

Lexington County Veteran Newsletter

Summer Edition 2025



"Serving those who served and sacrificed for America"



**Lexington County
Veterans' Affairs Office
605 West Main Street Suite B
Lexington, SC 29072
Phone: (803) 785-8400**

Lexington County Veterans' Affairs Office Emails

Ed Lundeen

elundeen@lexingtoncounty.sc.gov

Director

Jennifer Parler

jparler@lexingtoncounty.sc.gov

Veterans' Affairs Supervisor

Brittany Gunter

brgunter@lexingtoncounty.sc.gov

Senior Benefits Counselor

Lee Harley

lharry@lexingtoncounty.sc.gov

Benefits Counselor

Jolene Bailey

jbailey@lexingtoncounty.sc.gov

Benefits Counselor

Annastasia Blake

ablake@lexingtoncounty.sc.gov

Administrative Assistant

From the Director

Summer is here with all its activities and of course, the heat and humidity accompany it. Your VA team has been busy also as we said farewell to Kathy DeBerry, who retired in late April after 12½ years of service. We gave her a great retirement celebration, and she now has new duties being a first-time grandmother. We miss her but wish her well.

We have a new Benefits Counselor that began work in late June. Her name is Jolene Bailey. She is an Army Veteran. With her on the team, for the first time in modern history, our VA team is 50% Veterans. I am immensely proud of that. Please stop in and welcome Jolene if you find yourself in Lexington. She is excited to be onboard; and we are excited to have her.

Inside this issue, you will find complete details on the 2025 Wreaths Across America program at Fort Jackson National Cemetery. It is a program that allows a beautiful Christmas wreath to be purchased and placed on every grave at Christmas time. Carol Davis has spearheaded this program since the cemetery opened in 2009. She is retiring from this endeavor. She has found two great volunteers to take over this very important mission. I am happy to say that both individuals are very dear to me. I must say, all the work Carol did by herself has transformed into two people picking up where she left off. Mike Brown and Olivia Varner, there are no words that I can say that exhibits the amount of pride and joy at the two of you carrying this mission forward.

Lastly, we appreciate all the kind words and compliments about our office newsletter. We strive to improve it with each quarterly edition. If your local Veterans Service Organization would like to provide us information on your Post or Chapter, we would love to include it.

Enjoying the journey,

Ed

Links

<https://scdva.sc.gov/>

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/home>

<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage>

<https://benefits.va.gov/columbia/>

<https://www.fisherhousecolumbiasc.org/>

Important Numbers

- Veterans Crisis Line 24/7, 1-800-273-8255, press 1
- Vet Center counseling 803-765-9944
- Women Veterans Hotline 1-855-829-6636
- Homeless Veteran call center 1-877-424-3838
- VA pharmacy refills 1-800-293-8262
- VA claims self-help line 1-800-827-1000
- Mission Lexington (803) 785-6930
- VA Regional Office 1-800-827-1000
- Dorn VA Medical Center 803-776-4000
- VA Home Loans 1-877-827-3702
- VA Education Hotline 1-888-442-4551
- Fort Jackson National Cemetery 1-866-577-5248
- Healthcare Eligibility 1-877-222-8387
- Tricare (Southeast Region) 1-800-444-5445
- DFAS 1-800-321-1080
- CHAMPVA 1-800-733-8387

Thank you to everyone who
Volunteered to say the Pledge!

- David Eisenhower
- David Griffith
- John Hill
- Pete Korn
- Sam Owens
- William Taylor
- Mike Smith

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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 please be present around 4:15pm. Please contact our office at 803-785-8400, if you are interested.

VETERANS' OUTREACH

Ed Lundeen will be at the libraries below:

Gaston library – 1st Thursday of each month between 10am – 12pm

Chapin library – 1st Friday of each month between 10am – 12pm

Batesburg library – 2nd Friday of each month between 10am – 12pm

We Will Be **CLOSED**

Labor Day
September 1st, 2025



Purple Heart Award

The **Purple Heart**, one of America's oldest military awards, was established in 1782, following the Revolutionary War. President George Washington created the award to help suppress talk of rebellion during peace negotiations. Originally named the Badge of Military Merit, to recognize the heroic acts of his troops. The Continental Congress had forbidden General Washington from granting commissions and promotions based on merit. Nevertheless, with his desire to honor deserving soldiers, particularly the enlisted troops, Washington found a way to reward them.

To earn the badge, soldiers had to perform a brave act or accomplish an essential task contributing to the success of the Continental Army. The badge itself was a purple cloth heart with the word "Merit" stitched across it in white, typically worn over the left side of the uniform, on the left breast when awarded. In a sense, both the Medal of Honor and the **Purple Heart** originated from the Badge of Military Merit. This badge was first awarded to enlisted troops, making it the primary means of recognizing heroism among them and promoting or granting battlefield commissions.

Currently, three verified recipients of the Badge of Military Merit are Sergeant Elijah Churchill of the 2nd Continental Dragoons, Sergeant William Brown of the 5th Connecticut Continental Line Infantry, and Sergeant Daniel Bissel of the 2nd Connecticut Continental Line Infantry.

