

# Veterans Affairs Office of Lexington County



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EDITOR: *Debbie Myers*

## VET NEWS

September 2008

**GARY R. BAKER**  
DIRECTOR

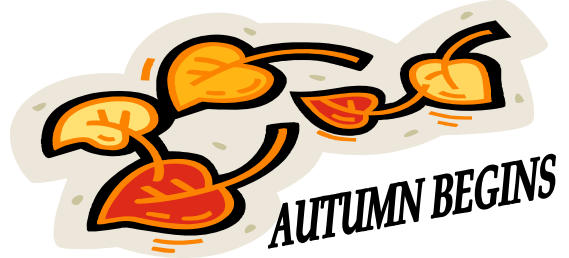
**BARBARA O'CONNOR**  
ASST. CSO

**JENNIFER HENDRIX**  
VETERANS SPECIALIST

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

### SEPTEMBER Dates To Note

- Sept. 1st Labor Day—  
**County Offices Closed**
- Sept. 2nd V-J Day (1945)
- Sept. 7th Grandparents Day
- Sept. 11th Patriot Day
- Sept. 14th “Star Spangled Banner” Written  
by Francis Scott Key (1814)
- Sept. 17th U. S. Constitution Approved (1787)
- Sept. 18th U.S. Air Force Established (1947)
- Sept. 19th POW/MIA Recognition Day
- Sept. 22nd Autumn Begins
- Sept. 28th Gold Star Mothers’ Day
- Sept. 29th VFW Day (VFW Established 1899)



### DISABLED VETERANS MEMORIAL UPDATE

(source: [NAUS Weekly Update 25 July 08](#))

On July 18, 2008, President Bush signed the American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin Act into law. The bill authorizes the U.S. Treasury Department to mint a coin in 2010 to honor the millions of veterans who became disabled while serving in the U. S. Armed Forces.

Proceeds from the sale of the coin will go to help construct the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial. Congress has authorized the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial to be placed on a site adjacent to the National Mall. The Disabled Veterans’ LIFE Memorial Foundation describes the memorial’s purpose as a way to “embody America’s lasting gratitude for the men and women whose lives are forever changed in service to our country.”

By precedent, only two commemorative coins are minted each year. Though the commemorative coin will help to raise a portion of the funds needed to construct the memorial, more money is needed for construction.

For more information on the Disabled Veterans Memorial or how to make a donation, here are a few ways to do it

- ⇒ via their website: [www.avdlm.com](http://www.avdlm.com)
- ⇒ via email: [info@dvlmf.org](mailto:info@dvlmf.org)
- ⇒ or mail: Disabled Veterans LIFE Memorial Foundation Inc., 2300 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 302, Arlington, VA. 22201-3367

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

“Only our individual faith in freedom can keep us free.”

-Dwight D. Eisenhower

### “NEVER FORGET”

EMBLAZENED ON BOW OF  
USS NEW YORK



Entire Motto of Ship reads, “STRENGTH FORGED THROUGH SACRIFICE. NEVER FORGET.”

# FLIGHTS TO HONOR WWII VETERANS

Each day, approximately 1,400 World War II veterans nationally pass away, many without ever visiting the memorial in Washington erected in their honor. Now, a new group named **Honor Flight of South Carolina**, would like to help remedy that by offering free trips for 600 World War II veterans in the Midlands.

This group, headed by restaurateur Bill Dukes, Lt. Gov. Andre Bauer and Medal of Honor recipient Charles Murray, is seeking to raise \$300,000 for six one-day flights to the World War II Memorial beginning in November of this year.

“Our goal is to provide all World War II veterans in our area an opportunity to visit the memorial, recognizing that many will need financial and physical help,” Dukes said. “We don’t want to leave anyone behind.”

Honor Flight is a national organization, begun in 2004 by Ohio resident Earl Morse, a retired U.S. Air Force Captain. Morse was inspired by a personal flight taken himself on a small plane, to accommodate one veteran. The reaction of that veteran was such that he began asking other pilots to donate flights for other vets.

