



LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS NEWS

"Serving those who served and sacrificed for America"

November/December 2016



Lexington, SC.

YOUR VA OFFICE STAFF

ED LUNDEEN

ELUNDEEN@LEX-CO.COM
DIRECTOR

JENNIFER HENDRIX

JHENDRIX@LEX-CO.COM
VETERANS AFFAIRS SUPERVISOR
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

KATHY DEBERRY

KDEBERRY@LEX-CO.COM
VETERANS AFFAIRS BENEFITS COUNSELOR

JENNIFER PARLER

JPARLER@LEX-CO.COM
VETERANS AFFAIRS BENEFITS COUNSELOR

DANA FORRESTER

DFORRESTER@LEX-CO.COM
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

OFFICE EMAIL ADDRESS

VETERANSAFFAIRS@LEX-CO.COM

605 WEST MAIN STREET
SUITE 101
LEXINGTON, S.C. 29072
8am to 5pm
Monday through Friday

TELEPHONE: (803) 785-8400
FAX: (803) 785-0115

TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

At-a-Glance Calendar/From the Director	2
Fiduciary Program	3
Military Retirement & VA Benefits	7
On This Day in History	8
2016 Veterans Day Discounts	9
Veterans Legacy Program	14
VA Healthcare vs Medicare	15
The History of John Philip Sousa	17
Welcome Home to Carolina Flyer	21
Wreaths Across America Flyer	23
Happenings Around Lexington County	27
Featured Medal	28



**At A Glance Calendar
November/December**

For a list of events in Lexington County for November & December

See page 27- Happenings Around Lexington County

Weekly on Tuesdays in November

Lexington County Veterans Group Meeting from 10am to 12 noon

Thursday, November 3rd

Gaston Outreach

Friday, November 4th

Chapin Outreach

Sunday, November 6th

Daylight Savings Time Ends
Lexington County Veterans Parade @ 3

Tuesday, November 8th

Election Day

Friday, November 11th

Veterans Day
County Offices are Closed

Saturday, November 12th

Welcome Home to Carolina Ceremony
More information on page 21
Dang-it Doll Workshop
More information on page 20

Tuesday, November 15th

County Council Meeting

Thursday, November 24th

Thanksgiving Day
County Offices are Closed

Friday, November 25th

Day After Thanksgiving
County Offices are Closed

Weekly on Tuesdays in December

Lexington County Veterans Group Meeting from 10am to 12 noon

Thursday, December 1st

Gaston Outreach

Friday, December 2nd

Chapin Outreach

Wednesday, December 7th

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

Thursday, December 8th

Batesburg/Leesville Outreach

Monday, December 12th

SC State House Wreath Laying Ceremony @ 12 noon

Tuesday, December 13th

County Council Meeting

Saturday, December 17th

Wreaths Across America @ Ft. Jackson Cemetery see flyer on pages 23 & 24

Wednesday, December 21st

Winter Begins

Friday, December 23rd

Christmas Holiday
County Offices are Closed

Saturday, December 24th

Christmas Eve
Hanukkah begins @ sundown

Sunday, December 25th

Christmas Day

Monday, December 26th

Kwanzaa Begins
County Offices are Closed

Tuesday, December 27th

Christmas Holiday
County Offices are Closed

Saturday, December 31st

New Year's Eve

Sunday, January 1st

New Year's Day

Monday, January 2nd

Holiday/County Offices are Closed

**From the
Director...**

At last fall is here after a hot, torrid summer and we rejoice in the cooler temperatures and the brilliant color of the leaves. As we prepare for Veterans Day activities both in our County and the Midlands, we are mindful of the service of all of our Veterans. We are grateful for their sacrifice and that of their families. We are honored to serve them every day. This issue is chock full of discounts, free meals, free entertainment and free or reduced hotel stays for Veterans due to the Veterans Day holiday. Please share this information with Veterans or those still serving on active duty that you may know.

Our Lexington County Veterans Parade will be at 3pm on Sunday, November 6 and we would love to have a large crowd to honor our Veterans. Last year the rain kept a lot of the crowd at home and we hope for better weather this year. The parade marches down Main Street, Lexington and ends at the County Administration building and Veterans Monument on South Lake Drive and is always a highlight of the year.

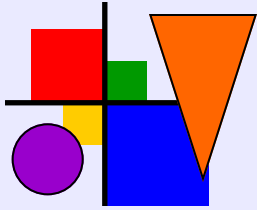
Lastly, I hope you will get out and vote in the election on Tuesday, November 8.

It is an honor to serve Lexington County!

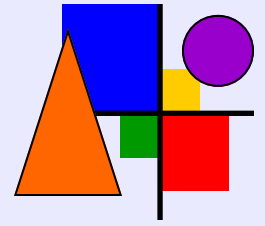


Purple—Holidays/Special Days
Blue—Outreach dates
Red—County Offices Closed, No van scheduled and Special Notices
Black—Director's appearances in the County
Brown—County Council Meetings
Pink—Special Events throughout the County
Orange—Director Out of Office
Green—Lexington County Veterans Group Meetings

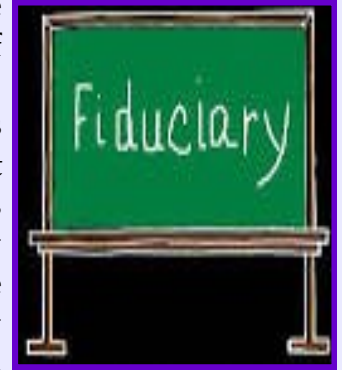
"THANK A VETERAN"



Fiduciary Program



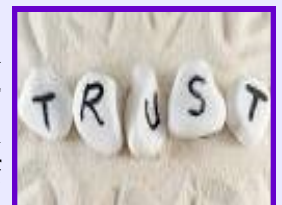
The fiduciary program provides oversight of the VA's most vulnerable beneficiaries who are unable to manage their VA benefits because of injury, disease, the infirmities of advanced age, or under 18 years of age. The VA appoints fiduciaries to manage VA benefits for these beneficiaries and the VA has oversight of the VA-appointed fiduciaries to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the beneficiaries they serve. This appointment and oversight of fiduciaries is handled through fiduciary hubs. Currently, there are seven fiduciary hubs in the United States. We are lucky to have one at the Columbia VA Regional Office. This fiduciary hub handles the fiduciary claims for South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia and Florida. Approximately 28,000 claims are being processed through the Columbia fiduciary hub. Currently, South Carolina has 12 field examiners, roughly one examiner for every four counties in the state.



A fiduciary is an individual or entity who has been appointed by the VA to receive VA benefits on behalf of a beneficiary for the use and benefit of the beneficiary and the beneficiary's dependents. It is the VA's policy that every beneficiary has the right to manage his or her VA benefits. However, in cases where medical evidence indicates that the beneficiary cannot manage their VA benefits, the VA may decide that the beneficiary needs the assistance of a fiduciary. This determination may also be made based upon notice that a court has appointed a guardian for the beneficiary. The VA's decision that a beneficiary needs a fiduciary may be appealed to the Board of Veterans Appeals.

