



LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS NEWS

"Serving those who served and sacrificed for America"

July/August 2014

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At A Glance Calendar July/August

Weekly on Tuesdays/July	Lexington County Veterans Group Meeting @ 12 noon
Tuesday, July 1st	Special Election Day
Thursday, July 3rd	Gaston/Swansea Outreach
Friday, July 4th	Independence Day County Office Closed No Chapin Outreach Lexington County Peach Festival in Gilbert
Friday, July 11th	Batesburg/Leesville Outreach
Thursday, July 17th	Columbia Chamber Presentation
Tuesday, July 22nd	County Council Meeting
Weekly on Tuesdays/August	Lexington County Veterans Group Meeting @12 noon
Friday, August 1st	Chapin Outreach
Thursday, August 7th	Gaston/Swansea Outreach
Friday, August 8th	Batesburg/Leesville Outreach
Thursday, August 14th	Columbia Chamber Presentation
Tuesday, August 26th	County Council Meeting

<p>Purple—Holidays/Special Days</p> <p>Blue—Outreach dates</p> <p>Red—County Offices Closed, No van scheduled, and Special Notices</p> <p>Black—Director's appearances in the County</p>	<p>Brown—County Council Meetings</p> <p>Pink—Special Events throughout the County</p> <p>Orange—Special event, Director Out of Office</p> <p>Green—Lexington County Veterans Group Meetings</p>
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*Watch out for children and buses!
School starts back in August.*



From the Director...

We would like to congratulate our own Kyle Carpenter for receiving the Medal of Honor, the Nations highest award. There is a featured article on page seven. I have just returned from an extensive trip to the Normandy region of France with 22 World War II Veterans. While there, I kept a journal of our activities and what it was like. I hope you enjoy reading about it in this issue and our future issues. I have been invited to speak publicly on this important trip and am available to any organization that would like to hear about it.

With the heat of summer upon us, I can't help but think about the heat of battle that our Revolutionary Soldiers faced so long ago. If it were not for their determination and perseverance, we would not be the United States of America. They are what the 4th of July is all about and the reason we have this important holiday. It is formally known as Independence Day and celebrates the signing of the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain in 1776. This document is the very fabric that makes us Americans and I thank God for it.

In the office we are preparing to go paperless. We have a new program installed that allows us to convert all our records in the file cabinets to electronic records. Over the next several months we will be initiating this process and any new clients will be paperless right away. Please be patient with me and my staff as we transition to this because it is necessary and will make us more efficient in serving the greatest people in the world, our Veterans and their families.

I hope you have a safe summer!
It is an honor to serve
Lexington County!

BENEFITS FOR PERMANENTLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED VETERANS

Veterans rated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to be permanently and totally disabled (100% P&T) by reason of service connected disability may be eligible for some or all of the following entitlements. The VA Regional Office will provide the P&T letters upon request. You will need to call the VA Regional Office at 1-800-827-1000 to obtain these letters prior to applying for these benefits. The letters will usually take five to seven working days. A list of the entitlements are as follows: Disabled Veterans Special License Plate (V-Tag); Property Tax Exemption (real estate and vehicle); Waiver of Premium for VA Life Insurance; CHAMPVA for Dependents; Free South Carolina Hunting and Fishing Licenses; Military ID Card (PX and commissary privileges); Chapter 35 Education Benefits for Dependents – Free Tuition for Children of Certain Veterans; South Carolina Education Assistance; Free Admittance to National Parks; Reduced admission price to SC State Parks; Forgiveness of Certain Federal Student Loans; VA Medical Enrollment Benefits and VA Dental Benefits.

Disabled Veterans Special License Plates (V-tag)

Disabled Veteran Tag - This plate is a free and permanent license plate and is available to individuals who submit proper certification from the Veterans Administration. Applicants must complete DMV Form MV-37, Application for Military License Plate and provide a letter or other documentation from the U.S., Regional or County Veterans Administration certifying that he or she is a 100% disabled Veteran who: (1) is entitled to compensation for the loss of use of one or both legs or arms, or (2) as 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. Limit two plates per applicant, either two vehicle plates, two motorcycle plates or one of each. The applicant cannot have four plates. The surviving spouse of a certified disabled Veteran may obtain or retain the license plate until remarried, and normally has to pay for the tag and taxes on the vehicle. This plate allows free parking at municipal parking meters (SC Code of Laws 56-5-2585) but DOES NOT allow parking in designated handicapped (wheelchair) parking spaces. In order to be able to park in a designated handicapped parking space, qualified disabled Veterans must have a Disabled Veteran Handicapped plate displaying a wheelchair emblem



Disabled Veteran Handicapped Tag - To obtain this plate, applicants must ALSO be certified permanently handicapped by a licensed physician on DMV Form RG-007A, Disabled License Plate and Placard Application and provide a prescription order from a licensed physician. Limit two plates per applicant: either two vehicle plates, two motorcycle plates or one of each. The applicant cannot have four plates. The surviving spouse of a certified disabled Veteran may obtain or maintain the license plate until remarried. However, the surviving spouse must also be certified as disabled by a licensed physician. This plate allows free parking at municipal parking meters (SC Code of Laws 56-5-2585) AND ALSO allows parking in designated handicapped (wheelchair) parking spaces.

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Benefits for Permanently and Totally Disabled Veterans - continued from page 3

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

Vehicle Tax Exemption

No more than two personal motor vehicles owned by a disabled Veteran for which special license tags have been issued by the SC Department of Motor Vehicles shall be exempt from state, county, and municipal taxes. A "D" tag is not required for the vehicle(s) to be tax exempt. Note: The surviving spouse may keep a disabled Veteran tag on one vehicle but the vehicle will not be exempt from taxes. SC Department of Revenue will issue a Certificate of Exemption of Property for each vehicle.