Washington proclaimed that the award as permanent, but once the Revolutionary War concluded, the Badge of Military Merit was largely forgotten. It was not until the 20th century, specifically on February 22, 1932, on Washington's 200th birthday, that the **Purple Heart** was revived. Designed by Elizabeth Will, an Army heraldic specialist, the modern medal features a profile image of Washington. It was once again awarded for meritorious service, now soldiers could also receive it if they were wounded by the enemy. Initially, the **Purple Heart** was only available to soldiers; however, in 1942, Congress revised the eligibility criteria, allowing the award for wounds and making it accessible to all branches of the military, including some civilians.

Civilians who worked with the military, such as Red Cross workers or war reporters, remained eligible for the award until 1997. Now, civilian employees of the Defense Department who are killed or wounded by an enemy receive the Defense of Freedom Medal. The **Purple Heart** has undergone various changes in its awarding criteria. Initially, it was exclusively awarded to Army and Army Air Corps personnel and could not be posthumously awarded to their next of kin. In 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt signed an executive order allowing the Navy to award the **Purple Heart** to sailors, Marines, and Coast Guard personnel. That same year, the **Purple Heart** was made available for posthumous awarding to any member of the Armed Forces who was killed on or after December 7, 1941.

Initially, the **Purple Heart** was awarded for meritorious service, with being wounded considered a form of merit. However, with the establishment of the Legion of Merit in 1942, awarding the **Purple Heart** for merit became unnecessary and was discontinued. Today, the **Purple Heart** is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of the U.S. Armed Forces who, while serving after April 5, 1917, has been wounded, killed, or has died as a result of injury inflicted by enemy action.



Purple Heart Day, observed annually on August 7. It serves as a solemn reminder of the sacrifices made by the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces who were wounded or gave their lives in service to their country. Recipients of the **Purple Heart** are honored in the name of the President of the United States, and this day is set aside to recognize their courage and devotion. Across the country, various states, counties, cities, and organizations within sports and entertainment pause to commemorate these heroes. Veteran and military groups often gather to reflect and remember the lives touched by this distinguished honor. To date, approximately 1.8 million **Purple Hearts** have been awarded. **Purple Heart Day**, officially recognized since 2014, encourages Americans to reflect on the courage of our service members and to ensure that their sacrifices are never forgotten. We invite you to join us in honoring all those who have earned the **Purple Heart**.



History of Hometown Heroes

In 1744, German wheelwright, Gottfried “Godfrey” Dreher immigrated to South Carolina and was granted land along Twelve Mile Creek in what was then known as Saxe Gotha and would later become Lexington County. On this property, he established a grist mill. Cherokee Warriors raided farms and attacked settlers as far south as Orangeburg during what was called the Cherokee War (1759-1760). To protect his family and fellow settlers, Dreher erected fortifications around his house. In May 1760, 120 refugees were temporarily living in the fort.

During the American Revolution, Godfrey Dreher supplied the Patriots with food while his son, Godfrey Dreher, Jr. fought for the Patriots along with his brother-in-law Johannes Kinsler. While on furlough in late 1780, Kinsler was allegedly ambushed and murdered by a Loyalist neighbor. The neighbor was soon hanged from a nearby tree, possibly by Godfrey Dreher Jr. In July 1781, British Lt. Col. Francis Lord Rawdon sent a detachment of soldiers to attack Dreher’s Fort and capture Godfrey Dreher, Jr. According to family legend, when the Dreheres realized the soldiers were coming, Dreher Jr. had the other family members go upstairs and make as much noise as possible so that the approaching soldiers would be under the impression that many armed men were in the building. As the soldiers came inside the house, Dreher Jr. shot the first man. Upon hearing the commotion upstairs and being fired upon, the soldiers fled, saving the fort and the people within. After the war, Dreher Jr. moved to Georgia then Louisiana in the early 19th century.

Credit given to: J.R. Fennell; Director of the Lexington County Museum

<https://lex-co.sc.gov/lexington-county-museum>

South Carolina Military Museum

1 National Guard Road

Columbia, SC 29201

(803) 299-4440

FREE ADMISSION!

Self-Guided Tours:

Available with no reservation needed

Guided Tours: Please call (803)299-4440 to make a reservation.

History of South Carolina Military Museum

First established in Sumter County as the National Guard Museum and State Weapons Collection, the South Carolina Military Museum relocated to the capital city of Columbia to better serve its mission of preserving the Palmetto State's military history.

This new location offered strong partnerships with the South Carolina Military Department and the opportunity to expand the collection. Through the efforts of staff and volunteers, the former National Guard motor pool was transformed into an inviting space for the community to learn their rich military heritage.

Officially recognized by the U.S. Army's Center for Military History and the National Guard Bureau, the museum highlights South Carolina military history in three galleries available for visitors to explore. Staff members are available to assist with research inquiries and the Hugh McLaurin Library and Archive is open by appointment. The museum also hosts community events and offers a wide variety of STEM-related education programs.



Coming Soon!