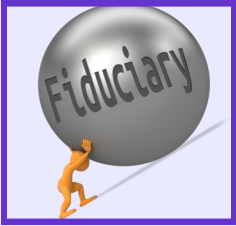
In deciding who should act as fiduciary for a beneficiary, the VA will always select the most effective and least restrictive fiduciary arrangement. This means that the VA will first consider whether the beneficiary can manage their VA benefits with limited VA supervision under supervised direct pay. The VA will consider the choice of the beneficiary, this could be the beneficiary's spouse, family members, friends, or caregivers who are qualified and willing to provide fiduciary services for the beneficiary without a fee. As a last resort, the VA will consider appointment of a paid fiduciary.

Prior to appointment of a fiduciary, the VA will assess the well-being and needs of the beneficiary and the beneficiary's dependents in light of their funds. This assessment or field examination is based, in part, upon a face-to-face meeting with the beneficiary at the beneficiary's home or place of residence.



Continued on page 4

Fiduciary Program continued from page 3



An assessment or field examination, conducted by a VA field examiner, checks the qualifications of a proposed fiduciary to include, but is not limited to: the willingness to serve and fulfill the responsibilities of a fiduciary; a face-to-face meeting with the prospective fiduciary; a credit history check; a criminal background check; and character witness interviews.

In some cases, the VA may require the appointed fiduciary to submit annual accountings and/or obtain a surety bond. The VA instructs the fiduciary regarding the duties and obligations of the position, and provides information regarding the beneficiary's needs, to include recurring monthly bills. After the initial appointment of a fiduciary, the VA conducts follow-up visits with beneficiaries and fiduciaries to monitor the beneficiary's well-being and fiduciary's performance. If the VA identifies unmet needs or adverse conditions, the VA may remove the fiduciary and appoint a new fiduciary for the beneficiary.

WHAT INFORMATION IS NEEDED AT AN ASSESSMENT/FIELD EXAMINATION?

During the assessment/field examination, please have the following information available for review by the field examiner:

1. Photo Identification.
2. The source and amount of all monthly bills, recurring expenses and income for the beneficiary.
3. A list of all assets, to include bank accounts, owned property, stocks, bonds, life insurance, burial plans, for the beneficiary.
4. A list of all current medications for the beneficiary.
5. Name, phone number, and address of the beneficiary's primary care doctor
6. Name, phone number, and address of the beneficiary's next of kin.



HOW DO I BECOME A FIDUCIARY?

If you are interested in serving as a fiduciary without a fee for a family member, friend, or person for whom you are a caregiver, please submit a request with the beneficiary's name, VA file number, and your name and contact information, to the VA Regional Office nearest you. You may obtain the address of the office nearest you by calling 1-800-827-1000.

If you are interested in being considered to serve as a fiduciary who may receive a fee, please submit your resume with a cover letter to the following e-mail address: VA_Fiduciary@va.gov. Please include your name, the name of your organization or business (if applicable), and your mailing and e-mail addresses with your request.

Continued on page 5

Fiduciary Program continued from page 4



You have the right to appeal the VA's decision finding that you are unable to manage your VA benefits. You also have the right to appeal the VA's selection of the fiduciary. If you disagree with the VA on either of these matters you may:

1. Appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals by telling the VA you disagree with their decision and want the Board to review it, or

2. Give the VA evidence we do not already have that may lead them to change their decision.

You may also request to have your ability to manage your VA benefits re-evaluated, or to have a new fiduciary appointed, at any time. If you wish to have a re-evaluation, please submit your request in writing with any supporting medical evidence to the fiduciary hub of jurisdiction.

The Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act prohibits you from purchasing, possessing, receiving or transporting a firearm or ammunition if you have "been adjudicated as a mental defective or been committed to a mental institution." In compliance with this act, the VA reports the names of incompetent beneficiaries to the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), which then adds the names to a database called the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). Gun dealers must check NICS for the name of a potential buyer before selling him/her a firearm. You may be fined and/or imprisoned if you knowingly violate this law. You may apply to the VA for relief of firearms prohibitions imposed by the law by submitting your request to the VA. The VA will determine whether such relief is warranted.

The determination that you are unable to manage your VA benefits does not affect your non-VA finances, or your right to vote.



For more information, you may contact the Columbia fiduciary hub at: PO Box 9367, Columbia, SC 29209 or toll free at 1-888-407-0144 option 1.

VA Expands Health Care

For Camp Lejeune Veterans

The VA issued a final rule to expand VA health care eligibility for Veterans affected by contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune. Veterans who served at least 30 days at Camp Lejeune from August 1, 1953 through December 31, 1987, are eligible to receive no cost health care for 15 medical conditions that have been linked to the contaminated water. Previously, only Veterans who served at Camp Lejeune from January 1, 1957 were covered. Veterans who have been diagnosed with any of the 15 medical conditions may receive reimbursement for the cost of treatment if the care was provided on or after December 16, 2014, when the law expanding eligibility was signed. However, Veterans must submit a request for reimbursement no later than July 18, 2018. For more information on benefits and services for Camp Lejeune Veterans, visit: <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune>.



This rule does not impact disability compensation benefits. The VA is still in the process of finalizing a rule to grant Camp Lejeune Veterans presumptive disability compensation for 8 of the 15 medical conditions found to be associated with exposure to the contaminated water at Camp Lejeune. However, Veterans who have been diagnosed with any of the 15 conditions should file a claim when possible to preserve the effective date.



IMPORTANT DAV VAN INFORMATION

The van runs on certain Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays taking Veterans to appointments at DORN VAMC for their scheduled appointments between 9am and 1pm.



If you need to schedule a ride on the DAV van, please call the office for dates and space availability at 803-785-8400.



WE ARE STILL LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEER VAN DRIVERS!!!

If you are 18 or older or know someone who may be interested in volunteering to drive the DAV van at least one day a month, please contact the office at 803-785-8400.



The U.S. Department of Treasury, in partnership with the SC State Housing Finance and Development Authority and SC Housing Corp., has made over \$295 million available to help eligible South Carolina homeowners avoid serious first mortgage delinquency and foreclosures.

Qualifications

SC Help is intended to assist borrowers who are facing first mortgage delinquency or possible foreclosure. There is no household income limit, the property must be an owner occupied primary residence, applicants must have a minimum 24 months homeownership history and applicants do NOT have to be delinquent.

How to Apply

Applicants are encouraged to apply electronically at: www.schelp.com. Applicants without the internet may call 1-855-435-7472, toll free number for assistance. There is NO FEE required at any point during the SC HELP process.

November is National Alzheimer's Awareness Month!



December is National Safe Toys & Gifts Month!

national SAFE toy and gift month



Military Retirement and VA Benefits



If you are retired from the military and are also eligible for VA disability compensation, determining how much you get paid, and from where, can seem complicated. You see, until 2004, it was against the law to receive military retirement pay and VA disability compensation at the same time. Retirees had to choose which pay they wanted to receive, and if they chose to receive their VA disability compensation, those funds were “offset,” or deducted, from their military retirement pay. There have been two major changes to this law in the past decade, and some Veterans may be eligible to receive their full military retirement pay along with their VA disability compensation.