Home Tax Exemption

A dwelling and the lot on which it is situated is exempt from real property taxes. The surviving spouse of the disabled Veteran receives this same tax exemption provided: (1) the house was jointly owned at the time of the Veteran's death, (2) the surviving spouse remains unmarried, and (3) the surviving spouse acquires ownership of the property. The effective date of the tax exemption is dependent upon the ownership of the property on December 31 of the year prior to the Veteran being rated as permanent and totally disabled. The SC Department of Revenue will issue a Certificate of Exemption of Property and will forward it to the Lexington County Auditor.



WAIVER OF PREMIUM FOR VA LIFE INSURANCE

Disabled Veterans rated 0% or greater are offered the opportunity to acquire Disabled Veterans Insurance to a maximum face amount of \$10,000. If 100% permanent and total the maximum face amount is \$20,000. A permanent and totally disabled Veteran may have premiums waived as long as the Veteran is under 65 years of age.

CHAMPVA FOR DEPENDENTS

CHAMPVA (Civilian Health and Medical Program for the Veterans Administration) is a healthcare benefits program for: (1) Dependents of Veterans who have been rated by VA as having a total and permanent disability; (2) Survivors of Veterans who died from VA-rated service-connected conditions, or who at the time of death, were rated permanently and totally disabled from a VA-rated service-connected condition; and (3) Survivors of persons who died in the line of duty, and not due to misconduct. Under CHAMPVA, VA shares the cost of covered healthcare services and supplies with eligible beneficiaries. The administration of CHAMPVA is centralized to the Health Administration Center in Denver, Colorado. In general, CHAMPVA covers most healthcare services and supplies that are medically and psychologically necessary. Upon confirmation of eligibility, applicants will receive program material that specifically addresses covered and non covered services and supplies. Generally, applicants can expect to receive written notification from the Health Administrative Center within 45 days from the mailing of the application.



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Benefits for Permanently and Totally Disabled Veterans - continued from page 4



FREE SOUTH CAROLINA HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES

A permanently and totally disabled Veteran may obtain a statewide fishing and hunting license at no cost. This license includes the privilege of hunting big game, hunting on wildlife management area lands, and state migratory waterfowl and saltwater fishing stamps. It must be issued by the Department of Natural Resources and is valid for three years. To recertify, the disabled Veteran must furnish proof that he or she is currently receiving benefits.

MILITARY ID CARD (PX and Commissary Privileges)

Unlimited exchange and commissary store privileges in the United States are available to a 100% service connected permanent and total disabled Veteran or 100% service connected Veterans who have a future exam, spouses, surviving spouses and children 18 & under or 18-23 if still in school. For more information contact Ft. Jackson at 803-751-7731.

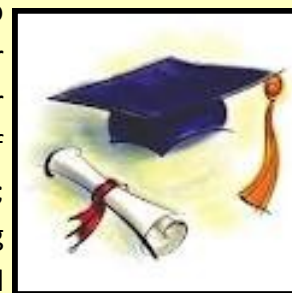


CHAPTER 35 EDUCATION BENEFITS FOR DEPENDENTS (Free Tuition for Children of Certain Veterans)

The Survivors' and Dependents Educational Assistance Program (DEA) provides education and training opportunities to eligible dependents of: (a) permanently and totally service-connected disabled Veterans or (b) a Veteran who died from any cause while such service-connected disability was in existence. The program offers up to 45 months of education benefits.

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION ASSISTANCE

A child of a wartime Veteran, upon application to and approval by the South Carolina Division of Veterans Affairs, may be admitted to any state supported college, university, or post high school technical education institution free of tuition, so long as his work and conduct is satisfactory to the governing body of the institution provided: the Veteran was a resident of this state at the time of entry into service and during service or has been a resident of this state for at least one year and still resides in this state, or if the Veteran is deceased, resided in this state for one year before his death, and provided the Veteran served honorably in a branch of the military service of the United States during a war period, and was killed in action; died from other causes while in the service; died of disease or disability resulting from service; was a Prisoner of War as defined by Congress or Presidential proclamation during such war period; is permanently and totally disabled as determined by the Department of Veterans Affairs from any cause; has been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor; has been awarded the Purple Heart Medal; is missing in action; or the applicant is the child of a deceased Veteran who qualifies under items four and five. The child must be the child, step-child, or adopted child of a Veteran who meets the residency requirements, is twenty-six years of age or younger, and is pursuing any type of undergraduate degree.



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Benefits for Permanently and Totally Disabled Veterans - continued from page 5



FREE ADMITTANCE TO NATIONAL PARKS

You will be issued a Golden Access Passport. This pass provides access to, and use of, Federal recreation sites that charge an entrance or standard amenity. For more information visit the National Park Service on the web at www.nps.gov/findapark/passess.htm or call Congaree National Park at 803-776-4396.

REDUCED ADMISSION PRICE TO SC STATE PARKS

Any South Carolina resident who is a permanently and totally disabled Veteran may enter any state park at a reduced rate upon presentation of supporting disability documentation. The Veteran may also apply for a reduced fee "Palmetto Passport." Certain services may require an additional fee. For more information, call South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism at 803-734-0156.



FORGIVENESS OF CERTAIN FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS

Types of Loans Forgiven: William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program; Federal Family Education Loan (FEEL) Program; Federal Perkins Loan Program; and TEACH Grant service obligation. Before your federal student loans or TEACH Grant service obligation can be discharged, you must provide information to the US Department of Education (ED) to show that you are totally and permanently disabled. ED will evaluate the information and determine if you qualify for a total and permanent disability (TPD) discharge. For more information, you can contact Nelnet Total and Permanent Disability Servicer at 1-888-303-7818.