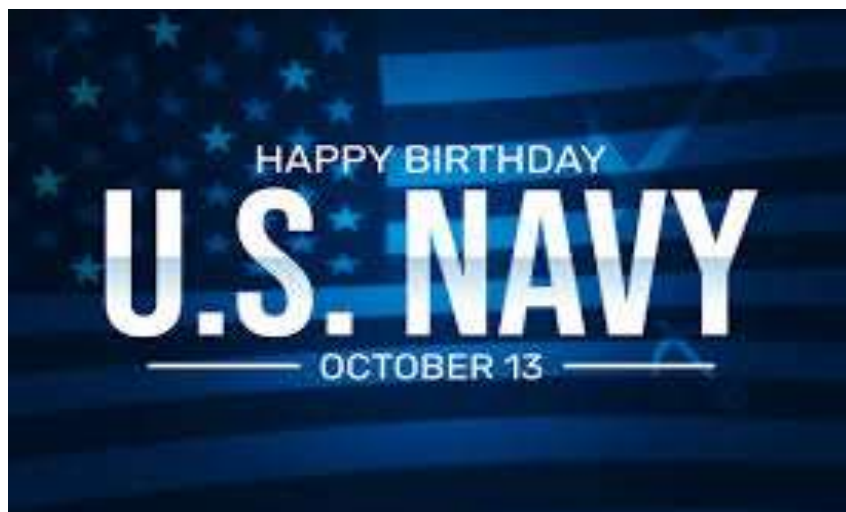
Global War On Terror Exhibit

An exhibit exploring the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The exhibit is due to open in the summer of 2025!

It takes a lot of time and planning for such an important project!



On September 18, 1947, the United States Air Force was officially established as a separate branch of the U.S. military, ushering in a new era of air and space superiority. Today, we celebrate the Air Force's birthday, honoring the innovative spirit, dedication, and courage of the Airman who have served and continued to serve our nation. From the skies over Europe in World War II to the modern theaters of conflict around the globe, the Air Force has been a critical force in defending freedom and advancing technology. Equally significant is the Air Force's commitment to humanitarian aid, disaster relief, and space exploration, areas where its service is genuinely inspiring a continually pushes the boundaries of what is possible. As we commemorate this particular day, we salute the Airmen who embody the Air Force's core values of integrity, service, and excellence. Happy Birthday, U.S. Air Force! Aim High!



On October 13, 1775 the Continental Congress authorized the creation of a naval force, marking the birth of the United States Navy. Today, we celebrate the Navy's 250th birthday, honoring its long-standing tradition of excellence, courage, and commitment to defending the nation's freedom and security. The U.S. Navy has grown into the world's most powerful naval force since its humble beginnings with just a few ships and sailors. Its role in shaping the history and destiny of the United States, from the Revolutionary War to the present day, is significant, and its impact is profound. The Navy's rich history is adorned with tales of heroism and sacrifice, highlighting the indomitable spirit and resilience of those who serve. Its mission extends beyond warfare, encompassing humanitarian efforts, disaster relief, and maintaining freedom of navigation in international waters. On this particular day, we pay tribute to the men and women of the U.S. Navy-past and present-who have dedicated their lives to serving their country. As we celebrate the Navy's birthday, we honor its enduring legacy and unwavering dedication to service while looking ahead to a future of continued innovation and excellence. Happy Birthday, U.S. Navy!



History of National POW/MIA Recognition Day

National POW/MIA Recognition Day is observed annually on the third Friday of September. It is centered around the commitment to the families of captured service members and missing war heroes. The term POW and MIA mean prisoner of war and military personnel who went missing in action. Many service members suffered as prisoners during the several wars that have happened throughout the history. U.S. National POW/MIA Recognition Day was introduced as a day to commemorate with the family of many of the tens of thousands of service members who never made it home.

The day was first observed in 1979 after Congress and President Jimmy Carter passed a resolution to make it official.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremonies share the common purpose of honoring those who were held captive and returned, as well as the memory of those who remain missing in action.

Until 1979, there was no formal day set aside for these important men and women. The first observance of POW/MIA day included a remembrance ceremony at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Since then, remembrance ceremonies were take place at the Pentagon, along with other celebrations happening at military bases around the country and the world.

Events



Fidelis 5k: Saturday August 30th 8 am: Fidelis Family Retreat returns as the organizer for this event that benefits veterans and their families. Follow the link for more information: <https://www.fidelisfamilyretreat.org/fidelis-family-events.htm#5K>

Run Walk, Roll or Stroll for a Great Cause!

Chapin Labor Day Festivities

Boots on Beaufort: August 31st

Sunday night features a favorite Labor Day Primer. Our Boots on Beaufort Country Concert features an opening Country music act from 6pm-8pm followed by a headliner from 8pm-11pm. There will also be select vendors, a food truck or two, and plenty of space to bring a chair and enjoy the show!

Classic Car Show: September 1st : If classic cars are your thing, head on down the Beaufort Street parking lot next to Mt. Horeb Lutheran Church on Labor Day and enjoy the 15th annual Classic Car show, sponsored by The Auto Shop of Chapin, LLC and presented by Columbia Classic Chevy club! With door prizes, trophies to win, and a lineup of beautiful classic cars to admire, this is an event that goes the extra mile.

