



LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS NEWS

"Serving those who served and sacrificed for America"

October 2012

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From the Director...

Last month I attended a very moving memorial ceremony in Columbia to remember the events that happened on September 11, 2001. On that same day at the Lexington County Council meeting, our very own

Vietnam Combat Veterans Group led the Pledge of Allegiance. We also had a very special presentation by Councilman Bobby Keisler to the Purple Heart Association declaring Lexington County as the first Purple Heart County in the State. The pride in that room was overwhelming and a copy of the Resolution is now proudly displayed in our lobby.

Our office was approached recently about a Veteran's group soliciting money at various locations throughout Lexington County and the group even told people we knew about them and supported them. They call themselves the United Veterans Association and have been spotted periodically collecting money along the side of the road, in front of Wal-mart and other establishments. Our office does **not** support or condone this organization and please know they are a legal charity out of Greenville and we are uncertain why they bring themselves to our county. Naturally, this is a free country and citizens may give to the charity of their choice but please don't feel like you have to donate to this organization. We appreciate the many Veterans' who called us about their activity and they did receive a visit from the Sheriff's Department.

We are gearing up for the Lexington County Veterans' Parade on November 4 at 3pm and hope you will be a part of it. We have received many entries so far and we hope to make this the biggest one ever! It is the tenth anniversary of our parade and my staff and I are proud to be associated with this salute to all Veterans.

As most of you may know, the Governor signed into law a bill to add Veteran to the SC driver's license. This is the biggest piece of legislation to benefit Veterans that we have seen in a long time. It will now allow a Veteran to obtain a discount at many establishments in the state that require picture proof a person is a Veteran. Speaking of discounts, in our next issue we will have our annual list of free and discounted items to honor Veteran's for Veteran's Day, please watch for it.

It is an honor to serve Lexington County!

**The office will be closed for the days of
October 10th through October 12th
for training in Columbia.**



AT-A-GLANCE
October

.....

Thursday, October 4	Gaston/Swansea Outreach
Friday, October 5	Chapin Outreach
Monday, October 8	Columbus Day
Wednesday, October 10 thru Friday, October 12	SCACVO Fall Training in Columbia
Saturday, October 13	US Navy established—1775
Tuesday, October 16	National Boss Day
Tuesday, October 23	Shandon Baptist Church Expo from 9am-12pm
Wednesday, October 24	United Nations Day
Wednesday, October 31	Halloween

- Purple—Holidays/Special Days
- Blue—Outreach dates
- Red—County Offices Closed/No van scheduled
- Black—Director’s appearances in the County
- Pink—Special Events throughout the County
- Orange—Special event—Director Out of Office
- Dark Green—Special Notices



Appointments are strongly encouraged to meet with our Veterans Counselors.

Mark your calendar...

The SC State Fair will be October 10th through October 21st.



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**OCTOBER DATES FOR
OUTREACH PROGRAM**

October 4th - Gaston/Swansea Outreach

October 5th - Chapin Outreach

**No Cayce/West Columbia or Batesburg/
Leesville Outreach this month.**

**TOLL-FREE
TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Lexington Main Office: 785-8400

From Batesburg/Leesville: 332-8400

From Chapin: 941-0231

We are now emailing copies of the newsletter. Please contact the office to be added to the newsletter email list.

New Office Policy

Please call the office to schedule an appointment for outreach in all four areas. Walk-ins will be seen after appointments if time permits.

Appeal Process

Veterans and other claimants for VA benefits have the right to appeal decisions made by the VA regional office, medical center or National Cemetery Administration (NCA) office. Typical issues appealed are disability compensation, pension, education benefits, recovery of overpayments, reimbursement for unauthorized medical services, and denial of burial and memorial benefits.



A claimant has one year from the date of the notification of a VA decision to file an appeal. The first step in the appeal process is for a claimant to file a written notice of disagreement with the VA regional office, medical center or NCA office that made the decision. This must be in writing, specifying what is being appealed and the date of the decision.



Following receipt of the written notice, VA will furnish the claimant with an appeal election letter. At this point, the claimant will need to select a traditional or non-traditional appeal process.