Military retirement pay and VA disability compensation are entirely separate forms of compensation. They are paid from different agencies, and paid from different sources of money. They also represent two different forms of compensation. Military retirement pay is a pension that is based on your years of service. VA disability compensation is a monetary award that is based on your decreased ability to perform work after leaving the military. Military retirement pay is taxable by the federal level, and is taxed by most states (some states do not have an income tax or do not tax military retirement pay). VA disability compensation, however, is considered non-taxable income by the federal government.



What Happens When You Are Eligible to Receive Retirement Pay & Disability Compensation? To best answer this question, we need to examine your disability rating. If you have a combined disability rating of 50% or greater, you should be eligible to receive CRDP. If you receive CRDP, you will receive your full military retirement pay along with your full VA disability compensation. There will be no reduction to your military retirement pay. If you have a combined VA service-connected disability rating of 40% or lower, then you are not eligible for CRDP and your military retirement pay will be offset, or deducted, by the amount of VA service-connected disability compensation you receive.

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**; you can 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.

IT'S YOUR CALL

ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Did you know that the following events occurred during the months of November/December?



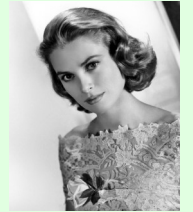
November 4, 1922 - King Tut's tomb was discovered at Luxor, Egypt, by British archaeologist Howard Carter.



November 6, 1854 - American conductor John Philip Sousa was born in Washington, D.C. Best known for his rousing marches including *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, *Semper Fidelis*, and *El Capitan*.



November 8, 1895 - X-rays (electromagnetic rays) were discovered by Wilhelm Roentgen at the University of Wuerzburg in Germany.



November 12, 1929 - Grace Kelly was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



November 13, 1927 - The Holland Tunnel was opened to traffic. The tunnel runs under the Hudson River between New York City and Jersey City and was the first underwater tunnel built in the U.S.



November 14, 1666 - The first experimental blood transfusion took place in Britain, utilizing two dogs.



November 17, 1869 - The Suez Canal was formally opened after more than 10 years of construction.



November 20, 1889 - American astronomer Edwin Hubble was born in Marshfield, Missouri.

November 26, 1832 - The first horse-drawn streetcar carried passengers in New York City.

December 5, 1933 - The 18th Amendment (Prohibition Amendment) to the U.S. Constitution was repealed.

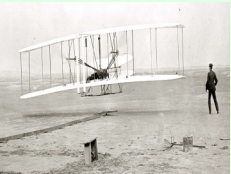


December 14, 1799 - George Washington died at Mount Vernon.

December 15, 1964 - Canada adopted a new national flag featuring a red maple leaf on a white background.



December 17, 1903 - Orville and Wilbur Wright achieved the first powered, controlled airplane flights.



December 20, 1860 - South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union in a prelude to the American Civil War.



December 24, 1993 - The KGB (Soviet Secret Police) organization was abolished by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.



December 26, 2004 - An estimated 230,000 persons were killed and 1.5 million left homeless when a magnitude 9.3 earthquake on the seafloor of the Indian Ocean set off a series of giant tsunami waves that smashed into the shorelines of a dozen countries including Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, India and Somalia.



December 29, 1940 - During the Blitz, German aircraft dropped thousands of incendiary bombs on the center of London, causing the worst fire damage since the great fire of 1666.



2016 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts



Two things to always remember during Veterans Day when using any of the free meals or discounts listed below:

1 - **Proof of Military Service:** First, most companies require some form of military ID – including a U.S. Uniform Services ID Card (active/reserve/retired), Current Leave and Earnings Statement (LES), Photograph in uniform, be wearing uniform (if your service permits), Veterans Organization Card (e.g., American Legion and VFW), DD214, discharge paperwork, or other form of identification. Other restaurants and companies may only require a photo of you in uniform, or go by the honor system.

2 – **Participation:** Second, always call ahead to verify locations, times, and participation. Many of the listed companies are franchises and may have different policies. We will do our best to keep this page updated as we find new information.

Discounts at Restaurants

Applebee's – Applebee's is again offering a free meal to military Veterans and active-duty service members on November 11th. There will be 7 entrées to choose from, beverage and gratuity not included. Military ID or proof of service is required. Last year over a million free meals were served.

Carraba's – free appetizer of your choice for active duty service members and Veterans. Military ID or proof of service is required.

Chili's – Chili's is offering all military Veterans, past and present, their choice of one of seven meals during the dinner hour or any lunch combo. Offer is valid at participating Chili's in the U.S. only. Dine-in from limited menu only; beverages and gratuity not included. Veterans and active duty military simply show proof of military service.

Denny's – Free all you can eat pancakes from 6am to 2pm on Veterans Day for all active, retirees, and Veterans with a valid military ID or proof of service. Offer available in every Denny's nationwide.

FATZ – Free meal for current and former military members up to \$13 value. Proof of service is required.

Golden Corral –The annual Golden Corral Military Appreciation Monday dinner is available to any person who has ever served in the United States Military. If you are a Veteran, retired, currently serving, in the National Guard or Reserves, you are invited to participate in Golden Corral's Military Appreciation Monday dinner. To date over four million free meals have been served.

Hooters – Hooters invites all Veterans and current servicemen and women to enjoy a free meal, up to \$10.99 in value with any drink purchase, by presenting a military ID or proof of service at any locations across the country.

Krispy Kreme – Free doughnut and small coffee available only at participating Krispy Kreme stores. Offer available to all active-duty, retirees & Veterans. Be sure to call ahead to verify your local Krispy Kreme is participating.

Little Caesars Pizza - Little Caesars is honoring the men and women of the United States Armed Forces this Veterans Day by providing Veterans and active military members with a free Crazy Bread with proof of military status or proof of service at participating stores nationwide.



Longhorn Steakhouse – Complimentary Texas Tonion and non-alcoholic beverage. Offer good for Veterans and active duty military members. Proof of service is required.

Continued on page 10

2016 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts continued from page 9

McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurants – McCormick & Schmick's is celebrating their annual Veteran's Appreciation Event with free lunch or dinner. Veterans will be able to choose a complimentary lunch or dinner entrée from a special menu. Veterans must provide proof of military service. Be sure to contact your local McCormick & Schmick's as this is valid at participating restaurants only. Space is limited and reservations are highly recommended.



Menchie's – All Veterans and current service members will receive a free 6oz frozen yogurt on November 11th. Proof of service required.

O'Charley's – Free entrée from the \$9.99 menu for all active duty and Veterans with proof of service

Olive Garden – All Veterans and military active duty will receive a free meal from a special menu on Veterans Day. Also, all November long, current military service members and their families get 10% their purchase in honor of Military Appreciation Month. Proof of service is required.