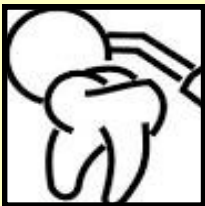
VA MEDICAL ENROLLMENT BENEFITS

If you have service-connected disabilities rated 100% disabling or are unemployable and paid at the 100% rate due to service-connected conditions, then you are eligible for enrollment for VA healthcare. For enrollment you will need to take a copy of your decision letter; DD214; and completed VA 10-10ez (Application for Health Benefits) to the nearest VA Medical Center.



VA DENTAL CARE

If you have service-connected disabilities rated 100% disabling or are unemployable and paid at the 100% rate due to service-connected conditions, then you are eligible for dental care through the VA healthcare system. This benefit is for Class I through Class IV dental care. Benefits include basic dental care, basic & major restorative and orthodontics. To qualify, you must first be enrolled in VA medical.



For 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.

Medal of Honor Awarded to Lexington County Resident

On June 19, 2014, President Barack Obama awarded 24 year old, Corporal William "Kyle" Carpenter, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret), the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry. While serving as a Marine rifleman in Marjah in Afghanistan's Helmand Province in November 2010, Kyle and another Marine, Lance Cpl. Nick Eufrazio were staffing a rooftop security position when they were attacked by Taliban fighters. When a grenade landed nearby, Carpenter threw himself on top of it to shield his partner from the blast. He suffered severe injuries to his right arm and face and lost an eye. Both Marines survived the blast but suffered major injuries.



Carpenter became the eighth living recipient of the Medal of Honor from Iraq or Afghanistan campaign, this is the nation's highest military honor. The Medal of Honor is awarded for personal acts of valor above and beyond the call of duty. The medal is awarded by the President of the United States in the name of the U.S. Congress to U.S. military personnel only. In awarding the medal during a ceremony in the East Room of the White House, President Barack Obama said "Carpenter has made no attempt to remove the scars on his face out of pride."



Carpenter has also received a Purple Heart, a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, a Combat Action Ribbon, a Navy Unit Commendation and a Sea Service Deployment Ribbon with one bronze star for his actions in Iraq or Afghanistan, according to military officials.

"It's hard to comprehend that three years ago today my life and body was torn apart by an enemy hand grenade on a hot dusty rooftop in Afghanistan," Carpenter wrote on the Operation Kyle Facebook page last year, on the third anniversary of the attack. "At times it has felt so long ago and yet, when I close my eyes, I can still feel the warm blood pouring out of me onto my skin and fading out of consciousness with my the final thought



of 'I'm going to die' in my head ... and here I am. I just want to thank and remind all of you how much it means and how truly appreciative I am for every comment, message, word of encouragement and prayer you have sent my way since that day in November 2010. You have helped get me to where I am today and for that I will be forever grateful. It took a life changing event to get me to truly appreciate the precious and amazing life I have been blessed with. Please take it from me ... enjoy every day

to the fullest, don't take life too seriously, always try to make it count, appreciate the small and simple things, be kind and help others, let the ones you love always know you love them and when things get hard, trust there is a bigger plan and that you will be stronger for it."



Prints for Sale

We have several copies of the Veterans Memorial and Gibson Pond prints for sale in our office. The Gibson Pond print is 32x24 and the Monument print is 24x15. Both are suitable for framing. 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. Please stop by the office Monday through Friday from 8-5 to get a closer look at the prints or to purchase.



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.



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 4:15pm. Contact the office at 803-785-8400 if you are interested.



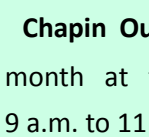
OUTREACH DATES AND TIMES

Please be aware that our outreach dates and times have changed. The correct dates and times are listed below.

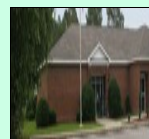
Appointments are strongly encouraged.



Batesburg/Leesville Outreach - 2nd Friday of the month at the Batesburg/Leesville Library from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.



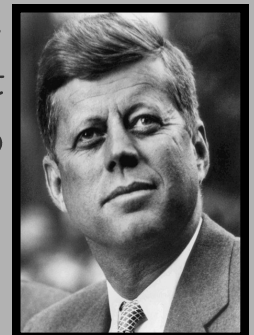
Chapin Outreach - 1st Friday of the month at the Chapin Library from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.



Gaston/Swansea Outreach - 1st Thursday of the month at the Gaston Library from 10 a.m. to 12 noon

"Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty."

-John F. Kennedy



Appeal versus Reconsideration

Often Veterans become upset with a VA rating decision, see the appellate rights and opt for filing a Notice of Disagreement (NOD). This will typically invoke a long and arduous appeals process. Appeals within the VA system often last 2-6 years, not including BVA remands.

A much easier way to continuously prosecute claims is by filing for reconsideration of a prior VA decision. Typically, claimants have one year from the date of notification of a VA decision to either file an appeal or request reconsideration of the prior decision with new and material evidence. This is evidence which has not previously been considered and may serve to overturn prior decisions.

If new and material evidence is received within the appellate period for any decision which has not become final, VA must consider this new and material evidence as having been filed in connection with the claim, which was pending at the beginning of the appeal period.

Generally, claimant's are unaware of the evidence required for a favorable decision, however, a proper VA Rating Decision should provide adequate reasons and basis for the denial of any condition. Within a VA Rating Decision there should be discussion of evidence considered in the service medical records, the evidence submitted, and findings of any VA examination to include rationale of the examiner as to why or why not a nexus opinion is given in regard to service connection.

Equally, the most common reason for a denial is not for lack of in-service treatment, or evidence of a current disability, but the medical opinion relating that condition to service.



Generally, service connection requires (1) evidence of an in-service injury, disease, or event, which was caused, incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, (2) a current chronic or disabling condition, and (3) a competent medical opinion relating the two to service.

