

Veterans Affairs Office of Lexington County



TELEPHONE: (803) 785-8400

FAX: (803) 785-0115

EDITOR: *Debbie Myers*

VET NEWS

October 2007

GARY R. BAKER
DIRECTOR

BARBARA O'CONNOR
ASST. CSO

JENNIFER HENDRIX
VETERANS SPECIALIST

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

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Oct. 7th War on Terror Began
(2001)
- Oct. 8th Columbus Day
- Oct. 13th Navy Established (1775)
- Oct. 16th National Boss Day
- Oct. 27th Navy Day
- Oct. 31st Halloween



SAILORS DISMISS SHAD FINDINGS

A Study of the health of some 6,000 sailors exposed to chemical and biological weapons 40 years ago was incomplete, say the test subjects (taken from article by Tim Dyhouse, VFW Magazine, September 2007)

Findings from a four-year study of the health effects on sailors participating in chemical and biological weapons tests in the 1960s and early 1970s are flawed, say the surviving test subjects. They believe the study neglected to survey those sailors who were exposed to the highest levels of chemicals.

The weapons testing, known as **Project SHAD**, or Shipboard Hazard and Defense, included more than 6,000 sailors, 17 Navy ships and five Army tugs.

The testing, done between 1962 and 1973, evaluated how well sailors could detect and respond to chemical or biological attacks.

Many of the agents used in the testing were presumably "innocuous simulants" ...but some tests used **toxic nerve gases** such as sarin and VX, and **infectious bacteria**. Many of the sailors involved in the SHAD tests were aware they were participating, but some were not.

In 2004, the Institute of Medicine began studying the medical records of sailors involved in the tests and mailed questionnaires to about 5,500 SHAD participants. It compared their health to similar sailors who did not participate in the SHAD tests. About 61% of SHAD vets and 47% of the control group veterans responded.

"The differences in the rates of medical symptoms and conditions experienced by each group were slight for the most part, and the study authors found no consistent specific patterns of ill health among SHAD veterans", the report stated.

SHAD vets, however, reported higher rates of memory loss, attention problems and neurodegenerative disorders. They also reported poorer health at higher rates than sailors who did not participate in the tests. Both groups reported poorer health than national norms.

Scientists also compared death rates of the two groups of veterans. SHAD vets had higher death rates from heart disease, according to the findings, but overall mortality rates between both groups of veterans were similar.



Cancer deaths were higher among SHAD vets who were potentially exposed only to trioctyl phosphate—a nontoxic simulant for VX used during the test. The survey also showed that former Marines had **higher mortality rates** than their former Navy counterparts, "a finding the authors believe might warrant further investigation." Nonetheless, the study, funded by VA, found "no clear evidence" of long term health effects associated with participation in the tests. In the end, the scientists said they could not find medical links between the SHAD vets symptoms and the chemicals or biological agents used in the tests.

One of the biggest flaws of the study, SHAD vets say, is that some 500 sailors who served on the Army tugs and received the highest exposure were not included in the findings.

"We got as many people on the light tugs as possible from the Defense Department," study director William Page told the *Navy Times*. They didn't have complete rosters. We would have loved to have included the light tug personnel, but we just couldn't find [all of] them."

GENERAL DAVID PETRAEUS... IN HIS OWN WORDS



HEADQUARTERS
MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE - IRAQ
BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09342-1400

7 September 2007

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and Civilians of Multi-National Force-Iraq:

We are now over two-and-a-half months into the surge of offensive operations made possible by the surge of forces, and I want to share with you my view of how I think we're doing. This letter is a bit longer than previous ones, since I feel you deserve a detailed description of what I believe we have – and have not – accomplished, as Ambassador Crocker and I finalize the assessment we will provide shortly to Congress.

Up front, my sense is that we have achieved tactical momentum and wrested the initiative from our enemies in a number of areas of Iraq. The result has been progress in the security arena, although it has, as you know, been uneven. Additionally, as you all appreciate very well, innumerable tasks remain and much hard work lies ahead. We are, in short, a long way from the goal line, but we do have the ball and we are driving down the field.

We face a situation that is exceedingly complex. Al Qaeda, associated insurgent groups, and militia extremists, some supported by Iran, continue to carry out attacks on us, our Iraqi partners, and the Iraqi civilians we seek to secure. We have to contend with the relentless pace of operations, the crushing heat, and the emotions that we all experience during long deployments and tough combat. And we operate against a backdrop of limited Iraqi governmental capacity, institutions trying to rebuild, and various forms of corruption. All of this takes place in a climate of distrust and fear that stems from the sectarian violence that did so much damage to the fabric of Iraqi society in 2006 and into 2007, not to mention the decades of repression under Saddam's brutal regime. Tragically, sectarian violence continues to cause death and displacement in Baghdad and elsewhere, albeit at considerably reduced levels from 8 months ago, due, in large part, to your hard work and sacrifice together with our Iraqi counterparts.

