DoD, you do not need to apply for the VIC. The VIC does not qualify you for additional benefits administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs and does not serve as proof for any benefits to which you may be entitled.

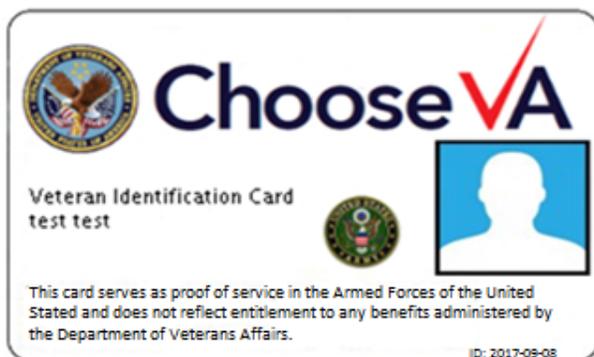
**HOW DO I APPLY FOR A VIC?** Veterans must log into [vets.gov](http://vets.gov) to apply for a VIC. If eligible, you will receive your ID card in the mail within 3 weeks. For more information please go to: <https://www.vets.gov>.

**IF I DO NOT HAVE A VETS.GOV ACCOUNT; CAN I STILL APPLY FOR THE VIC?** No, you must have a [vets.gov](http://vets.gov) account to apply for the VIC. If you do not have a [vets.gov](http://vets.gov) account, you can create one by selecting "Register" on <https://www.vets.gov/>.

**WILL THE VIC ALLOW ME TO ACCESS MILITARY POST OR INSTALLATIONS?** No, the VIC will not grant access to military installations.

**WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS ID CARD AND THE ID CARD GENERATED IN EBENEFITS?** Unlike the card generated in eBenefits, the VIC will contain the Veteran's photograph, as well a unique identification number. A graphic representation of the card is provided below:

**Front of Card**



**Back of Card**





## WreathsAcrossAmerica.org

In 2007, the Worcester family, along with veterans, and others who had helped with their annual Christmas wreath ceremony in Arlington, formed Wreaths Across America™, to continue and expand this effort, and support other groups around the country who wanted to do the same. This nonprofit organization continues the Arlington tradition as part of its mission to Remember, Honor and teach.

In 2016, Wreaths Across America and our national network of volunteers laid over 1,2004,000 memorial wreaths at nearly 1200 locations in the United States and beyond. We accomplished this with help from over 2800 fundraising groups, many corporate contributions, and donations of trucking, shipping, and thousands of helping hands. Our annual pilgrimage from Harrington, Maine to Arlington National Cemetery is known as the world's largest veteran's parade, stopping at schools, monuments, veteran's homes and communities all along the way to remind people how important it is to remember, honor and teach.

Proceeds place a wreath at one of the participating cemeteries; help support our fundraising partners, educational and veteran's services outreach. Please note that all sponsorships are sent directly to the location and no wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.

We welcome all to join us at any Wreaths Across America ceremony. If you would like to participate or help bring sponsored wreaths to your local community, please contact us and we will help connect you with other groups already working in your area.

### Schedule of Events

#### Sunday, December 10, 2017

Start of World's Longest Veterans Parade from Maine to Arlington National Cemetery and participating locations

#### Monday, December 11, 2017 12:00 Noon at the SC Veterans Memorial

#### Located on the Assembly Street side of the Statehouse grounds

There will be State House wreath-laying ceremonies in all 50 States and Puerto Rico

#### Saturday December 16, 2017 12:00 Noon

#### Fort Jackson National Cemetery 4107 Percival Rd. Columbia, SC 29229

Parking will be at the Blue Cross Blue Shield parking lot across from the cemetery. We will have shuttle buses to bring you to and from the cemetery starting at 10:30am the morning of the ceremony. There will be limited handicap parking in cemetery with proper identification.

For more information visit [www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org](http://www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org), or call Carol Davis (803) 467-4482  
You can also email [waajtjackson@gmail.com](mailto:waajtjackson@gmail.com)



# WREATHS *across* AMERICA

## Wreath Sponsorship Form

\*Sponsored wreaths are placed on the grave markers at state, national veterans cemeteries as well as local cemeteries each December.

