



LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS NEWS

"Serving those who served and sacrificed for America"

April 2012

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Director's Corner

With the arrival of spring in South Carolina, we all get the urge to enjoy the outdoors more with great weather, unless you like the pollen! We have a new

Administrative Assistant that joined the staff last month and her name is Gloria Price. Please stop by and welcome her at your convenience.

My wife recently did some spring cleaning in a room we rarely use and my three year old grandson, Trey, was helping her. He discovered some small US flags in the room and asked his Grandma what they were. She told him they were American flags and then he began to recite the Pledge of Allegiance all by himself. She was so impressed she brought him into another room where I was and told me I would not believe what he just said. Naturally, I thought it might be something bad and she asked him to recite the Pledge of Allegiance for me. As he said the words the pride in my heart overflowed and tears welled in my eyes. After he was done, I gave him a big hug and told him I was proud of him; it is a moment I will never forget. He learned the Pledge at the school he attends and this reaffirms my faith in teachers everywhere.

Speaking of the Pledge of Allegiance, your Lexington County Council needs your help and this will be discussed in more detail later in this issue. They are requesting that Veterans help lead the Pledge of Allegiance at the start of every County Council meeting. It is a way to honor and recognize the sacrifice Veterans have made for their country. It does not matter if you served in a war or not. You can be a two year Veteran of the Army or a three year Veteran of the Navy, you are still a Veteran.

My office is responsible for providing a Veteran at these County Council meetings the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. The Veteran and his/her family (if desired) should be in the Council Chambers on the second floor at 4:15pm and someone from this office will meet you and ensure you are escorted in. My staff is putting together a database of Veterans to perform the Pledge of Allegiance and will be calling you to ask for your participation. I hope you will accept this honor and recognition that you deserve and will tell others about it. You can come alone or bring your entire family and you are not expected to stay for the whole meeting, which typically lasts an hour.

Happy Easter!

It is an honor to serve Lexington County!

AT-A-GLANCE
April

Sunday, April 1st	Palm Sunday
Thursday, April 5th	VA Benefits Seminar & Health Screenings, Auditorium of 605 West Main Street
Friday, April 6th	Good Friday
Sunday, April 8th	Easter Sunday
Tuesday, April 10th	Chapin Outreach 9 to 12pm
Wednesday, April 11th - Friday, April 13th	SCACVAO Spring Conference—Director out of office
Saturday, April 14th	Dang-it Doll Workshop Cayce Masonic Lodge 10am to 4pm
Thursday, April 19th	Holocaust Remembrance Day
Sunday, April 22nd	Earth Day
Wednesday, April 25th	Administrative Professionals Day

No Chapin Outreach in May

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



Lexington, SC.

YOUR VA OFFICE STAFF

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**APRIL DATES FOR
OUTREACH PROGRAM**

April 10th: 9-12 Chapin Town Hall

*****No Chapin Outreach in May*****

**TOLL-FREE
TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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

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

★ ***New Office Policy*** ★

You must call the office to schedule an appointment for outreach in Batesburg and Chapin. Walk-ins will be seen after appointments if time permits.

Individual Unemployability Benefits

What is Individual Unemployability?

Individual Unemployability is a part of the VA's disability compensation program that allows VA to pay certain Veterans compensation at the 100% rate, even though VA has not rated their service-connected disabilities at the total level.

What is the Eligibility Criteria for Individual Unemployability?

A Veteran must be unable to maintain substantially gainful employment as a result of his/her service-connected disabilities. Additionally, a Veteran must have:

- * one service-connected disability ratable at 60 percent or more, OR
- * two or more service-connected disabilities, at least one disability ratable at 40 percent or more with a combined rating of 70 percent or more.

How do I Apply?

Submit VA Form 21-8940, Veteran's Application for Increased Compensation Based on Unemployability to our office or your nearest VA regional office. You can also call our office to schedule an appointment with us.

Can I work?

Veterans who are in receipt of Individual Unemployability benefits may work as long as it is not considered substantially gainful employment. The employment must be considered marginal employment.