Today the Honor Flight Network has 73 hubs in 30 states, including one in Greenville. The hope is that there will be hubs in all 50 states by the end of 2008. As for Dukes, his inspiration to start a hub came from a trip taken by him in June, when he transported his father, William E. Dukes, who served as a sergeant in the 81st “Wildcat” infantry division. “There is such a quiet reverence there,” he said. “I came back and decided to do this.”

Bauer also has a family connection which served as inspiration for his involvement. His grandfather, Rudolph Charles Bauer, retired as a rear admiral, having served on the USS Midway. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

“I can’t think of a better way to honor so many people that gave so much for our country,” he said. Bauer also added that it is important to raise money for this cause quickly.

The youngest World War II veterans are now 78 years old. There are about 3 million WWII veterans still living today. With a current average life

expectancy of 74.4 years, “time is against us,” Dukes said. There are about 3 million WWII veterans still alive today. It is expected that virtually all of them will be gone in the next 10 years or so.

These flights will be one-day charters on U.S. Airways 737 jets. The veterans will visit the memorial and Arlington National Cemetery. The plane will carry 100 veterans free of charge. Also, 43 “guardians”- family members or volunteers, can book flights for \$500. Volunteers can register at the website. The first flight is scheduled for November 19th.

**Register for a flight as a veteran or guardian at [www.honorflightsc.com](http://www.honorflightsc.com). You may also call (864) 864-3001 for more information.**

**Applications are also available in the Lexington County Veterans Affairs Office. Call us at (803) 785-8400 if you would like to receive an application by mail.**

{Source: [TheStateNewspaper.com](http://TheStateNewspaper.com), 8/1/08}



## Armed Forces Monument Update

The Batesburg-Leesville Armed Forces Monument is preparing to enter **phase two**. Phase one featured fundraising, resulting successfully selling of nearly 150 bricks. The next phase includes the laying of a concrete foundation.

If you would like to order a brick or make a donation, don’t wait too long. The monument is scheduled for dedication on Veterans Day 2008, November 11th.

Contact Trey Anthony at **803-532-2847**.



**WE SALUTE OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN**



# SPOTLIGHT ON OUR VOLUNTEER VAN DRIVERS

PART THREE IN A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS

**WILLIAM "BILL" ARNDT**

**[Mr. Arndt has been a Lexington County DAV van driver since 2007]**

**Q: Where are you from originally?**

**A:** I am a native of Bay City, Michigan, lived in Sumter County for 24 years, and moved to Lexington in the year 2000.

**Q: Tell us about your family.**

**A:** Married to Joan in 1957, we have three daughters; Beth, Bev and Susan. Susan works for the SC Department of Education.

**Q: Are you a Veteran?**

**A:** Retired from the U.S. Air Force in 1976, after 23 years of service, spanning Korea, Vietnam and the Cold War. Two of my daughters are also veterans; Beth retired from the **Navy** and works at a VA hospital in Biloxi, Mississippi; Bev retired from the **Air Force** and now works in the Oklahoma school system as an LPN.

**Q: What is your current or former occupation, if retired?**

**A:** Correctional Officer with the SC Department of Corrections

**Q: What are your hobbies and interests?**

**A:** Crossword puzzles, jigsaw puzzles, reading (mostly fiction), Domestic and Foreign coin collecting

**Q: What would be your most memorable van driving experience?**

**A:** It was actually the longest day and most miles driven by me... "I won't forget Devil's Backbone Road..."

**Q: Please share something our readers might be surprised to know about you:**

**A:** My love of light classical music

**Mr. Arndt's birthday is September 19th... Please join us in wishing him a very HAPPY BIRTHDAY !!!!!**



**Favorite Southern Expression?**

These Definitions:

"Yankee"- Someone born in the North  
"D\*\*\* Yankee"- Someone born in the North and Moves South  
"D\*\*\* Fool Yankee"- Someone Born in the North who moves South, then back North!

**Favorite Expression?**

"We will fight them on the beaches, etc. We shall never surrender." - Winston Churchill

**Favorite Military Quote?**

"There are no atheists in fox-holes!"