**FORT JACKSON NATIONAL CEMETERY 3 FOR 2 SPONSORSHIP FORM**

Wreaths may be purchased online at [www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org](http://www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org) Please use Cemetery Code SCFJNC and Organization Code SC0015

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:  
**Wreaths Across America TM**  
PO Box 3356  
West Columbia, SC 29171  
Questions? Please call 803-467-4482  
Thank you for your Sponsorship and joining us in our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach!

Do we have permission to publicize your name as a sponsor?

Yes OR  No, I wish to remain Anonymous

Sponsorship	Price	Quantity	Total
Individual- 1 Wreath	\$15.00		
Mailed "In Honor" card- If you wish to send a mailed honor card telling someone of your sponsorship-see "In Honor" section below. *Card will not be mailed if the \$2 fee is not included.	\$2.00		
Family- 4 Wreaths	\$60.00		
Small Business- 10 Wreaths	\$150.00		
Corporate- 100 Wreaths	\$1,500.00		
		Grand Total	

**\*\*SORRY- WE CAN NOT TAKE GRAVE SPECIFIC REQUESTS\*\***

**In Honor of:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide email of "In Honor OF" recipient, or mailing address so a card can be sent notifying them of your sponsorship in their honor. (if you have a specific message please write it on the back of this sheet and we will include it.)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing: \_\_\_\_\_

**In Memory of:**

\_\_\_\_\_

This name will be listed on our online memory wall, please provide name, rank, branch of service and state resided

Branch of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note that all sponsorships are sent directly to the location and no wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.

Location ID: SCFJNC Fundraising Group ID: SC0015

### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Cash \$: \_\_\_\_\_ Total\$: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total # Checks: \_\_\_\_\_ Reconciled: \_\_\_\_\_  
MO \$: \_\_\_\_\_ GEN: \_\_\_\_\_  
Entered: \_\_\_\_\_

## Lexington County Veterans Group



All Honorably Discharged Lexington County Veterans are invited to attend the weekly meetings. The group meets weekly on Tuesdays from 10 am to 12 noon in the auditorium at 605 West Main Street in Lexington. The group meets for Health Issues and PTSD counseling with a licensed counselor.

The Veterans group also participates 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 visit their website at [lex-coveteransgroup.com](http://lex-coveteransgroup.com) or contact our office at 803-785-8400.



### *Dang-it Dolls Workshops*

Saturday, November 17th from 10am to 3pm  
at the Cayce Masonic Lodge, 1701 12th Street, Cayce, SC.

**THERE WILL BE NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.**

There is something for everyone to do and this is the one place where  
**THE MORE THE MERRIER**  
really counts.

### ***Information on VA home Loans and how to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility***

Any Veteran who wants to use their VA loan guaranty benefit must have a Certificate of Eligibility (COE). The Veteran's lender needs the COE in order to have the loan guaranty insured.

Current process: There are three ways to apply for a COE

1. The easiest and quickest is to apply through eBenefits. It takes just a few minutes and generally can be printed out by the Veteran.
2. Alternatively and equally simple, the Veteran's lender can gather the required information and apply electronically through a VA hosted loan guaranty website.
3. Last option (if the first two are not possible) is for the Veteran to complete and sign a paper application, then mail it by U.S. Post to their Regional Loan Center of jurisdiction.

For more information on VA home loans, call 1-888-768-2132.

# ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Did you know that the following events occurred during the months of November and December?



**November 1, 1950** - President Truman was the target of an unsuccessful assassination attempt.



**November 4, 1922** - King Tut's tomb was discovered at Luxor, Egypt, by British archaeologist Howard Carter.



**November 10, 1775** - The US Marine Corps was established as part of the US Navy.



**November 12, 1867** - A major eruption of Mount Vesuvius in Italy began.



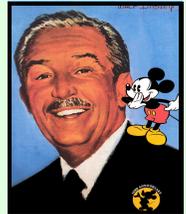
**November 14, 1666** - The first experimental blood transfusion took place in Britain, utilizing two dogs.

**November 19, 1493** - Puerto Rico was discovered by Columbus.



**November 20, 1889** - American astronomer Edwin Hubble was born in Marshfield, Missouri.

**November 23, 1859** - William H. Bonney (Billy the Kid) was born in New York City.



**November 26, 1832** - The first horse-drawn streetcar carried passengers in New York City.

**December 5, 1901** - Walt Disney was born in Chicago, Illinois.



**December 7, 1941** - The US Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii was bombed. This started the US involvement in WWII.