In spite of these challenges, our operations – particularly the offensive operations we have conducted since mid-June – have helped produce progress in many areas on the ground. In fact, the number of attacks across the country has declined in 8 of the past 11 weeks, reaching during the last week in August a level not seen since June 2006. This trend is not just a result of greater numbers of Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces; it also reflects your determination, courage, and skill in conducting counterinsurgency operations. By taking the fight to the enemy, you have killed or captured dozens of leaders and thousands of members of Al Qaeda-Iraq and extremist militia elements, you have taken many of Al Qaeda's former sanctuaries away from them, and you have dismantled a number of their car bomb and improvised explosive device networks. By living among the population with our Iraqi partners, you have been holding the areas you have cleared. By helping Iraqis reestablish basic services and local governance, you have helped exploit the security gains. And by partnering closely with Iraqi Security Forces, you have been strengthening Iraqi elements that will one day have sole responsibility for protecting their population. Indeed, while Iraqi forces clearly remain a work in progress, Iraqi soldiers and police are very much in the fight, and they continue to sustain losses that are two to three times our losses.

We are also building momentum in an emerging area of considerable importance – local reconciliation. Local Iraqi leaders are coming forward, opposing extremists, and establishing provisional units of neighborhood security volunteers. With growing Government of Iraq support, these volunteers are being integrated into legitimate security institutions to help improve local security. While this concept is playing out differently in various areas across Iraq, it is grounded in a desire shared by increasing numbers of Iraqis – to oppose extremist elements and their ideologies. This is very significant because, as many of you know firsthand, extremists cannot survive without the support of the population. The popular rejection of Al Qaeda and its ideology has, for example, helped transform Anbar Province this year from one of the most dangerous areas of Iraq to one of the safest. The popular rejection of extremists has helped Coalition and Iraqi Forces take

away other areas from Al Qaeda as well, and we are seeing a spread of this sentiment in an ever-increasing number of Sunni areas. Now, in fact, we are also seeing a desire to reject extremists emerge in many Shi'a areas.

The progress has not, to be sure, been uniform across Baghdad or across Iraq. Accomplishments in some areas – for example, in Ramadi and in Anbar Province – have been greater than any of us might have predicted six months ago. The achievements in some other areas – for example, in some particularly challenging Baghdad neighborhoods and in reducing overall civilian casualties, especially those caused by periodic, barbaric Al Qaeda bombings – have not been as dramatic. However, the overall trajectory has been encouraging, especially when compared to the situation at the height of the sectarian violence in late 2006 and early 2007.

Many of us had hoped this summer would be a time of tangible political progress at the national level as well. One of the justifications for the surge, after all, was that it would help create the space for Iraqi leaders to tackle the tough questions and agree on key pieces of “national reconciliation” legislation. It has not worked out as we had hoped. All participants, Iraqi and coalition alike, are dissatisfied by the halting progress on major legislative initiatives such as the oil framework law, revenue sharing, and de-ba’athification reform. At the same time, however, our appreciation of what this legislation represents for Iraqi leaders has grown. These laws are truly fundamental in nature and will help determine how Iraqis will share power and resources in the new Iraq. While much work remains to be done before these critical issues are resolved, the seriousness with which Iraqi leaders came together at their summit in late August has given hope that they are up to the task before them, even if it is clearly taking more time than we initially expected.

In the coming months, our coalition’s countries and all Iraqis will continue to depend on each of you and on our Iraqi counterparts to keep the pressure on the extremists, to help improve security and strengthen the rule of law for all Iraqis, to work with the Government of Iraq to integrate local volunteers into local security and national institutions, to assist with the restoration and improvement of basic services, and to continue the development of conditions that foster reconciliation. For our part, Ambassador Crocker and I will continue to do everything in our power to help the Prime Minister and the Government of Iraq achieve the meaningful results that will ensure that your sacrifices and those of your comrades help produce sustainable security for Iraq over the long term. A stable and secure Iraq that denies extremists a safe haven and has a government that is representative of and responsive to all Iraqis helps protect the vital interests of our coalition countries. A stable and secure Iraq will also benefit Iraq’s citizens and Iraq’s neighbors alike, bringing calm to a region full of challenges and employing Iraq’s human capital and natural resource blessings for the benefit of all.

As I noted at the outset of this letter, over the next few days, Ambassador Crocker and I will share with the U.S. Congress and the American people our assessment of the situation in Iraq. I will also describe the recommendations I have provided to my chain of command. I will go before Congress conscious of the strain on our forces, the sacrifices that you and your families are making, the gains we have made in Iraq, the challenges that remain, and the importance of building on what we and our Iraqi counterparts have fought so hard to achieve.

