



VETERAN NEWS

October 2011

Lexington County Veterans Affairs Office

605 WEST MAIN STREET, SUITE 101
LEXINGTON, S.C. 29072

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

ED LUNDEEN
DIRECTOR

JENNIFER HENDRIX
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

JANET SMITH
VETERANS SPECIALIST

CINDY WISE
VETERANS CLERK/SECRETARY

Director's Corner

What possesses a person to put their life in danger to save the life or lives of someone else? Men and women who serve and have served in the United States military think nothing of this action. The mentality to save your comrades is instilled in the minds of servicemen and women. It is much like a parent who loves their children so much that they would endanger themselves to save or protect their children from anything.

Last month I attended a benefit for United States Marine Lance Corporal Kyle Carpenter of Gilbert. Kyle took the impact of a hand grenade from the enemy while serving in Afghanistan. He saved the lives of fellow Marines that day who live because of his sacrifice. The decision to fall on a grenade is made in seconds and with no thought of yourself, but that of your comrades. To me, it takes a special person to do that and that is exactly what Kyle Carpenter is. When I waited in line to speak to him it was evident he is a man of true courage and bravery. He has a great sense of humor and a wonderful spirit about him. When it came my turn, before I could even say one word Kyle stuck out his left hand and said, "it's good to meet you sir." I was impressed by his meekness and pleasure to meet me and promptly told him it was an honor to meet him and offered the services of this office when the time comes. We embraced and it was as if I was hugging an old friend. The impact of the blast has disabled Kyle somewhat but what it did not do is dampen his spirit or his love for family and friends. He is what military service and love of country is all about.

I have been travelling a lot around the County to personally visit all Veteran Service Organizations and it is my goal to visit all of them and introduce myself and the services of this office. I am honored to be in the position as your County Veterans Service Officer and invite you to our office for a visit. We have made many changes in an effort to better serve the Veterans, surviving spouses, dependents and beneficiaries of Lexington County.

OCTOBER DATES FOR OUTREACH PROGRAM

Oct. 4th: 9-12 Batesburg-Leesville
Police Dept
Oct. 11th: 9-12 Chapin Town Hall

Please call the office
to schedule an appointment.

TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

In this issue . . .

Warriors want dolls	2
Direct Deposit Mandate	3
Veteran's Day Free Offers	6
Wreaths Across America	8-9
Did You Know	10



DATES TO REMEMBER

- Oct. 3rd End of the Berlin Wall (1990)
- Oct. 7th War on Terror Began (2001)
- Oct. 10th Columbus Day (Observed)
Veterans Advisory Committee
- Oct. 13th U.S. Navy Established (1775)
- Oct. 16th National Boss Day
- Oct. 24th United Nations Day
- Oct. 31st Halloween

WARRIORS WANT DOLLS

Sounds crazy doesn't it. That is until you see the dolls they want and what their purpose is. The dolls are DANG-IT DOLLS and are to help relieve the stress our service men and women are under every day. They are not just pretty faces. They are to be used and abused or hugged and loved, depending on the owners preference. Each doll comes with an instruction sheet that reads: "When your day is stressful and you want to scream and shout, here's a little Dang-it Doll that you can't live without. Grasp it firmly by its legs and find a place to bang it and while you knock its stuffing out, yell DANG-IT, DANG-IT, DANG-IT." It then reads, Thank you for serving your country so Honorably from your friends in South Carolina.

In the six and a half years since the first doll was shipped overseas, Operation Military Stress Relief Dolls, Inc. has shipped 70,000 Dang-it Dolls to our service men and women. They are free to them and only for them, and is a project everyone can participate in, be it coming to the workshops across the state and helping make the dolls, donating material and yarn or donating money to help with the cost of shipping and other doll making supplies. The cost per doll including shipping, based on a shipment of 50 dolls is \$5.95 each. The cost goes up per doll on smaller shipments. The dolls have to be requested by the military person themselves or a family member and we ship directly to the Soldier, Sailor, Marine, Airman or Coast Guard. From the thank you's, responses and request we received daily, the Dang-it Dolls must be doing their job.

If you are interested in volunteering, donating or need more information, please contact Carol Davis (803) 739-2774 email address OMSRD@yahoo.com



This is a beautiful photo of a giant American flag in Arizona. The photo is authentic, UN-Touched and was taken on regular Kodak 35mm film. The person who took the Picture couldn't believe the image created by the sun's rays. Nice of them to share it with the world!

THERE HAS BEEN A CHANGE

The Veterans Advisory Committee Meeting will be held on Monday, October 10th, at 7pm in the Lexington County VA Office.