Traditional Appeal Process

With the traditional appeal process, the claimant can elect a hearing at the Board of Veterans Affairs (BVA) in Washington, a BVA Video Conference hearing or BVA “in-person” hearing. The BVA video conference and BVA “in-person” hearings are conducted at the local VA regional offices. The VA will furnish the claimant a “Statement of the Case” describing what facts, laws and regulations were used in deciding the case. Along with this, a VA Form 9 will be included.

Non-traditional Appeal Process

With the non-traditional appeal process, the claimant elects to have a local hearing by a Regional Office Decision Review Officer (DRO). These hearings are held in the regional office by a DRO. The DRO will evaluate the evidence you present and make a decision on your appeal without waiting to send the case to the BVA. If you’re not satisfied with the DRO’s decision, you will be sent a Statement of the Case with a VA Form 9 and your appeal then goes to the BVA.



Only \$5 Million left in this year's Palmetto Heroes home loan fund

Please help us remind your members that there is only \$5 million left in the SC Housing Palmetto Heroes home loan fund. Anyone hoping to purchase a home with these funds needs to move quickly.

Palmetto Heroes funds are available to **teachers, nurses, law enforcement officers (including correctional officers), firefighters, veterans and emergency medical services workers.**

Rates for Palmetto Heroes have dropped to **3.5%** and, perhaps most importantly, have **\$5000** down payment assistance available to help with closing cost.

Please help us get the word out. More details are available at our website at: <http://www.schousing.com/First-Time Home Buyers/Palmetto Heroes>

Prints for Sale

We have several copies of the Veterans Memorial and Gibson Pond prints for sale in our office. The cost is \$10.00 each. The proceeds will be placed in our Veteran's Fund and/or Van Fund. Your donation is tax-deductible and a receipt can be provided if you wish. Come by the office to have a closer look at the prints. Please stop by our office M-F from 8 to 5 to purchase one or more of these beautiful prints!

Veterans Crisis Line



The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring Department of Veterans Affairs responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text. Veterans and their loved ones can call 1-800-273-8255 and press 1, chat online, or send a text message to 838255 to receive confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Just A Reminder...

Active and retired military personnel and their dependents with proper military ID will be admitted **FREE** the entire 12 days of the fair. This is in appreciation for their service to our country and its citizens.



Also, join in for a patriotic flag-raising ceremony each day of the fair at 12:00 noon near the South Gate as the State Fair salutes our military and the USA.



The State Fair opens on Wednesday, October 10th and runs through Sunday, October 21st.

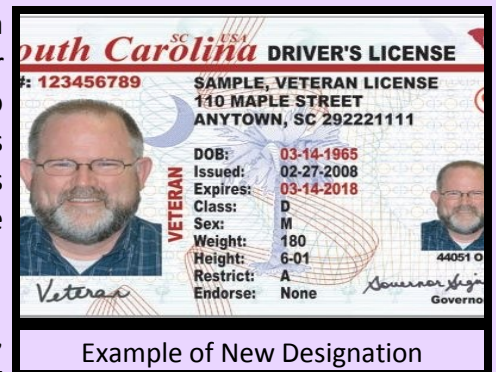
New Drivers License Information

The South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) announced on the September 7, 2012, the availability of a "VETERAN" designation on driver licenses, identification cards and beginner permits for individuals who served honorably in the United States Armed Forces.

The VETERAN designation applies only to individuals who served honorably as members of the United States Armed Forces. To apply, Veterans must present their Form DD214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty), which indicates an honorable discharge. No other proof of service will be accepted. Military dependents, spouses, or civilian employees on military bases are not eligible.

The cost to add VETERAN designation to a driver license, identification card or beginner permit is \$1.00. If a customer adds the designation without changing or renewing his license, he will pay only the \$1.00 fee. However, if the customer conducts another license transaction, he will pay \$1.00 plus the required transaction fee. For example, a customer that adds the designation when he renews his 10-year driver license would pay \$25.00 plus the \$1.00 fee. A customer who changes his address and adds the designation would pay \$10.00 plus the \$1.00 fee. Each time a customer changes or renews his credential, he must pay an additional \$1.00 fee to add the designation.

Because state law requires documentation of military service, Veterans applying for the designation must visit a DMV office. To get the best service in the shortest amount of time, DMV recommends that customers visit the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Customers should also remember that the days before and after a holiday are extremely busy at DMV.



Example of New Designation

Volunteers needed

County Council Needs You!



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 you would need to be present around 4 to 4:15pm. Contact the office at 803-785-8400 if you are interested.

