

**Veterans Affairs Office  
of Lexington County**



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# VET NEWS

May 2011

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SUITE 101  
LEXINGTON, S.C. 29072

## MAY DATES FOR OUTREACH PROGRAM

May 3rd: 9-12 Batesburg-Leesville

**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:

- May 1 National Day of Prayer
- May 8 Mother's Day
- May 10 Confederate Memorial Day
- May 14 Palmetto Patriots Ball
- May 21 Armed Forces Day
- May 30 Memorial Day



## REMINDER:

The Lexington County Veterans Affairs Office will be closed on May 10 in observance of Confederate Memorial Day and May 30 in observance of Memorial Day.

The DAV Van will not run on May 30.

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

“Only our individual faith in freedom can keep us free.”

-Dwight D. Eisenhower





## **2011 Palmetto Patriots Ball**

**Date: May 14, 2011**



## **Keynote Speaker**

**Lt. General Russel Honore'  
US Army (Ret)**

### **Mission Statement:**

The Blue Star Mothers of South Carolina look forward to your support and attendance at this 3rd annual Palmetto Patriots' Ball to celebrate and to benefit the Service Members, Veterans and their families in South Carolina.

The goal of this event is to allow us all to convey our pride and gratitude to our Active and Retired Members of the United States Armed Forces. We know this event will leave an indelible impression on those who attend. Those present will take home a renewed sense of pride and gratitude for the Service Members and Veterans of South Carolina.

We will recognize those who have dedicated their lives to protect our country and preserve and secure the blessing of our Liberty as we honor the South Carolina Veterans of all Military Branches.

You will visit with current and past members of our armed services. Then join together to reflect and honor our fallen service men and women. We will pause to lift up in prayer those who have not yet returned home to us.

Join us for an elegant meal with fellow South Carolinians as you are moved by our speakers and the level of patriotism that will encompass you.

There will be a silent Auction and door prizes with all proceeds being donated to this year's selected beneficiaries.

*The Palmetto Patriots' Ball is hosted by the Blue Star Mothers of South Carolina, a non-profit 501 (c) 3 charity. Contributions are tax deductible under applicable laws.*

# Congratulations!

We would like to congratulate two of our employees in the Lexington County VA Office. Barbara O'Connor, Assistant County Service Officer, retired on April 22nd to spend more time with her family and new granddaughter, who was there to greet her when she arrived in Chicago on Saturday, April 23rd. She had 10 years of service with our office, starting out as Veterans Specialist and then being promoted to Assistant County Service Officer. She will be truly missed.

Jennifer Hendrix was promoted to Assistant County Service Officer to take Barbara's place. She has 5 years of service with our office as Veterans Specialist and is highly qualified to serve in this position. We are glad to have her move up.

We wish both of them the best!

Barbara being presented a certificate by Howard Metcalf, Interim Director, Governor's Office Of Veterans Affairs.



The South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (SCDMV) has redesigned three Disabled Veteran license plates. The new plates will replace the current red and white plates. The new design is blue and white with red borders and features a blue star on the left side of the plate.

Current plate holders may be required to provide a new Veteran's Administration certification to obtain the new design. Veterans should contact SCDMV to find out if new certification is required. Please be aware that this change may increase the number of certification requests you receive from disabled veterans.

To apply for a Disabled Veteran License Plate, applicants must submit a letter or other documentation from the U.S., Regional or County Veterans Administration certifying that he or she is war time disabled veteran who:

- 1) is entitled to compensation for the loss of use of one or both legs or arms, or
- 2) has a permanent impairment of vision in both eyes to a degree as to constitute virtual blindness and is entitled to a special monthly statutory award by reason thereof, or
- 3) is a SC veteran classified as totally and permanently disabled due to service-connected disabilities as determined from the medical records on file with the U.S. or county Department of Veterans Affairs.

The surviving spouse of a certified disabled veteran may also obtain or retain the license plates until remarried. There is no charge for any of the Disabled Veteran license plates.

