

**Veterans Affairs Office  
of Lexington County**



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*Editor: Cindy Wise*

# VET NEWS

December 2010

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## DECEMBER DATES FOR OUTREACH PROGRAM

Dec. 7th: 9-12 Batesburg-Leesville  
Dec. 14th 9-12 Chapin

Please call the office to schedule an  
appointment.

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### TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

## DATES TO REMEMBER:

Dec. 7th National Pearl Harbor  
Remembrance Day  
Dec. 8th World War II Began (1941)  
Dec. 10th Germany & Italy Declared  
War on U.S. (1941)  
Dec. 21st Winter Begins  
Dec. 25th Christmas Day  
Dec. 31st Official End of WWII (1946)

**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW  
YEAR FROM OUR STAFF:**



**Gary, Barbara, Jennifer and Cindy**



## REMINDER

The Lexington County Veterans Affairs Office will be closed December 24th, 27th and 28th for Christmas and on January 3rd for New Year's Day. The DAV van **will not** run on December 27th and January 3rd.

*Quote of the month: "America will never be destroyed  
from the outside. If we falter and lose our freedoms, it will  
be because we destroyed ourselves."*

**Abraham Lincoln**

## SUPPORT GROUP MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

If you are the wife of a combat veteran, please feel free to attend the monthly wives' support group meeting the 2nd Monday of each month in Room 110 (**auditorium**) of the Lexington County Auxiliary Administration Building.

The group will be meeting at **12:00 p.m.** on **December 13**. Please come for support and discussion on helpful topics related to being a spouse of a combat veteran. This group is led by Tyrone Hart from the Columbia Vet Center.

No reservation is necessary, but you can call Tyrone at 765-9944 for more information.

### Saluting our bravest



Wayne Caughman, left, Ronnie Cromer, back, and Wallace Oswald, are honored for their service in the Gulf Wars during the Lexington Veterans Parade on November 7th. (source Lexington Chronicle)



**WREATHS-ACROSS-AMERICA.ORG**  
**REMEMBER - HONOR - TEACH**

2010 will mark the 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Worcester Wreath Company donating Maine wreaths to adorn the headstones of our Nation's veterans at Arlington National Cemetery. In addition to 15,000 wreaths destined for Virginia, Worcester Wreath will again donate 7 ceremonial wreaths to over 410 State, National and local cemeteries across the Country. In 2009 wreath-laying ceremonies were coordinated in 24 foreign cemeteries and aboard Naval ships in all Seven Seas, this tradition continues into 2010.

In response to the many voices who wanted to share in the project, the non-profit Wreaths Across America organization was formed (EIN: 20-8362270) to expand the program by offering supporters the opportunity to sponsor a wreath. Our goal is to one day see every veterans grave in the country covered to honor every veteran during the holidays. In 2008 we expanded once again to give even more organizations the chance to help bring our goal to fruition by providing the opportunity to fund raise for their organizations needs along with helping Wreaths Across America gather sponsorships for wreaths.

Sponsorships are \$15 each. Proceeds place a wreath at one of the participating cemeteries, help support our fundraising partners, educational and veterans services outreach. Please note that **all sponsorships are sent directly to the location and no wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.**

There is no stipulation for participation in these activities. We welcome all to join us at Wreaths Across America as the organization was formed to promote and coordinate sponsorship of wreaths for the other national, state and local cemeteries that have shown a desire to emulate the Arlington wreath-laying event. If you would like to participate or help bring sponsored wreaths to your local community, please contact us and we will help connect you with other groups already working in your area.

## **Schedule of Events**

**Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

Start of World's Longest Veterans Parade from Maine to participating locations all across the Country

**Monday, December 6<sup>th</sup>**

State House wreath-laying ceremonies in all 50 States and Puerto Rico

**Saturday December 11<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 noon (EST)**

Simultaneous wreath laying ceremonies at over 350 locations all across the World.

For more information visit [www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org](http://www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org), or call 207-483-2039.

You can also email [Marcy@wreathscrossamerica.org](mailto:Marcy@wreathscrossamerica.org), [Amy@waa08@yahoo.com](mailto:Amy@waa08@yahoo.com) or [Wayne@wreathscrossamerica.org](mailto:Wayne@wreathscrossamerica.org) Locally, you can contact Carol at [waaftjackson@yahoo.com](mailto:waaftjackson@yahoo.com) or call (803) 739-2774



## 'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone, in a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.

I had come down the chimney with presents to give and to see just who in this home did live.

I looked all about, a strange sight I did see, no tinsel, no presents, not even a tree. No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand. On the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.

With medals and badges, awards of all kinds, a sober thought came through my mind.