**December 8, 1980** - Former Beatle musician, John Lennon was assassinated.



**December 15, 1964** - Canada adopted a new national flag featuring a red maple leaf on a white background.



**December 20, 1860** - South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union in a prelude to the American Civil War.



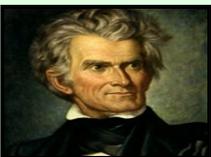
**December 21, 1945** - General George Patton died in Germany following a car accident.



**December 24, 1993** - The KGB (Soviet Secret Police) organization was abolished by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.



**December 28, 1832** - John C. Calhoun became the first American ever to resign the office of vice president.



**December 30, 1803** - The Stars and Stripes flag was raised over New Orleans as the United States took formal possession of the territory of Louisiana, an area of 885,000 square miles, nearly doubling the size of the US.



## Happenings Around Lexington County

For the Months of November & December

Sunday, November 5th

Lexington County Veterans Parade - 3pm  
For more information contact Sharon Willis @ 803-785-1454.



Saturday, November 18th through Friday, December 30th

Lights Before Christmas at Riverbanks Zoo 5 to 9pm. (closed 11/23, 12/24 & 12/25) For more information visit their website at [riverbanks.org/events/lights-before-Christmas](http://riverbanks.org/events/lights-before-Christmas).



Wednesday, November 22nd through Saturday, December 31st

Holiday Lights on the River at Saluda Shoals (NOTE - the entrance again this year is off of St. Andrews Road) 6 to 10pm For more information visit their website at [iric.net/holiday-lights](http://iric.net/holiday-lights).



Friday, December 1st through Sunday, December 3rd

Town of Lexington's Snowball Festival Parade with be on Sunday, 12/3 at 3:30pm For more information contact Jennifer Dowden, Events & Media Coordinator at 803-356-8238 or visit the website [icehouseandpitheather/events.com](http://icehouseandpitheather/events.com)



Saturday, December 9th

Lexington Leisure Center Christmas Sampler 9 to 3pm. For information call 803-957-7828.



Saturday, December 9th

Tri-City Leisure Center Christmas Peddler 9 to 3pm. For information call 803-939-9309.



Saturday, December 9th

West Metro Holiday Parade of Lights Starts at 5:30pm. For more information contact the Cayce/West Columbia Chamber at 803-794-6504.



Sunday, December 10th

Lexington County Museum Christmas Open House 1 to 4pm. For more information call 803-359-8369.



Merry Christmas



Wishing everyone  
a Happy Hanukkah, a Happy Kwanzaa and a Merry Christmas  
from your Lexington County VA Staff!!

*Ed, Jennifer, Kathy, Jennifer and Mary Kay*

## List of Common Allowable (Recurring) Medical Expenses for an Initial Claim Application

The list below shows recurring VA allowable medical expenses for the initial claim application for pension benefits. The list is not all-inclusive and must be unreimbursed by insurance. They must be paid for by the applicant and are used to reduce outside income that exceeds the VA income limit.

1. Medicare Part B Premiums
2. Medicare Part D Premiums
3. Insurance Premiums for supplemental medical insurance
4. Home Health Services
5. Assisted Living Facility Services
6. Nursing Home Services
7. Long Term Care Insurance
8. Medical Monitoring Program (like Life Alert)



There is a new number to call for billing issues through the VAMC for any private health care that was fee based out. That number is 1-877-881-7618 9am to 5pm EST.



## County Council Needs You!

Veterans are still 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 please be present around 4:15pm.



Contact the office at 803-785-8400, if you are interested.

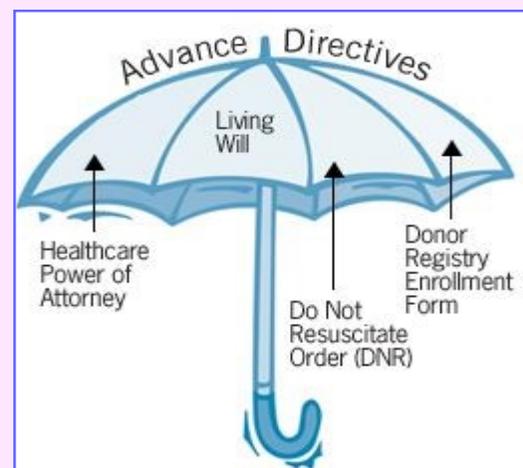
The office would like to thank Samuel "Tank" Owens, Richard Niehe, Mike Gordon, and Carleton Bailiff, Jr. These individuals volunteered their time to say the Pledge of Allegiance during the months of September and October.

