

Veterans Affairs Office of Lexington County

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EDITOR: *Debbie Myers*



VET NEWS

December 2009 -
January 2010

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SPECIAL HOLIDAY EDITION

DECEMBER/ JANUARY OUTREACH PROGRAM DATES

Dec. 1st	9-12	Batesburg-Leesville
Dec. 8th	9-12	Chapin
Jan. 5th	9-12	Batesburg-Leesville
Jan. 12th	9-12	Chapin

TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

Please note regarding outreach: Appointments are **greatly** appreciated, and walk-ins will be assisted between appointments. Thank you for helping us better assist you!



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Dec. 7th Anniversary of Pearl Harbor Attack (1941)
- Dec. 12th Wreaths Across America - Noon
Ft. Jackson National Cemetery
- Dec. 21st Winter Begins
- Dec. 25th Christmas Day
- Jan. 1st New Year's Day
- Jan. 11th Veterans Advisory
Committee Meeting-
7 PM
- Jan. 18th Martin Luther King Holiday-
County Offices Closed



PLEASE NOTE:

The Lexington DAV van WILL NOT RUN on Dec. 24th, 28th, 31st or Jan. 18th.



Also, please note that our OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED on Dec. 24th, 25th and 28th in celebration of the Christmas Holiday. We will also be closed on January 1st for New Year's Day.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

Ft. Jackson National Cemetery and Florence National Cemetery will participate in the **Wreaths Across America** project this year. Organizers of the local events hope for 100% participation to have a wreath on every grave. Ceremonies will simultaneously commence nationwide on **Saturday, December 12, 2009 at 12:00 noon**, involving all National Cemeteries.

LEXINGTON VETERANS PARADE 2009



Ladies Auxiliary—Military Order of the Purple Heart

Congressman Joe Wilson on hand to greet the participants



The Blue Star Mothers walk the parade route to honor those who serve



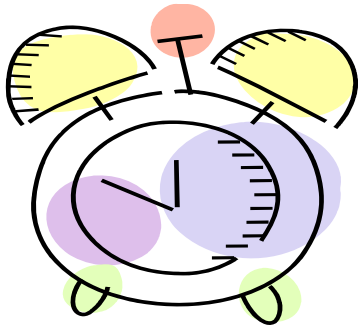
Grand Marshalls - Former Prisoners of War

24-HOUR HOTLINE: HELP AVAILABLE FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Veterans going through an emotional crisis during the holidays can turn to the 24-hour hotline for help.
The TOLL-FREE # is 1-800-273-8255.

It is staffed with mental health professionals, as provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

TIME TO SUBMIT THOSE ANNUAL REPORTS!



Anyone who receives an Eligibility Verification Report (EVR) or Medical Expense Report should call our office as soon as possible to schedule an appointment for the completion of these forms.

Once your appointment is set, please gather the following information relating to your 2009 expenses:

- ◇ Computer printout from pharmacy itemizing medication expenses
- ◇ Paid receipts for doctor/hospital Expense, glasses and eye exams, hearing aids, dental care, over-the-counter drugs
- ◇ Itemization of total mileage accumulated while traveling to/from doctors, hospital, pharmacy
- ◇ Private Medical Insurance premiums

Also bring with you items relating to your **INCOME**, such as your Social Security 2010 award statement, checking/savings account information, IRA/stocks/bonds/mutual funds from 2009. Method of payment information for aid and attendance payment (if applicable) should be provided to us as well.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will **not consider** canceled checks as proof of payment, nor will Explanation of Benefits Statements (EOB) or prescriptions qualify as proof of expense. These forms should be postmarked by March 1, 2010 to avoid interruption of compensation payments.



**Hoping you have a
Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year!
Gary, Barbara,
Jennifer & Debbie**





QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

"The time is near at hand which must determine whether Americans are to be free men or slaves."

-George Washington

WE HONOR THOSE WHO SERVE

**Van Drivers
Appreciation Luncheon
2009**

The office staff held a van drivers appreciation luncheon on Friday, December 11th, to honor the volunteer van drivers for all of their hard work. This year, the drivers and their spouses were treated to a picnic in December with hotdogs and all the fixings.



We would like to thank our drivers (and their spouses) for all their time and hard work. This is a very special and dedicated group of guys.

From left to right: Gary Baker, Lexington VA County Services Officer; Roger Rucker; Ed Gavin; Craig Brandt; Charlie Davis; Jim Borkanovich; Ted Powell and Matt "Doc" Becker.