For this house was different, it was dark and dreary. I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone, curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home. The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder, not how I pictured a United States soldier.

Was this the hero of whom I 'd just read? Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?

I realized the families that I saw this night, owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight. Soon round the world, the children would play, and grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas day. They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone on a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.

The very thought brought a tear to my eye, I dropped to my knees and started to cry.

The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice, "Santa don't cry, this life is my choice. I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more, my life is my God, my Country, my Corps." The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep, I couldn't control it I continued to weep.

I kept watch for hours, so silent and still and we both shivered from the cold night's chill. I didn't want to leave on that cold winter's night, this guardian of honor so willing to fight.

Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure, whispered "Carry on Santa, it's Christmas Day, all is secure."

One look at my watch, and I knew he was right.

"Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night."

*-Anonymous*

**Wreaths Across America.org™**



Tax ID 20-8362270

## Wreath Sponsorship Form

\*Sponsored wreaths are placed on the grave markers at state, national veterans cemeteries as well as local cemeteries each December. Wreaths may be purchased online at [www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org](http://www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org). If you wish to make your sponsorship with a credit card please visit our website for a secure online transaction.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

(To receive our FREE email newsletter)

Sponsoring Group ID Number: SCNDV001

**For every 2 Wreaths purchased on this form, we receive a third one free**

Cemetery Designation: Fort Jackson National Cemetery, Columbia, SC  
(please select one cemetery per group)

Cemetery ID Number: SCFJNC  
(located on our website under locations tab)

Sponsorship	Price	Quantity	Total
Individual= 1 Wreath	\$15.00		
Family= 4 Wreaths	\$60.00		
Small Business= 10 Wreaths	\$150.00		
Corporate= 100 Wreaths or more	\$15.00 each wreath		
WAA Pins (25 pins per pack)	\$10.00 / pk		
WAA Patch	\$3.00 each		
		<b>Grand Total</b>	

**\*\*WE DO NOT TAKE GRAVE SPECIFIC REQUESTS\*\***

Please make All checks payable to:  
Wreaths Across America TM  
P.O. BOX 3356  
West Columbia, SC 29171  
Local Contact:  
Carol Davis (803) 739-2774

Thank you for your Sponsorship and joining us in our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach!

Please note that all sponsorships are sent directly to the location and no wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.



## ***Attack on Pearl Harbor - December 7, 1941*** ***[Information taken from Department of the Navy website]***

The December 7, 1941 Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor was one of the great defining moments in history. A single carefully-planned and well-executed stroke removed the United States Navy's battleship force as a possible threat to the Japanese Empire's southward expansion. America, unprepared and now considerably weakened, was abruptly brought into the Second World War as a full combatant.

Eighteen months earlier, **President Franklin D. Roosevelt** had transferred the United States Fleet to Pearl Harbor as a presumed deterrent to Japanese aggression. The Japanese military, deeply engaged in the seemingly endless war it had started against China in mid-1937, badly needed oil and other raw materials. Commercial access to these was gradually curtailed as the conquests continued. In July 1941 the Western powers effectively halted trade with Japan. From then on, as the desperate Japanese schemed to seize the oil and mineral-rich East Indies and Southeast Asia, a Pacific war was virtually inevitable.

By late November 1941, with peace negotiations clearly approaching an end, informed U.S. officials (and they were well-informed, they believed, through an ability to read Japan's diplomatic codes) fully expected a Japanese attack into the Indies, Malaya and probably the Philippines. Completely unanticipated was the prospect that Japan would attack east, as well.

The U.S. Fleet's Pearl Harbor base was reachable by an aircraft carrier force, and the Japanese Navy secretly sent one across the Pacific with greater aerial striking power than had ever been seen on the World's oceans. Its planes hit just before 8AM on 7 December. Within a short time five of eight battleships at Pearl Harbor were sunk or sinking, with the rest damaged. Several other ships and most Hawaii-based combat planes were also knocked out and over 2400 Americans were dead. Soon after, Japanese planes eliminated much of the American air force in the Philippines, and a Japanese Army was ashore in Malaya.

These great Japanese successes, achieved without prior diplomatic formalities, shocked and enraged the previously divided American people into a level of purposeful unity hardly seen before or since. For the next five months, until the Battle of the Coral Sea in early May, Japan's far-reaching offensives proceeded untroubled by fruitful opposition. American and Allied morale suffered accordingly. Under normal political circumstances, an accommodation might have been considered.

However, the memory of the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor fueled a determination to fight on. Once the Battle of Midway in early June 1942 had eliminated much of Japan's striking power, that same memory stoked a relentless war to reverse her conquests and remove her, and her German and Italian allies, as future threats to world peace.