



# VET NEWS

July 2007

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- July 2**      **Advisory Committee Meeting  
Veterans Affairs Office--7:00 p.m.**
- July 4**      **County Offices Closed /  
Independence Day**

**Independence Day**, or the Fourth of July, commemorates the formal adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Declaration, written by a committee headed by Thomas Jefferson, is an eloquent statement of the American colonies' intention to become an independent nation. It broke the formal ties between the colonies and Britain after the American Revolution had begun. The Independence Day celebration is a reminder of the ideals on which the nation was founded.

Although the signing of the Declaration was not completed until August 1776, the Fourth of July holiday has been accepted as the official anniversary of U.S. independence. It was not declared a legal holiday until 1941, however. Today it is celebrated in all states and territories of the United States.

The first celebration took place in Philadelphia on July 8, 1776, four days after the Declaration of Independence was adopted. On that day the declaration was read aloud, city bells rang, and bands played. Within a few years the Fourth of July was observed throughout most of the new nation, although until 1783 the city of Boston, Massachusetts, commemorated Independence Day on March 5, the date of the Boston Massacre. An elaborate Fourth of July celebration was held in Philadelphia in 1788, following the ratification of the Constitution of the United States.

Several important U.S. projects were started on Independence Day. Work on the Erie Canal in

New York state began on July 4, 1817. Construction of the first railroad in the United States, the Baltimore and Ohio, was started on July 4, 1828. July 4 was the date selected in 1848 for laying the cornerstone of the Washington Monument in the U.S. capital.



**Independence Hall  
Philadelphia, PA**

### VA VET CENTER

**David Cox, the VA Vet Center counselor, is available for counseling for combat veterans each Monday afternoon and all day Tuesdays at the Auxiliary Administration Building. You can make inquiries or appointments at the Lexington County Veterans Affairs Office, 605 West Main Street, Lexington, SC or call 803-785-8400.**

## VA VET CENTERS

### *Vital Services to Be More Accessible For Returning Veterans*

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) vet center program, which provides readjustment counseling and outreach services to combat veterans, is expanding into 23 new communities across the nation in the next two years. These facilities are an important resource for veterans returning from the Global War on Terror and their families.

All vet centers are community-based. They provide counseling on mental health and employment, plus services on family issues, education, bereavement and outreach, to combat veterans and their families. They are staffed by small teams of counselors, outreach specialists and other specialists, many of whom are combat veterans themselves.

The vet center program was established by Congress in 1979 in recognition that a significant number of Vietnam veterans were still experiencing readjustment problems. Today, all veterans who served in combat are eligible for care at a VA vet center at no cost, as are their families for military-related issues. Also eligible are veterans who were sexually assaulted or harassed while on active duty and the families of service members who die on active duty. (*What Every Veteran Should Know*, March 2007)

## BILL RENEWED

Most VA disability claims filed by military retirees are resolved in less than a year. But lost paperwork, administrative errors, and appeals of rejected claims delay thousands of disability awards for years on end.

The VA disability award is retroactive to the date of the application -- making some portion of past military retired pay tax-free. But to get a refund of back taxes paid, disabled retirees must file an amended tax return for each applicable year.

That's when retirees run into a major problem: the IRS Code bars filing amended returns beyond the last three tax years. As a result, VA administrative glitches and insensitive tax laws cost these disabled veterans thousands of dollars through no fault of their own.

The "*Disabled Veterans Tax Fairness Act of 2007*" (S. 326) would allow disabled veterans whose disability claims have been pending for more than 3 years to received refunds on previous taxes paid for up to five years - the length of time the IRS keeps these records.

House Champion Representative Sam Farr (D-CA) is expected to re-introduce a similar measure soon. The Farr bill would authorize a 15-year look-back exception to IRS rules for amended returns from disabled military retirees.



Just back from Iraq or Afghanistan?

Looking for job opportunities?