Outback Steakhouse – Outback Steakhouse is honoring America's military Veterans by offering active duty military and Veterans a free Bloomin' Onion and a non-alcoholic beverage to military personnel and Veterans with ID or proof of service. Also, receive 15% off your purchase from November 11th - December 31st.

Red Lobster – Free Appetizer on Veterans Day with Military ID or proof of service. Veterans may choose from a select list of appetizers.

Red Robin –Free Red's Tavern Double burger and bottomless steak fries for all Red Robin guests with military ID or proof of service. Red Robin is also partnering with Heinz for Veterans Days to benefit the Wounded Warrior Project. Red Robin will also donate \$10,000 to the Wounded Warrior Project.

Ryan's – On November 11th, active duty, reservists and retired military may enjoy a free dine-in lunch at participating Ryan's locations, from open until 3:30 pm. Show your military ID or proof of service to enjoy the free meal.

Shoney's –On November 11th, Shoney's will be having a Veterans Day free meal that consists of a free All-American Burger. This is for Veterans as well as active duty military. Proof of military service is required and it's for dine-in only.

Starbucks – Free tall brewed coffee for active duty, Veterans and their spouses at participating stores only.

Texas Roadhouse –Every Texas Roadhouse location across the country will participate in the free lunch event to honor the men and women of our armed forces. Choose from one of 10 free meals, plus sides and a drink. Offer good for All Veterans – including all active, retired or former U.S. military. Dine-in only and ID Required.

T.G.I. Friday's – Free Lunch for all current military members and Veteran from 11:00am to 2:00pm. Valid ID or proof of service required. Dine-in only at participating locations.

Uno Chicago Grill – Free individual pizza or entrée with purchase of a pizza or entrée of equal or greater value. Available for all active duty and Veterans. No coupon is necessary; proof of service required. Don't forget to tell the staff you are there that day to support Fisher House, and a portion of your party's check will go to benefit the Fisher House Foundation, an awesome military charity.



Continued on page 11

2016 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts continued from page 10

Home Improvement Discounts

Home Depot - The Home Depot is offering a 10% discount for all Veterans on Veterans Day. Proof of service is required.

Lowe's – Lowes is offering a 10% discount for all Veterans on Veterans Day (this also includes immediate family). Proof of service is required.



Retail Stores & More

Big Lots – 10% off all purchases with valid military ID, November 9th – 11th.

Bed, Bath & Beyond – 20% off in store purchases, November 9th – 11th.

Build-A-Bear Workshop – 20% off entire purchase.

Char-Broil – Get 10% off site wide on orders over \$75 at Char-Broil! Offer ends November 15th and anyone can use the offer. Code: A14VET

Dollar General – Veterans, active military members and their families will get 11% off their in-store or online purchase on Veterans Day.

JC Penny – Anyone with a military ID or proof of service will receive 20% off their purchases November 3rd – 15th; in-store only.



Sleep Number Beds – From October 14th – November 16th Sleep Number is providing exclusive offers for current and past military personnel. You could save \$400 - \$700 on selected Sleep Number mattress sets.

Sam's Club - Sam's Club continues to honor military Veterans from November 9th – 11th with an annual cane giveaway. In collaboration with AMG Medical, 36,000 free folding canes will be distributed to Veterans in need of mobility assistance. "Hugo Salutes Our Veterans" will distribute Hugo Folding Canes (retail value: \$29.99) at all U.S. Sam's Club locations. Sam's Club Membership is not required, but proof of U.S. military service is required to be eligible.

Free Services

Free Car Washes – Grace for Vets is a non-profit organization who has gotten together independent car wash operators to offer Veterans a free car wash in thousands of locations on Veterans Day. Find a list of the participating car washers at Grace for Vets.

Free Haircuts at Great Clips – Veterans and active/inactive/retired military members can stop into Great Clips on November 11th and get a free haircut or pickup a free haircut card to use before the end of the year. Anyone can stop in to get their haircut and receive a free haircut card that they can give to a Veteran.

Free Haircuts at Sports Clips – Veterans and active duty US service members can stop in at Sports Clips on November 11th to get a free haircut.

Free Night Lodging at B&B's – Veterans can stay the night at over 200 participating B&B's and inns around the country Veterans Day. Reservations for your free stay can be made now and are available while supplies last. For more information, visit B&B's for Vets.



Continued on page 12

2016 Veteran's Day Free Meals and Discounts continued from page 11

Free Park Admissions for Veterans Day

Colonial Williamsburg – Veterans, service members and dependents of currently deployed troops can get free admission tickets to the park from November 7th through 11th.

Free Entrance Into National Parks – This freebie is in honor of Veterans Day but everyone can take part in it. Over 100 national parks will waive admission fees on November 11th in honor of Veteran's Day.

Knotts Berry Farm– Knott's Berry Farm continues its tradition of honoring the brave men and women who have served in the U.S. military, both past and present, with free admission during its 25th annual Military Tribute. The free-admission offer applies to all U.S. Veterans, retired and active military personnel and one guest. Up to six additional tickets may be purchased at Knott's Ticket Booths for only \$24 each from November 2 through 21 and for \$29 each from November 22 through January 4, 2015. U.S. Veterans, retired and active military personnel must present military ID or proof of U.S. military service at Knott's ticket booths to receive the complimentary tickets. Veterans, retired and active military personnel must be present.

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment – Veterans get 50% off tickets now through November 11th. The tickets must be used by December 21st. Veterans promotion includes SeaWorld Orlando, SeaWorld Antonio, SeaWorld San Diego, Busch Gardens Tampa, Busch Gardens Williamsburg, and Sesame Place Langhorne. The program does not include Discovery Cove in Orlando or Aquatica, SeaWorld's Water Park. Active duty military members who have already used their free admission for the year can also get 50% off tickets.

Veteran Ticket Foundation – Get free tickets to sporting event, movies, shows and more by visiting www.vettix.org.



Veterans Day is an official United States public holiday, observed annually on November 11th, that honors military Veterans, that is, persons who served in the United States Armed Forces. Veterans Day, formerly known as Armistice Day, was originally set as a U.S. legal holiday to honor the end of World War I, which officially took place on November 11, 1918. In legislation that was passed in 1938, November 11 was "dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be hereafter celebrated and known as 'Armistice Day.'" As such, this new legal holiday honored only World War I Veterans. In 1954, after having been through both

World War II and the Korean War, the 83rd U.S. Congress -- at the urging of Veterans service organizations -- amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American Veterans of all wars. It also coincides with other holidays, including Armistice Day and Remembrance Day, celebrated in other countries to mark the anniversary of the end of World War I.

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
and wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
"For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men."

National Veterans Day Ceremony

The Veterans Day National Ceremony is held each year on November 11th at Arlington National Cemetery. The ceremony commences precisely at 11:00 a.m. with a wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknowns and continues inside the Memorial Amphitheater with a parade of colors by Veterans' organizations and remarks from dignitaries. The ceremony is intended to honor and thank all who served in the United States Armed Forces.