Looking for Volunteer Van Drivers

The van runs on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, taking Veterans to appointments at DORN VAMC for their scheduled appointments between 9am and 1pm. If you can volunteer to drive the DAV van at least 1 day a month, contact the office at 803-785-8400.



Special Recognition for Lexington County

Lexington County Council presented a resolution to the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) identifying Lexington County as the first Purple Heart county in the State. MOPH also presented County Council with a plaque and purple heart lapel pins. There is also a copy of the resolution in our office.



From left to right: County Council Chairman, Bill Banning, Councilman, Bobby Keisler, Veterans Affairs Director, Ed Lundeen, and State Commander of MOPH, James Miller.



Presentation of the Purple Heart lapel pins to the entire County Council



Chairman Bill Banning with State Commander of MOPH, James Miller



Special coin presentation to Councilman Bobby Keisler by State Commander of MOPH, James Miller





You are cordially invited to attend the

*Belgian Waffle Breakfast Fundraiser and
Celebration of the Opening for*

The Shepherd's Center of Lexington

Friday, November 2, 2012

**Lexington United Methodist Church
309 East Main Street, Lexington**

Donation for Breakfast - \$7 payable at door

Serving of Belgian Waffles – 8 am to 9 am

Celebration of Opening – 9:15 am to 9:45 am

Registration for Lifelong Learning Courses – 9:45 am to 11 am

A Shepherd's Center has the conviction that **life is not over at retirement** but opens a door to a new chapter of life. A life in which we continue to **contribute** to society, a time we **learn new skills**, make new **friends**, a time to find ways to **serve** others, a time to learn how to take care of ourselves, and a time to get connected in fresh ways within our faith community

The Shepherd's Center of Lexington is affiliated with the Shepherd's Centers of America. All Shepherd's Centers are nonprofit organizations focused on serving the needs of their local communities. For more details visit the following website: www.shepherdcenters.org

Printed material furnished, compliments of Simplified Office Systems, Dave Gordon, 917-5489



Watch out for all the
ghosts and goblins on the 31st.
HAPPY HALLOWEEN



For basic information and questions,
please check out our webpage at
www.lex-co.sc.gov/departments/DeptRZ/va/Pages/index.aspx

We have also moved the
Veterans Service Organizations in Lexington County
to our Webpage.

Changes to TRICARE

TRICARE Prime enrollment fees to increase.

TRICARE Prime enrollment fees will increase for some retired military personnel and their families by 3.6 percent and for most by 17 percent starting October 1st.

TRICARE Management Activity announced July 2 its new annual fee structure for military retirees enrolled in Prime. For those who enrolled before October 1, 2011, annual fees will increase for individuals from \$230 to \$269.28, and from \$460 to \$538.56 for families.

Those who enrolled after October 2, 2011, and all new beneficiaries will pay \$269.28 a year for individuals, up from \$260, and \$538.56 for families up from \$520.

The increase falls in line with legislation passed in 2011 restricting the amount the Pentagon can increase annual fees to the military cost-of-living adjustment. The TRICARE fee increases are equal to the cost-of-living adjustment in military retired pay made December 1, 2011.

Survivors of active duty deceased sponsors or medically-retired uniformed service members and their dependents are exempt from enrollment fee increases. They continue to pay the rate they paid when the survivor or medically-retired member enrolled.



The truth of the matter is that you always know the right thing to do.
The hard part is doing it. -Norman Schwarzkopf





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

In 2007, the Worcester family, along with veterans, and others who had helped with their annual Christmas wreath ceremony in Arlington, formed Wreaths Across America™, to continue and expand this effort, and support other groups around the country who wanted to do the same. This nonprofit organization continues the Arlington tradition as part of its mission to Remember, Honor and Teach.

In 2011, Wreaths Across America and our national network of volunteers laid over 320,000 memorial wreaths at 741 locations in the United States and beyond. We accomplished this with help from 1185 fundraising groups, corporate contributions, and donations of trucking, shipping, and thousands of helping hands. Our annual pilgrimage from Harrington, Maine to Arlington National Cemetery is known as the world's largest veteran's parade, stopping at schools, monuments, veteran's homes and communities all along the way to remind people how important it is to remember, honor and teach.