Chapin Labor Day Parade and Festival: September 1st : This is the big one, folks. Monday morning will see our teams head out through the heart of Chapin. Between the Grand Marshal, the panel of judges, and the other VIPs in the parade entries, it'll be a who's-who of South Carolina! Bring the whole family and enjoy the lineup of western themed floats.

After the clock runs out on the parade and everyone benches their floats, enjoy the famed Chapin Labor Day Festival taking place on Beaufort Street, Clark Street, and Lexington Avenue! With live music, tons of food options, a children's carnival area, a train museum, and vendors from all over, it will be the place to be when Labor Day fires up! In addition to the downtown festivities, there will be a book sale in the community room of Chapin Town Hall for the duration of Labor Day weekend. Come stop by and bring the whole family for some holiday weekend fun!

Taste of Chapin: September 2nd - September 8th: The Taste of Chapin Restaurant Week returns in 2025, this year as a post-Labor Day celebration. The lifeblood of any small town is their local businesses and nothing brings communities together like food. Our raffle system will work the same as years prior. To enter, bring a receipt from a Chapin-addressed restaurant of at least \$5 dated during the designated Restaurant Week (Sept. 2nd to Sept. 8th) to town hall in exchange for one raffle ticket. There is no limit to the amount of entries allowed and, after the week concludes on September 8th at 4pm, Mayor Koon will draw one winning ticket of a fabulous prize! Stay tuned for more details.

To find out more information or to participate contact Dylan Francis at communications@chapinisc.com or Paul Sadler at director@chapinchamber.com.



South Carolina State Fair

<https://www.scstatefair.org/>

Dates: Oct 8-19 at the State fairgrounds.

Please see website for more details.

Irmo Okra Strut

<https://www.okrastrut.com/>

Date: Sept 26th 6pm to 11pm &
Sept 27 9am to 5 pm

Location: Moore Park
7473 Church Street
Irmo, SC 29063



Fall Fido Festival

<https://www.fallfidofestival.com/>

Date: Sunday, October 12th, 2025

Time: 1pm - 4pm

Location: Melvin Park
370A Eptings Camp Rd
Chapin, SC 29036

Get ready for Modern Companion's most anticipated dog-friendly event of the year! We will have photo ops, games, vendors, shopping, food trucks, adoptions, raffles,



Sumter American Legion Fair

<https://sumterfair.com/sumter-american-legion-fair/>

Date: September 9th - 14th

Location: 30 S Artillery Drive
Sumter, SC 29150

The Leon Irons Memorial Golf Tournament

Monday, September 15th | 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM | The WildeWood Club

Providing Programs for Veterans, Active-Duty Service Members, First Responders, and their Families
at the Big Red Barn Retreat

Presented By:



Benefitting the Big Red Barn Retreat's Programs and Services

Monday, September 15th 2025, The WildeWood Club will host The Leon Irons Memorial Golf Tournament, benefitting The Big Red Barn Retreat! Using a "Captain's Choice" format, there are plenty of opportunities to let loose, win some amazing prizes, and have tons of fun all while supporting the BRBR. Use the button below to register your team today.



Schedule of Events:

Registration/Breakfast: 8:30 am

Tee Off: 10:00 am

Lunch & Awards: 3:00 pm

About Leon Irons

Leon Irons embarked on a journey in the Navy aboard the "USS Independence" right after graduating from high school. After his years in the service, he owned and operated multiple Sonic Drive-Ins around the Columbia area and across the southeast. Leon and his wife, Barbara, eventually made Columbia and the WildeWood Community their home in the late 80's. They played an active role in the founding of the Member's Club at WildeWood and still own a home overlooking the green on Hole 17.

After Leon's passing in 2009, the Big Red Barn Retreat was created to help Veterans, active-duty service members, and first responders as a tribute to his legacy. Founded by his wife and daughter, the retreat stands as a poignant homage, dedicated to supporting military personnel in leading fulfilling lives. The Annual Leon Irons Memorial Golf Tournament serves as a testament to Leon's enduring legacy and his unwavering mission to aid our nation's heroes as they transition from their service roles. The Big Red Barn Retreat is committed to ensuring they receive the training they need to become the best version of themselves.

More information on The Leon Irons Memorial Golf Tournament



\$600 per Team

\$150 per Individual

Includes:

- Hot Breakfast, Mimosa & Bloody Mary Bar
- Swag Bag
- Cold Beer, Wine, and Soft Drinks
- Access to 19th Hole Cocktail & Snack
- Low Country Boil will be provided by:

Dupre Catering & Events

****No refunds will be issued, but substitutions are allowed. If there is inclement weather, we will reschedule the tournament for a different day.****

Team Prizes Include:



1st Place

Blue Tees Golf Player Pack GO Bundle:

Elevate your game with the ultimate golf tech bundle from Blue Tees! This Complete Player Pack includes the S3 Max+ Rangefinder for pinpoint accuracy, the Player GO Magnetic GPS Speaker, a versatile 6-in-1 Utility Divot Tool, and a weatherproof premium case. With a USB-C charging cable and quick-start guide included, this stylish and practical prize delivers everything a modern golfer needs—on and off the green.

One awarded to each member of your team \$1000 Value!