Photo courtesy of Delores Rucker



**DO YOU THINK YOU
COULD BE ONE OF
OUR VAN DRIVERS?**

If you are interested in serving our county's disabled veterans in this way, please call us at 803-785-8400 or come by our office for an application today! Thanks!

THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO !

USO COLUMBIA AIRPORT NEEDS LIST

We are often asked what items are needed at the USO now serving our military service members at Columbia airport. Here is a list of items that are always needed. This list will be updated as needed. You may contact Carol Davis at the lounge to make arrangements for drop off, or call her at the numbers listed here. Also, items may be dropped off at our office in Lexington. See page 1 of this newsletter for our location and contact information.

Food and Beverage items needed:

Sweet & Salty:

- Beef Jerky
- Chewing gum
- Chips
- Cookies
- Crackers
- Granola/Power bars
- Hard candy
- Licorice
- Microwave popcorn
- Peanuts/Cashews
- Pudding/plastic spoons
- Rice Crispy treats
- Sunflower seeds
- Trail mix
- Muffins

Fruit:

- Apples
- Bananas
- Oranges
- Raisins

Beverages:

- Bottled Water
- Coffee
- Hot Chocolate
- Juice boxes
- Power Aide/Gator Aide
- Soda
- Tea Bags/individually wrapped
- Vitamin water
- Half & Half
- Sugar
- Sweet N Low

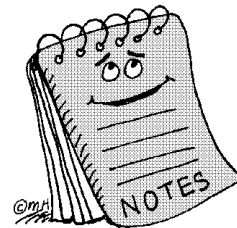
Please note: ALL FOOD ITEMS MUST BE INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED AND PACKAGED.

Hygiene and Entertainment items needed:

General Hygiene:

- Breath mints
- Chap stick/Blistex

- Cough Drops
- Eye drops
- Hand sanitizer
- Lotion
- Moist wipes
- Sunscreen lotion



Entertainment:

- Batteries
- Coloring books and crayons
- Crossword puzzle books
- Disposable cameras
- DVD's
- Envelopes
- Music CD's
- Pens
- Phone cards (International)
- Playing Cards
- Postcards/note cards
- Nerf toys (football,....)
- Travel Games
- Word Search books
- Writing paper

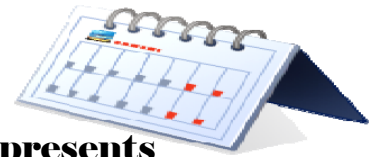
Here are a few notes about items baked for the lounge:

1. Cookies, cake slices, candies, etc. must be individually wrapped for use in the lounge.
2. Items must have a label stating what the item is and if there is chocolate, nuts or peanut butter or wheat in them. We don't want to send the service members off with an allergic reaction.
3. Your name or the name of your organization must also be on the label.
4. Labels must also have the date the items were baked.

Thank you so much for your help!

Carol Davis
USO Volunteer Coordinator,
Columbia SC Armed Forces Lounge Columbia
Metropolitan Airport
Lounge Phone # (803) 822-7953
After Hours: (803) 739-2774

SAVE THE DATE



The Midlands Chapter of Blue Star Mothers presents
the

2010 Palmetto Patriots' Ball

Where: Medallion Center, Columbia, SC

When: Saturday, May 22, 2010

6pm—until

Keynote speaker—Oliver North

Details at www.palmettopatriotsball.org

Honor Flight gets \$25,000 Boost

[Source: The State Newspaper, December 8, 2009]

Record-setting gift will help group fly more WWII veterans to Washington. The National Guard Association of South Carolina, SCANA corp. and Wal-Mart will present the group with a check for \$25,000. It represents the concession proceeds from October's McEntire Air and Ground Show Expo held at McEntire Joint National Guard Base.

So far, Honor Flight SC in one year has flown 650 World War II veterans to see the National World War II Memorial.

Each chartered flight costs \$50,000. Much of the money is raised by guardians—individuals who pay \$500 to assist the vets on the one-day trips. Many of the veterans are in poor health, some in wheelchairs.

In addition to the World War II Memorial, the flights include visits to the Vietnam and Korean memorials, Arlington National Cemetery and the Marine Corps War Memorial.

There are 3 million World War II veterans across the nation, but they are dying at the rate of 1,500 a day. The Honor Flight Network has 73 hubs in 30 states, all dedicated to flying as many veterans as possible to the memorial.