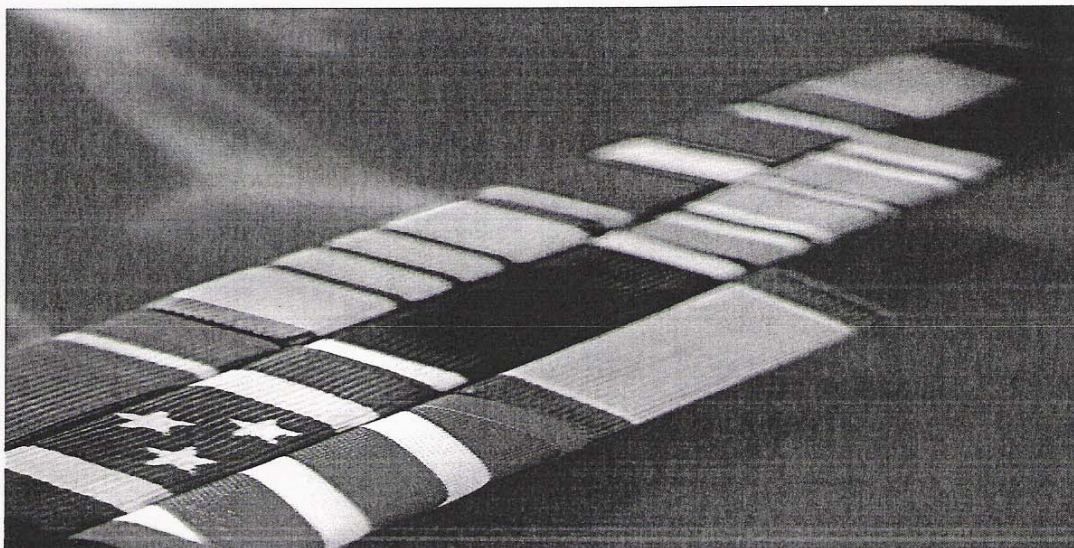
Need to brush up your skills?

Registration: Mondays & Tuesdays  
at the WJB Dorn VAMC Bldg 106,  
Room B201

**Fast Forward (FF) To Career Readiness**

Register Wednesdays 9-3 (FF)

# Homefront Readiness



Fast Forward's Home Front Readiness program will provide high quality job training services to veterans returning to Columbia, South Carolina. In collaboration with the Veterans Administration and the Midlands Workforce Developmental Board will use Work Keys, WIN for Workkeys and technology training and job placement for returning veterans.

## Highlights

- Work Keys assessment
- Keyboarding training
- Technology Training
- Career Readiness

**Contact person: Rebecca Smith**

Fast Forward

(803) 343-2577

3223 Devine Street, Suit #3 Columbia, SC 29205

**Contact person: Juan Zamora and  
Gloria Jennings**

WJB Dorn VA Medical Center  
Building 106

6439 Garners Ferry Road (MC 116-D)

Columbia, SC 29209 Ph #: 803-776-4000, Ext.  
6386/6384



## Nursing Home Checklist

It is important for you and your family members to visit the nursing home to make sure that it meets your needs, as well as those of your family. A few things to consider when choosing a nursing home are listed here.

- Is the nursing home accepting new residents? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Is the nursing home easy to visit for family and friends? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Does the nursing home use hospitals where my doctor practices? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Does the nursing home have the services I need? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Does the nursing home have a variety of activities I might enjoy? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Do residents appear clean and well groomed? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Do the residents have the same staff on a daily basis? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Is there enough staff available to assist residents? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
  - Does the staff respond quickly to residents' calls for help? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Does the nursing home have an active resident and/or family council? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Is the nursing home clean and pleasant? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Is the nursing home certified by Medicare and Medicaid? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- Are the nursing home and current administrator licensed? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
- How much is the cost of care in this nursing home? \_\_\_\_\_
- What services are included in this price? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What additional costs will I have to pay? \_\_\_\_\_

Also, ask to see the nursing home's last annual state inspection report. Did the report find any problems? Ask how the problems were fixed.



