




**Department of**



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**The American Legion**  
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March 6, 2014

## SOUTH CAROLINA NEWS LINE

**Be gentle to all and be stern with yourself.**

### System Worth Saving

The visit scheduled for March 14-15 & 16 at the Dorn Medical VA center has been postponed as well as the Town Hall meeting at Post 6 on March 14. The tentative date is now April 14 same time and same place, Post 6 at 7 p.m. Any further information will be relayed when received. Anyone who would like to let the committee know what you think about your VA health care be known and help improve the quality of care you receive is asked to RSVP to [wkennedy@legion.org](mailto:wkennedy@legion.org) or 202-263-5769.

### State Oratorical Contest Results

The 76th Annual South Carolina high school oratorical scholarship program "A CONSTITUTIONAL SPEECH CONTEST" was held on March 1, 2014, at the Clarion Hotel in Columbia. There were four participants, one from each quadrant. Sarah Foster of Quadrant 4, participant from Northwood Academy in Goose Creek, was the first place winner, and she will represent South Carolina at the National final on April 4-6 in Indianapolis. The 1st place winner will receive \$2,000.00 scholarship. The participant who came in 2<sup>nd</sup> was Claire Atwood from Greenville and she will receive a \$1,000.00 scholarship. 3<sup>rd</sup> place went to Mason Browder of Gaston and 4th place went to Chinyere Victoria Nwankudu of Florence. Each of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place winners will get a \$500.00 scholarship. Sarah will receive \$1,500.00 from national and she will compete for an \$18,000.00 scholarship.

Chairman John Coaxum wishes to thank all that help with the contest to make this program a success, everyone was very pleased as to the level of the contest. Each Department Vice Commander who made the necessary arrangements for the specific quadrant contestant also should be proud of the outcome of their hard work. Without their work we would not have had such a good contest. First Vice Commander John Collins, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander John Davis, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Commander Harry Brown and 4<sup>th</sup> Vice Commander Robert Scherer. Thank you gentlemen.

**National  
Commander's Visit**

On March 4, National Commander Dan Dellinger, Virginia, began his visit to the Department of South Carolina arriving at Columbia Metro Airport around 4:30 p.m. There were about 27 ALR members who met the Commander and his aide, Bob Renner first in the arrival section of the airport with an avenue of flags then escorting him to the hotel in Columbia. The Commander was very happy to see the Riders there and their escort. Monday, the Commander visited with troops at Fort Jackson and met with Brigadier General Beck and with Lt. Colonel Glick. The group then went on to view some of the training the new Privates participate in before returning to the hotel.

On Tuesday, the Commander met with some of the Post Commanders and Adjutants and other members of the Department at the Clarion Hotel for a meet and greet session before proceeding to the state legislature to address a joint session of the legislature. The meet and greet was well attended and I would like to thank all of those members who attended and participated in the event. The commander was impressed.

On Wednesday, the Commander visited Post 147 James Island and met with some of the members of that post. The post served a lunch before the Commander proceeded to the Ralph Johnson VA Medical Center in Charleston and was given a tour of the facility meeting with some of the residents of the nursing section. After touring the facility, he returned to Columbia. He and the aide were scheduled to depart Columbia Thursday morning for Vermont.

**National Vice  
Commander Visit**

On March 7, National Vice Commander Paul E. Dillard, Texas will be arriving for his official membership visit to the Department of South Carolina. His visit will commence on March 7 and he will return to Texas on March 10. Following is his itinerary for the visit with approximate times noted.

Cayce Post#130 3/7 at 4:00 p.m. There will also be a meal supplied by the post. Everyone is welcome.

Dillon Post #32 3/8 at 10:30 a.m.

Florence Post #228 3/8 at 2 p.m.

Barnwell Post #46 3/9 at 3:30 p.m.

Blackville Post #253 3/9 at 5 p.m.