THANKS

## Did You Know...



**Veterans can obtain advance directives through the Dorn VAMC. For more information contact Cheryl Geddings at 776-4000 ext. 4084.**



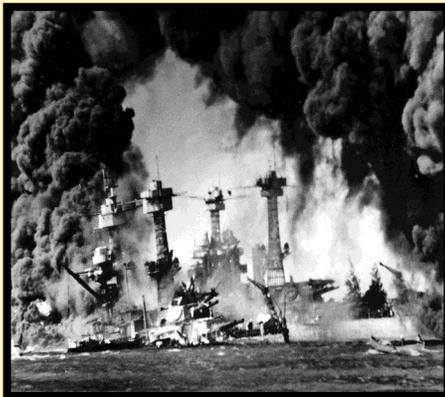


## The History of the Attack on Pearl Harbor

On Sunday, December 7, 1941 at 7:55am Hawaii time, a Japanese dive bomber bearing the red symbol of the Rising Sun of Japan on its wings appears out of the clouds above the island of Oahu, descending on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in a surprise military strike. A swarm of 360 Japanese warplanes followed (including fighters, level and dive bombers, and torpedo bombers) in two waves, launched from six aircraft carriers. The surprise attack struck a critical blow against the U.S. Pacific fleet and drew the United States irrevocably into World War II.

With diplomatic negotiations with Japan breaking down, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his advisers knew that an imminent Japanese attack was probable, but nothing had been done to increase security at the important naval base at Pearl Harbor. As it was Sunday morning, many military personnel had been given passes to attend religious services off base. At 7:02am two radar operators spotted large groups of aircraft in flight toward the island from the north, but, with a flight of B-17s expected from the United States at the time, they were told to sound no alarm. Thus, the Japanese air assault came as a devastating surprise to the naval base.

Much of the Pacific fleet was rendered useless: All eight U.S. Navy battleships were damaged, with four sunk. It completely destroyed the American battleship *U.S.S. Arizona* and capsized the *U.S.S. Oklahoma*. The Japanese also sank or damaged three cruisers, three destroyers, an anti-aircraft training ship, and one minelayer and beached twelve others. 188 U.S. aircraft were destroyed and another 150 damaged; 2,403 Americans were killed and 1,178 others were wounded. All but the *U.S.S. Arizona* were later raised, and six were returned to service and went on to fight in the war. Important base installations such as the power station, dry dock, shipyard, maintenance, and fuel and torpedo storage facilities, as well as the submarine piers and headquarters building (also home of the intelligence section), were not attacked. Japanese losses were light: 29 aircraft and five midget submarines lost, and 64 servicemen killed. One Japanese sailor, Kazuo Sakamaki, was captured. Fortunately for the United States, all three Pacific fleet carriers were out at sea on training maneuvers. These giant aircraft carriers would have their revenge against Japan six months later at the Battle of Midway, reversing the tide against the previously invincible Japanese navy in a spectacular victory.



A hurried dispatch from the ranking United States naval officer in Pearl Harbor, Admiral Husband Edward Kimmel, Commander in Chief of the United States Pacific Fleet, to all major navy commands and fleet units provided the first official word of the attack at the ill-prepared Pearl Harbor base. It said simply: **"AIR RAID ON PEARL HARBOR X THIS IS NOT DRILL"**. Radio stations receiving the news interrupted regular broadcasts to announce the tragic news to the American public. Most people knew what the attack meant for the U.S. even before Roosevelt's official announcement the next day. The U.S. would declare war on Japan. The U.S. was already close to joining the war, but in an attempt to preserve its stance of isolation and neutrality, it had only committed to sending war supplies on loan to the Allied forces, mainly Great Britain, France, and Russia. The following day, December 8, President Roosevelt appeared before a joint session of Congress and the United States declared war on Japan and several days

later, on December 11, Germany and Italy declared war on the U.S. The U.S. responded with a declaration of war against Germany and Italy. Thus America would enter WWII in both the Pacific and European theaters.