2nd Place

JBL Charge 6 Bluetooth Speaker

(Red): Take the party anywhere with the JBL Charge 6—a portable, waterproof, and drop-proof speaker that delivers bold Pro Sound with punchy bass and crisp highs. Featuring AI Sound Boost for optimal performance and a built-in power bank, this speaker is ready for any adventure. With up to 28 hours of playtime and a removable carrying strap, this is the sound system you didn't know you needed—until now.

One awarded to each member of your team \$800 Value!



3rd Place

JBL Clip 5 Bluetooth Speaker (Red):

Big sound in a small package! The JBL Clip 5 is ultra-portable, waterproof, and dustproof—perfect for golf bags, backpacks, or belt loops thanks to its built-in carabiner. With up to 12 hours of playtime and rich JBL Pro Sound, this compact speaker delivers way more boom than its size lets on. Made in part with recycled materials, it's a small speaker that makes a big impact.

One awarded to each member of your team \$320 Value!

Join Us in Our Mission
Remember ★ Honor ★ Teach



★ **December 13, 2025** ★

National Wreaths Across America Day



**Help WAA FJNC \$5 Pay It Forward
honor local heroes!**

Sponsor a wreath today to be placed on a
veteran's grave this December at
Fort Jackson National Cemetery

Scan the QR code to make a donation online or visit
www.wreathscrossamerica.org/SC0015



For each wreath sponsored through this link,
WAA will credit us \$5.00 toward an additional wreath.



#KeepMovingForward



Wreaths Across America Fort Jackson National Cemetery

WAA FJNC \$5.00 Pay It Forward Sponsorship Program

In 2008, we held our first Wreaths Across America Ceremony at the Fort Jackson National Cemetery to Remember and Honor Our Veterans and to Teach Our Children that Freedom Is Not Free. The cemetery was only 1 year into existence and had 346 gravesites. From the very beginning, with the help of the Midlands Community, Veterans and Civic Groups, Businesses and Corporations, we have kept our commitment to have a wreath for every gravesite at the cemetery. This year, our goal is 17,000 wreaths. With your help, for our 17th year, we will continue to keep that commitment! Thank you to all who have and will continue to support our Mission!

We welcome everyone to join us on December 13, 2025, for our Wreaths Across America ceremony. **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO VOLUNTEER TO ATTEND THE CEREMONY AND HELP PLACE THE WREATHS!** Everyone will have the opportunity to help place the wreaths. If you would like to volunteer to help work with the setup the morning of the event or other areas we will be needing assistance, please email: Volunteers.waafjackson@gmail.com and we will send you information on the areas you can help. For all other inquiries, please email: waafjackson@gmail.com

Ways to Donate

You can mail your check and donation form to
Wreaths Across America
P.O. Box 3356 West Columbia, SC, 29171

Go online to:

www.wreathsafteramerica.org/SC0015

or Scan the QR code with your smart phone!



For each wreath sponsored on this form, WAA will credit us \$5.00 toward an additional wreath.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SOUTH CAROLINA STATEHOUSE CEREMONY

Monday, December 08, 2025, 12:00 Noon at the SC
Veterans Memorial Located on the Assembly Street side
of the Statehouse grounds.
The public is invited to attend.

FORT JACKSON NATIONAL CEMETERY CEREMONY

Saturday December 13, 2025, 12:00 Noon

Fort Jackson National Cemetery 4170 Percival Rd. Columbia, SC 29229

This ceremony is open to the public. 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 10:00am with family wreath placement from 10:00am until 11:30am the morning of the ceremony. There will be limited handicap parking in cemetery with proper identification.

For more information email waafjackson@gmail.com or call Carol Davis (803) 467-4482

Follow us on Facebook: Wreaths Across America – Fort Jackson National Cemetery, Columbia, SC

Donated by:



WREATHS *across* AMERICA

Wreath Sponsorship \$5 Pay It Forward Order Form

Sponsored wreaths are placed on veterans' grave markers at cemeteries nationwide each December for National Wreaths Across America Day. Your donation ensures a wreath is placed to honor one or more veterans at the participating location of your choice. **Thank you for supporting our mission to REMEMBER, HONOR, and TEACH!**

For each wreath sponsored on this form, WAA will credit us \$5.00 toward an additional wreath.
All sponsored veteran wreaths are shipped directly to the location selected by the sponsor on this form.
Wreaths are not shipped to individual wreath sponsors.

CHECK #	CHECK DATE	GROUP ID	LOCATION ID(s)	DOLLAR AMOUNT
		SC0015	SCFJNC	



Each individual wreath sponsorship is \$17.

If your check is for multiple locations, list each location ID with its dollar amount.

SPONSOR NAME	
PHONE #	
EMAIL ADDRESS	
MAILING ADDRESS	

SPECIAL REQUESTS

Please note in memory/honor of requests do not place a wreath on a specific loved one's grave.

- ☐ **IN-HONOR OF:** Let someone know you sponsored wreath(s) for veteran(s) in their honor. We will email them.

→ Provide Email Recipient Name & Email Address, along with Message (optional):

- ☐ **IN-MEMORY OF:** Post a veteran's name & message on Wreaths Across America's Remembrance Wall online.

