



LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS NEWS

"Serving those who served and sacrificed for America"

May 2012

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Director's Corner

This month the Nation remembers Memorial Day as a special day set aside to remember those who gave their lives for freedom. The thing that bothers me about this time of year is all the Memorial Day sales we will hear about over and over. Some even consider Memorial Day the official beginning of summer. It is neither of these and is a time to pause, reflect and remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice so that we may remain the freest country in the world.

If you hear people say "Happy Memorial Day" please remind them it is not a time to be happy but a time to remember and commemorate. When I am told, "Happy Memorial Day" I always reply back, "Remember Memorial Day" and usually get a funny look. This is one time of year that we need to be especially grateful and thankful to all those who didn't make it home, who gave their all for America. Their families will never be the same because of the loss of their loved one.

We had a great Veterans Benefits Seminar and health screening last month in our building. We had several agencies who partnered with us to bring free information and gifts. Thanks to Jimmy John's for supplying us with sub sandwiches and Iacofano's for providing us warm home baked brownies! All of it was great and for the people who showed up, it was a special treat. We are planning a Benefits Expo for our next venture and as soon as plans are finalized, we will announce it in our newsletter and on our web page.

Remember Memorial Day!

It is an honor to serve Lexington County!



AT-A-GLANCE
May

Saturday, May 5th	Dangit Doll Workshop Our Savior Lutheran Church 10am to 3pm
Monday, May 7th - Friday, May 11th	Director on leave
Thursday, May 10th	Confederate Memorial Day County Office Closed No Van Scheduled
Sunday, May 13th	Mother's Day
Saturday, May 19th	Armed Forces Day Patriot's Ball Mediallion Center, Cola, SC 5:30pm
Tuesday, May 22nd	Aid & Attendance Expo Columbia Conference Ctr 11am to 3pm
Monday, May 28th	Memorial Day County Office Closed No Van Scheduled

- Purple—Holidays
- Blue—Outreach dates
- Red—County Offices Closed/No van scheduled
- Black—Director's appearances in the County
- Pink—Special Events throughout the County
- Orange—Special event—Director Out of Office
- Dark Green—Special Notices



Lexington, SC.

YOUR VA OFFICE STAFF

- ED LUNDEEN**
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- JENNIFER HENDRIX**
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TELEPHONE: (803) 785-8400
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**MAY DATES FOR
OUTREACH PROGRAM**

No Outreach in May

**TOLL-FREE
TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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

*We are now emailing copies of the newsletter.
Please contact the office to be added to the
newsletter email list.*

★ ***New Office Policy*** ★

**You must call the office to schedule an ap-
pointment for outreach in Batesburg and
Chapin. Walk-ins will be seen after ap-
pointments if time permits.**

VA HEALTH CARE BENEFITS

BASIC ELIGIBILITY:

A person who served in the active military, naval or air service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable may qualify for VA benefits. Reservist and National Guard members may also qualify for VA health care benefits if they were called to active duty (other than for training only) by a Federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty.

MINIMUM DUTY REQUIREMENTS:

Veterans who enlisted after September 7, 1980, or who entered active duty after October 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty in order to be eligible. This minimum duty requirement may not apply to Veterans discharged for hardship, early out or a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

ENROLLMENT:

For most Veterans, entry into the VA health care system begins by applying for enrollment. To apply, complete VA Form 10-10EZ, Application for Health Benefits, which may be obtained from any VA health care facility or regional benefits office, on line www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez or by calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387). Once enrolled, Veterans can receive health care at VA health care facilities anywhere in the country.



PRIORITY GROUPS:

During enrollment, each Veteran is assigned to a priority group. VA uses priority groups to balance demand for VA health care enrollment with resources. Changes in available resources may reduce the number of priority groups VA can enroll. If this occurs, VA will publicize the changes and notify affected enrollees.

GROUP 1: Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 50 percent or more and /or Veterans determined by VA to be unemployable due to service-connected conditions.

GROUP 2: Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 30 to 40 percent.