There were numerous historical precedents for unannounced military action by Japan, but the lack of any formal warning, particularly while negotiations were still apparently ongoing, led President Franklin D. Roosevelt to proclaim December 7, 1941, "a date which will live in infamy". Because the attack happened without a declaration of war and without explicit warning, the attack on Pearl Harbor was later judged in the Tokyo Trials to be a war crime.





# Forever GI Bill

The Harry W. Colmery  
Veterans Educational Assistance Act

On August 16, 2017, in Bedminster, New Jersey, President Trump signed into law the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act also known as the “Forever GI Bill,” which will bring significant changes to Veterans education benefits. The law is named after the American Legion national commander who wrote the original GI Bill language in 1944, and will allow more Veterans to use the GI Bill and more time to use it. Some of the changes will go into effect immediately, and some are written to go into effect shortly after.

Some new provisions that go into effect immediately include:

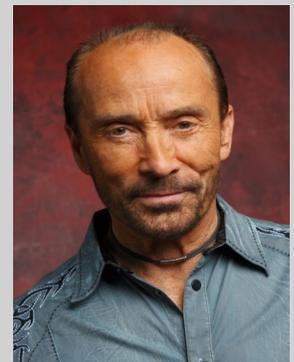
- The 15-year time limitation for using Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits is eliminated for Veterans who left active duty on or after January 1, 2013, and qualifying dependents (Fry children who became eligible on or after January 1, 2013 and all Fry spouses).
- Reservists who had eligibility under the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) and lost it due to the program sunset provision will have that service credited toward the Post-9/11 GI Bill program.
- Certain work-study is permanently authorized; previously it had to be re-approved by Congress every few years.
- The VetSuccess on Campus program will be available to students across the country
- The VA will help Veterans to more clearly identify schools that offer them priority enrollment

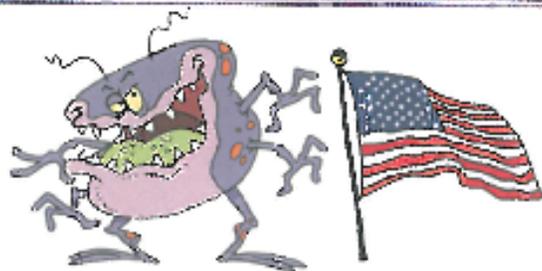
The majority of the changes enhance or expand education benefits for Veterans, Service Members, Families and Survivors. Simple breakdowns to a portion of the provisions can be found at [www.va.gov/GIBILL/FGIBSummaries](http://www.va.gov/GIBILL/FGIBSummaries).



*“And I’m proud to be an American, where at least I know I’m free. And I won’t forget the men who died, who gave that right to me.”*

*- Lee Greenwood*





**LET'S ARM FORCES AGAINST INFLUENZA ...**

**GET VACCINATED!!**

**FLU SHOTS ARE  
AVAILABLE!**

**AT ALL DORN PRIMARY CARE CLINICS,  
MEDICAL CLINICS, AND CBOCS**

**Monday-Friday; 8am-4pm**

**WALGREENS IS OFFERING FREE FLU SHOTS  
TO VA PATIENTS WITH VA ID CARD AND A  
PICTURE I.D.**



**GET YOUR FLU SHOT TODAY!**

## DID YOU KNOW...



Copies of all of our newsletters can be found on the Lexington County website at [lex-co.com/departments/veteransaffairs/newsletters](http://lex-co.com/departments/veteransaffairs/newsletters).

The newsletters are listed on the site by year.

## News Tidbits from the VA



The new three tier parking garage for the Dorn VAMC is scheduled to begin construction in January.

A home health aide is provided to service connected Veterans rated at 70% or higher. This service is for a total of 16 hours per week. To apply the Veteran must go through his social worker at the VAMC. Unfortunately, this program is no longer available for non-service connected Veterans.