→ Provide Veteran Name for Memory Wall Post and Message (Optional):

Please complete this form and mail it with your check to our address below, or pay with a credit/debit card, PayPal, or GooglePay by sponsoring online at www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org/SC0015 or by scanning the QR code.

Wreaths Across America

P.O. Box 3356

West Columbia, SC 29171



WREATHS *across* AMERICA

Recipe Nook

Banana Pudding Cookies

Ingredients:

- 1 cup softened butter
- ½ cup light brown sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tsp banana extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 (3.4 oz) box of INSTANT banana pudding mix
- 1 cup vanilla wafers
- 1 cup banana chips (optional)



Directions:

Preheat oven to 350

Line baking sheet(s) with parchment paper

Coarsely chop up vanilla wafers and banana chips and set aside

In a bowl, cream together butter and both sugars for 2 minutes. Add egg, vanilla and banana extracts and mix until just combined. Set aside

In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda and dry pudding mix. Slowly add dry ingredients into wet ingredients bowl mixing until combined. Stir in vanilla wafers and banana chips. Dough will be slightly thick.

Scoop 3 TBS (or standard ice cream scoop) onto baking sheet and slightly press down to flatten

Bake 10-14 minutes until very light brown. Take out of oven and let cool on cookie sheet for 5-7 minutes then move to cooling rack.

As a little way to spice it up, try drizzling them with vanilla buttercream and salted caramel syrup.



DON'T FEED THE SHARKS



DontFeedTheSharks.org

What is a "Claim Shark"?

- A Claim Shark is an individual or company that charges hefty fees to "assist" or "consult" veterans with filing their VA benefit claims – this practice is illegal!
- Claim Sharks are not VA accredited, meaning they aren't required to adhere to the well-established professional and ethical standards of VA accreditation, so their advice can often be misleading or even fraudulent.
- Like a "Loan Shark," once you're in, you can't get out, and may be subject to new and hidden fees whenever you get a new rating, no matter who does the work.

Some of their predatory practices are:

- Promising or guaranteeing an increased disability rating or percentage increase.
- Advertising expedited VA claims decisions.
- Requesting login credentials to access a veteran's personal information through secure VA websites like eBenefits or VA.gov.
- Using confusing tactics or ambiguous language to mislead claimants or coerce them into signing a contract.
- Telling veterans to forego VA exams and offering health consultations within their own network of doctors.

Who are the Claim Sharks?

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| ➤ Trajector Medical | ➤ Patriot Angels |
| ➤ Vet Benefits Guide | ➤ Veteran Care Services |
| ➤ Veterans Guardian | ➤ VetComm |
| ➤ VA Claims Insider | ➤ VA Claims Academy |
| ➤ Telemedica | ➤ Vet Assist |

Veterans can protect themselves by:

- Always working with VA accredited representatives.
- Attending all exams ordered by VA.
- Not signing contracts.
- Not agreeing to fees or payments from future benefits.
- Not agreeing to pay for medical consultations or opinions.
- Not providing access to Protected Health Information or Personal Identifiable Information.

Who is NOT a Claim Shark?

- VA accredited veterans service organization representatives, like the VFW
- VA accredited claims agents
- VA accredited attorneys
- Attorneys assisting with Camp LeJeune lawsuits who do not charge excessive fees



Ministry's Goals:

SHORT TERM:

Kennels: Metal Siding and Roof Repair

MID TERM:

Tool Barn: Roof Repair and Siding

LONG TERM:

FarmHouse/Lodge: A retreat setting where we can host veterans and their families, as well as pastors, in need of individual attention. We believe this FarmHouse will serve as the hub for HomePlace Farm and Hunting Preserve. It is also our intention to use the FarmHouse as a meeting/gathering place for various activities. We also intend to use the FarmHouse for monthly men's barn meetings to reach out to the men of the surrounding area.

Guest Cabin: 1) Temporary home, employment to a veteran or a pastor who is in transition and has no where to go. 2) Temporary location where soldiers/veterans could stay when coming to HomePlace to obtain or train their service dog.

OTHER ITEMS NEEDED IMMEDIATELY AND IN THE FUTURE:

Operational Costs: equipment; farm/pond maintenance

Shooting Range Supplies

Handicapped Accessible Hunting Blinds

Gates: to properly protect entrances

Farming Equipment:

Wood Splitter

Wood Chipper

Picnic Tables

Commercial Ice Maker



HomePlace

Helping People Find Home

501.627.5179

1039 US Highway 76, Little Mountain, SC 29075

Dr. Chuck McAlister, *President*
HomePlace Ministries

chuck@homeplaceministries.org

www.homeplaceministries.org

"God settles the lonely in a home." PS 68:6A



HomePlace

A Ministry Helping Veterans



Emotional Support For:

Marriage Support Group | Finding Life's Purpose

Community | Therapeutic Hunting

Service Dog Ministry & Placement

www.homeplaceministries.org

Emotional Support For Veterans

At HomePlace, we seek to help veterans deal with PTSD and other issues that grow out of the trauma they have experienced. They have the highest suicide and divorce rates of any demographic group in our nation. We believe that we must address both the spiritual and emotional needs of the veteran and his family to facilitate a complete healing. To provide emotional support to our veterans, and others in need, HomePlace provides the following:

MARRIAGE SUPPORT GROUP

We facilitate a support group for marriages in crisis utilizing the workbook which we have written. Often the spouse of a veteran does not know how to handle the change that has happened to their mate as a result of their combat experience. Couples are given homework assignments and gather weekly with other couples to discuss the results which helps them see that they are not alone in the challenge they are facing. We have seen multiple marriages saved and many couples surrender their lives and marriages to Jesus as they receive the emotional support they need.