All posts within any of the above areas are welcomed to attend and bring any memberships you might have to turn in during the NVC's visit. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

## Agent Orange

The American Legion has announced its support for extending Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits eligibility to veterans who were exposed to aircraft that had previously sprayed Agent Orange over Vietnam. The Legion's support is based on a study published Feb. 21 in the scientific journal *Environmental Research: "Post-Vietnam Military Herbicide Exposures in UC-123 Agent Orange Spray Aircraft."* The study reports that environmental testing of such aircraft revealed traces of dioxin levels above Department of Defense (DoD) standards for maximum permissible exposure to poisonous chemicals. U.S. Air Force and VA policies do not currently recognize "dried residues" of herbicide and dioxin as harmful. Based on recent surface wipes and airborne concentration tests, occupational health researchers have concluded that inhalation, ingestion, and skin absorption of dioxin and Agent Orange occurred in crews who came in contact with the spray aircraft after the Vietnam War. "The Legion is committed to ensuring that veterans receive the benefits they deserve," American Legion National Commander Daniel M. Dellinger said. "We will work with Congress and the VA to promptly designate C-123K aircraft as Agent Orange exposure sites, thereby qualifying veterans who worked with these planes to be eligible for Agent Orange-related benefits." According to Dr. Jeanne Mager Stellman, Professor at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, the study "should provide the evidence needed for post-Vietnam veterans to receive the same health treatment as in-country veterans. They need and deserve it." Stellman is senior author of the study. The American Legion and Stellman worked together in the early 1980s to prove that adverse health conditions among Vietnam War veterans were linked to Agent Orange exposure, establishing a link that authorizes VA compensation and health care for those veterans.

In 1983, the Legion sponsored an independent study by Columbia University that established the effects of exposure to Agent Orange on Vietnam War veterans. Congress received the results of the "American Legion-Columbia University Study of Vietnam-era Veterans" in 1989.

The Legion and Stellman have continued to fight for changes that include, in a 2010 decision, ischemic heart disease, Parkinson's disease and B-cell leukemia among conditions presumed to be connected to Agent Orange. The Legion has also fought to expand eligibility beyond those who served only with "boots on the ground" during the Vietnam War, including "blue-water" veterans exposed to the defoliant on U.S. Navy vessels and U.S. Air Force crews who handled it. In August 2012, the Legion passed [Resolution 128](#) to mitigate legal problems for the more than 1,500 veterans who must prove they suffer health problems associated with herbicide exposure.

## 2015 Post Data Form

Last week, the above form was mailed to each post for completion and returning to Department by April 15, 2014. This form is used by us and National for renewal notices when sent as well as correct any addresses and for any dues changes. It is imperative that these be completed as soon as possible and returned to us by the above date so any changes can be made to our and National's records. Your cooperation in the matter will be greatly appreciated.

### 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.

### SSA Disability Claims Processing

Beginning on March 17, 2014 the Social Security Administration will start a new process to expedite disability claims of veterans who have a compensation rating of 100 percent permanent and total (P&T) by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. Please share this exciting news with your members, colleagues, and other interested parties. For more information visit SSA website at [www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/disability-pt.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/disability-pt.htm).

### What's Happening

**March 7 thru March 10 – National Vice Commander's Visit**

**March 10, Monday – Veterans Fair @ 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**, Brookland Baptist Church Health and Wellness Center, 1066 Sunset Blvd., West Columbia. FMI: visit [www.joewilson.house.gov/veteransfair](http://www.joewilson.house.gov/veteransfair) or 803-939-0041.

**March 11, Tuesday – 6:00 p.m.** Post 182 Awards Night Fort Jackson Officers Club.

**March 15-17 – American Legion Birthday Celebration**

### Post Officer Lists

**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 #79, #142, #174, #217

**District #2** – Posts #136, #145,

**District #3** – Post #231

**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 #13** – Posts #51, #67, #113

**District #14** – Post #100

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

**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.)

**LIT AD&D FREE**

Just a reminder of the free \$1,000 to the Legionnaire AD&D insurance available thru the LIT. Last year the program was expanded to cover up to \$5,000.00 free insurance IF you were travelling on official Legion business and were killed or had a dismemberment as a result of an accident. Official business would be travelling to or from a meeting either at the Post, District or Department (conference or convention). All the Legionnaire has to do is apply for it and is not automatic. I do not know of any family who could not use the additional funds at a time of necessity due to the loss of a loved one. In reviewing just what members of posts that are participating in the program, it is very eye opening that many, many members have not enrolled in this program.

To enroll all that is required is complete the application or call toll free 1-800-235-6943 with your membership number.

Proud to Serve

Lloyd  
Dept. Adjutant