## NURSING HOME RESIDENTS RIGHTS

Residents' rights are guaranteed by the federal 1987 Nursing Home Reform Law and the S.C. Code Ann. § 44-81-20. These laws require that long-term care facilities "promote and protect the rights of each resident" and place a strong emphasis on individual dignity and self-determination. A person living in a long-term care facility maintains the same rights as an individual living in the community.

All facilities are required to provide services and activities to attain or maintain the highest practicable physical, mental and psychosocial well-being of each resident in accordance with a written plan of care. The facility must give each resident or resident's representative a written plan of care. The facility must give each resident or resident's representative a written and oral explanation of the rights, grievance procedures and enforcement provisions before or at the time of admission. The resident or resident's representative's written acknowledgement of receipt of these explanations must be made a part of the resident's file.

A Resident's Rights Poster must be posted in prominent locations in all facilities. As a resident of a long-term care facility, you have the following rights:

### **The right to be fully informed of**

- available services and the charges for each service;
- facility rules and regulations, including a written copy of resident rights;
- address and telephone number of the State Ombudsman and state survey agency;
- state survey reports and the nursing home's plan of correction;
- advance plans of a change in rooms or roommates;
- assistance if a sensory impairment exists; and

- residents have a right to receive information in a language they understand (Spanish, Braille, etc.).

### **Right to complain**

- Present grievances to staff or any person, without fear of reprisal and with prompt efforts by the facility to resolve those grievances;
- to complain to the ombudsman program; and
- to file a complaint with the state survey and certification agency.

### **Right to participate in one's own care**

- Receive adequate and appropriate care;
- be informed of all changes in medical condition;
- participate in their own assessment, care, planning, treatment and discharge
- refuse medication and treatment;
- refuse chemical and physical restraints;
- review one's medical record; and
- be free from charge for services covered by Medicaid or Medicare.

### **Right to privacy and confidentiality**

- Private and unrestricted communication with any person of their choice;
- during treatment and care of one's personal needs; and
- with regard to medical, personal or financial affairs.

For more rights, contact your regional or state long-term care ombudsman. You can visit the National Citizens' Coalition for Nursing Home Reform (NCCNHR) at [www.nursinghomeaction.org](http://www.nursinghomeaction.org) for more information.

## **LEXINGTON VETERAN'S DAY PARADE**

The Lexington Veteran's Day Parade will be held on November 11, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. Please see the Registration Form in this month's newsletter or call Gary Baker at 785-8401. All veterans, organizations, and the community are urged to participate.

### **Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program**

The purpose of the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) is to provide services to assist in reintegrating homeless veterans into meaningful employment within the labor force and to stimulate the development of effective service delivery systems that will address the complex problems facing homeless veterans.

HVRP was initially authorized under Section 738 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in July 1987. It is currently authorized under Title 38 U.S.C. Section 2021, as added by Section 5 of Public Law 107-95, the Homeless Veterans Comprehensive Assistance Act of 2001. Funds are awarded on a competitive basis to eligible applicants such as: State and local Workforce Investment Boards, public agencies, for-profit/commercial entities, and non-profit organizations, including faith based and community based organizations.

Grantees provide an array of services utilizing a case management approach that directly assists homeless veterans as well as provide critical linkages for a variety of supportive services available in their local communities. The program is "employment focused" and veterans receive the employment and training services they need in order to re-enter the labor force. Job placement, training, job development, career counseling, resume preparation, are among the services that are provided. Supportive services such as clothing, provision of or referral to temporary, transitional, and permanent housing, referral to medical and substance abuse treatment, and transportation assistance are also provided to meet the needs of this target group.

Since its inception, HVRP has featured an outreach component using veterans who themselves have experienced homelessness. In recent years,

this successful technique was modified to allow the programs to utilize formerly homeless veterans in various other positions where there is direct client contact such as counseling, peer coaching, intake, and follow-up services.

The emphasis on helping homeless veterans get and retain jobs is enhanced through many linkages and coordination with various veterans' services programs and organizations such as the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives stationed in the local employment service offices of the State Workforce Agencies, Workforce Investment Boards, One-Stop Centers, Veterans' Workforce Investment Program, the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Departments of Veterans' Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, and Health and Human Services.