GROUP 3: Veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 10 and 20 percent; Veterans who are former Prisoners of War (POW) or were awarded a Purple Heart Medal; Veterans awarded the Medal of Honor (MOH); Veterans awarded special eligibility for disabilities incurred in treatment or participation in a VA Vocational Rehabilitation program; and Veterans whose discharge was for a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

GROUP 4: Veterans receiving aid and attendance or housebound benefits and /or Veterans determined by VA to be catastrophically disabled.

GROUP 5: Veterans receiving VA pension benefits or eligible for Medicaid programs, and non service-connected Veterans and non-compensable, zero percent service-connected; Veterans whose gross annual household income and/ or net worth are below the VA national income threshold and geographically-adjusted income threshold for their resident area.

VA HEALTH CARE BENEFITS *continued*

GROUP 6: Veterans of WWII; Veterans seeking care solely for certain conditions associated with exposure to ionizing radiation during atmospheric testing or during the occupation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; for any illness associated with participation in tests conducted by the Department of Defense (DOD) as part of Project 112/Project SHAD; Veterans with zero percent service-connected disabilities who are receiving disability compensation benefits; Veterans who served in the republic of Vietnam between 1962 and 1975; Veterans of the Persian Gulf War that served between August 2, 1990 and



November 11, 1998 and Veterans who served in a theater of combat operations after November 11, 1998 as follows: 1. Veterans discharged from active duty on or after January 28, 2003, who were enrolled as of January 28, 2008 and Veterans who apply for enrollment after January 28, 2008, for 5 years post discharge 2. Veterans discharged from active duty before January 28, 2003, who apply for enrollment after January 28, 2008, until January 27, 2011

GROUP 7: Veterans with gross household income below the geographically-adjusted income threshold (GMT) for their resident location and who agree to pay co-pays.

GROUP 8: Veterans, enrolled as of January 16, 2003, with gross household income and/or net worth above the VA national income threshold and the geographically-adjusted income threshold for their resident location and who agree to pay co-pays.

Note: Due to income relaxation rules implemented on June 15, 2009 Veterans with household income above the VA national threshold or the GHMT income threshold for their resident location by 10 percent or less, who agree to pay co-pays, are eligible for enrollment in Priority Group 8.

VETERAN HEALTH REGISTRIES

Certain Veterans can participate in a VA health registry and receive free medical examinations, including laboratory and other diagnostic tests deemed necessary by an examining clinician. VA maintains health registries to provide special health examinations and health related information.

PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTION

What is Presumptive Service Connection?

VA presumes that specific disabilities diagnosed in certain Veterans were caused by their military service. VA does this because of the unique circumstances of their military service. If one of these conditions is diagnosed in a Veteran in one of these groups, VA presumes that the circumstances of his/her service caused the condition, and disability compensation can be awarded.

Veterans in the following groups identified below: Entitlement to disability compensation may be presumed under the circumstances described.

Veterans within one year of release from active duty: Veterans diagnosed with chronic diseases (such as arthritis, diabetes or hypertension) are encouraged to apply for disability compensation.

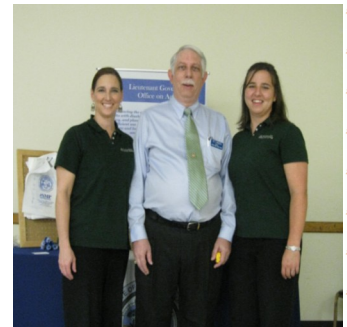
Veterans with continuous service of 90 days or more: Veterans diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) /Lou Gehrig's disease at any time after discharge or release from qualifying active service is sufficient to establish service connection for the disease, if the Veteran had active, continuous service of 90 days or more.

Former Prisoners of War--Vietnam Veterans (Exposed to Agent Orange)—Atomic Veterans (Exposed to Ionizing Radiation)—Gulf War Veterans (Undiagnosed Illness)

Veterans Benefit Seminar and Health Screening Highlights

The Veterans Benefit Seminar and Health Screenings was a great success and we hope to continue it in the future. We would like to thank all our sponsors who participated: Lt. Governor's Office on Aging, LICCS, VAMC, Medical Services of America, Palmetto Health, and Lexington County Sheriff's Department. We had a good turnout, learned many new things and made great contacts. We would like to also thank Jimmy John's for supplying us with sub sandwiches and Iacofano's for providing us brownies!

Watch for information about a Veteran's expo coming in the fall.