## COULD YOU BE ONE OF OUR DRIVERS?

We appreciate the SERVICE provided by our current volunteer van drivers. However, due to the increasing volume of calls for this service, additional drivers are still needed. The Lexington County DAV van is transporting an increasing number of veterans to Dorn VA hospital each month, with our drivers logging over 1,000 miles per month.

Whether **1 day** a week or **twice** a month, all help is greatly appreciated. Please call our office at **785-8400** or stop by for an application if you feel you could serve our veterans in this way.

### \*\*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*\*

THE LEXINGTON COUNTY DAV VAN WILL NOT BE IN SERVICE ON LABOR DAY, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST. THIS IS A HOLIDAY AND ALL COUNTY OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED.

# AIR SHOW SCHEDULED FOR SHAW AFB



(from WLTX.com website)

Officials at Shaw Air Force Base are promoting their first air show in more than three years, **Shawfest 2008**. The air show is set for the base's community appreciation day, September 6, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The theme of the day's event, "**Thunder Over the Midlands**," will feature demonstrations from the F-22 Raptor, the C-17 Globemaster, a P-51 mustang, and Shaw's pride and joy, the F-16 Fighting Falcon.

Officially, the event is the base's community appreciation day, September 6, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The theme of the day's event, "**Thunder Over the Midlands**," will feature demonstrations from the F-22 Raptor, the C-17 Globemaster, a P-51 mustang, and Shaw's pride and joy, the F-16 Fighting Falcon.

The **free** event will also feature a selection of vintage and model aircraft on the ground, including the C-45, A-10 Thunderbolt, HC-130 Hercules, MH-53, F/A-18 Hornet, and the V-22 Osprey.



Gates are scheduled to open at **7:30 a.m.** before the day's events. Shaw Air Force Base is located off of Highway 378 in Sumter.

If you need more information, you are asked to visit [www.shaw.af.mil](http://www.shaw.af.mil) and click on the link for ShawFest 2008.

## From Shaw's Website:

**7:30 a.m. Airshow Gates Open**  
**10:00 a.m. Opening Ceremonies**  
**5:00 p.m. Gates Close, Airshow Ends**



**F/A 18 Hornet**



**F-16**

**P-51 Mustang**



**A-10 Thunderbolt Warthog**

**F-22 Raptor**



## VIETNAM WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT DIES

Boise, Idaho— **Edward Freeman**, a former Army helicopter pilot awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroics during the Vietnam War and portrayed in the Mel Gibson movie "We Were Soldiers," has died at the age of 80.

Freeman died on August 20, 2008, from complications of Parkinson's Disease.

The Mississippi native braved intense enemy fire in the La Drang Valley as he carried out rescue missions on Nov. 14, 1965, during one of the fiercest battles of the Vietnam War.

President Bush awarded Freeman the Congressional Medal of Honor at a White House ceremony in 2001.



# U.S. OVERHAULING GUARD TRAINING

(Information taken from news reports)

**Washington**— The Pentagon is determined to overhaul both training and active duty tours for the Army National Guard, to give these part-time soldiers more time at home; However, it may cost more than \$128 million. After working for more than 18 months to condense the training process, Guard leaders have managed to chop months off the time citizen soldiers must spend away from their jobs and families due to deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan.

Until early 2007, Guard combat brigades were training for up to six months — largely away from home — then 12 to 15 months in the war zone. That average time has been slashed to just more than 13 months, including a month of training at home, 40 to 70 days at the formal Army training center, then roughly 10 months on the battlefield.

Spurred on by the Pentagon's promise that Guard deployments would be limited to one year, military leaders pledged to spread some of the required pre-deployment war preparation into the soldiers' routine training exercises each year. That would allow soldiers to train, get required medical tests and do some paperwork while at home for much of the 12 months prior to heading to one of 10 mobilization centers for their final training .