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.*

We welcome all to join us at any Wreaths Across America ceremony. 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 9th, 2012

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

Monday, December 10th, 12:00 noon S.C. Veterans Memorial on the South Carolina State House grounds, and in all 50 States and Puerto Rico

Saturday December 15th, 12:00 noon (EST) Ft. Jackson National Cemetery, 4170 Percival Rd. Columbia, SC 29229

Simultaneous wreath laying ceremonies will be held at over 750 locations all across the World.

For more information visit www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org, or call 877-385-9504.
Locally, you can contact Carol Davis at waftjackson@yahoo.com or call (803) 739-2774



Tax ID 20-8362270

Wreath Sponsorship Form

*Sponsored wreaths are placed on the grave markers at state and national veterans cemeteries as well as local cemeteries each December. Wreaths may be purchased online at

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 3rd one free.

Cemetery Designation: Fort Jackson National Cemetery, Columbia, SC

Cemetery ID Number: SCFJNC

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		
		Grand Total	

****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.



CAROLINA



CLEMSON



**REMEMBER WHEN — “BIG THURSDAY”
HEALTH–WELLNESS FAIR**

\$ Invest in Your Well'th

“The greatest wealth is health.” – Virgo

The Columbia Presbyterian Retirement Community

You are invited to participate in our upcoming Health Wellness Fair

Please see Registration and Contract also attached



Thursday, November 15, 2012

2:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

700 DaVega Drive • Lexington, SC 29073 • 803-796-8700

Near the Intersection of I-20 & Hwy 378

W. Columbia side – across from the PB Station

2012 LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS PARADE APPLICATION
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2012 @ 3:00PM
JOIN US IN CELEBRATING OUR 10TH YEAR

NO ENTRY FEE, SIGN UP DUE BY OCTOBER 26th, PLEASE

(IF YOU MISS THE DEADLINE GIVE ME A CALL, EVERYONE IS WELCOME IN THIS PARADE)

ALL MARCHING BANDS AND ROTC GROUPS WILL MEET IN THE EMPTY PARKING LOTS OF BUSINESSES IN THE BUTLER STREET AND MAIN STREET AREA. PLEASE USE CAUTION! PLEASE DROP OFF ALL MEMBERS AND YOU CAN PARK AT THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING PARKING LOT FOR PICK UP. PLEASE, PLEASE DO NOT TAKE UP SPACES AT MCDONALD'S FOR PARKING.

PARADE ROUTE WILL LINE UP AT HAYGOOD AND WEST BUTLER STREET, ENTER MAIN STREET TAKE A LEFT, GO DOWN MAIN STREET, TURN RIGHT ON SOUTH LAKE DRIVE AND THEN LEFT, ENDING AT THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING PARKING LOT.

Name & Description of Entry: _____

Special Request: _____

Entry Contact Person: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: (W) _____ (H) _____

Email address: _____ Fax : _____

Mail Applications To:

Lexington County Veterans Parade
Attn: Sharon Willis
212 South Lake Drive Ste 302
Lexington SC 29072

For More Information Contact:

Lexington Veterans Affairs Office @ 803-785-8400
Sharon Willis @ 803-785-1454
Cell # 803-237-9617
Fax # 803-785-8300

Applications can be emailed to you also. Contact Sharon at swillis@lex-co.com

EVERYTHING WILL BE DONE TO PLACE YOU IN THE LINEUP THAT SHOWCASES YOUR ORGANIZATION AT THE BEST POSSIBLE SPOT. ONCE THE LINEUP FOR THE PARADE HAS BEEN DETERMINED YOU WILL RECEIVE A MAP AND LOCATION FOR YOUR PLACE IN THE PARADE. PLEASE ENTER THE PARADE LINE UP ROUTE FROM SOUTH CHURCH AND GO UP BUTLER STREET. PLEASE DO NOT ENTER FROM COLUMBIA AVENUE OR MAIN. TURNING FLOATS AND TRAILERS AROUND IS VERY DIFFICULT. HAYGOOD STREET MUST BE KEPT OPEN FOR THE LINEUP. MAIN STREET WILL BE CLOSED DOWN AT 2:45 SO PLEASE BE AT YOUR LOCATION BY 2:30.

(A CEREMONY WILL BE HELD AT THE VETERANS MONUMENT FOLLOWING THE PARADE.)