## About Our Office

On March 22, 1945 the SC General Assembly adopted a bill creating a VA office in each of the state's 46 counties. The Lexington County VA Director is appointed by the Lexington County delegation. This office is employed by Lexington County; not the Federal VA. The Lexington County Veterans' Affairs Office is an advocate for Veterans and their surviving dependents. We provide the assistance needed in applying for benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs and for VA medical care. The Lexington County VA Office assists former and present members of the US Armed Forces and their dependents in preparing claims. Types of benefits include but not limited to: service connected disabilities and non-service connected pension; death pension benefits; burial; medical care; educational assistance, including vocational rehabilitation; guaranteed home loans; government life insurance and other benefits. We are not trained in Social Security or Department of Defense Benefits but can assist with some of these forms. Our office also provides off-site appointments at three of the County libraries once a month and we can provide home visits on a case by case basis.



The VAMC Dorn has been awarded \$80 million in construction projects. This includes a new eye clinic, mental health clinic, prosthetic clinic, a Fisher House and several other projects. All construction should break ground next year.

There is a new extension for Patient Advocates at Dorn VAMC. The new extension is ext. 6937. To reach a patient advocate call 803-776-4000 ext. 6937. The caller would need to leave a voicemail if the intake person is on the line or with someone. The voicemail will be returned within 48 hours.



The VA has a website anyone can access for all VA questions, SEP user guides, regulations, policies, laws and any other VA resources. The website is: [www.knowva.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.knowva.ebenefits.va.gov).



## DID YOU KNOW...

The VA has lifted it's hiring freeze. They are now hiring VSRs and call center employees at VA regional offices and the VAMCs are hiring multiple positions. Please visit [www.va.gov/jobs](http://www.va.gov/jobs) for more information.



There are over 2000 employees at the Dorn VAMC and over 700 employees at the Regional Office.



LEXINGTON INTERFAITH COMMUNITY SERVICES

## 2017 Holiday Basket Wish List

Ham or Turkey (frozen or canned)  
Canned Sweet Potatoes or Yams  
Canned Collards  
Stuffing Mix  
Cranberry Sauce  
Cornbread Mix  
Green Beans  
Dessert Mix



We will begin to give these to clients  
Thanksgiving: Wednesday, November 1st  
Christmas: Friday, December 1st

Questions? Anna Smith  
Director of Community Relations  
957-6656 x 228 | [anna@licssc.org](mailto:anna@licssc.org)

*You may pack a basket or box and bring it completed,  
or simply bring the items and we will prepare. Feel free  
to add a personal note or prayer for the family.*

*"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" - Matthew 25:40*

216 HARMON STREET, LEXINGTON SC 29072  
803 957 6656 | 803 957 3414 fax | [www.licssc.org](http://www.licssc.org)



## The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration



# Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pin

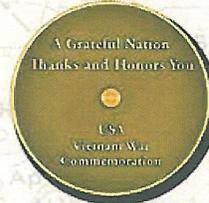


*“A Lasting Memento of the Nation’s Thanks!”*

Front



Back



**Purpose:** To recognize, thank and honor United States military veterans who served during the Vietnam War.

**Eligibility:** Living United States veterans who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time during the period of November 1, 1955 to May 15, 1975, regardless of location, are eligible to receive one lapel pin.

**Presentation:** These lapel pins will be presented in a dignified manner to each Vietnam veteran during public events held in their communities by Commemorative Partners. Accompanying remarks should reflect the nation’s thanks for their service and sacrifice. In the rare instance when an honoree cannot attend a public event, the pin may be presented during a private ceremony.

**Symbolism:**

- **Eagle** - The eagle represents courage, honor, and dedicated service to our nation. As one of the most recognizable and notable American symbols, it is emblazoned with distinction on numerous military insignia.
- **Blue Circle** - The color blue matches the canton of the American flag and signifies vigilance, perseverance, and justice. The circle shape and blue color also match the official seal of the Commemoration.
- **Laurel Wreath** - A time-honored symbol representing victory, integrity, and strength.
- **Stripes** - The stripes behind the eagle represent the American flag.
- **Stars** - The six stars represent the six allies who served, sacrificed, and fought alongside one another: Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, and the United States.
- **Message** - “A Grateful Nation Thanks and Honors You” is embossed on the back, closest to the heart of the wearer. Also, the official name of the Commemoration is included to remind each veteran that this is a national initiative, and this lapel pin is the nation’s lasting memento of thanks.