Free counseling for war time Veterans & their dependents

The Columbia Vet Center offers a wide range of services to help you make a successful transition from military to civilian life. You have earned these benefits and there is no cost to you or your family members.

Services provided are:

- Individual & group counseling
- Family counseling for military related
- Bereavement counseling for families
- Military sexual trauma
- Outreach & education
- Substance abuse assessment & referral
- Employment assessment & referral
- VBA benefits explanation & referral
- Screening & referral for medical issues

The Columbia Vet Center is located at 1710-A Richland Street, Columbia. Their telephone number is 803-765-9944.



Due to issues following Hurricane Matthew in South Carolina, the DAV is providing disaster relief to eligible Veterans. Should you have any questions regarding this program, please contact the DAV at 803-647-2422. Their grant application can be found

online at okdav.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Disaster_Relief_Grant_App.pdf or we have copies of the applications in our office.



Disabled American Veterans





VA Launches Veterans Legacy Program

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the launch of the Veterans Legacy Program to memorialize Veterans' service and sacrifice through public educational programming. The program uses the rich resources found throughout VA national cemeteries, Soldiers' lots and monument sites.

"The Veterans Legacy Program is meant to bring to life the stories of Veterans buried in the VA national cemeteries through lesson plans, interactive maps and video vignettes," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Robert A. McDonald. "Behind every marker is a story—a story of what it meant to be a Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine and Coast Guardsman at a particular moment in time. Our goal is to ensure that our nation does not forget their stories and their sacrifice."

Using online educational products such as lesson plans, interactive maps and short video vignettes, the VA, through the Veterans Legacy Program, will engage the general public, students and educators. The VA launched this initiative earlier this year at two pilot sites: Beaufort National Cemetery in South Carolina and Riverside National Cemetery in California. Over the next several years, online educational products and programs will be developed for all the VA national cemeteries.

The VA has also formed a partnership with the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) to co-sponsor a "Teachers Institute," a workshop for educators who will conduct research at the VA and the ABMC cemeteries. Information about the program may be found at www.cem.va.gov/cem/legacy/.

More than 4 million Americans, including Veterans of every war and conflict, are buried in the VA's 133 national cemeteries. The VA also provides funding to establish, expand, improve, and maintain 100 Veterans cemeteries in 47 states and territories including tribal trust lands, Guam and Saipan. For Veterans not buried in a VA national cemetery, the VA provides headstones, markers or medallions to commemorate their service. In 2015, the VA honored more than 353,000 Veterans and their loved ones with memorial benefits in national, state, tribal and private cemeteries.

For more information about the history of VA national cemeteries, visit www.cem.va.gov/history.



*"We are forever indebted
to those
who have given their lives
that we might
be free."*

*-Ronald
Reagan*



**There is a new
number to call for
billing issues through the VAMC
for any private health care
that was fee based out.**

**That number is
1-877-881-7618
9am to 5pm EST.**



VA HEALTHCARE VERSUS MEDICARE

You can have both Medicare and Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits. However, Medicare and VA benefits do not work together. Medicare does not pay for any care that you receive at a VA facility.



- In order for Medicare to cover your care, you must receive care at a Medicare certified facility that works with your Medicare coverage.
- In order for your VA coverage to cover your care, you must generally receive health care services at a VA facility.

Medicare Part B and VA Coverage:

Many Veterans use their VA health benefits to get coverage for health care services and items not covered by Medicare, such as over-the-counter medications, annual physical exams and hearing aids. However, you may want to consider enrolling into Medicare Part B (medical insurance), even if you have VA coverage. Part B may cover services you receive from Medicare-certified providers and provide you with medical coverage outside the VA health system. In addition, if you do not enroll into Part B when you are first eligible to do so, you will most likely incur a Part B premium penalty for each 12-month period you were without Medicare Part B coverage. In addition, you may also experience gaps in coverage.

Medicare Part D and VA Coverage:

Some Veterans only use their VA drug coverage to get their medications, since VA drug coverage may offer more generous prescription drug coverage than Medicare Part D, the Medicare prescription drug benefit. Since VA drug coverage is considered creditable, meaning it is as good as or better than the Medicare prescription drug benefit, you can delay enrolling into Medicare Part D without penalty. If you do lose VA drug coverage, make sure you enroll into a Part D plan within 63 days of losing your VA benefits.



Note that although you can have both Medicare Part D and VA drug coverage, the two do not work together. VA benefits only cover the drugs you get from VA pharmacies and Part D plans usually only cover drugs you get from pharmacies that are within the plan's network. You may want to join a Part D plan in certain situations. You may want to enroll in a plan if you move into a nursing home outside of the VA health system and need coverage for medications from the nursing home pharmacy. You may also want to enroll in a Part D plan if you qualify for Extra Help, the federal assistance program that helps people with Medicare afford their Part D drug costs.

If you have questions about VA benefits and coverage, contact the VA Health Administration Center at 1-800-733-8387. For questions on Medicare benefits and coverage, contact the Social Security Administration at 1-866-964-7594.



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

A list of the Veterans Service Organizations in Lexington County are also on our webpage.

“Veterans are Fathers, Mothers, Sons, Daughters, Brothers, Sisters, Friends and Lovers.
 They are the elderly people who can barely stand
 but refuse to sit when old glory passes by.
 They are the people who sit quietly thinking of a plan when everyone else is panicking.
 They are the ones who stand up for somebody’s rights even though they may
 disagree with them.
 They are the ones who celebrate Memorial Day and Veterans Day every day of the year.
 They are the people who keep going when everybody else gives up.
 They know the meaning of “The Ultimate Sacrifice” and are willing to make it without a
 second thought.
 They do not ask for praise or glory, only that you Honor those who have given their all.”

Author: Robert A. Sanchas

Happy Turkey Day!



DINNER LOVE
 FAMILY THANKS
 FRIENDS TURKEY



Chicken Scratch NY

D I N N E R W R
 F R I E N D S L
 Y T Z Y O S P Y
 E H X L E K R Q
 K N E I H N O Y
 R P V M F A S G
 U B O A V H H P
 T T L F J T J P

Direct Deposit



What is the fastest way to enroll or make a change to your Direct Deposit? The fastest way is to call 1-800-827-1000. They will be able to change it over the phone. To enroll you will need to know your routing and account number along with the amount that is being deposited. If you are changing your direct deposit, you will need to know your old routing and account number along with your new information.



Don't forget to turn
 back your clocks...
 Daylight Savings
 Time ends
 Sunday, November 6th.



Merry
 Christmas



Wishing everyone
 a Happy Hanukkah, a Happy Kwanzaa and a Merry Christmas
 from your Lexington County VA Staff!!

