

**Veterans Affairs Office
of Lexington County**



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VET NEWS

November 2009

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**NOVEMBER OUTREACH
PROGRAM DATES**

Nov. 3rd 9-12 Batesburg-Leesville
Nov. 10th 9-12 Chapin

TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

Please note regarding outreach: Appointments are greatly appreciated, and walk-ins will be assisted between appointments. Thank you for helping us better assist you!

HAPPY VETERANS DAY !!!

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Nov. 1st Daylight Savings Ends
Nov. 8th Lexington Veterans Parade 3 PM
Nov. 11th Veterans Day-
County Offices Closed
Nov. 26th Thanksgiving Day-
County Offices Closed
***County Offices will be CLOSED Nov. 26th
and 27th for the Thanksgiving Holiday***

REMINDER

Set your clocks **BACK** 1 hour
on Sunday November 1st
@ 2 AM



APPLEBEE'S OFFERS FREE MEALS FOR VETERANS



All U.S. veterans and active duty military with proof of current or former military service will eat free at all Applebee's nationwide on Veterans Day, Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2009.

Proof of service includes: U.S. Uniform Services Identification Card, U.S. Uniform Services Retired Identification Card, Current Leave and Earnings Statement, Veterans Organization Card, photograph in uniform or wearing uniform.

For additional details, visit: www.applebees.com/vetsday

Thank you, Applebee's !

PLEASE NOTE:

The Lexington DAV van **WILL NOT RUN** on Wednesday, November 11th, and Thursday, November 26th, as our OFFICE **WILL BE CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS** on both of those dates.





Golden Corral Once Again Offers Free Meals for Veterans

Golden Corral's 9th annual Military Appreciation Monday Dinner will be held on **Monday, November 16, 2009, from 5 to 9 P.M.** in all Golden Corral Restaurants nationwide.

The free dinner meal is a special "thank you tribute" 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 join us for Golden Corral's Military Appreciation Monday dinner.

To date, Golden Corral restaurants have provided over 2.2 million free meals and contributed over \$3.3 million to the Disabled American Veterans organization.

To locate a Golden Corral near you, visit www.goldencorral.com/locator.

Thank You For Your Service!

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:
"The ear of the leader must ring with the voices of the people."
-Woodrow Wilson

The Moving Wall Comes to Barnwell

"The Moving Wall" is the half-size replica of the Washington, DC Vietnam Veterans Memorial and has been touring the country for more than twenty years.

October 29 to November 2, 2009
24 hours a day (Setup on Oct 29 @ 0900; Removal Nov 2)
at
Veterans Memorial Park
US 278 West, Barnwell, SC



CHECK THIS OUT!
The American Soldier photographic tribute to soldiers from the Civil War to Iraq-
* **November 11, 2009** through **February 2, 2010**
* Mon.-Sat. 9-7 and Sun. 9-5
* Florence Civic Center—
3300 W Radio Drive
* **(843) 679-9417**
* Open to the Public—**FREE** admission



SafeGuarding and Serving
VA AND VETERANS
FIGHT THE FLU
Department of Veterans Affairs
www.publichealth.va.gov

FIGHT THE FLU!

For more information about the flu, visit VA's Office of Public Health and Environmental Hazards website. The site includes detailed information about public health for veterans, health professionals, and the general public.

WWII SHIP'S CREW HONORED

During World War II, the light cruiser USS Columbia participated in most of the sea battles in the Pacific theater, sustained three separate kamikaze attacks and lost 60 of its sailors.

On Thursday, October 15th, the few surviving crew members were honored by the city and state during their reunion in the city for which the ship is named. About two dozen veterans - all in their late 80s or 90s - and about 100 family members were in attendance during the three-day event. They last visited Columbia in 2004.

The event featured the unveiling of a new exhibit, including an 8-foot model of the ship, at the S.C. Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum. Mayor Bob Coble, state officials and other dignitaries honored the veterans in a 9 a.m. ceremony. Saturday the 17th, the Relic Room featured special exhibits and living history presentations about World War II and the USS Columbia.



"It's an honor to have these veterans in our presence," Coble said. "It enriches our community and makes us feel proud." The S.C. Senate proclaimed Thursday, October 15th as "**USS Columbia Day**" in recognition of the veterans. State Sen. John Courson, R-Richland, and a former Marine, sponsored the proclamation. "They served on our namesake," he said. "I was honored to do it."

Rick Shakelford, left, built the case, and Darby Erd added new paint and details to a USS Columbia model at the S.C. Military Museum.



HONOR FLIGHT SCHEDULED NOVEMBER 7th



To sponsor a hero, please call us at **1-803-582-8826** or go to our website at



www.honorflightsc.com

WE ARE LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEN

Do you have a few hours you can donate to our county's disabled veterans? We are in need of a few more volunteer van drivers for our transportation service here in Lexington.

>Whether you can volunteer one day a week or one day a month, we would appreciate your help!

If you believe you can help in this way, please stop by our office for an application or call Debbie at 785-8400 for more information.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

Ft. Jackson National Cemetery and Florence National Cemetery will participate in the **Wreaths Across America** project this year. Organizers of the local events hope for 100% participation to have a wreath on every grave.