Pictures from left to right: Tom Robinson with LCSD, Ed's presentation, and Ed with Sue Theriot and Rene Beard with the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging



Veteran's Monument across from the Administration Building

Prints for Sale

\$10.00 each



Gibson's Pond in Lexington

We have several copies of both of these prints for sale in our office. The cost is \$10.00 each. The proceeds will be placed in our Veteran's Fund and/or Van Fund. Your donation is tax-deductible and a receipt can be provided if you wish. To have a closer look at the prints, we have framed copies in our lobby. Please stop by our office M-F from 8 to 5 to purchase one or more of these beautiful prints!



You are invited to a
Memorial Day Service

“The hero is commonly the simplest and obscurest of men.”
~ Henry David Thoreau

Monday, May 28, 2012
10:00am

Caughman ~ Harman Funeral Home
503 North Lake Drive
Lexington, SC 29072
803-359-6118

Come help us remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice upon our
Nation's Altar of Freedom.

Light refreshments will be served following the service



**Driver Improvement Program
(for 4 points reduction off driving record)**



**Free 8 hour Course for All Eligible Veterans
May 15, 2012, 8am–5pm
For More Information, Call 803-776-4000, 7052
Dorn VA Medical Center**

Dang-it Doll Workshop

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Dang-it doll workshop has been changed to Saturday, May the 5th, from 10:00am until 3:00pm at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 1500 Sunset Blvd, West Columbia, SC 29169.

Please come and invite a friend to help us make the Dang-it Dolls for our service men and women. This will be the last workshop until September, so any help would be appreciated.

Remember, if you want to sponsor a box or two of stuffing or a box of dolls for shipping, donations can be made online at the website: www.militarystressreliefdolls.com



Looking for Volunteer Van Drivers

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



VETERAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS IN LEXINGTON COUNTY

AMERICAN LEGION

Post #7-Lexington: Meets the first Saturday of the month (except before a holiday) at 1900.

Address is: American Legion Road, Lexington.

Post #61-Batesburg Leesville: Meets the third Tuesday of the month at 2000.

Address is: South Hendrix Street, Leesville.

Post #79-West Columbia: Meets the first Monday of the month at 1930.

Address is: 700 B Avenue, West Columbia

Post #90-South Congaree: Meets the first Thursday of the month at 1900.

Address is: Hwy. 302 near South Congaree.

Post #130-Cayce: Meets the third Thursday of the month at 1830.

Address is: Naples Avenue, Cayce.

Post #142-Gilbert: Meets the second Tuesday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 4200 Veterans Road, Gilbert

Post #156-Sandy Run: Meets the fourth Monday of the month.

Address is: Pine Plain Road outside of Gaston, just off Old Sandy Run Road.

Post #174-Irmo: Meets the second Tuesday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 801 Piney Woods Road, Columbia

Post #193-Chapin: Meets the second Thursday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 102 Lexington Ave., Chapin.

Post #217-Lexington: Meets the second Thursday of the month at 1930.

Address is:

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Chapter #4-West Columbia: Meets the second Monday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 511 Violet Street, West Columbia.

Chapter #13-West Columbia: Meets the second Saturday of the month at 1300.

Address is: 511 Violet Street, West Columbia.

Chapter #20-West Columbia: Meets the third Saturday of the month at 1100.

Address is: 511 Violet Street, West Columbia.

Chapter #28-West Columbia: Meets the second Tuesday of the month at 1800.

Address is: 511 Violet Street, West Columbia.

Chapter #51-Leesville: Meets the third Thursday of the month at 1900.

Address is: South Hendrix Street, Leesville.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Post #6740-Lake Murray: Meets the _____ of the month at _____

Address is: 950 Rock N Creek Road, Leesville.

Post #8738-Lexington: Meets the first Tuesday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 424 Cedarcrest Drive, Lexington.

Post #9037-Pelion: Meets the third Monday of the month at 1930.

Address is: 505 Canal Drive, Pelion.

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

Detachment #1141-West Columbia: Meets the second Thursday of the month at 1900 .

Address is: 511 Violet Street, West Columbia.

BLUE STAR MOTHERS

Midlands Chapter-Lexington: Meets the third Thursday of the month at 1800.