Jennifer Hendrix

Ed Lunden

Jennifer Parker

Kathy DeBerry

Dana Forrester

The History of John Philip Sousa

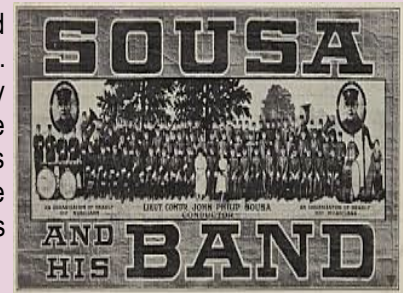


John Philip Sousa was born in Washington, D.C., on November 6, 1854, as the third of ten children of John Anthony Sousa and Maria Elisabeth Trinkhaus. Sousa started his music education by playing the violin and studying music theory and composition at the age of six, where he was found to have absolute pitch. During his childhood, Sousa studied voice, violin, piano, flute, cornet, baritone horn, trombone, and alto horn. On December 30, 1879, Sousa married Jane van Middlesworth Bellis. They had three children: John Philip, Jr., Jane Priscilla, and Helen.



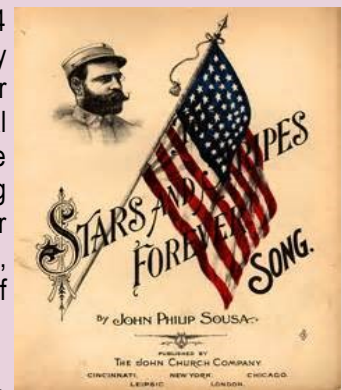
When Sousa was 13, his father, a trombonist in the Marine Band, enlisted him in the United States Marine Corps as an apprentice to keep him from joining a circus band, and his initial rank was listed as "boy". Sousa re-enlisted on July 8, 1872 and was promoted to musician. He left the Marine Corps in 1875 at the age of 20. After leaving the Marine Corps, Sousa joined a theatrical (pit) orchestra where he learned to conduct. His second period of Marine service was from 1880 to 1892 and during this period, he was the leader of the Marine Band in Washington, D.C. Sousa's salary as "leader of the band" (his official Marine Corps rank) was \$83 per month. Under his leadership, the Marine Band became the premier military band in the United States. In July 1892, Sousa requested, and received, a discharge from the Marine Corps to pursue a financially promising civilian career as a band leader. He organized the Sousa Band the year he left the Marine Band. The Sousa Band toured from 1892 to 1931, performing at 15,623 concerts in both America and around the world.

On May 31, 1917, shortly after the United States declared war on Germany and entered World War I, Sousa was commissioned as a lieutenant in the United States Naval Reserve. At that time, Sousa was 62 years old which was then the mandatory retirement age for Navy officers. Sousa was discharged from active duty after the war's end in November 1918. He returned to conducting his own band but continued to wear his naval uniform for many of his concerts and other public appearances. For this service during the war, Sousa received the World War I Victory Medal. During World War II, the Liberty ship, SS *John Philip Sousa* was named after him. The ship's bell is still used by the Marine Band in concert.



The marching brass bass, or sousaphone was created by J. W. Pepper, a Philadelphia instrument maker, who created the instrument in 1893 at Sousa's request using several of his suggestions in its design. Sousa wanted a tuba that could sound up and over the band whether its player was seated or marching. The sousaphone was re-created in 1898 by C.G. Conn and the instrument is named after Sousa, who popularized its use in his band and it was the model that Sousa preferred to use.

Sousa wrote 137 marches, 15 operettas, 5 overtures, 11 suites, 24 dances, 28 fantasies, and 322 arrangements of nineteenth-century western European symphonic works. Including: "Semper Fidelis" (Official March of the United States Marine Corps); "Stars and Stripes Forever" (National March of the United States); "El Capitan"; "Hands Across the Sea" (dedicated to the band of the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets); "U.S. Field Artillery" (modified version "The Army Goes Rolling Along" is the official song of the U.S. Army); and "Salvation Army March". Sousa wrote marches for several American universities, including the University of Minnesota, University of Illinois, University of Nebraska, Kansas State University, and Marquette University. In 1987, an act of Congress named "The Stars and Stripes Forever" as the National March of the United States.



Sousa died of heart failure at the age of 77 on March 6, 1932, in his room at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel in Reading, Pennsylvania. He had conducted a rehearsal of "The Stars and Stripes Forever" the previous day with the Ringgold Band. He is buried in Washington, D.C.'s Congressional Cemetery.



LEXINGTON INTERFAITH COMMUNITY SERVICES

2016 Holiday Basket Wish List

Ham or Turkey (frozen or canned)
Canned Sweet Potatoes
Canned Collards
Stuffing Mix
Cranberry Sauce
Cornbread Mix
Green Beans
Dessert Mix (Complete kit)



We will begin to give these to clients

Thanksgiving: Wednesday, November 1st

Christmas: Friday, December 1st

Questions? Anna Smith
Director of Community Relations
Extension 228 | anna@licssc.org

You may pack a basket or box and bring it completed, or simply bring the items and we will prepare. Feel free to add a personal note or prayer for the family.

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" - Matthew 25:40

216 HARMON STREET, LEXINGTON SC 29072
803 957 6656 | 803 957 3414 fax | www.licssc.org



Flu & You

Q: Should I get the flu vaccine?

Yes. Influenza is a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and death. Even healthy people can get sick from the flu and spread it to others.

The flu shot is recommended for all persons aged 6 months and older with rare exception.



**Fight
the
Flu**

Where can I get my flu shot?

You can get your flu shot at:

DORN Primary Care and CBOCs from 8:00-4:00

Dorn Mental Health clinics Tues-Thurs from 9:00-11:00, 1:00-2:00

You do not need an appointment!



get your
Flu Shot
here!

Each year in the U.S., the flu causes more than 226,000 hospitalizations and about 36,000 deaths.



**FLU SHOTS
FOR
VA PATIENTS**



No cost to you*

We'll even automatically update your records with the VA.

Nearby locations | Walk in anytime



VA

Department of Veterans Affairs

Widely Available

A. H. ROBINSON

*Not available for certain VA patients. For more information, visit www.va.gov/flu or call 800-695-7904.

A flu shot is the best way to protect yourself against seasonal influenza (flu).

Can a flu shot give me the flu?

NO. Some people get minor body aches, a headache or low grade fever, but this is **NOT** the flu.

If you have already received your flu vaccination from another facility ... not at Dorn or one of Dorn's Community Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs), please alert your Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) to ensure that your vaccination record is updated in your medical records to reflect month and location of flu vaccination. Alternatively, this information may be faxed to 803-695-7904.



Job Hunting?

The VA medical center and regional office is hiring Veterans.

Visit USAjobs.com for more information.



Lexington County Veterans Group



All Lexington County Veterans are invited to attend the weekly meetings. The group meets weekly on Tuesdays from 10 am to 12 noon in the auditorium at 605 West Main Street in Lexington. The group meets for Health Issues and PTSD counseling with a licensed counselor.

The Veterans group also participates 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 at 803-785-8400.



Dang-it Dolls Workshops

Saturday, November 12th from 10am to 3pm
at the Cayce Masonic Lodge, 1701 12th Street, Cayce, SC.



Please note: There will be no meeting in December.