But it's an expensive exercise, as training and equipping these part-time troops will cost nearly double the estimated \$128 million tag of revamping the nature of their active-duty tours. Depending on the size and type of unit, soldiers now are spending anywhere from two weeks to more than two months at the mobilization center, where they get their final, most up-to-date training. The final weeks could include the latest data on counterinsurgency efforts, methods to find and defeat roadside bombs, as well as instruction on new weapons or the latest mine-resistant vehicles.

Roughly 2,000 trainers for the Guard are needed to ensure that the Guard members get the needed training during that one-year period before they mobilize. According to Col. Rob Moore, chief of training for the Army National Guard, nearly 1,500 of those slots have been filled.

Moore said it will cost at least \$128 million this year to hire these additional trainers and set up a small command unit in each state and U.S. territory. Those units, comprising a small number of people in charge of the trainers, already have been created. And many of the trainers are in place. But because the active duty Army also has units constantly training to go to war, there is a huge demand for trainers and the services have been competing for them. In addition, the Guard has spent about \$5 million to buy cell phones, laptop computers and other supplies for each state.

"We're really doing this on the cheap," said Moore, adding that the current funding only allows units to begin training for their deployment a year before they are scheduled to go. It would be better, he said, if they could begin two years before deployment. To do the full training required, he said, would nearly double the cost to about \$250 million.

Early last year, military leaders warned that making the new training program work would require time, money and much more coordination among beleaguered states that already must swap equipment to handle hurricanes and other disasters.

"It took a little while to get the plans out, outlining how we were going to do this," said Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, the Director of the Army National Guard. Now, he said, the changes are moving forward, and states "are gathering confidence in the program."

According to Brig. Gen. C. Stewart Rodeheaver, deputy commander at First Army, who oversees the training and mobilization of Guard forces, 75 days is about the longest training session needed at the mobilization centers, and that would involve either high-tech or full combat operations instruction for a brigade or aviation unit going to either Iraq or Afghanistan. He said the average training time is 40 to 45 days. And some smaller, specialized units — such as a postal company — may require even less.

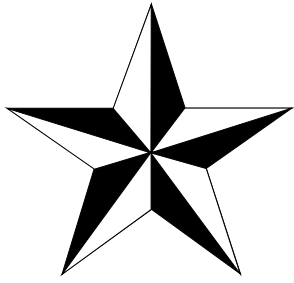
One of the biggest changes, Rodeheaver said, has been to improve coordination with the states to schedule training when the unit is all together and the equipment is ready. In previous years, training had to be delayed or repeated at times because all the equipment or personnel slots were not filled.

"A year ago, we didn't even have the equipment to move to the units," Vaughn said in an interview. "Modern equipment was in such short supply." Now, while there is still not enough to fully equip every unit, there is enough for the training, he said.

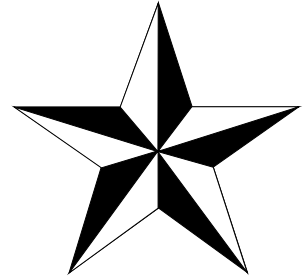
There may be some variations in the states, as Guard units begin preparing to go to Iraq and Afghanistan in the next year. In some states, training may be spread throughout the year, adding a few days to the regular weekend stints and extending the annual two-week session to three weeks. In other cases, employers have urged the military to consolidate the training and do one longer session just before the soldiers leave for the mobilization centers.

As of Aug. 12, First Army, which has more than 8,800 trainers working at the 10 mobilization centers, has trained nearly 79,000 troops, of which nearly 60,000 are Army Guard and Reserve soldiers. The others include Air Force, Navy and Marine forces, as well as some 1,500 Canadian troops.

Officials expect to train another 23,000 by the end of the fiscal year. The mobilization centers are located across the country, including sites at Camp Shelby, Miss., and Fort McCoy, Wis. The trainers can provide between three to 10 weeks of training depending on the size and type of unit heading to the war front.