Thanks once again for what each of you continues to do. Our Nations have asked much of you and your families. It remains the greatest of honors to serve with you.

Sincerely,

David H. Petraeus
General, United States Army
Commanding

*****Editor’s Note:** As the Holidays approach and many of our soldiers are away from their loved ones, there will be opportunities to help make the Holidays brighter for them. Please contact your area chapters of **VFW, Blue Star Mothers, American Legion,** etc...to see how you might participate. These brave ones have done so much for us! Let’s show them how much we appreciate their efforts!



Base Named after Soldier with S.C. ties

Camp Hughie now located where Bin Laden used to live

A base named after a soldier with South Carolina ties is located on the grounds of what once was Osama bin Laden's home. Days after medic Sgt. Buddy "Doc" Hughie died earlier this year while trying to aid two Afghan soldiers, U.S. troops renamed their Jalalabad base in the National Guardsman's memory.

"Buddy Hughie was just a genuine good guy," said Sgt. Brandon Greene, a fellow medic and member of the S.C. National Guard's 218th Brigade Combat Team.

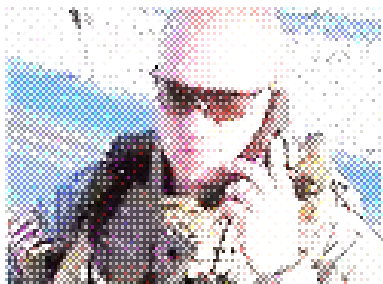
Camp Hughie is part of a military compound on the outskirts of this eastern Afghanistan city. An Afghan army complex also is on the grounds. Bin Laden first settled here in the mid-1990s, after being kicked out of the Sudan. In late 2001, the compound was the site of fierce fighting as the Taliban were being driven out of power.

Hughie, whose widow and 9-month-old son live in Charleston, died Feb. 19 in Nuristan Province, near the Pakistan border. Hughie, nicknamed "Doc" by his fellow soldiers, left his covered position to tend to the two Afghan soldiers.

Raised in Oklahoma, Hughie moved to the Charleston area after marrying a woman from South Carolina. Hughie was on his second combat tour in Afghanistan, having volunteered to go with the 1st Battalion, 180th Infantry of the Oklahoma National Guard.

Hughie, who planned to be an emergency medical technician, did not have to go with the Oklahoma unit. That's because he had deployed to Afghanistan in 2002 with an S.C. National Guard unit. Hughie was passionate about his work, friends said. Army medics not only care for U.S. personnel, but also tend to Afghan troops, civilians and even wounded enemy fighters.

"Sergeant Hughie was one of those soldiers that you did not have to worry about," said Lt. Col. Bobby Yandell, commander of Hughie's Oklahoma Guard unit. "He always did the right thing."



Sgt. Buddy James Hughie



THE JOSHUA L. TORRENCE MEMORIAL FIELD HOUSE
COMMITTEE
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE
LEXINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION
PROUDLY PRESENTS A

PATRIOTIC PRIDE SALUTE

A Patriotic Salute To Our Veterans and Fallen Heroes
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3rd, 2007
WHITE KNOLL HIGH SCHOOL
PROGRAM AT 7:00 PM
DOORS OPEN AT 5:00 PM FOR MILITARY DISPLAY
VIEWING

- ◆ MILITARY DISPLAYS
- ◆ VISIT WITH MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS
- ◆ LISTEN TO PATRIOTIC MUSIC BY AREA SCHOOL BANDS AND CHOIRS
- ◆ NYC FIREFIGHTERS WILL PARTICIPATE
- ◆ SILENT AUCTION (PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE JOSHUA L. TORRENCE MEMORIAL FIELD HOUSE)
- ◆ VETERANS RECOGNITION PROGRAM WITH KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Tickets are \$20
FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BE A SPONSOR PLEASE CALL: 803 996-4564 or 803-312-4150

"Freedom Isn't Free"

PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGES



new
**SUPPORT GROUP FOR WIVES
OF VIETNAM VETERANS**

You are cordially invited to join our new support group specifically designed for the wives of Vietnam veterans.