There is something for everyone to do and this is the one place where **THE MORE THE MERRIER** really counts.



Attention Commanders of Veterans Service Organizations in Lexington County, our office is looking for a contact name and number for all American Legion posts, DAV chapters, VFW's, etc. Please contact our office with this information.



DID YOU KNOW...



Since October of last year, the American Legion has submitted more FDC (Fully Developed Claims) or express claims than any other Veterans Service Organization in the country.



WELCOME HOME *to Carolina*

Saturday, November 12
Noon - 5:30pm

JOIN US in welcoming home South Carolina's Vietnam Veterans as we honor their service and sacrifice on behalf of freedom, democracy, self-determination, and the American fight against communism. Entitled "Welcome Home to Carolina", the following events will be held to provide our Vietnam Veterans the long overdue reception they earned fifty years ago.



YELLOW RIBBON RALLY & RIDE

Riders will rally at Spirit Communications Park and parade to the T. Eston Marchant NG Complex in honor of the 982 fallen Vietnam warriors enshrined on South Carolina's Vietnam Memorial Wall. To find out more information and register to carry a ribbon in the ride, please visit our website at WelcomeHomeToCarolina.com

YELLOW RIBBON CEREMONY

Next will be the Yellow Ribbon Ceremony, where all 982 names will be read aloud and their respective ribbons placed into a commemorative locker. A powerful POW / MIA ceremony will then be conducted followed by the locker being ceremoniously delivered to the South Carolina Military Museum. There it will be placed on display as a reminder of South Carolina's fallen Vietnam warriors, their service, and their ultimate sacrifice.



COOKOUT & DOCUMENTARY FILM

The SC Vietnam Veterans will be treated to a free cookout, including Vietnam era music & entertainment. The day will climax with the premiere of a documentary film "In Their Own Words" which captures the personal stories of Vietnam Veterans throughout the Palmetto State.

www.WelcomeHomeToCarolina.com



DID YOU KNOW...

The VAMC Dorn now has a food pantry. Any Veteran in need may participate in the program. He or she must contact Voluntary Services and they will direct you to the food pantry. To contact Voluntary Services call (803) 776-4000 extension 6780.

KOREAN WAR

COMMEMORATION MEDAL



These medals were given out to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean war. The medal was commissioned and made by the South Korean government as a sign of appreciation and thanks for American soldiers. The lanyard of the medal depicts the flags of all the nations involved in the war and the medal itself contains a piece of the wire from the DMZ.

Do you know of a Korean War Veteran in Lexington County that hasn't received a medal? If so, please have them contact or come by our office. If the Veteran is deceased, this medal can also be awarded to the surviving spouse. Our office only has **seven** medals remaining to award, so it is first come first served.

OUTREACH DATES AND TIMES



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

Chapin Outreach is the 1st Friday of the month at the Chapin Library from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.



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

THERE WILL BE NO BATESBURG/LEESVILLE OUTREACH FOR NOVEMBER & THE DATE FOR THE DECEMBER OUTREACH HAS BEEN CHANGED TO DECEMBER 8th.

Appointments are strongly encouraged. Call the office at 803-785-8400 to schedule a time.

County Council Needs You!

Veterans are still 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 please be present around 4:15pm. Contact the office at 803-785-8400, if you are interested.



The office would like to thank Bo Davenport, Gerhard Haimberger and the Lexington County Veterans Group. These gentlemen volunteered their time to say the Pledge of Allegiance for the months of September and October.

THANKS

Fort Jackson National Cemetery SCFJNC

FOR EVERY 2 WREATHS PURCHASED ON THIS FORM, THE CEMETERY WILL RECEIVE A 3RD. WREATH FREE

Wreaths may be purchased online at www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org Please use cemetery code SCFJNC and Group ID: SC0015 for the 3 for 2

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: _____

Please make checks payable to:
Wreaths Across America TM
 PO Box 3356
 West Columbia, SC 29171
 Questions? Please call 803-467-4482
 Thank you for your Sponsorship and joining us in our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach!

Do we have permission to publicize your name as a sponsor? Yes OR NO, I wish to remain Anonymous

Sponsorship	Price	Quantity	Total
Individual = 1 Wreath	\$15.00		
Mailed "In Honor" card = If you wish to send a mailed honor card telling someone of your sponsorship-see "In Honor" section below. *Card will not be mailed if the \$2 fee is not included.	\$2.00		
Family = 4 Wreaths	\$60.00		
Small Business = 10 Wreaths	\$150.00		
Corporate = 100 Wreaths	\$1,500.00		
		Grand Total	

****SORRY- WE CAN NOT TAKE GRAVE SPECIFIC REQUESTS****

In Honor of:

Please provide email of "In Honor Of" recipient, or mailing address so a card can be sent notifying them of your sponsorship in their honor. (if you have a specific message please write it on the back of this sheet and we will include it.)

Email: _____

Mailing: _____

In Memory of:

This name will be listed on our online memory wall, please Provide name, rank, branch of service and state resided

Branch of Service: _____

Rank: _____

State: _____

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

Location ID: SCFJNC Fundraising Group ID: SC0015

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Cash \$: _____

Total\$: _____ Date: _____

Total # Checks: _____

Reconciled: _____

MO \$: _____

GEN: _____



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 2015, Wreaths Across America and our national network of volunteers laid over 900,000 memorial wreaths at nearly 1100 locations in the United States and beyond. We accomplished this with help from over 2500 fundraising groups, many 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 Veteran's 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 11, 2016

Start of World's Longest Veterans Parade from Maine to Arlington National Cemetery and participating locations

Monday, December 12, 2016 12:00 Noon

S. C. State House wreath-laying ceremonies at the SC Veterans Memorial on the State House Grounds (Assembly St side)

Saturday December 17, 2016 12:00noon

Fort Jackson National Cemetery, 4170 Percival Rd. Columbia, SC 29229

Parking will be at the Blue Cross Blue Shield parking lot across from the cemetery. There will be shuttle buses to bring you into the cemetery starting at 10:30am the morning of the ceremony.

Simultaneous wreath laying ceremonies at over 1100 locations all across the country and beyond.

For more information, email Carol Davis waaftjackson@yahoo.com or call (803) 467-4482
You can also email info@wreathscrossamerica.org

**Veterans
Get Telephonic Health Care
Application Option**



The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has announced that it is amending its enrollment regulations to allow Veterans to complete applications for enrollment in VA health care by telephone without the need for a signed paper application. The change is effective immediately for Combat Veterans and will be effective July 5, 2016, for all Veterans. This phased implementation accelerates the VA's effort to enroll all Combat Veterans with pending applications as part of its ongoing Veterans Enrollment Rework Project. The VA is working to complete the review and rework of all pending health enrollment records for living and deceased Veterans this summer. By adding this telephone application option to the VA's regulations, the VA will now offer three ways to enroll. This change provides Veterans an even more convenient way to apply for enrollment, in addition to the paper VA Form 10-10EZ and online enrollment application process. For more information, Veterans can contact the Health

Eligibility Center Enrollment and Eligibility Division toll free at 1-855-488-8440.



