



**Department of**



"Get on Board the Communication Train"  
Gene McDaniel, Department Commander 2013/2014

**South Carolina  
The American Legion**  
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## SOUTH CAROLINA NEWS LINE

**For the good of all veterans, their families and communities everywhere.**

### Hiring Our Heroes

There will be a Hiring Our Heroes hiring event at Fort Jackson on February 11, 2014 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with a workshop commencing at 9 a.m. at the Solomon Center, at 6510 Strom Thurmond Blvd., Fort Jackson, SC 29207. For more information go to the following or contact Davy Leghorn, Assistant Director, Veterans Employment & Education Division at 202.263.5746 or [dleghorn@legion.org](mailto:dleghorn@legion.org). You can also go to the following website <http://www.hiringourheroes.org/hiringourheroes/columbia-sc2>

### Flag Amendment

On May 22, **House Joint Resolution (H.J. Res.) 47** was introduced by Rep. Spencer Bachus (AL). This legislation is a proposed constitutional amendment to protect the American flag from physical desecration. Its text states simply: *"The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States."* The measure currently has 24 cosponsors. On June 13, Sen. Orrin Hatch (UT) introduced **Senate Joint Resolution (S.J. Res.) 17**, a companion measure. This measure currently has 22 cosponsors. The task before us now is finding additional cosponsors for these two measures. Please contact your representative and senators, and ask them to become cosponsors of the flag amendment in their respective chambers. [**Resolution 272-2012**]

## **Military Commissaries**

The leader of the nation's largest veterans service organization says he is incensed by a threat to the survival of military commissaries – the U.S. military's grocery stores. The Department of Defense reportedly is discussing a \$1 billion cut over the next three years to the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) budget. As a consequence, all but a handful of service members' and military retirees' grocery stores could be closed.

“This is yet another undeserved blow to our men and women in service – and their families – in the name of ‘necessary cutbacks’ to reduce an ungainly national deficit,” said Daniel M. Dellinger, national commander of the 2.4-million member American Legion. “Like the trimming of expenses to be made by reducing military retirees’ pensions, this is an inexcusable way of attempting to fix a fault by penalizing the blameless.”

The DeCA currently operates nearly 250 stores worldwide with a \$1.4 billion annual budget. With the proposed budget cut to \$400 million annually by fiscal 2017, all but 24 stores would close. Those remaining would be overseas and in rural areas stateside. “Commissaries are extremely important to young military families who are just trying to make ends meet,” Dellinger said. “By using commissaries, financially challenged military families can save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared with commercial supermarkets.

“This important benefit helps compensate for the significant difference between military pay and comparable civilian salaries. In addition to improving the quality of life for the troops and their families, commissary privileges help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve our country.”

The American Legion leader's comments echo the points made in a resolution adopted by Legion leadership in 2012, which stated, “The value of commissaries in the quality of life equation for junior enlisted families and military retirees and others is indisputable. Military commissary usage has ranked second only to medical health care in the non-pay compensation package... Any effort to reduce or dismantle the integrity of the military commissary system would be seen as a serious breach of faith with a benefit system that currently serves as a mainstay for the active and reserve components, military retirees and military survivors, military personnel involuntarily discharged or released from active duty, and 100 percent service connected disabled veterans and others.”

Dellinger encouraged DoD to reconsider the proposal, saying, “The costs in both fiscal and human terms would be far higher than the temporary savings realized. It's a bad idea, plain and simple.”

## **System Worth Saving**

From March 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the American Legion's System Worth Saving Task Force will be conducting a site visit to the William Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center. On March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7 p.m. a focus group discussion will be held at Post 6 Columbia located at 200 Pickens Street up stair in the executive meeting room. The task force members are interested in hearing concerns with the VA healthcare from veterans who are receiving their health care at the local VA Medical Center especially those enrolled and active users of the VA healthcare system. It is hoped that as many local veterans as possible can and will attend this meeting.

On March 4 members will be visiting the Medical center from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on March 5 they will be visiting from 8:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. During these meetings, they will be discussing VA healthcare programs and initiatives that affect veterans. The two members conducting this visit are William R. (Bob) Wallace and Edward G. Lilley, Field Representative, VA&R.