DIRECT DEPOSIT MANDATE

By March 1, 2013, everyone getting the following federal benefits by paper check must switch to electronic payments – **direct deposit** to a bank or credit union account or to the **Direct Express**[®] Debit MasterCard[®] card:

- ◇ Social Security
- ◇ Supplemental Security Income
- ◇ Veterans Affairs
- ◇ Railroad Retirement Board
- ◇ Office of Personnel Management
- ◇ Department of Labor (Black Lung)

Direct deposit is a fast and easy way to get your benefits. They will go directly into your checking or savings account. Direct Express[®] Debit MasterCard[®] card is a Treasury-recommended prepaid debit card where no bank account or credit check is required.

If you want to get your federal benefit payments paid by **direct deposit** to your checking or savings account, you'll need your:

- ◇ Social Security number or claim number
- ◇ 12-digit federal benefit check number
- ◇ Amount of most recent federal benefit check
- ◇ Financial institution's routing transit number*
- ◇ Account number* and type (checking or savings)

(* This information is often on personnel checks. The first set of numbers is the routing number and the second set is the account numbers)

If you want to get your benefit payments through the **Direct Express**[®] card, you'll need your:

- ◇ 12-digit federal benefit check number
- ◇ Amount of most recent federal benefit check

You can call (800) 333-1795 for more information.

Looking for Volunteer Van Drivers

The van runs on Mondays, Wednesdays, & 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.



DID YOU KNOW?

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



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

The State Fair opens on Wednesday, October 12th and runs through Sunday, October 23rd.



You can contact the Department of Veterans Affairs through the Inquiry Routing & Information System (IRIS) at <https://iris.custhelp.com> to ask a question on your claim or to check the status. You can also contact the VA by calling 1-800-827-1000 8am to 9pm EST, Monday through Friday.

The office will be on a limited staff on Wednesday, October 19th through Friday, October 21st, for continuing education training in Columbia.

**LEXINGTON COUNTY
9TH ANNUAL
VETERAN'S PARADE**

**Sunday, November 6th, 2011
Main Street and South Lake Drive
Downtown Lexington**

**PARADE BEGINS AT 3:00PM
(no entry fee)**

COME HELP HONOR OUR VETERANS!

**Grand Marshal: Mr. Gary R. Baker
Retired Lexington County Veterans Affairs Director**

*A memorial service will be held at the Veterans
Monument following the parade*

SPONSORED BY:

**LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE
AMERICAN LEGION POST 7
VFW POST 8738
TOWN OF LEXINGTON
KIRBY FLOATS**

**For More Information Contact:
Sharon Willis 785-1454
Veterans Affairs Office 785-8400**

2011 Lexington County Veteran's Parade Application
Sunday, November 6, 2011 at 3:00 p.m.

NO ENTRY FEE, SIGN UP DUE BY OCTOBER 28TH

(IF YOU MISS THE DEADLINE, PLEASE 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! DROP OFF ALL MEMBERS AND PARK AT THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING PARKING LOTS. THIS IS WHERE YOU WILL NEED TO PICK UP ALL MEMEBERS. PLEASE DO NOT TAKE UP SPACES AT MCDONALD'S FOR PARKING.

PARADE ROUTE WILL LINE UP AT HAYGOOD AND WEST BUTLER STREETS, 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 Veteran's
Parade Committee
Attn: Sharon Willis, Chairperson
212 South Lake Drive, Ste 302
Lexington, SC 29072

For More Information Contact:

Sharon Willis - 803-785-1454
Cell # 803-237-9617
Fax # 803-785-8300
Veterans Affairs office 803-785-8400

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

WE DO OUR BEST TO PLACE YOU IN THE LINEUP THAT SHOWCASES YOUR ORGANIZATION IN THE BEST POSSIBLE SPOT. ONCE THE LINE UP 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 TRAILORS AROUND IS VERY DIFFICULT. HAYGOOD STREET MUST BE KEPT OPEN FOR THE LINEUP. MAIN STREET WILL BE CLOSED DOWN AT 2:45PM, SO PLEASE BE AT YOUR LOCATION BY 2:30 PM.

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

ALL OF THE VETERANS APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT

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

FREE OFFERS

2011 VETERAN'S DAY BENEFITS

Abuelo's Mexican Food Restaurant-Abuelo's offerings vary by region, be sure to call ahead to see what the discounts or freebies are included. **CLOSEST LOCATION IS IN MYRTLE BEACH**

Applebee's-All Veterans and active duty military eat free from a limited menu at Applebee's on Veterans Day (Nov. 11).

Chili's- Veterans and active duty dine for free from a special limited six item menu on Veterans Day.

Golden Corral- Golden Corral Restaurants' Military Appreciation Monday free dinner will be available on November 15, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Military retirees, Veterans, active duty, National Guard and Reserves are all welcome.