**ALL OF THE VETERANS APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT
AND
THEY THANK YOU VERY MUCH.**

NEED A FLOAT?
CONTACT KIRBY FLOATS @ 803-359-3134.
(DISCOUNTS GIVEN TO VETERANS)

Support and Donate to the WAR DOG MEMORIAL FUND

Veteran's Memorial Park ★



Veteran's Memorial Park in Columbia, S.C. where the S.C. Vietnam Memorial stands is the site for the proposed "War Dog Memorial". Funds and support are being raised to make this worthy tribute to all military working dogs a reality.

S.C. Vietnam Monument ★



Proposed South Carolina War Dog Monument ★



Military working dogs have fought alongside and saved the lives of thousands of American soldier's throughout our history. Many were killed in action . Those who fought alongside these dogs have long considered them their fellow soldier with great reverence. It is only fitting that a memorial honoring them be erected in their memory and those whom they saved and protected. Please donate today. For more info-

Contact:

Allen Marshall: 803-252-6636 /

Johnny Mayo: 803-767-6756

Email: K9heroes@att.net

Website: www.wardogmemorialfund.com

S.C. Memorial Park Fund / "War Dog Memorial Fund"
c/o Smith Barney - PO Box 7277 - Columbia, SC 29202

*** All Contributions are Tax Deductible**

Featured Medal:

Iraq Campaign Medal

The Iraq Campaign Medal is a military award of the United States armed forces which was created by Executive Order 13363 of President George W. Bush on November 29, 2004. The Iraq Campaign Medal was designed by the U.S. Army Institute of Heraldry. The Iraq Campaign Medal became available for general distribution in June 2005. It was awarded to any member of the U.S. military who performed duty within the borders of Iraq (or its territorial waters) for a period of thirty consecutive days or sixty non-consecutive days. The medal was awarded retroactively from March 19, 2003 until the end of Operation New Dawn on December 31, 2011. Personnel who engaged in combat with an enemy force, or personnel wounded in combat or wounded as a result of a terrorist attack within Iraq received the Iraq Campaign Medal regardless of the number of days spent within the country.

In addition, each day participating in aerial missions as a "regularly assigned air crewmember of an aircraft flying sorties into, out of, within or over Iraq and in direct support of the military operations" established a single day of eligibility. When the required minimum days of eligibility were accrued, the medal was then awarded.

The medal was also awarded posthumously to any service member who died in the line of duty within Iraq, including from non-combat injuries such as accidents and mishaps.

On April 23, 2012, an order terminating the award of the campaign medal was issued by the Department of Defense. The order is effective to December 31, 2011, the day Operation New Dawn ended. Personnel serving in Iraq after 2011 will not be eligible to receive the Iraq Campaign Medal.

The Iraq Campaign Medal may be awarded with the arrowhead device for qualified soldiers. The Iraq Campaign Medal may be awarded with the combat operation insignia for qualified sailors assigned to Marine Corps units. The following are the established combat campaigns authorized for service stars to the Iraq Campaign Medal. On June 23, 2011 a DOD announcement closed the Iraqi Sovereignty phase and authorized an additional service star for participation in Operation New Dawn.

The medal is made of bronze and is 1.25 inches (32 mm) in diameter. The obverse depicts a relief of the map of Iraq, surmounted by two lines throughout, superimposed over a palm wreath. Above is the inscription "IRAQ CAMPAIGN." On the reverse, the Statue of Freedom surmounts a sunburst, encircled by two scimitars pointing down with the blades crossing at the tips. Below is the inscription "FOR SERVICE IN IRAQ." The medal is suspended from a ribbon 1.375 inches (34.9 mm) wide. The stripes of the ribbon are: 5/32 inch scarlet at the edges, followed by 1/16 inch white, 1/32 inch green and 1/16 inch white. The white is separated by a 5/32 inch black with a 7/16 inch stripe is chamois in the center.

The award replaced the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal for service in Iraq from March 19, 2003, through April 30, 2005. Personnel who previously received the GWOTEM for Iraq service were given the option to exchange the medal for the Iraq Campaign Medal. Both medals were not authorized for the same period of service in Iraq and any Iraq service which followed the medals creation was recognized only with the Iraq Campaign Medal.



Picture of Iraq Campaign Medal and Ribbon

Coming in the Next Issue... VA Home loans & Special Offers for Veterans Day