For more information about U.S. Department of Labor employment and training programs for veterans, contact the Veterans' Employment and Training Service office nearest you, listed in the phone book under United States Government, U.S. Department of Labor or at:

[www.dol.gov/vets/aboutvets/contacts/main.htm](http://www.dol.gov/vets/aboutvets/contacts/main.htm).

### **PTSD**

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), once called combat fatigue, is an anxiety disorder resulting from exposure to a frightening event or experience. The events that cause PTSD are called stressors. They include:

- Natural disasters (floods, earthquakes)
- Accidents (car or airplane crashes, large fires)
- Man-made disasters (bombings, death camps)
- Military combat
- Violent personal assault (torture, rape)
- Being kidnapped or taken hostage
- Having suffered abuse as a child.

Symptoms include: recurrent thoughts of a traumatic event; being easily startled; unable to sleep; easily irritated, angry outbursts, or anxiety; feelings of loneliness; and problems keeping a job.





### CONTRIBUTION FORM

Donation   
Memorial Brick

METHOD OF PAYMENT: Cash/Check

AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions payable to:  
Lexington County School District One  
Educational Foundation (LOEF)  
Joshua L. Torrence Memorial Field House  
111E Tarrar Springs Road  
Lexington, SC 29072

Donations are Tax Deductible

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

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

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

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

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

Lexington County School District One does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or handicap in admission to, access to, treatment in or employment in its programs and activities. The following people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Mary R. Walker and Joe H. Benenbaugh, Lexington County School District One, PO Box 1869, Lexington, SC 29071 and telephone number (803) 359-4178. Contact them if you have questions regarding these issues.



### WHITE KNOLL HIGH SCHOOL

White Knoll High School opened its doors to students in August 2000 and has served the surrounding community with pride since that date. During the seven years since the school's opening, the students and staff of WKHS have earned recognition for excellence in the fields of academics, athletics, business and technology, career development, fine arts, and guidance programs. The school has earned three prestigious Palmetto Gold Awards for outstanding academic achievement.



White Knoll High School  
5643 Platt Springs Road  
Lexington, SC 29073

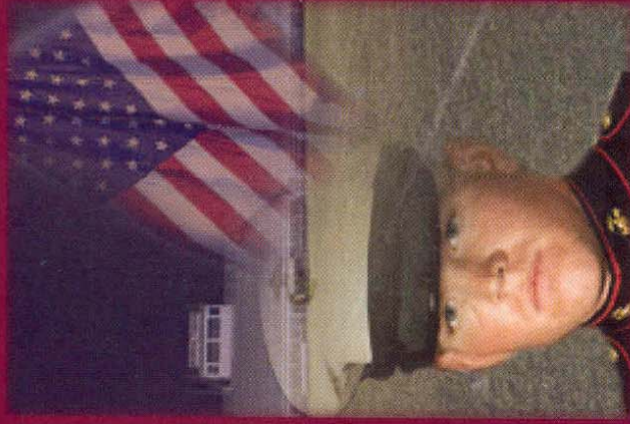
Phone: (803) 996-4500  
Fax: (803) 996-4581  
Email: [wkhsfieldhouse@yahoo.com](mailto:wkhsfieldhouse@yahoo.com)

[www.cdline.net/pages/White\\_Knoll\\_High\\_School](http://www.cdline.net/pages/White_Knoll_High_School)

Principal - Mrs. Jo Mayer

White Knoll High  
School Proudly  
Presents...