Should you have any questions regarding the new plates, please contact Hermenia Perkins-Brown at 803.896.9863 or email [Hermenia.Brown@scdmv.net](mailto:Hermenia.Brown@scdmv.net)

## Confederate Memorial Day

Confederate Memorial Day is a day set aside in the South to pay tribute to those who served with the Confederate forces during the American Civil War.

The founder of the Federal Memorial Day, John A Logan (Commander in Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic), was so impressed with the way the South honored their dead with a special day, he became convinced that such a day must be created to honor Union dead.

The battlefield graves all around Richmond could be seen "marked with little white flags, faded wreaths of laurel" where family and friends of Confederate soldiers had placed them. Logan is reported to have been "deeply touched" and said "it was most fitting; that the ancients, especially the Greeks, had honored their dead, particularly their heroes, by chaplets of laurel and flowers, and that he intended to issue an order designating a day for decorating the grave of every soldier in this land, and if he could he would have made it a holiday." This of course was done at a later date, thus, our National Memorial Day.

## GI BILL UPDATE 95

Legislation introduced in Congress on 6 APR would ensure that students attending college under the new post-9/11 GI Bill will have their full tuition covered, even if the cost exceeds the \$17,500 cap put in place under recent changes to the program. The measures, overshadowed by the looming government shutdown, are sponsored by House Veterans Affairs Chairman Jeff Miller, R-Fla., and Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y. In statements released Thursday, both said they hope to act on the legislation before the new changes go into effect, potentially costing some student veterans thousands of dollars. The bill, H.R.1383, Restoring GI Bill Fairness Act of 2011, would provide temporary relief limited to people who were enrolled in a private institution of higher learning before the Post-9/11 GI Bill Veterans Educational Assistance Act was signed into law on 4 JAN and created the new nationwide tuition limit. In December, Congress passed changes to the new GI Bill rules, including a flat rate of \$17,500 per year for tuition and fees for private and out-of-state public universities. That move will give most students thousands more in tuition funding, but for students whose current tuition costs exceed \$17,500, the move could leave them deep in debt.

Veterans groups have urged lawmakers to pass a quick fix to grandfather those students in at current tuition rates, making sure they can complete their college classes. Both Schumer's and Miller's bills would do that, promising all veterans currently enrolled in classes tuition assistance totaling either \$17,500 or the money they received for the fall 2010 semester, whichever is greater. In a statement, Schumer said the move will —ensure that our veterans receive the full benefits they were promised and rightly deserve.

Miller told Stars and Stripes that he's optimistic his bill can be passed before the changes go into effect this August, saying the move will allow student veterans affected to finish the education they started. Millers bill would pay for the grandfather clause by holding GI Bill housing stipends flat for two years, a move that could cost all student veterans several hundred dollars in coming months. Miller said that move was needed to make sure the fix did not add to the national deficit. Schumer's measure does not include a cost offset. No hearings have been scheduled on either bill. If legislation is not passed, the new GI Bill tuition rates will go into effect for the fall 2011 semester. [Source: Stars and Stripes Leo Shane article 8 Apr 2011 ++]

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## Memorial Day History

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service. It's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. It is more likely that it had many separate beginnings; several different towns, along with planned or spontaneous gatherings of people to honor the war dead in the 1860's tapped into the general human need to honor our dead. It is not important who was the first, what is important is that Memorial Day was established. Memorial Day is not about division. It is about reconciliation; it is about coming together to honor those who gave their all.

Memorial Day was first observed on May 30, 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war). It is now celebrated in almost every State on the last Monday in May.

Traditional observance of Memorial Day has diminished over the years. Many Americans nowadays have forgotten the meaning and traditions of Memorial Day.

To help re-educate and remind Americans of the true meaning of Memorial Day, the "National Moment of Remembrance" resolution was passed on Dec 2000 which asks that at 3pm local time, for all Americans "to voluntarily and informally observe in their own way a moment of remembrance and respect, pausing from whatever they are doing for a moment of silence or listening to Taps." The Moment of Remembrance is a step in the right direction to returning the meaning back to the day.