**LEXINGTON COUNTY  
VETERANS' PARADE**



Sunday, November 9, 2008  
North Lake Drive and South Lake Drive  
Downtown Lexington

**PARADE BEGINS AT 3:00 P.M.**  
**(No entry fee)**

**COME HELP HONOR OUR VETERANS !!**  
**Grand Marshals: Vietnam Veterans**

**A memorial service will be held at the Veterans'  
Monument following the parade**

**SPONSORED BY:**

**LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS  
AMERICAN LEGION POST 7  
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS  
LADIES AUX. MOPH CHAPTER 402  
MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART CHAPTER 402  
TOWN OF LEXINGTON  
VFW POST 8738**

**For More Information Contact:  
Sharon Willis [swillis@lex-co.com](mailto:swillis@lex-co.com)  
Gary Baker or Barbara O'Connor 785-8400**

**2008 County of Lexington Veterans' Day Parade Application  
Sunday, November 9, 2008 at 3:00 p.m.**

**\*\*\* PLEASE READ GROUP DROP OFF INSTRUCTIONS \*\*\***

Name of Entry: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Entry: \_\_\_\_\_  
(i.e., truck, car, float, tractor trailer - include the length of your entry)

Number Participating: \_\_\_\_\_

Entry Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (H) \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information for Your Entry Here:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Mail Applications To:**

County of Lexington Veterans' Day  
Parade Committee  
Attn: Sharon Willis, Chairperson  
212 South Lake Drive  
Lexington SC 29072

**For More Information Contact:**

Sharon Willis swillis@lex-co.com  
Gary Baker 803-785-8400  
Barbara O'Connor 803-785-8400

**ENTRY IS FREE! DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS OCTOBER 31, 2008**

**\*\*\*\*\*ALL MARCHING BANDS AND ROTC GROUPS WILL MEET IN THE BUS PARKING LOT OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. PLEASE DROP OFF ALL MEMBERS OF THE BAND AND ROTC IN THE REAR BUS PARKING LOT. (Please enter off of North Lake Dr, to Corley Street then left on School Street. This will take you to the rear of school parking lot.) BANDS AND ROTC GROUPS WILL LINE UP AND ENTER THE PARADE FROM THE DRIVEWAY OF THE PARKING LOT. THANKS\*\*\*\*\***

**PARADE ROUTE:**

START AT 116 AZALEA DRIVE IN FRONT OF LEXINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. TURN LEFT ON TO NORTH LAKE DRIVE - CONTINUING DOWN NORTH LAKE DRIVE CROSSING MAIN STREET TO SOUTH LAKE DRIVE. CONTINUE DOWN SOUTH LAKE DRIVE, TURNING LEFT ON FORT STREET, AND ENDING AT LEXINGTON COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING PARKING LOTS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO HELP PUT OUT THE PARADE STAKES BEFORE THE PARADE AND TO HELP WITH THE BAND & ROTC GROUPS BEHIND THE SCHOOL . THANK YOU AGAIN AND TO ALL OF OUR VETERANS... THANK YOU!!!**

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

U S POSTAGE PAID  
LEXINGTON, SC  
PERMIT NO. 90

**SEPTEMBER OUTREACH  
PROGRAM DATES**

Sept. 2nd	9-12	Batesburg/Leesville
Sept. 9th	9-12	Chapin

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**TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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

## Department of Veterans Affairs Mortgage Assistance

[Information taken from [The American Legion Bulletin](#), June 25, 2008]

Many borrowers, including veterans, are being hard-hit by recent events unfolding in the nation's housing and mortgage markets. It is the goal of the Department of Veterans Affairs to help keep veterans in their homes. To this end, VA has established a toll-free number for veterans seeking assistance with their mortgages.

### What VA can do for veterans with VA loans:

- \* VA may be able to help avoid foreclosure through counseling and or special financing arrangements.
- \* VA may be able to intercede with the borrower on the veteran's behalf to pursue options that would allow a veteran to keep his or her home.

### What VA can do for a veteran who has a non-VA loan:

- \* VA can provide advice/ counseling on how to work with their lender to avoid foreclosure.

### What VA cannot do:

- \* VA cannot provide assistance with non-mortgage related issues (i.e., car payments, credit card debt, etc.)

**Veterans in need of mortgage-related assistance should call VA at (877)827-3702. This is a toll-free number.**



**MONEY  
MATTERS**