A Tribute to...  
*Joshua L. Torrence*

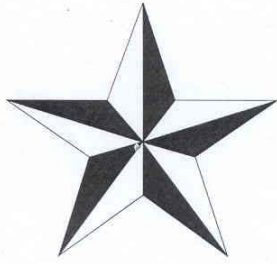


Joshua L. Torrence  
Memorial Field House

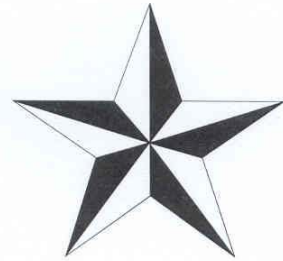








**LEXINGTON COUNTY  
VETERAN' S PARADE**



Sunday, November 11, 2007  
North Lake Drive and South Lake Drive  
Downtown Lexington

**PARADE BEGINS AT 3:00 P.M.  
(No entry fee)**

**COME HELP HONOR OUR VETERANS !!  
Grand Marshalls: Military Order of  
The Purple Heart**

**SPONSORED BY:**

**LEXINGTON COUNTY EMPLOYEE COMMITTEE  
AMERICAN LEGION POST 7  
VFW POST 8738  
LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS  
TOWN OF LEXINGTON**

**For More Information Contact:  
Sharon Willis 785-8201  
Gary Baker or Barbara O'Connor 785-8400  
Bob Hall 785-8349**

**2007 County of Lexington Veteran's Day Parade Application**  
**Sunday, November 11, 2007 at 3:00 p.m.**

**\*\*\*\* PLEASE READ GROUP DROP OFF INSTRUCTIONS\*\*\*\***

Name of Entry: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Entry:      Marching Band      Beauty Queen      Civic Float  
(Please Circle Entry Type)      Marching Group      Dignitary      Business Float

Description of Entry: \_\_\_\_\_  
(i.e., truck, car, float, tractor trailer - include the length of your entry)

Number Participating: \_\_\_\_\_

Entry Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (H) \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information for Your Entry Here:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mail Applications To:  
County of Lexington Veteran's Day  
Parade Committee  
Attn: Sharon Willis, Chairperson  
440 Ball Park Road  
Lexington SC 29072

For More Information Contact:  
Sharon Willis 803-785-8121  
Gary Baker 803-785-8400  
Bob Hall 803-785-8349  
\*Monday - Friday 8-5 pm \*

**ENTRY IS FREE! DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS OCTOBER 26, 2007**

**\*\*\*\*\*ALL MARCHING BANDS AND ROTC GROUPS WILL MEET IN THE BUS PARKING LOT OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. PLEASE DROP OFF ALL MEMBERS OF THE BAND AND ROTC IN THE REAR BUS PARKING LOT ALSO. (Please enter off of North Lake Dr, to Corley Street then left on School Street. This will take you to the rear of school parking lot.) BANDS AND ROTC GROUPS WILL LINE UP AND ENTER THE PARADE FROM THE DRIVEWAY OF THE PARKING LOT. THANKS, \*\*\*\*\***

**PARADE ROUTE:**

**START AT 116 AZALEA DRIVE IN FRONT OF LEXINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. TURN LEFT ON TO NORTH LAKE DRIVE - CONTINUING DOWN NORTH LAKE DRIVE CROSSING MAIN STREET TO SOUTH LAKE DRIVE. CONTINUE DOWN SOUTH LAKE DRIVE, TURNING LEFT ON FORT STREET, AND ENDING AT LEXINGTON COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING PARKING LOTS. ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE FOR ALL VETERANS TO RETURN TO THEIR VEHICLES AFTER REACHING THE PARKING LOTS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.**



**DAV VAN SCHEDULE**

The DAV Van is currently transporting veterans to Dorn VA Medical Center on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays for appointments between the hours of 9AM and 2 PM.

This service is made possible by our wonderful volunteer drivers.

We appreciate you!

***MORE VAN DRIVERS ARE NEEDED***

We would like to increase the number of days the van transports veterans to the Dorn VA Medical Center.

In order to do that, we need more drivers.

If you could help in this way, please call our office at 785-8400.

**VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE  
OF LEXINGTON COUNTY  
605 West Main Street, Suite 101  
Lexington, SC 29072  
(803) 785-8400**

**JULY OUTREACH PROGRAM**

July 3rd	8-12	Batesburg-Leesville
July 10th	9-12	Chapin
July 17 <sup>th</sup>	8-12	Swansea
July 24 <sup>th</sup>	8-12	West Columbia

**TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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