When? 2nd Mandays of each month, beginning Sept. 10th at NCCN, see changes (X)

Where? 605 West Main Street
Room 110 (Auditorium)
Lexington, SC

What? Support, Encouragement and Fun

Hosted by David Cox of the Columbia Vet Center

(Mr. Cox can be reached by calling 803-765-9944 or you can call 803-785-8400 for more information)



(X) Changes TO 3rd Monday beginning Oct 15
New dates Sept 10 Monday (2nd Monday)
Oct 15 Monday (3rd Monday)
Nov 19 Monday (3rd Monday)
Dec 17 Monday (3rd Monday)

Seven Important Questions to Ask When Hiring a Paid Caregiver

- ⇒ 1. If the hired caregiver becomes ill or otherwise unavailable, what alternate arrangements can be made?
- ⇒ 2. Are social security, federal and state taxes, and unemployment insurance paid so the family is not legally responsible?
- ⇒ 3. Do we have verification that the paid caregivers can legally work in the U. S.?
- ⇒ 4. If the hired caregiver is injured, who is responsible? (Many homeowner's insurance policies exclude such injuries via "domestic employee exclusions.")
- ⇒ 5. Are criminal history background checks, state abuse registries checks and prior work reference checks completed?
- ⇒ 6. Is there bonding and insurance in place that would cover any injury to the client or theft?
- ⇒ 7. Assuming family is not available to supervise paid caregivers at all times, will there be documentation that substantiates the completion of services?

This information is taken from the *2007 Adult Caregiving Show Me Guide*, a free publication. A copy of the guide may be obtained by going to the Secure Horizons website www.iLiveSecure.com or Right At Home's website www.rightathome.net.

The Lexington County Monument in honor of World War II, Korea, and Vietnam Veterans



Flags

1. U.S. Merchant Marine
2. U.S. Air Force
3. U. S. Army
4. MIA/POW
5. U.S. Flag
6. South Carolina
7. U.S. Navy
8. U.S. Marine Corps
9. U.S. Coast Guard

Some gave all, All gave some

The monument was a three-year fund-raising goal and was dedicated on November 11, 2002. Bricks honoring loved ones, employees, or friends are available with 14 characters per line for \$50 or 28 characters for \$100 including punctuation and spaces. All proceeds go to the upkeep of the monument. Donations are tax deductible. To reserve a brick, please use this application and send with your check to:

Monument Fund, Town of Lexington, PO Box 397, Lexington, SC 29071-0397

Your name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Your signature _____

I want _____ 14-character bricks at \$50 each & _____ 28-character bricks at \$100

Please print in the blocks below as you want them to appear on the bricks. To have your bricks placed together, please order them at the same time. Allow 2-3 weeks for your certificate and confirmation.

We reserve the right to refuse any message deemed inappropriate.

Print the name that should go on the certificate. _____

Please indicate which war so we can place your brick(s) on the proper side.

World War II: ____ Korea: ____ Vietnam: ____ Homefront ____

Example:

\$50 brick

\$100 brick



2007 County of Lexington Veteran's Day Parade Application
Sunday, November 11, 2007 at 3:00 p.m.

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

Name of Entry: _____

Type of Entry: Marching Band Beauty Queen Civic Float
(Please Circle Entry Type) Marching Group Dignitary Business Float

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:

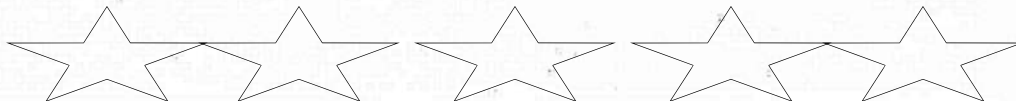
Mail Applications To:
County of Lexington Veteran's Day
Parade Committee
Attn: Sharon Willis, Chairperson
440 Ball Park Road
Lexington SC 29072

For More Information Contact:
Sharon Willis 803-785-8121
Gary Baker 803-785-8400
Bob Hall 803-785-8349
*Monday - Friday 8-5 pm *

ENTRY IS FREE! DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS OCTOBER 26, 2007

******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 ALSO. (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. ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE FOR ALL VETERANS TO RETURN TO THEIR VEHICLES AFTER REACHING THE PARKING LOTS.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.



NATIONAL GUARD INFORMATION

The National Guard is looking for prior service veterans between the ages of 17 and 42 who would like to be part of the SC National Guard. Prior service veterans with more than 5 years of service, who are older than 42, may also qualify. Contact SFC Jimmy Foley, 109-T Old Chapin Road, Lexington 29072, (803) 356-2340.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees all others.”

Winston Churchill

PLEASE NOTE THESE DATES:

Our Service Representatives will be out of the office on **October 9th through 12th** in order to attend a training conference.



However, the office will be open from 8 am to 5 pm each day and available for information, van transportation requests and emergencies.

The van will be running on its normal schedule the Monday, Wednesday and Thursday of that week.

We thank you in advance for your understanding.

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

OCTOBER OUTREACH PROGRAM

Oct. 2nd	8-12	Batesburg/Leesville
Oct. 9th	9-12	Chapin
Oct. 16th	8-12	Swansea
Oct. 23rd	9-12	West Columbia

TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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