FINDING LIFE'S PURPOSE

Many veterans find themselves confused about their life purpose after leaving the military where they experienced intense training regarding their responsibility in the accomplishment of the mission. For that reason, veterans comprise the largest number of homeless people in our country. We have launched a training program that walks individuals through a workbook we have written that helps them identify and live out their life purpose. This 3-week program involves 3 commitments and 3 personal habits that each person must engage to live out their purpose. Veterans can start these classes at any time.



HomePlace Farm, owned by HomePlace ministries, is one way we are attempting to give veterans a sense of purpose. With 140 fruit bushes and trees, the maintenance work on pruning, caring for these plants along with the grass cutting is a massive undertaking. We enlist the veterans' assistance and volunteers in this work to help enhance veteran's dignity and sense of value as we help them identify their purpose. We are among a select number of farms designated as a "HomeGrown By Heroes" Farm.

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

One of the things that veterans miss the most when they leave the military is the sense of camaraderie and family that they experience with their comrades in arms. We provide a weekly support for men which allows them to meet and experience the sense of community.

THERAPEUTIC HUNTING

Much of the ministry of HomePlace has grown out of the hunting TV program, *AdventureBound Outdoors*, which we founded and was on the air for 16 years on the Outdoor Channel. As former combat veterans began to go hunting on the program with us, we soon realized that the use of the firearms triggered a PTSD response from the veterans. As a result, we have developed a step by step process that we can take a veteran through to help him/her emotionally deal with their PTSD. Evidently, we are the pioneers, in the country, in this therapy that professionals have named therapeutic hunting. HomePlace Farm consists of 203 acres that we are transitioning into a hunting preserve for the exclusive use of our veterans needing to address their PTSD.

Our goal is to build a FarmHouse/lodge to accommodate our veterans as they come to the property.

SERVICE DOG MINISTRY & PLACEMENT

In dealing with the PTSD and emotional trauma of their combat experience, we have found that many of these veterans need ongoing emotional support to help them deal with their challenge. Dogs trained as PTSD support dogs are the best way to provide our veterans with an opportunity for emotional stability through the attachment that develops between the dog and the veteran. It costs a veteran approximately \$27,000 to obtain a PTSD service dog. Recognizing the need, we, at HomePlace, decided that we



would do what was necessary to provide these dogs to the veterans at no cost to the veteran. We have enlisted businesses to cover the cost of the dog and the training for both dog and veteran for one year. Those veterans acquiring a dog meet with the HomePlace dog trainer on a regular basis. This allows HomePlace to not only train the dog, but to disciple the veteran as well.

This year, we are expanding our service dog ministry to specifically address the mental health issues related to Survivor's Guilt and/or Toxic Chemical Exposure ("burn-pit" exposure). We are training service dogs as emotional therapy dogs for anxiety and depression.

FAMILY EXPERIENCE

One of our goals at HomePlace is to help veterans reconnect with their families and to become the spouse and parent their families need. We accomplish this through family activities that involve veterans with their families. Through family cookouts, teaching shooting skills at the HomePlace shooting range, gathering around the fire pit, camping as a family, spending several days camping in the HomePlace camper, or taking the family fishing on the HomePlace 6-acre pond, veterans and their families have access to use the property to connect.



WOUNDED SOLDIERS/MARINES

HomePlace Farm acts as a weekend destination for soldiers directly from surrounding states' military hospitals: Fort Stewart, Fort Bragg, and Camp Lejeune. Many wounded military personnel have been able to connect with their families away from the sterile hospital environment and enjoy fishing, RTV rides, hiking, long walks with family members, pizza, home-made desserts, and many other activities.



HomePlace

Our goal is to help people have their encounter with Jesus through a variety of means...





"God settles the lonely in a home.." Psalm 68:6a

Stay Connected

Website

www.homeplaceministries.org

Social Media

Follow us on Facebook for latest updates!
www.facebook.com/homeplaceministry/

Supporting Materials

Waterproof Bible (available in NKJV, KJ, ESV, and NIV)

Gifted for Life's Journey

Choosing Your Way to a Great Marriage

Adventures in God's Country

Exposed

Online Giving

Follow the QR code or visit:
homeplaceministries.org/donate
 to give today! Gift amounts
 can be made custom,
 set up on a recurring basis,
 or given as a one-time donation.



100% of donations go directly to support the
 ministry of HomePlace. Check or cash donations
 can be mailed to the address listed below.