**NEW
SOUTH CAROLINA POW MEDAL**

South Carolina Veterans who were prisoners of war during a war time period are eligible to receive a new special state POW medal for their time in captivity. The POW medal was created by the Legislature in a June 2014 law that authorizes the Governor to present the award to South Carolina residents who are on federal POW lists. Any former POW who received an honorable discharge and is a South Carolina citizen can apply for the medal. Former prisoners from WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War, or other conflicts are also eligible. Surviving spouses or descendants can also apply for the medal once.



If you live in Lexington County or know someone who does and they meet the above requirements, please call the Lexington County VA office at 803-785-8400 with their name and contact information.

CLOSINGS...

County offices will be closed on the following dates:

- Friday, November 11th - Veterans Day
- Thursday, November 24th - Thanksgiving Day
- Friday, November 25th - Thanksgiving Holiday
- Friday, December 23rd - Christmas Holiday
- Monday, December 26th - Christmas Holiday
- Tuesday, December 27th - Christmas Holiday
- Monday, January 2nd - New Years Day Holiday



HELP NEEDED

Help is needed at Lexington Interfaith Community Services (LICS). They are in particular need for folks to assist at the donation door. They have staff members who would work with them and supervise.

This position entails customer service by greeting community members as they drive up to donate items, assisting them with carrying in their items, possibly giving receipts, and then sorting the items. It is physical work, but they can work around any slight limitations. Lifting is often required and they may also be asked to load items onto a truck.

If you are interested, contact: Kitti Clayton, Volunteer Coordinator, at 803-957-6656 ext: 227.



News Tidbits from the VA

The VA's Veterans Choice Program has reached a key milestone in improving access to health care for Veterans. More than two million appointments have been scheduled through the program.



The VA's Million Veteran Program has reached an important milestone when an Army Veteran from Montgomery, Alabama, became the 500,000th to voluntarily enroll in the research database program – making MVP the largest genomic database in the world.

The VA has announced that it is piloting a protocol to implement veterinary health benefits for mobility service dogs approved for Veterans with a chronic impairment that substantially limits mobility associated with mental health disorders.



Veterans receiving care at VA Medical Centers will now be able to schedule routine ear and eye appointments at local VA Audiology and Optometry clinics without a primary care referral – a move that

eliminates multiple steps and gets Veterans into appointments quicker. Before now, Veterans seeking appointments with audiologists or optometrists had to first make an appointment with a primary care physician for a referral for a routine clinic consult visit. The Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative is expected to be fully operational within all VA Medical Centers by the end of 2016.



About Our Office

This office is employed by Lexington County not the Federal VA. The Lexington County Veterans' Affairs Office is an advocate for Veterans and their surviving dependents. We provide the assistance needed in applying for benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs and for VA medical care. The Lexington County VA Office assists former and present members of the US Armed Forces and their dependents in preparing claims. Types of benefits include but not limited to: service connected disabilities and non-service connected pension; death pension benefits; burial; medical care; educational assistance, including vocational rehabilitation; guaranteed home loans; government life insurance and other benefits. We are not trained in Social Security or Department of Defense Benefits but can assist with some of these forms.

The VA has a website anyone can access for all VA questions, SEP user guides, regulations, policies, laws and any other VA resources. The website is: www.knowva.ebenefits.va.gov.




Happenings Around Lexington County

During the Months of November & December

<p>Sunday, November 6th</p>	<p>Lexington County Veterans Parade - 3pm For more information contact Sharon Willis @ 803-785-1454.</p>
<p>Saturday, November 19th through Friday, December 30th</p>	<p>Lights Before Christmas at Riverbanks Zoo 5 to 9pm. (closed 11/24, 12/24 & 12/25) For more information visit their website at riverbanks.org/events/lights-before-Christmas.</p>
<p>Wednesday, November 23rd through Saturday, December 31st</p>	<p>Holiday Lights on the River at Saluda Shoals (NOTE - there is a new entrance this year off of St. Andrews Road) 6 to 10pm For more information visit their website at iric.net/holiday-lights.</p>
<p>Friday, December 2nd through Sunday, December 4th</p>	<p>Town of Lexington's Snowball Festival Parade will be on Sunday, 12/ 4 @ 3:30pm For more information contact Jennifer Dowden, Events & Media Coordinator at 803-356-8238.</p>
<p>Saturday, December 10th</p>	<p>Lexington Leisure Center Christmas Sampler 9 to 3pm. For information call 803-957-7828.</p>
<p>Saturday, December 10th</p>	<p>Tri-City Leisure Center Christmas Peddler 9 to 3pm. For information call 803-939-9309.</p>
<p>Saturday, December 10th</p>	<p>West Metro Holiday Parade of Lights Starts at 5:30pm. For more information contact the Cayce/West Columbia Chamber at 803-794-6504.</p>
<p>Sunday, December 11th</p>	<p>Lexington County Museum Christmas Open House 1 to 4pm. For more information call 803-359-8369.</p>
<p>Saturday, December 17th</p>	<p>Batesburg/Leesville Leisure Center Carolina Craftisan Craft Show 9 to 3pm. For more information call 803-532-3810.</p>



 <p>November is National Peanut Butter Month!!</p>	<p>December is National Fruitcake Month!!</p> 
--	--

Featured Medal:

Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor is the United States of America's highest military honor, 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. There are three versions of the medal, one for the Army, one for the Navy, and one for the Air Force. Personnel of the Marine Corps and Coast Guard receive the Navy version. It is sometimes known by its initials "MH", but the initials are not used by recipients as a post-nominal title.

The Medal of Honor was created as a Navy version in 1861 named the "Medal of Valor", and an Army version of the medal named the "Medal of Honor" was established in 1862 to give recognition to men who distinguished themselves "conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity" in combat with an enemy of the United States. Because the medal is presented "in the name of Congress", it is often referred to as the "Congressional Medal of Honor". However, the official name is the "Medal of Honor", which began with the U.S. Army's version. Within United States Code the medal is referred to as the "Medal of Honor", and less frequently as "Congressional Medal of Honor".

The Medal of Honor is usually presented by the President in a formal ceremony at the White House, intended to represent the gratitude of the American people, with posthumous presentations made to the primary next of kin. According to the Medal of Honor Historical Society of the United States, there have been 3,515 Medals of Honor awarded to the nation's Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen since the decoration's creation, with just less than half of them awarded for actions during the four years of the American Civil War.

In 1990, Congress designated March 25 annually as "National Medal of Honor Day". Due to its prestige and status, the Medal of Honor is afforded special protection under U.S. law against any unauthorized adornment, sale, or manufacture, which includes any associated ribbon or badge.



**The Army, Navy and Air Force versions of the Medal of Honor.
The Navy version is also presented to the Marine Corps and Coast Guard.**



Coming in the Next Issue...

***Appeals;
DD214s, awards, medals,
upgrades & emergency
requests;
and travel pay***