Hooter's- Veterans and active duty eat free. The free entrees must be selected from a special Veterans Day menu.

Krispy Kreme- All active-duty, retirees & Veterans get a free doughnut on Veterans Day. Be sure to call ahead to verify your local Krispy Kreme is participating.

McCormick & Schmick's-Participating McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurants offer a complimentary entree to Veterans from a special menu on a space available basis, online reservations are highly recommended. **CLOSEST LOCATION IS IN CHARLOTTE, NC**

Outback Steakhouse- Veterans and active-duty military get a complimentary Bloomin' Onion and non-alcoholic beverage on Veterans Day.

TGI Friday's- Veterans and Service members buy one get one free from Nov 11-14. Contact your nearest location for more details on their Veterans Day BOGO offer.

Texas Roadhouse- Free meal from opening until 4pm. on Veterans Day. Call ahead to your local restaurant for more information.



UNO Chicago Grill- UNO is offering a Buy One Get One free offer to Service members or Veterans with a military or veteran I.D. or in uniform or with a photo of themselves in uniform. The Veterans Day BOGO offer includes a free entree or individual pizza, with the purchase of an entree or pizza of equal or greater value.

DISCOUNTS

Dollar General- Veterans, Service members (Active, Guard, and Reserve), and their immediate families will receive a 10-percent discount with a Veterans Day coupon. The coupon may be found in store circular ads or by asking a sales associate.

Home Depot- Offers a 10 percent discount (up to a \$500 maximum) to all active military, reserve, retired or disabled veterans and their family members with a valid military ID. All other Veterans qualify for a 10 percent discount during Veterans Day, Memorial Day and Independence Day. [Learn more about the Home Depot Military Discount program.](#)

Lowe's- Lowe's offers a year-round 10 percent discount offer for all active duty, National Guard and Reserve, retirees and disabled Service members and their immediate families. All other Veterans receive the 10-percent discount on Veteran's Day, Memorial Day and the Fourth of July. The discount is available on in-stock and special-order purchases of up to \$5,000. The offer can't be used on sales at Lowes.com, on previous sales or on sales of services or gift cards. You must present a valid military I.D. card to receive the discount.

FREE SERVICES

Sport Clips-The men's hair salon chain is offering a free haircut to active military and Veterans on Veterans Day.

FREE ADMISSION

National Parks from Nov.10-15

Virginia's B & B Association-free night's lodging on Nov. 10 only

These offers are subject to change



FEATURED MEDAL: *SILVER STAR*

The **Silver Star** is the third-highest combat military decoration that can be awarded to a member of any branch of the United States Armed Forces for valor in the face of the enemy.

The Silver Star is awarded for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States not justifying one of the two higher awards – the service crosses (Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross, or the Air Force Cross), the second-highest military decoration, or the Medal of Honor, the highest decoration. The Silver Star may be awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity with the armed forces, distinguishes himself or herself by extraordinary heroism involving one of the following actions:

- In action against an enemy of the United States
- While engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force
- While serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party



VA TRAVEL BENEFITS

If you meet the criteria below, you may be eligible for mileage reimbursement or special transport in association with obtaining VA health care services.

You Qualify If:

1. You have a service connected (SC) rating of 30% or more, or
2. You are traveling for treatment of a SC condition, or
3. You receive a VA pension, or
4. Your income does not exceed the maximum annual VA pension rate, or
5. You are traveling for a scheduled compensation or pension examination.

You Qualify for Special Mode Transportation (Ambulance, Wheelchair van, etc.) if:

1. Your medical condition requires an ambulance or a specially equipped van as determined by a VA clinician, and
2. You meet one of the eligibility criteria in 1 through 4 above, and
3. The travel is pre-authorized (authorization is not required for emergencies if a delay would be hazardous to life or health)

General travel is paid at \$0.415 (41.5 cents) per mile.

One morning a grandmother awoke to find that her 7-year old grandson had made her coffee! Smiling, she chocked down the worst cup of coffee in her life. When she finished, she found three little green Army men at the bottom. Puzzled, she asked, "Honey, what are these Army men doing in my coffee?" Her grandson answered, "Like it says on TV Grandma...the best part of waking up is soldiers in your cup!"





Wreaths Across America at Fort Jackson National Cemetery would like to invite all who wish to participate in the sales, promotion and/or the service itself, contact them at their email address: waajtjackson@yahoo.com

If your group or organization is trying to raise funds for a project, wreath sales for the Fort Jackson National Cemetery is an excellent way to do it. For every \$15.00 wreath you sale, your group or organization will receive \$5.00. If you are not fund raising and want to help insure every headstone at the cemetery receives a wreath, you may want to opt for the 3 wreaths for the price of 2 program. Either way, you are helping the Fort Jackson National Cemetery reach its goal.