If the claimant can overcome a VA medical opinion with a competent medical opinion, which is as equally thorough or greater in probative value than that of a VA examiner, then the claim should be reconsidered and granted. This can be accomplished by asking for reconsideration of the prior decision, and effective dates should be assigned accordingly. This technique can win cases in a much faster fashion than electing to file an appeal, which in the end will require the same type of evidence for a claimant to prevail.

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. Support for deaf and hard of hearing individuals is also available.



A Pilgrimage Back to Normandy

“70th Anniversary of D-Day”

The Director, Ed and Mr. “Red” Smith, a local WWII Veteran from Lexington, traveled to Normandy for the 70th Anniversary along with 21 other WWII Veterans.

Day 1 – June 1, 2014



We gathered at a central meeting point in Columbia, SC at Beth Shalom Synagogue. Some of the group had never met before this and the room was full of excitement. A bagpipe player played patriotic songs as we checked our luggage and young helpers marked our checked bags with yellow tape. They were marked with a “V” for Victory to make them easier to identify once we got to the Paris airport. We received our 70th anniversary name tags as we checked in, on the inside of the synagogue. Provided inside was coffee, juice, fruit, pastries and doughnuts. We made new friends in this group of 60 headed to the Normandy coast. We said good-bye to our family and friends and boarded the bus to Charlotte, amid the media.

We picked up some folks at the North Carolina Welcome center and there was media there as we entered the building. A group picture was taken of the 22 World War II Veterans going on this historic trip. We arrived at the Charlotte airport with little fanfare except for the USO bringing us bottled water, chips, candy and cookies. Stories from the Veterans began as we awaited the boarding call in the terminal.

Once on board the plane, the pilot announced to everyone that our 22 heroes from South Carolina were on board and headed to Normandy. This was met with a rousing applause by both the French and the Americans on board. The flight was pre-destined to take eight hours with an arrival time locally of 7:30am. We were fed well for the supper meal and also offered plenty to drink.



Day 2 – June 2, 2014

We arrived in Paris ten minutes early on this day. There were no bands or anyone to welcome these Veterans back to France. Customs was a breeze and one Veteran remarked that they did not have to show any passport when they came ashore in 1944!

The airport in Paris is very confusing, especially to weary travelers. A nice, young French girl who worked at the airport caught up with me and my Veteran, Mr. “Red” Smith. She personally guided us to where we needed to go and did not speak English but somehow, we understood one another. She gave us a hug as she departed. After gathering our luggage, which was easy to spot with the yellow “V”, we met our chartered bus outside. Our driver, is from Holland and speaks perfect English. His company had gifts in each of the seats for all of us.



We began the long bus ride to Normandy, hungry and tired, because of the overnight flight and the six hours time difference. Most of us nodded off on the bus but did see the beautiful scenery of Normandy out of the bus window. Beautiful fields of wheat and cows were viewed along the way and many of the Veterans who were awake remarked the land had changed a lot since 1944. Some of them described land stripped of beauty and real signs of life in the early stages of the Normandy campaign.

We arrived in Caen, a very historic city prior to the war and a city hard fought by the Allies during the war. Here we had a wonderful lunch in a cafeteria style similar to that in America. Some of the patrons came up to the Veterans to shake their hand or just to talk. The Veterans were overwhelmed with emotion at this gratitude.

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A Pilgrimage Back to Normandy, "70th Anniversary of D-Day" - continued from page 10

We then arrived at our hotel in Courselles-sur-mer and it is such a lovely place. Within walking distance is the town and also Juno beach, where the Canadians led the charge on D-Day. We received our agenda for the next day and headed to our rooms. Each Veteran has a guardian sharing the spacious condo and to help take care of them. We unpacked and met later for the supper meal at La Chauminere. It was a wonderful meal and the restaurant was opened specifically for our group. We had a ceremonial glass of French wine and toasted these Veterans for our freedom. We then retired for the night and were thankful for a comfortable bed to sleep in. A busy day is planned for tomorrow and we are ready.



Day 3 – June 3, 2014

We began the day with fresh croissants brought to us by our tour guide from the local bakery. Our big events of the day took us to Bayeux and the historical tapestry. Mr. Red was partially interviewed by P.J. Randawha of WIS-Channel 10. The tapestry is made of linen and housed behind a long glass case. Tourists can use headsets in their own language and these depict the story of William the Conqueror and his rise to the throne of England in 1066. It is a fascinating display of art work. After the tapestry museum, we met some local children who were enamored with our Veterans and they with them. It was a wonderful connection of two nationalities. We ate lunch at the same cafeteria as yesterday and the food was fantastic. We also shopped for essentials at a Carrefour, which appeared to me to be the French version of Sam's or Super Wal-mart. The typical shopper has to buy or bring a shopping bag to put their purchases in. This is the European way and seems to work well.

We headed to the port city of Arromanches to visit a museum and its part in the Battle of Normandy. The British fabricated many fortifications in the UK and had them sent here by ship and assembled. The tour guide told us it takes about seven years of construction to make a port of entry and exit. The British built this one and sent it over and had this done is less than one year. Unfortunately, it was never finished and many pieces were left out to sea and along the beach.



Afterward we were greeted by many children and local re-enactors.

This town was filled with GI uniforms, jeeps, 2½ ton trucks, and people from many nationalities. Our Veterans were signing autographs, posing for pictures, shaking hands, getting an occasional hug or kiss, and shedding tears. It was emotional just watching this. We walked to our evening restaurant called the 6 of June restaurant. This is a fabulous place in the center of town. As we walked there people were applauding, smiling, and waving at all of us. A young man and his friend came up to Mr. Red and asked if he was with the 84th Infantry Division, the Railsplitters. He immediately came to life as the man told him that he liberated his country during the war and was grateful for that. Mr. Red was overwhelmed with joy at finally hearing someone remember the 84th. Up to this point, no one had. The other 21 Veterans on this trip served with other units. The man and his friend posed for pictures with Mr. Red and continued to shower him with affection; it was a hallmark moment for him and me.