- * **Substantially gainful employment** is defined as employment at which non-disabled individuals earn their livelihood with earnings comparable to the particular occupation in the community where the Veterans reside.
- * **Marginal employment** is generally deemed to exist when a Veteran's earned income does not exceed the amount established by the U.S. Census Bureau as the poverty level for the Veteran only.

What is the poverty level?

Per the U.S. Census Bureau the poverty levels depends upon the Veteran's age. If a Veteran is up to age 65, the poverty level is \$11,702 per year. If the Veteran is over age 65, the poverty level is \$10,788.

What if I don't meet the percentage Criteria?

Special consideration will be given for Veterans when the following criteria is met:

- * The Veteran is considered unemployable due to a service-connected disability(ies) but fails to meet the minimum percentage standards, OR
- * There is evidence of exceptional or unusual circumstances to impairment of earning capacity due to disabilities (for example, interference with employment or frequent periods of hospitalization)

Note: Veterans may have to complete an employment questionnaire once a year in order for the VA to determine continued eligibility to Individual Unemployability.

**Lexington County
Veterans Affairs**

**Thursday,
April 5, 2012**

1:00 to 5:00pm

**Auditorium at
605 West Main St
Lexington, SC**

**Contact the
Lexington
County Veterans
Affairs Office at
803-785-8400
for more
information.**

Please join us for this event

Veterans Benefits Seminar & Health Screenings



The event is open to the public and to any employee of the County who wants information on the multitude of programs offered by the Department of Veteran's Affairs. The Health Screenings consist of blood pressure checks, diabetic checks, PSA tests, and will be offered free of charge.

Sponsored by:

- Lexington County Veterans Affairs
- VA Medical Center
- Lt. Governor's Office on Aging
- Palmetto Health Center
- Medical Services of America
- Lexington Interfaith Community Services

Did you know that 1 in 10 people in Lexington County is a Veteran?

Veterans Benefits Seminar Schedule

1:00 to 2:00pm – VA Benefits Presentation – Ed Lundeen

2:00 to 3:00pm – VA Medical Center

3:00 to 4:00pm – Lt. Governor's Office on Aging – Sue Theriot & Rene Beard

4:00 to 4:30pm – Medical Services of America

4:30 to 5:00pm – LICs – Jenny Kennedy



Veteran's Monument across from the Administration Building

Prints for Sale

\$10.00 each



Gibson's Pond in Lexington

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

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.



VETERAN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS IN LEXINGTON COUNTY

AMERICAN LEGION

Post #7-Lexington: Meets the first Saturday of the month (except before a holiday) at 1900.

Address is: American Legion Road, Lexington.

Post #61-Batesburg Leesville: Meets the third Tuesday of the month at 2000.

Address is: South Hendrix Street, Leesville.

Post #79-West Columbia: Meets the first Monday of the month at 1930.

Address is: 700 B Avenue, West Columbia

Post #90-South Congaree: Meets the first Thursday of the month at 1900.

Address is: Hwy. 302 near South Congaree.

Post #130-Cayce: Meets the third Thursday of the month at 1830.

Address is: Naples Avenue, Cayce.

Post #142-Gilbert: Meets the second Tuesday of the month at 1900.

Address is: Hwy. #1 Gilbert.

Post #156-Sandy Run: Meets the fourth Monday of the month.

Address is: Pine Plain Road outside of Gaston, just off Old Sandy Run Road.

Post #174-Irmo: Meets the second Tuesday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 801 Piney Woods Road, Columbia

Post #193-Chapin: Meets the second Thursday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 102 Lexington Ave., Chapin.

Post #217-Lexington: Meets the second Thursday of the month at 1930.

Address is:

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Chapter #4-West Columbia: Meets the second Monday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 511 Violet Street, West Columbia.

Chapter #13-West Columbia: Meets the second Saturday of the month at 1300.

Address is: 511 Violet Street, West Columbia.

Chapter #20-West Columbia: Meets the third Saturday of the month at 1100.

Address is: 511 Violet Street, West Columbia.

Chapter #28-West Columbia: Meets the second Tuesday of the month at 1800.

Address is: 511 Violet Street, West Columbia.

Chapter #51-Leesville: Meets the third Thursday of the month at 1900.

Address is: South Hendrix Street, Leesville.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

Post #6740-Lake Murray: Meets the of the month at

Address is: 950 Rock N Creek Road, Leesville.