For more information, to purchase a wreath, or to volunteer, please contact Carol Davis at (803) 739-2774 or email at waajtjackson@yahoo.com

2011 will mark the 20th anniversary of Worcester Wreath Company donating Maine wreaths to adorn the headstones of our Nation's Veterans at Arlington National Cemetery. In addition to 15,000 wreaths destined for Virginia, Worcester Wreath will again donate 7 ceremonial wreaths to over 410 State, National and local cemeteries across the Country. In 2009 wreath-laying ceremonies were coordinated in 24 foreign cemeteries and aboard Naval ships in all Seven Seas, this tradition continues into 2011.

In response to the many voices who wanted to share in the project, the non-profit Wreaths Across America organization was formed (EIN: 20-8362270) to expand the program by offering supporters the opportunity to sponsor a wreath. Our goal is to one day see every Veterans grave in the country covered to honor every Veteran during the holidays. In 2008 we expanded once again to give even more organizations the chance to help bring our goal to fruition by providing the opportunity to fund raise for their organizations needs along with helping Wreaths Across America gather sponsorships for wreaths.



Sponsorships are \$15 each. Proceeds place a wreath at one of the participating cemeteries, help support our fundraising partners, educational and Veterans services outreach, *Please note that **all** sponsorships are sent directly to the location and **no** wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.*

There is no stipulation for participation in these activities. We welcome all to join us at Wreaths Across America as the organization was formed to promote and coordinate sponsorship of wreaths for the other national, state and local cemeteries that have shown a desire to emulate the Arlington wreath-laying event. 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 4th, 2011

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

Monday, December 5th

State House wreath-laying ceremonies in all 50 States and Puerto Rico

Saturday December 10th, 12:00 noon (EST)

Simultaneous wreath laying ceremonies at over 350 locations all across the World.



For more information visit www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org, or call 207-483-2039.

You can also email Marcy@wreathscrossamerica.org, Amy@waa08@yahoo.com or Wayne@wreathscrossamerica.org
Locally, you can contact Carol Davis at waajtjackson@yahoo.com or call (803) 739-2774



Tax ID 20-8362270

Wreath Sponsorship Form

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

If you wish to make your sponsorship with a credit card please visit our website for a secure online transaction.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____ (to receive our FREE email newsletter)

Sponsoring Group ID Number: SCNDV001

For every 2 Wreaths purchased on this form, we receive a third one free

Cemetery Designation: Fort Jackson National Cemetery, Columbia, SC
 (please select one cemetery per group)

Cemetery ID Number: SCFJNC (located on our website under locations tab)

Sponsorship	Price	Quantity	Total
Individual= 1 Wreath	\$15.00		
Family= 4 Wreaths	\$60.00		
Small Business= 10 Wreaths	\$150.00		
Corporate= 100 Wreaths or more	\$15.00 each wreath		
WAA Pins (25 pins per pack)	\$10.00 / pack		
WAA Patch	\$3.00 each		
		Grand Total	

****WE DO NOT TAKE GRAVE SPECIFIC REQUESTS****

Please make All checks payable to:
Wreaths Across America TM
 P.O. Box 3356
 West Columbia, SC 29171
 Local Contact:
Carol Davis (803) 739-2774

Thank you for your Sponsorship and joining us in our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach!
 Please note that all sponsorships are sent directly to the location and no wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.

NEWS FROM LEXINGTON COUNTY VIETNAM COMBAT VETERANS GROUP

On August 22, 2011, several members of the Lexington County Vietnam Combat Veterans Group visited the US Army Basic Combat Training Museum located at Ft. Jackson. Below are several pictures from their trip.



DID YOU KNOW?

The DMV has an online site where you can tell them who to contact in case you're in an accident and can't speak. For the people registered in SC the address is <http://www.scdmvonline.com> In the right hand column you'll see a place to register two people to be contacted in case of an emergency. When the officer arrives on the scene it will automatically come up on their computer screen.

The ISO Rating of a Class 5 may reduce insurance premiums for residences and businesses in Lexington County. Class 5 applies to properties within five road miles of a fire station while Class 10 applies to properties over five road miles of a fire station. This new classification will take effect on June 1, 2011. Home and business owners are responsible for notifying their insurance companies for a possible reduction in their insurance premiums. Any questions regarding the County's ISO rating can be directed to Michael Van Troost with the Lexington County Fire Service on Ball Park Road at 785-8287, or check out the Lexington County website at <http://www.lex-co.com> under the current news section.



Coming in the Next Issue...

Information on Agent Orange and service connected conditions, and Veterans Day programs.