Contact

Chuck McAlister (HomePlace President):
chuck@homeplaceministries.org
 501.627.5179

Jeff McAlister (HomePlace CEO):
jeffmcAlister7@icloud.com
 803.687.1224

Taylor Faraca (HomePlace Operations Director):
taylor@homeplaceministries.org
 765.606.7770

Address

1039 US Highway 76
 Little Mountain, SC 29075



HomePlace



Helping People Come Home

www.homeplaceministries.org

Porch Talk



Subscribe



Join us weekly on the HomePlace Farm front porch where we discuss God's word, happenings in the world and how they relate to the Bible, share HomePlace updates, and much more! We invite you to our Porch Talk community and encourage you to share our channel with others. Grab your glass of sweet tea, pull up a chair, and enjoy a message. A new Porch Talk is made available every Sunday morning.



www.youtube.com/@dutchforkchurch

Why HomePlace?

HomePlace Ministries is passionate about and committed to helping military personnel, veterans, families, and all other individuals experience the healing of the whole person—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Our 200-acre farm located near Little Mountain, South Carolina allows HomePlace to offer the perfect setting for all interactions with those who visit, all while enjoying the beauty of creation.

HomePlace offers weekend experiences for United States Military personnel from surrounding Soldier Recovery Units as they are in the midst of healing from combat wounds. The wounded soldiers are able to connect with others away from the sterile hospital environment and enjoy a variety of activities over the weekend they are with us. We seek opportunities to serve those who have selflessly served our country.

Service dog training is another assistance HomePlace offers to veterans as they have proven to have an enormous healing effect. We have noticed service dogs help their companions by: increasing their activity level and accelerating their re-integration into society, grounding them in reality and redirecting their misdirected focus, reducing the length and intensity of their night terrors and flashbacks, increasing their independence, mitigating their perceived threats while creating a sense of safety, and providing them with around the clock companionship and support.

HomePlace has also sponsored several parent and children days by partnering with local kindergarten and first grade classes. We have a desire to serve our community by offering outdoor experiences for families, workplaces, and others in God's creation. We are constantly looking for ways to meet the emerging needs of those around us. All interactions help us shape our mission plan and strategy for each upcoming year.

Get Involved

"How can I be involved at HomePlace?"

PRAY! Please pray for HomePlace as we look for ways to help as many people as we can encounter Jesus. Whether that be through veteran and active duty military outreach, family support, or service dog placement, we are constantly in prayer for God to expand this ministry for the furtherance of **HIS** Kingdom.

VOLUNTEER! HomePlace has a variety of volunteer opportunities. Volunteering could mean an extra hand to help during HomePlace events, offering support to guests that visit, helping in outdoor projects such as tree clearing, building of new structures to accommodate guests, and more. Please contact us if you are interested in offering a helping hand.

FOLLOW ALONG! Follow along via social media and newsletter as we provide updates with our latest projects, prayer requests, and all things HomePlace ministries. Visit our website: homeplaceministries.org and fill out the information portion on the bottom of the screen with your name and email address to receive our newsletter. You are also invited to join us at Dutch Fork Church (3517 Dreher Shoals Rd. Irmo, SC 29063) on Sunday mornings at 10:30am for a message and a time of worship.

DONATE! In order for HomePlace to remain operational, we rely on God to send donors that are willing to give to help us provide experiences for those in need. Donations are accepted through our website (homeplaceministries.org), cash, or check wrote to "HomePlace Ministries." All donations will generate a contribution statement used for tax purposes. Please contact us with questions on how to donate.

Chapin American Legion

Post 193



LET'S PLAY BINGO!

Chapin American Legion Post 193 hosts BINGO on the 1st Thursday of each month at the Chapin Town Hall, 157 Columbia Ave, Chapin, SC 29036. Admission is \$3.00, and Game packets (13 games) are just \$20.00. Doors open at 5:30 pm and games begin promptly at 7:00 pm. Concessions are available on-site so please no outside food or beverages. Ages 6 and up can play! All proceeds benefit Chapin American Legion Post 193 New Building Fund.

Monday Morning Veterans ONLY Breakfast

Every Monday morning unless otherwise posted on our website

<https://www.americanlegionpost193.com>

Coffee is on at 7:30 am with breakfast served from 8:30am-9:15am. The cost is \$6.00 per person. (Eggs including made to order, hash browns, grits, various types of meat, fruit, a yogurt bar, and home-baked goods, juice, and coffee.)

Chapin American Legion Post 193
102 Lexington Ave, Chapin, SC 29036



This Veteran ONLY event is to foster fellowship and conversation.

Chapin American Legion Post 193 is actively recruiting new members! We are a dynamic Post and one of the fastest growing Posts in the State of SC For more information; please contact our Post Adjutant, Steven Goulet, at (803) 553-2806 or

adjutant@americanlegionpost193.org



Lexington County Veterans Group

All Lexington County Veterans are cordially invited to attend the weekly meeting. The group meets on Tuesdays from 10am-12pm at:

American Legion Post 7

211 American Legion Drive (off Harmon St.)

Lexington, SC 29072

Please reach out to members below for more information about joining!

E.C Murray (803) 606-9571

Rich (Richard) Little (803) 422-1113





*Ed
Jennifer
Brittany
Lee
Annastasia
Jolene*