Post #8738-Lexington: Meets the first Tuesday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 424 Cedarcrest Drive, Lexington.

Post #9037-Pelion: Meets the third Monday of the month at 1930.

Address is: 505 Canal Drive, Pelion.

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

Detachment #1141-West Columbia: Meets the second Thursday of the month at 1900 .

Address is: 511 Violet Street, West Columbia.

BLUE STAR MOTHERS

Midlands Chapter-Lexington: Meets the third Thursday of the month at 1800.

Address is: 424 Cedarcrest Drive, Lexington.

AMVETS

Post #2-West Columbia: Meets the of the month at

Address is: 1778 D Avenue, West Columbia.

MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART

Chapter #402-Columbia: Meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 200 Pickens Street, Columbia.

NAVY SEABEES

SCX #2-West Columbia: Meets the second Monday of the month at 1900.

Address is: 179 Lynn Street, West Columbia.

VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

Chapter #303, Sandlappers-Columbia: Meets the third Tuesday of the month at 1900

Address is: 200 Pickens Street, Columbia

PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

VA Regional Office-Columbia is the nearest chapter.

Address is: 6439 Garner's Ferry Road, Columbia



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Featured Medal: *Achievement Medal*



Picture of Achievement Medal and ribbons for the Joint Service, Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps and Coast Guard

The Achievement Medal is a military decoration of the United States military. The Achievement Medal was first proposed as a means to recognize the contributions of junior officers and enlisted personnel who were not eligible to receive the higher Commendation Medal or the Meritorious Service Medal.

Each military service issues its own version of the Achievement Medal, with a fifth version authorized by the Department of Defense for joint military activity. The Achievement Medal is awarded for outstanding achievement or meritorious service not of a nature that would otherwise warrant awarding the Commendation Medal. Since the Achievement Medal is designated as an award solely for junior personnel, it is generally only awarded to officers in the pay grade of O-4 and below and enlisted personnel below the grade of E-7. Award authority rests with local commanders, granting a broad discretion of when and for what action the Achievement Medal may be awarded.

County Council Needs You!



Veterans are needed to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at County Council meetings. County Council meetings start at 4:30pm, so you would need to be present around 4 to 4:15pm. Contact the office at 803-785-8400 if you are interested.

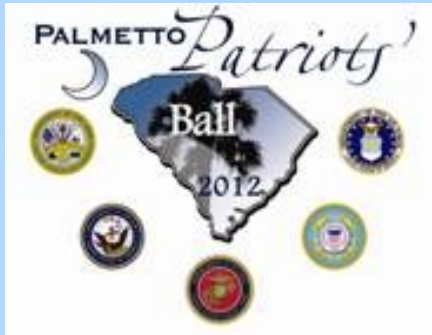


◆ Honor and Support Your South Carolina Veterans ◆ 2012 Palmetto Patriots' Ball

The Blue Star Mothers of the Midlands are hosting the 4th Annual Palmetto Patriots' Ball on May 19, 2012 at the Medallion Center in Columbia, SC.

The event will raise money to support our South Carolina Veterans.

For more information, please visit www.palmettopatriotsball.org.



Saturday, May 19, 2012

The Medallion Center - Columbia, SC

Reception and Silent Auction 5:30 / Dinner and Dancing 6:30

Semi-Formal or Military Dress

Keynote Speaker:

Mike Huckabee

**Former Governor, Presidential Candidate and
Host of FOX News' "Huckabee" & Daily ABC Radio Broadcast
Show**



**Mark your
calendars!**

***The 2012 Lexington County
Veterans Parade is
scheduled for Sunday,
November 4th at 3pm in
downtown Lexington.
Please mark your calendars
to join us for the 10th
Annual Parade.***



Veteran Service Organizations in Lexington County

Continued from page 6

We Need Your Help...

This is a list of the Veteran Service Organizations in Lexington County that we are aware of. Also, we have included meeting days, times and locations. Please help us in verifying the information we have and including any we don't have. If you know of any Veteran organization that is not on our list, please give us a call or email with the information and we will update the list.

Coming in the Next Issue...

Healthcare Benefits