

# Veterans Affairs Office of Lexington County



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*Editor: Cindy Wise*

# VET NEWS

August 2011

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## AUGUST DATES FOR OUTREACH PROGRAM

August 2nd: 9-12 Batesburg-Leesville  
August 9th: 9-12 Chapin

**Please call the office to schedule an  
appointment.**

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### TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

## DATES TO REMEMBER:

AUGUST 1ST	AIR FORCE DAY
AUGUST 2ND	OPERATION DESERT SHIELD (PERSIAN GULF) BEGAN (1990)
AUGUST 4TH	US COAST GUARD ESTABLISHED (1790)
AUGUST 5TH	US ENTERED VIETNAM WAR (1964)
AUGUST 7TH	PURPLE HEART MEDAL ESTABLISHED (1782)
	NATIONAL PURPLE HEART DAY
AUGUST 15TH	V-J DAY/WORLD WAR II (1945)
AUGUST 16TH	NATIONAL AIRBORNE DAY
AUGUST 19TH	NATIONAL AVIATION DAY

## Director's Corner



I was appointed as the Lexington County Veteran's Affairs Officer by the Lexington County Delegation effective July 1, 2011 to replace Gary Baker. I am honored and humbled to be selected for this position and appreciate the service of Gary Baker in his eight years to this office. He and his staff helped me with my VA claim and appeal and it made an impression on me.

I come into this position having served 21 years of active duty in the US Army with assignments at Fort Hood, TX, Fort Stewart, GA, Fort Jackson, SC, Fort Lee, VA and overseas assignments to Germany, South Korea and Iraq/Kuwait. I served in Operation Iraqi Freedom from 2003-2004. I worked as a Benefits Counselor for the Department of Veterans Affairs in Columbia from 2008-2011 and am well-versed on VA claims, appeals, benefits and programs.

I grew up in Lexington County and graduated from Airport High School. My ancestral roots are deep here and my family has lived here since the 1700's. It is a great place to work and live.

My goals and objectives are to assist Veterans, surviving spouses, dependents and beneficiaries in getting any VA benefit they are eligible for. I will fight for your benefits if you are eligible and will never give up. I look forward to serving you and meeting you as I travel about the County to public and patriotic events. I plan to visit all Veterans Service Organizations in the County and will work with state and local agencies to assist you anyway I can.

Please feel free to stop by our office in the County Administration Building in Lexington near Lizard's Thicket Restaurant. We are here to serve you from 8-5 Monday-Friday.

## July 4, 2011 Lexington County Peach Festival

My first public event as the Lexington County Veterans Affairs Officer was the Peach Festival in Gilbert on July 4<sup>th</sup>. My family and I have attended this great event for many years and always enjoy the food. I was privileged to ride in a 1929 Model A Ford owned and driven by Mr. Leo Craps, a Korean War and Vietnam War Veteran. I appreciate him allowing me to ride in it and we both loved doing it. I met a lot of people there and look forward to meeting many more.



On Thursday, June 30<sup>th</sup>, the office staff hosted a drop-in retirement party for Gary R. Baker. Gary was the County Veterans Service Officer for several years. During his time he worked with veterans, families, groups and organizations where he was a unique part of making Lexington County Veterans Affairs what it is today. Many veterans, widows, friends and family were on hand and all had telling stories on how Gary had touched or helped them in some way or another. Several awards were presented to him. He was presented a clock from Lexington County for his service, certificates of service from Senator Joe Wilson's office and from the Governor's office, and was made an honorary member of the Blue Star Mothers. The office staff even presented him with his very own "Shining Star".

While working on his third retirement, Gary hopes to do some traveling with wife, Judy, visiting family members, especially the grandkids. Otherwise he will be busy with yard work, fishing, stamp collecting, and civil war history. He can still be seen popping in and out of the office from time to time...but we wish him Happy Retirement.



# Congratulations!





The Blue Star Mothers-Lexington Chapter meets at 6pm every third Thursday of the month at the VFW Post 8738 at 424 Cedarcrest Drive in Lexington. They recently awarded several beneficiaries for their support and the County Veterans Service Officer attended this meeting on July 21, 2011. This was his first public meeting with an organization that supports Veterans. Ed also met Anna Bingham who is the Founder and Executive Director of Hidden Wounds, an organization she founded after the death of her Marine Veteran brother, Mills. It was a great event and two organizations supported by the Lexington County Veterans Affairs Office.