We came back to our rooms around 10pm and were reminded of tomorrow's agenda. We will visit the Normandy American Military cemetery and place a South Carolina wreath there. I am sure this will be the most poignant and emotional activity we will have on this tour.

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A Pilgrimage Back to Normandy, "70th Anniversary of D-Day" - continued from page 11

Day 4 – June 4, 2014

At breakfast this morning, Mr. Red recanted the story of the Belgian man who thanked him for liberating his country. He became very emotional as he told it and I told him it was worth the trip just to hear that.



We journeyed to the Normandy American Military Cemetery today and most of our 22 Veterans have never been there. I told Mr. Red it would be an emotional day for all of them. A slight rain fell as we disembarked our tour bus and the wind brought a chill. Our tour group leader brought a beautiful wreath to lay at the memorial in the cemetery. One of our Veterans led a prayer, the National Anthem was played and finally, "Taps." I don't think there was a dry eye among our group. Our Veterans posed for many pictures afterwards and mingled with students. All were telling their story as they remember it. As I looked through this cemetery of 9,387 white marble crosses, I couldn't help but think this is the price of freedom. Our Veterans took turns holding the wreath for pictures. I asked Mr. Red how he felt doing that and he said he was honored and crying the whole time. I told him I did, too.



After this, he and I walked down to the sea wall on the edge of the cemetery to view Omaha Beach. As he grazed across the water he said this is what I remember from 70 years ago. The sand, the culverts, the trees as we left our LCT and waded ashore with our gear on our backs and our rifles over our heads. Mr. Red came ashore in October 1944 at Omaha Beach from England. This remained a port of embarkation long after June 6, 1944.

As we toured through the cemetery we met other Americans who posed for pictures and spoke with the Veterans. We left and made our way to the German cemetery in Normandy. This cemetery is not as ornate as the American one and graves were spaced out more. Most of the Veterans stayed on the bus and did not want to visit for obvious reasons. One Veteran, who I walked through it with, told me he was honoring a German friend he made at the end of the war. They had kept in touch for 25 years or so until sadly, the friend passed away. He stated to me that he would never forget his friend and even though Germany was the enemy, he felt compelled to honor his friend.



We had lunch at a local restaurant and then went further down the coast to Omaha Beach, where it was more accessible. Many of our group gathered sand to take back home. Channel 10 was on the beach filming Veterans as they reflected on the last time they were there.

I looked out at the water as the wind formed small whitecap waves and I wondered what it was like on D-Day. The Veterans described machine guns and artillery fire, the noise of airplanes, the concertina wire, land mines and chaos and confusion. Somehow, the Allies were victorious and the world was grateful.

The Veterans were over-whelmed with thankful people from Holland, the Netherlands, and France. One young lady came up to one of our Veterans standing near me and began weeping as she thanked him for helping to liberate her country, France. She stated her grandfather was killed in the war and she was so grateful for her freedom. The Veteran stated matter of factly that someone had to do it because France could not defend herself and he was glad to do it. He also said he was lucky because he was a paratrooper and jumped into France on D-Day. The lady had her children with her and this Veteran took the time to take their hand and offer advice for life and to never forget what happened here at Omaha Beach.



Continued on page 13

A Pilgrimage Back to Normandy, "70th Anniversary of D-Day" - continued from page 12

This is what I labeled the other side of freedom and it was a very touching moment for him and for me. He didn't even want to come back to Normandy but stated after this exchange, he was glad he did. It was poignant to see what the liberation had done; it freed an oppressed people who had been free prior to the German invasion.

We had a nice supper at a quaint French restaurant and prepared for the next day. We all agreed it had been a great day.

To be continued...

The story will continue in the next issue.



Lexington County Veterans Group

All Lexington County Veterans are invited to attend the weekly meetings. The group meets weekly on Tuesdays from 12 noon to 2:00 pm in the auditorium at 605 West Main Street, Lexington, SC. The group meets for Health Issues and PTSD counseling with a licensed Counselor.

Our Veterans also participate in various social activities such as group lunches, group dinners with wives/significant other, boat trips on Lake Murray, participation in the Lexington County Veterans parade and other general group tours.

For further information, please contact the Lexington County Veterans Affairs Office @ 803-785-8400.



Just a Reminder...The next Honor Flight will be September 3rd. For more information contact SC Honor Flight at 803-582-8826. Applications for Veterans and guardians can be found on their website at <http://www.honorflightsc.com/>



Mark Your Calendars



The 12th annual Lexington County Veterans Parade will be held on Sunday, November 2, 2014, at 3pm.

Parade application follows on the next page.

Dang-it Dolls Update

We received an update on the Dang-it Dolls. They will not be meeting again until Saturday, September 13th from 10am to 3pm at the Cayce Masonic Lodge, 1701 12th Street, Cayce. The same time and location will be for the meetings on Saturday, October 11th and Saturday, November 8th. There will be no workshop in December.



2014 LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS PARADE APPLICATION

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2014 @ 3:00PM

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING OUR 12TH YEAR

NO ENTRY FEE, SIGN UP DUE BY OCTOBER 24th, 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
swillis@lex-co.com

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 also be found on the Lexington County VA website.

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)

Incarcerated Veterans/Fugitive Felons

Incarcerated Veterans

Veterans can sometimes run into issues with law enforcement and the criminal justice system resulting in incarceration. It is important that justice-involved Veterans are familiar with VA benefits including what VA benefits they may still be eligible to receive, what happens to the VA benefits they are already receiving if they become incarcerated, and what programs are available to assist them with reintegrating back into the community once released from incarceration. Despite the circumstances, some justice-involved Veterans may be eligible for VA benefits. Please be aware many VA benefits can be affected by incarceration.