The Ceremony will simultaneously commence nationwide on **Saturday, December 12, 2009 at 12:00 noon**, involving all National Cemeteries.

Ceremonies will include the laying of wreaths on monument markers for each of the branches of service, The Army, The Navy, The Marines, The Air Force, The Coast Guard, The Merchant Marines and one for the POW/MIA's. Nationally, the effort placed 105,000 wreaths in over 350 locations, not including the 24 national cemeteries on foreign soil, who also hosted ceremonies. This year, the goal is to surpass that of last year.

Locally, you may contact: Laurie Stokes (Florence): stokeslk@msn.com or Carol Davis (Columbia) tfnnavy-vols@yahoo.com in order to volunteer or to donate to the cause. Or, you may participate by visiting the website listed here. The national website is <http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/>



Please see page 5 of this newsletter for a sponsorship application.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO OUR WORLD WAR II VETERANS
Sponsored by the South Carolina Philharmonic and Honor Flight South Carolina

Journeys MASTERWORKS series 3
Thursday, November 12, 2009
Koger Center for the Arts
7:30 p.m.

Please be our special guest at a pre-concert reception and evening with the South Carolina Philharmonic Thursday, November 12, when the orchestra, in cooperation with **Honor Flight South Carolina**, pays tribute to our World War II veterans. A featured work of the evening is Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

The private reception for our vets will be held at **6:30 p.m.** prior to the concert at 7:30 p.m. To reserve your **FREE** seat, call **Capitol Tickets at (803) 251-2222** and identify yourself as a World War II veteran. Guardians and family members can also attend at a special reduced rate of \$12 per ticket. (Please note: Wheelchair seating is limited so reserve early if needed. Guardian/family can sit in row in front of wheelchair section.) *Southern Valet provides valet parking for \$7.*

CAPITOL TICKETS: (803) 251-2222

721 Lady Street, Suite B | Columbia, SC 29201
803.254.PHIL (7445) | www.SCPhilharmonic.com



WE HONOR THOSE WHO SERVE~

LEXINGTON VETERANS PARADE

November 8th—3 P.M.

in downtown Lexington

Join us for the Annual Lexington County Veterans Parade on **Sunday, November 8th At 3 P.M.** *Please note that the parade route has changed.

This is an excellent activity for local church or civic organizations! Let's all make this year's event better than ever! The Grand Marshalls of the 2009 Parade will be former POW'S. Come on out and show your support for our heroes!***



Scenes From 2008 Parade





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 Deadline for ordering on line is 11/25/09. If sending by US mail, must be received by 11/23/09 No orders will be taken after 11/25/09. 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 or SCFNCF

Cemetery Designation: Fort Jackson National Cemetery, Columbia SC or Florence National Cemetery
(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 / pk		
WAA Patch	\$3.00 each		
		Grand Total	

WE ARE UNABLE TO TAKE GRAVE SPECIFIC REQUESTS

Please make checks payable to:

Wreaths Across America TM

PO Box 256

Harrington, ME 04643

Questions? Please call 207-483-2039

**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.

Information on Emergency Payments for Veterans Awaiting VA Educational Benefits

Washington, DC- Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki has authorized advance payments up to \$3,000 for veterans who applied for VA educational benefits and who have not yet received their monthly education payments. If you are a veteran who has applied for one of VA's education programs and have not yet received your monthly benefit payment for the Fall 2009 term, you can request advance payment through this website, www.advancepay.gibill.va.gov.

You can also visit one of VA's **57 regional offices** across the country to immediately receive an advance payment. You will need to bring a government-issued photo ID and your course schedule when you visit the regional office.

* Please note that if you submit your request by going to our website, your personal information will be collected in that process. If you do not wish to give personal information in this manner, please go to the Regional VA office in your area to apply.

The advance payments will be reconciled with future education payments owed to you. If you are a veteran-student who received an emergency check and your bank has not yet made your funds available, or you are a bank representative with questions about this process, please go to the website for more information.

The amount of the advance payment will be determined as follows:

- Post-9/11 GI Bill \$3,000
- Montgomery GI Bill—Active Duty \$3,000
- Montgomery GI Bill— Selected Reserve \$1,000
- Reserve Education Assistance Program (REAP) \$2,000
- Post-Vietnam Era Educational Assistance Programs \$1,000

Education Benefit
Advance
Payments

* Please Note: Intake sites are military installations. They are not sites where emergency checks are being distributed. Veterans are encouraged to find the nearest regional office in their state.

VA and Department of Defense Host National Mental Health Summit

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Defense (DoD) are hosting a first-of-its-kind national summit to address the mental health care needs of America's military personnel, families and Veterans, harnessing the programs, resources and expertise of both departments to deal with the aftermath of the battlefield.

The summit, which opened Monday in Washington, D.C., invited mental health experts from both departments, Congress, the president's cabinet and more than 57 non-government organizations to discuss an innovative, wide-ranging public health model for enhancing mental health for returning service members, Veterans, and their families.



To underscore the commitment both departments share, the event kicked off with addresses from both VA Secretary Eric Shinseki and Defense Secretary Robert Gates. For more information on this summit, go to the VA website at www.va.gov