### National Legislative Info

On January 23, The American Legion sent a letter of support to Sen. Bernie Sanders (VT) for **S. 1950**, the *Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2104*. This measure contains a large number of provisions which our organization supports. They include:

- Requiring schools that participate in the GI Bill program to offer in-state tuition to veterans [**Resolution 27-2013 Fall**];
- Immediately authorize a group of Community Based Outreach Clinics (CBOCs) that are currently unfunded due to Congressional Budget Office scoring conflicts [**Resolution 24-2013 Spring**];
- Improve rural healthcare access for veterans [**Resolutions 130-2012 and 294-2012**];
- Increased support for Military Sexual Trauma (MST) victims [**Resolution 295-2012**];
- Opens VA healthcare access to all priority groups [**Resolutions 120-2012 & 76-2013**] and,
- Repeals the harmful effects of the Bipartisan Budget Agreement of 2013 (**P.L. 113-67**) that imposes an unfair tax on military retirees under age 63 by reducing their cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) by 1 percent each year [**Resolution 25-2013 Spring**].

### Kudos

I must apologize to the members of District 2 who over the Christmas holiday season donated 900 pounds of food to the Low Country Food Bank in Charleston. It is kind works such as this that makes members proud to be a member of our great organization. A special thank you goes to Post 147 (Commander Dwight Cargile) and Post 179 (Commander Rich Struth) as well as the American Legion Riders of Chapter 179. As a side note members spent all day on December 21 ringing the bells for the Salvation Army Red Kettle at two large Wal-Mart stores. A big thank you to all members involved.

Big thank you goes to Post #17 Camden Executive Board and Commander James Rabon and members, for their assistance in responding to another post in need of their help. This is a prime example of “**Veterans Helping Veterans**”.

### 2013 Enhancements

Just a note to remind all that the 2013 enhancements are due in department no later than April 30, 2014 in order for the post to be considered in good standing and to participate in the 2014 Department Convention and any of the programs of the Department of South Carolina. At this time there are only 14 posts that need to pay the 2012

enhancement. Please check to see if your post has paid on the 2013 amount due and encourage the responsible officers to do such. It will be greatly appreciated.

### What's Happening

**February 1, Saturday – District 6 @ 10 a.m.** 204 Butter Rd., Bonneau Civic Club, Bonneau, S.C.

**February 8, Saturday – District 1 @ 10 a.m.** Cayce Post #130, 402 Naples Ave., Cayce.

**February 11, Saturday – ALR DEC 11 a.m.** Department Headquarters

**February 15, Saturday –** All Quadrant Oratorical Contests be held in various locations. Contact the Vice Commanders and see the website <http://www.scarolinalegion.org/page/contest/programs/hw-dare-maness-high-school-oratorical-contest> for more information.

**February 18, Tuesday – District 15 @ 7 p.m.** Saluda Post #65, 108 S. Randolph St. meal at 6:30 p.m. meeting 7 p.m.

**February 22, Saturday – District 5 @ 10 a.m.** Spartanburg Post #28, 94 West Park Drive. Meeting will be followed by brunch.

**February 22, Saturday – District 13 @ 10 a.m.** American Legion Post #107, 205 Lucky St., Westminster. Light refreshments.

**February 25, Tuesday – District 17 @ 6 p.m.** American Legion Post #15, 34 South Artillery Dr., Sumter.

### Sick Call

If one of your past post commanders, district commanders, present post or district commanders is listed on sick call then also please let me know. This is provided for our membership knowledge and will not be published if the individual or their family requests that it not be published.

### Condolences

This would also be specific to past post, district or department commanders and/or spouses of those individuals. Past department officers and present officers are included here as well.

### Post Officer Listings

**District Commanders Please Note:** This means also that even though you may have the same officers in the same positions for the 2013-2014 year, you should also submit a listing to department. Also, for those that have email addresses, please indicate that on the listing. Your assistance and attention to this matter will be greatly appreciated. The following is a listing of the posts. If they are in your district, please contact them and request they submit the information as soon as possible. This information is as of today, 12/19/2013.

**District #1 –** Posts #90, #142, #174, #217

**District #13 –** Posts #51, #67, #113

**District #2 –** Posts #136, #145,

**District #14 –** Post #100

**District #3 –** Post #231

**District #15 –** Posts #77, #153, #154, #168, #169, #232

**District #6** – Post #126

**District #8** – Posts #21, #105, #128

**District #10** – Posts #24, #70

**District #11** – Post #63

**District #12** – Posts #60, #74, #80, #92, #213

**District #17** – Posts #35, #202

**District #18** – Posts #47, #118, #266

**District #19** – Posts #8, #114

**District #20** – Posts #64, #78, #156

**(The blank form is on the website to be used if needed.)**

Proud to Serve

Lloyd H. Woods  
Department Adjutant