VA Programs for Justice-Involved Veterans

Health Care for Re-entry Veterans (HCRV) Program

The HCRV Program is designed to help incarcerated Veterans successfully reintegrate back into the community after their release. A critical part of HCRV is providing information to Veterans while they are incarcerated, so they can plan for re-entry themselves. A primary goal of the HCRV program is to prevent Veterans from becoming homeless once they are reintegrated back into the community.

Veteran Justice Outreach (VJO) Initiative

The VJO initiative is designed to help Veterans avoid unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration by ensuring eligible justice-involved Veterans receive timely access to VA health care, specifically mental health and substance use services (if clinically indicated) and other VA services and benefits as appropriate.

How Incarceration Affects Eligibility for VA Benefits

VA can pay certain benefits to Veterans who are incarcerated in a Federal, State, or local penal institution; however, the amount depends on the type of benefit and reason for incarceration.

Disability Compensation

VA disability compensation payments are reduced if a Veteran is convicted of a felony and imprisoned for more than 60 days. Veterans rated 20 percent or more are limited to the 10 percent disability rate. For a Veteran whose disability rating is 10 percent, the payment is reduced by one-half. Once a Veteran is released from prison, compensation payments may be reinstated based upon the severity of the service connected disability(ies) at that time. Payments are not reduced for recipients participating in work release programs, residing in halfway houses (also known as "residential re-entry centers"), or under community control. The amount of any increased compensation awarded to an incarcerated Veteran that results from other than a statutory rate increase may be subject to reduction due to incarceration.

Pension

Veterans in receipt of VA pension will have payments terminated effective the 61st day after imprisonment in a Federal, State, or local penal institution for conviction of a felony or misdemeanor. Payments may be resumed upon release from prison if the Veteran meets VA eligibility requirements. Failure to notify VA of a Veteran's incarceration could result in the loss of all financial benefits until the overpayment is recovered.

Apportionment to Spouse or Children

All or part of the compensation not paid to an incarcerated Veteran may be apportioned to the Veteran's spouse, child or children, and dependent parents on the basis of individual need. In determining individual need, consideration shall be given to such factors as the claimant's income and living expenses, the amount of compensation available to be apportioned, the needs and living expenses of other claimants as well as any special needs, if any, of all claimants.

Education Benefits

Beneficiaries incarcerated for other than a felony can receive full monthly benefits, if otherwise entitled. Convicted felons residing in halfway houses (also known as "residential re-entry centers"), or participating in work-release programs also can receive full monthly benefits. Claimants incarcerated for a felony conviction can be paid only the costs of tuition, fees, and necessary books, equipment, and supplies. VA cannot make payments for tuition, fees, books, equipment, or supplies if another Federal State or local program pays these costs in full. If another government program pays only a part of the cost of tuition, fees, books, equipment, or supplies, VA can authorize the incarcerated claimant payment for the remaining part of the costs.

Continued on page 18

History of the US Postal Service

During early colonial times in the 1600s, few American colonists needed to send mail to each other; it was more likely that their correspondence was with letter writers in Britain. Mail deliveries from across the Atlantic were sporadic and could take many months to arrive. There were no post offices in the colonies, so mail was typically left at inns and taverns. In 1753, Benjamin Franklin, who had been postmaster of Philadelphia, became one of two joint postmasters general for the colonies. He made numerous improvements to the mail system, including setting up new, more efficient colonial routes and cutting



delivery time in half between Philadelphia and New York by having the weekly mail wagon travel both day and night via relay teams. Franklin also debuted the first rate chart, which standardized delivery costs based on distance and weight. In 1774, the British fired Franklin from his postmaster job because of his revolutionary activities.

William Goddard, a Patriot printer frustrated that the royal postal service was unable to reliably deliver his Pennsylvania Chronicle to its readers or deliver critical news for the paper, laid out a plan for a Constitutional Post before the Continental Congress on October 5, 1774. Congress waited to act on the plan until after the Battle of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775. Benjamin Franklin promoted Goddard's plan and served as the first postmaster general under the Continental Congress beginning on July 26, 1775, nearly one year before the Congress declared independence from the British crown. Franklin's son-in-law, Richard Bache, took over the position on November 7, 1776, when Franklin became an American emissary to France. President George Washington appointed Samuel Osgood, a former Massachusetts congressman, as the first postmaster general of the American nation under the new U.S. constitution in 1789. At the time, there were approximately 75 post offices in the country.



While postmaster, Franklin streamlined postal delivery with properly surveyed and marked routes from Maine to Florida (the origins of Route 1), instituted overnight postal travel between the critical cities of New York and Philadelphia and created a standardized rate chart based upon weight and distance. Samuel Osgood held the postmaster general's position in New York City from 1789, when the U.S.

Constitution came into effect, until the government moved to Philadelphia in 1791. Timothy Pickering took over and, about a year later, the Postal Service Act gave his post greater legislative legitimacy and the service more effective organization. Pickering continued in the position until 1795, when he briefly served as secretary of war, before becoming the third U.S. secretary of state. The postmaster general's position was considered a plum patronage post for political allies of the President until the Postal Service was transformed into a corporation run by a board of governors in 1971.



Other important dates in Postal History include: 1847 – Stamps were issued; 1860 – Pony Express started; 1950 – Residential deliveries dropped to once per day; and 1963 – Zip code was inaugurated.



Today, the United States has over 40,000 post offices and the postal service delivers 212 billion pieces of mail each year to over 144 million homes and businesses in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, the American Virgin Islands and American Samoa. The postal service is the nation's largest civilian employer, with over 700,000 career workers, who handle more than 44 percent of the world's cards and letters. The postal service is a not-for-profit, self-supporting agency that covers its expenses through postage and related products. The postal service gets the mail delivered, rain or shine, using everything from planes to mules. However, it's not cheap: The U.S. Postal Service says that when fuel costs go up by just one penny, its own costs rise by \$8 million.

Attention Veterans and Active Duty Military!