Address is: 424 Cedarcrest Drive, Lexington.

AMVETS

Post #2-West Columbia: Meets the _____ of the month at _____

Address is: 1778 D Avenue, West Columbia.

MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART

Chapter #402-Columbia: Meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 200 Pickens Street, Columbia.

NAVY SEABEES

SCX #2-West Columbia: Meets the second Monday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 179 Lynn Street, West Columbia.

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

Chapter #303, Sandlappers-Columbia: Meets the third Tuesday of the month at 1900

Address is: 200 Pickens Street, Columbia

PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

VA Regional Office-Columbia is the nearest chapter.

Address is: 6439 Garner's Ferry Road, Columbia



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Featured Medal: *Soldier's Medal*

The Soldier's Medal is a military award of the United States Army. It was introduced as Section 11 of the Air Corps Act, passed by the Congress of the United States on July 2, 1926. The criteria for the medal are: "The Soldier's Medal is awarded to any person of the Armed Forces of the United States or of a friendly foreign nation who, while serving in any capacity with the Army of the United States, distinguished himself or herself by heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy."

The distinguishing criteria for the award of the Soldier's Medal as per Army Regulation 600-8-22 states that "The performance must have involved personal hazard or danger and the voluntary risk of life under conditions not involving conflict with an armed enemy. Awards will not be made solely on the basis of having saved a life." It is the highest honor a soldier can receive for an act of valor in a non-combat situation, held to be equal to or greater than the level which would have justified an award of the Distinguished Flying Cross had the act occurred in combat. Any American service member who is eligible for retirement pay will receive an increase of 10 percent in retirement pay, if the level of valor was equal to that which would earn the Distinguished Service Cross.

The first medals were awarded on October 17, 1927 to John F. Burns and James P. Martin, for heroism during a fire and to James K. Wilson and Cleophas C. Burnett for saving people from drowning.

Notable recipients of the Soldier's Medal include Colin Powell, who was awarded the decoration during his second tour in Vietnam (1968–69) when he was injured in a helicopter crash and, despite his wounds, rescued two comrades from the burning wreckage. In 1998 three soldiers were awarded with this medal for their intervention in the My Lai Massacre (1968), including threatening to fire on their own army's troops to make them halt their murderous rampage. They were Hugh Thompson, Jr., Lawrence Colburn and Glenn Andreotta; Andreotta was awarded the decoration posthumously. In 2001, following the terrorist attack on the Pentagon, the U.S. Army issued an unprecedented number of these awards (28), to personnel who risked their own lives to assist their fellow comrades in the wake of the attack.

At least one hundred Soldier's Medals have been issued since the onset of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Soldier's Medal is considered to be equivalent to the Navy and Marine Corps Medal, the Airman's Medal, and the Coast Guard Medal.



Picture of the
Soldier's Medal and Ribbon

County Council Needs You!



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



◆ Honor and Support Your South Carolina Veterans ◆ 2012 Palmetto Patriots' Ball

The Blue Star Mothers of the Midlands are hosting the 4th Annual Palmetto Patriots' Ball on May 19, 2012 at the Medallion Center in Columbia, SC.

The event will raise money to support our South Carolina Veterans.

For more information, please visit www.palmettopatriotsball.org.



Saturday, May 19, 2012

The Medallion Center - Columbia, SC

Reception and Silent Auction 5:30 / Dinner and Dancing 6:30

Semi-Formal or Military Dress

Keynote Speaker:

Mike Huckabee

Former Governor, Presidential Candidate and

Host of FOX News' "Huckabee" & Daily ABC Radio Broadcast Show



Mark your calendars!

The 2012 Lexington County Veterans Parade is scheduled for Sunday, November 4th at 3pm in downtown Lexington. Please mark your calendars to join us for the 10th Annual Parade.



Veteran Service Organizations in Lexington County

Continued from page 8

We Need Your Help...

This is a list of the Veteran Service Organizations in Lexington County that we are aware of. Also, we have included meeting days, times and locations. Please help us in verifying the information we have and including any we don't have. If you know of any Veteran organization that is not on our list, please give us a call or email with the information and we will update the list.

Coming in the Next Issue...

Education Benefits for Veterans