Published: August 2016

[www.vietnamwar50th.com](http://www.vietnamwar50th.com)

***You may stop by our office to pick up your commemorative pin.***



### DID YOU KNOW...

The VAMC Dorn now has a food pantry. Any Veteran in need may participate in the program. He or she must contact Voluntary Services and they will direct you to the food pantry. To contact Voluntary Services call (803) 776-4000 extension 6780.



### CLOSINGS...

County offices will be closed on the following dates:

- Friday, November 10th - Veterans Day
- Thursday, November 23rd - Thanksgiving Day
- Friday, November 24th - Thanksgiving Holiday
- Friday, December 22nd - Christmas Holiday
- Monday, December 25th - Christmas Holiday
- Tuesday, December 26th - Christmas Holiday
- Monday, January 1st - New Years Day Holiday

### OUTREACH DATES AND TIMES



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

**Chapin Outreach** is the 1st Friday of the month at the Chapin Library from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.



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



*Appointments are strongly encouraged.  
Call the office at 803-785-8400  
to schedule a time.*

### \*\*SPECIAL NOTE\*\*

**THERE WILL BE NO  
BATESBURG/LEESVILLE  
OUTREACH IN NOVEMBER.**

### VETERANS DAY

By Cheryl Dyson

*On Veterans Day we honor all,  
Who answered to a service call.  
Soldiers young, and soldiers old,  
Fought for freedom, brave and bold.  
Some have lived, while others died,  
And all of them deserve our pride.  
We're proud of all the soldiers who,  
Kept thinking of red, white and blue.  
They fought for us and all our rights,  
They fought through many days and nights.  
And though we may not know each name,  
We thank ALL Veterans just the same.*



# ***Featured Medal: Bronze Star***

The **Bronze Star Medal** (BSM, or BSV with valor device) is a United States Armed Forces individual military decoration that may be awarded for bravery, acts of merit, or meritorious service. As a medal it is awarded for merit, and with the "V" for valor device, it is awarded for heroism. It is the fourth-highest combat award of the U.S. Armed Forces and the ninth highest military award (including both combat and non-combat awards) in the order of precedence of U.S. military decorations. Officers from the other federal uniformed services are also eligible to receive the award if they are militarized or detailed to serve with a service branch of the armed forces. The Bronze Star Medal was established by Executive Order 9419, 4 February 1944 (superseded by Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962, as amended by Executive Order 13286, 28 February 2003). The Bronze Star Medal may be awarded by the Secretary of a military department or the Secretary of Homeland Security with regard to the Coast Guard when not operating as a service in the Navy, or by such military commanders, or other appropriate officers as the Secretary concerned may designate, to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard of the United States, after 6 December 1941, distinguishes, or has distinguished, himself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight— (a) while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States; (b) while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or (c) while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.



The acts of heroism are of a lesser degree than required for the award of the Silver Star. The acts of merit or acts of valor must be less than that required for the Legion of Merit but must nevertheless have been meritorious and accomplished with distinction. The Bronze Star Medal is awarded only to service members in combat who are receiving imminent danger pay. The award may be made to each member of the Armed Forces of the United States who, after 6 December 1941, was cited in orders or awarded a certificate for exemplary conduct in ground combat against an armed enemy after 7 December 1941. For this purpose, an award of the Combat Infantryman Badge or Combat Medical Badge is considered as a citation in orders. Documents executed since 4 August 1944 in connection with recommendations for the award of decorations of higher degree than the Bronze Star Medal cannot be used as the basis for an award under this paragraph.

The award that eventually became the Bronze Star Medal was conceived by Colonel Russell P. "Red" Reeder in 1943, who believed it would aid morale if there were a medal which could be awarded by captains of companies or batteries to deserving people serving under them. Reeder felt the medal should be a ground equivalent of the Air Medal, and proposed that the new award be called the "Ground Medal". The idea eventually rose through the military bureaucracy and gained supporters. General George C. Marshall, in a memorandum to President Franklin D. Roosevelt dated 3 February 1944, wrote "The fact that the ground troops, Infantry in particular, lead miserable lives of extreme discomfort and are the ones who must close in personal combat with the enemy, makes the maintenance of their morale of great importance. The award of the Air Medal has had an adverse reaction on the ground troops, particularly the Infantry Riflemen who are now suffering the heaviest losses, air or ground, in the Army, and enduring the greatest hardships."

***Coming in the Next Issue...***

Appeals Modernization; Medical Expense Reports, & Travel Pay