Are You in NEED of Home Repairs?



Weatherization Assistance Program.... Working in your Community

"Making communities stronger, one family at a time!"

Obtain needed repairs to your home through grant programs. The Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation & Weatherization Program is available to make repairs for low-medium income homeowners. Available to veterans or active duty members of any branch of the US Military that are currently serving, have served, or their surviving spouse!

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

INCOME GUIDELINES:

Must identify and verify all sources of income for each household member. Verification of income must be within 90 days of submission

OWN OR BUYING A HOME:

Must have thirty (30) days ownership.

STATEMENT FROM FINANCIAL INSTITUTION:

Must submit last two (2) months of bank statements for all accounts.

COPY OF DEED:

Must be registered and recorded.

PROPERTY TAX:

Must be paid and current.

DD 214:

Or other proof of service.

Please contact Capital Rehab Management

George Lesesne: Phone - 803.238.4375 or email GeorgeLesesne@yahoo.com

Joyce Pue: Phone - 803.261.5772 or email Pues112@yahoo.com

This program is for Veterans, their surviving spouse or active duty members and does have income requirements. The grant money does not have to be repaid and is distributed on a first-come first-served basis each year. The grant allows for repairs such as roofing, windows, doors or HVAC. There is so much the grant can provide for low income Veterans and their surviving spouses to improve their homes, so please call George Lesesne or Joyce Pue at the numbers on the bottom of the flyer.

Incarcerated Veterans/Fugitive Felons continued from page 15

Additional Information

Each VA Regional Office has a Homeless Veterans Outreach Coordinator who assists justice-involved Veterans. They are a direct point of contact for you to learn more about what benefits you qualify for, assist you with applying for those benefits, and refer you to other organizations and resources that will help you with your specific needs. To find your local Homeless Veterans Outreach Coordinator, please call VA's National Call Center for Homeless Veterans at 1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838).

Fugitive Felon Program (FFP)

VA is prohibited from providing or continuing to provide health care and services, including medications and any care provided in the community, at VA expense to Veterans and beneficiaries identified as fugitive felons. A Fugitive Felon is defined as a person who is:

1. Fleeing to avoid custody or confinement after conviction for an offense which is a felony under the laws of the place from which the person is fleeing, or for an attempt to commit such an offense; and/or
2. Fleeing to avoid prosecution for an offense which is a felony; and/or
3. Violating a condition of probation or parole imposed for committing a felony under Federal or State law.

Termination of VA Health Care Benefits

VA will mail a letter to the Veteran or beneficiary identified as a fugitive felon to inform them of their status and termination of all VA health care benefits. VA staff will take appropriate steps to transition the fugitive felon's health care from VA programs to alternative care outside the VA health care system. VA cannot pay for any of this alternative care. In addition, VA will bill the Veteran and/or beneficiaries for all VA provided care received while in this fugitive felon status.

Resolving Fugitive Felon Status

Persons identified as a fugitive felon must contact the Originating Agency that issued a felony warrant, **not the VA Police**, if it is believed:

1. An error was made, such as mistaken identity.
2. The warrant should be cancelled.
3. The warrant has been satisfied by your arrest or surrender.
4. There are other reasons, which would resolve the warrant.

Evidence that the warrant has been satisfied should be provided to your local VA. For additional information concerning the Fugitive Felon Program, please contact the Fugitive Felon Coordinator or Enrollment Coordinator at your local VA medical care facility or contact VA at 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

A poster for a Vietnam War Era Veterans Honor Ceremony. The background features a large bronze statue of two soldiers in a field, with a row of six circular military branch emblems (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Space Force) in the middle ground. The text is overlaid on the image.

**Vietnam War Era Veterans
Honor Ceremony**

Hosted by U.S. Senator Tim Scott

*All Vietnam era veterans and their families
are invited to attend and be recognized!*

When: August 2, 2014, 10 AM

Where: First Baptist Church of Columbia
1306 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29201

RSVP or to learn more: 844-820-0146 (toll-free)
or www.scott.senate.gov/veterans

News from the Lexington County Veterans Group

On Tuesday, June 3rd, members of the Lexington County Veterans Group took a day trip to Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort. The trip was arranged by one of the members who had been stationed there. Upon arrival at the base, the group was met by Sgt. Marcy Sanchez. Sgt. Sanchez, who is assigned to the base public affairs office, acted as both a guide and official photographer for the group.



The group began their visit with a presentation by the base crash and rescue team. After which they were given a tour of the base. This was followed by lunch in the enlisted mess hall. Everyone was very surprised by the lunch and remarked how much things had changed. Gone was the single steam line with mess cooks slopping food on to your tray. Instead we found a very modern buffet style eatery with friendly civilian servers.

Lunch was followed by a visit to one of the hangers and a tour of an F/A-18A aircraft. Unfortunately, the F-35 aircraft had not yet arrived at the base.

Everyone remarked that they had a great day of camaraderie and are looking forward to their next outing.



Members of the Veterans group with a member of Marine Corps Air Station standing in front of an F/A-18A aircraft.



South Carolina State Library, Talking Book Services In a Nutshell

Talking Book Services is a FREE library that loans books and magazines in special formats to people who cannot read a normal print book due to blindness, visual disabilities or physical disabilities which prevent them from holding a book or turning pages. Physically based reading disabilities such as dyslexia also qualify.

About the Library

- Talking Books are not JUST for blind people. The library is available to people who experience physical disabilities or illnesses that prevent them from holding a book, sitting up for periods of time, or turning the pages of a book.
- Our library serves people of ALL ages. Our youngest user is 3 years old and our oldest is 106. In fact we have 21 readers who are over the age of 100! We have books for all tastes and interest levels!
- Talking Books are completely FREE. There is no charge for the books, the talking book player, or the postage to mail the books back to the library.
- Talking Books is located at the South Carolina State Library in Columbia, SC. The library serves any eligible South Carolinians by shipping books through the US Postal Service.

Books and Equipment

- **What kind of books does the library have?** All kinds! Our library has the same books that are found in your public library.
- All audio books in the library are narrated by professional voice-over actors.
- The library has over 90,000 books in digital format, over 11,000 in large print, over 149 description DVDs. More books are added weekly.
- **When books go out in the mail how do you know what to send?** The main way that our users get books is by telling us what subjects and authors they like. They can even tell us subjects they don't want. We call it "auto-selection." Users can also get books by giving us lists of requests. Any time a request is available, it will go out ahead of an "auto-selected" book.
- The audio books require special playback equipment—but that is provided by the library for free on "extended loan."
- **What happens if the books get lost in the mail?** If the books are lost or damaged just call the library—there is no charge for lost or damaged materials.
- What about the player? Same thing applies—call the library and they will replace the player right away.
- By the way, all books have a 4-week loan period and there are no fines for overdue books.

- In addition to audio and Large Print books, Talking Books Services loans audio magazines and descriptive videos. Braille books are available through interlibrary-loan.
- Talking Books also provides access to downloadable books (BARD), referral to the South Carolina Commission for the Blind for NFB-NEWSLINE (newspapers by phone).

Registration

- **How does a person get signed up for Talking Books?** The process is very easy. Just fill out an application for service and certification section signed by nurse, doctor, librarian, therapist, activity director, social worker, or teacher. Those with reading disabilities **MUST** have it certified by a medical doctor.
- If you are not sure who qualifies to sign an application for somebody, call us and ask! **1-800-922-7818 or 803-734-4611.**
- Return the signed application to Talking Books. We will contact you to confirm, process the application, and put a player and a couple of books in the mail to get you started.

Downloadable Books (BARD)

- BARD stands for the **B**raille and **A**udio **R**eading **D**ownload.
- All of the audio books (and most of the Braille books) provided by our library are available for on-demand download.
- Download the books to a flash drive for use with the player provided, or use the BARD Mobile app on your IOS mobile device (iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch).
- This part of our library is also **FREE**.

History

- The Library of Congress started (what would become) the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) in 1931 after the Pratt-Smoot Act was passed.
- This library has existed in South Carolina since 1973. The library was originally called the South Carolina Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. In 2013, we moved into the same building as the South Carolina State Library for the first time since it was begun.
- Talking Book Services is a joint partnership between the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped and the South Carolina State Library.

1500 Senate St.
Columbia, SC 29202

P.O. Box 821
Columbia, SC 29202

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Did you know that the following events occurred during the months of July and August in history...



July 3, 1863—Battle of Gettysburg ends.



July 4, 1776— US declares Independence.



July 7, 1930—Building of the Hoover Dam begins.



July 9, 1877—Wimbledon began.



July 17, 1955—Disneyland opens.



July 20, 1969—Neil Armstrong walks on the moon.

July 26, 1775—The US Postal service was established.



July 27, 1949—First jet makes test flight.

July 29, 1958—NASA was created.



August 2, 1776—Most of the 55 members of the Continental Congress signed the parchment copy of the Declaration of Independence.



August 3, 1492—Christopher Columbus set sail from Spain.



August 6, 1945—1st Atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan @ 8:15am.



August 13, 1961—Berlin wall came into existence.



August 14, 1935—President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act establishing the Social Security system.



August 16, 1896—Gold was discovered in Alaska.



August 17, 1978—1st transatlantic balloon trip was completed by three Americans: Max Anderson, Ben Abruzzo, and Larry Newman.



August 21, 1959—Hawaii was admitted to the Union as the 50th State.



Featured Medal:

MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL

The Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) is a military award presented to members of the United States Armed Forces who distinguished themselves by outstanding meritorious achievement or service to the United States subsequent to January 16, 1969. The MSM was previously awarded as a decoration for achievement during peacetime; effective September 11, 2001, this decoration may also be bestowed in lieu of the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious achievement in a designated combat theater. Normally, the acts or services rendered must be comparable to that required for the Legion of Merit but in a duty of lesser, though considerable, responsibility.

An ad hoc committee was formed by the Secretary of Defense to select a name. On November 8, 1968, the committee unanimously approved the name "Meritorious Service Medal". President Lyndon B. Johnson established the Meritorious Service Medal per Executive Order 11448, dated January 16, 1969. The Executive Order was amended by President Ronald Reagan per Executive Order 12312, dated July 2, 1981, to authorize award to members of the armed forces of friendly foreign nations.

The medal was designed by Mr. Jay Morris of the Institute of Heraldry, and the design was approved by the committee on March 20, 1969. The ribbon design purposely follows the colors used for the Legion of Merit to reflect the parallel between the two medals. The eagle, symbol of the United States, stands on laurel branches denoting achievement. The star is used to represent the military service and the rays emanating from there denote the constant efforts of individuals to achieve through excellent and meritorious service.

The Meritorious Service Medal is a bronze medal, 1.5 inches in diameter overall, consisting of six rays issuant from the upper three points of a five-pointed star with beveled edges and containing two smaller stars defined by incised outlines; in front of the lower part of the star an eagle with wings upraised standing upon two upward curving branches of laurel tied with a ribbon between the feet of the eagle. The reverse has the encircled inscriptions "UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" and "MERITORIOUS SERVICE". The suspension ribbon is 1 3/8 inches wide and consists of the following stripes: 1/8 inch Crimson 67112; 1/4 inch White 67101; center 5/8 inch Crimson; 1/4 inch White; and 1/8 inch Crimson.



Picture of
Meritorious Service Medal
and Ribbon.

GOD BLESS AMERICA

Coming in the Next Issue...

Agent Orange;
obtaining DD214s, awards, medals, upgrades, and emergency requests;
clothing allowances and more on the trip to Normandy.