



**Department of
South Carolina
The American Legion**

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SOUTH CAROLINA NEWS LINE

Truth always wins over falsehoods.

Nat'l Cmdr Letter

Dear Legion Family Members and Friends,

All of us have been struck by the recent string of horrific stories of preventable deaths of veterans, secret waiting lists and irresponsible bonuses for VA officials. Early investigations have been made. Blame has been assigned. Secretary Shinseki has stepped down. But none of those actions will necessarily fix the biggest problem, and my primary concern: Our veterans are not getting the best possible treatment from VA, which they have earned through their honorable service. The American Legion's long, proud history includes working in the 1920s to help create the U.S. Veterans Bureau, the precursor to today's Department of Veterans Affairs. Since then, the Legion has worked closely with the VA. Every day American Legion service officers assist veterans with their benefits claims. Every day Legionnaires volunteer at VA facilities. Every day The American Legion advocates on behalf of veterans.

A little more than 10 years ago, then-American Legion National Commander Ronald Conley initiated a series of interactions at VA facilities, which became known as [System Worth Saving visits](#). Even with all the problems facing VA and our veterans, the system is still worth saving — perhaps now more than ever. That is why The American Legion is [returning to Phoenix next week](#) to launch a pilot program, a Veterans Crisis Command Center. The center, located at Post 1 in Phoenix, 364 N. 7th Ave., will open at noon June 10. At the center, American Legion staff members and volunteers will:

- Work on claims assistance with veterans and family members, including those veterans who may have died due to a lack of treatment.
- Assist veterans wishing to enroll in VA health care.
- Provide grief counseling to veterans suffering from conditions such as depression and family members who have lost loved ones due to VA's negligence.
- Connect those wishing to share their stories with the media to reporters.

It is important to note that the Veterans Crisis Command Center is a pilot program. One look at the [Legion's map titled Epidemic of VA Mismanagement](#) demonstrates how widespread this problem has become. The Legion's Veterans Crisis Command Center will visit other VA facilities, working face-to-face with veterans and their family members. At some point, the media and nation's attention will shift away from the VA story. But

The American Legion will not waver. We've been there for veterans from the start of the Paris Caucus nearly a century ago. And we will continue to advocate on behalf of all veterans — past, present and future.

For God and Country

Dan Dellinger

New Dept Officers

Last Saturday, May 31 at Greenville at the 96th Annual Department Convention, the following officers were elected to the indicated offices for the ensuing 2014-2015 American Legion Year. They are:

Commander: John Collins, Post #3, Greenville

Department 1st Vice Commander: John Davis, Post #249, Dillon

Department 2nd Vice Commander: Harry Brown, Post #208, Charleston

Department 3rd Vice Commander: Bob Scherer, Post #200, Boiling Springs

Department 4th Vice Commander: Michael Strauss, Post #172, Headquarters

Alternate NECman: Cecil "Bud" Hennis, Post #178, Murrells Inlet

Department Historian: Bill Wade, Post #147, James Island

Congratulations to all of the above officers and look forward to working with you in the upcoming year.

2015 Membership Cards

In the coming two weeks, the Department Commander and I will be travelling over the state distributing the 2015 Membership Cards to the following districts. Anyone who would like to attend these meetings may very well do so even though they are geared more for the Post Commanders and Post Adjutants as well as the District Commanders.

June 10 – District #12, Chesterfield #74 @ 10 a.m.

District #18, Florence #1 @ 2 p.m.

District #4, Myrtle Beach #40 @ 7 p.m.

June 11 – District #19, Murrells Inlet #178 @ 10 a.m.

District #17, Sumter #15 @ 2 p.m.

District #20, Orangeburg, #4 @ 7 p.m.

June 12 – District #2, James Island #147 10 a.m.

District #6, TBA, @ 2 p.m.

District #8, St. George #105 @ 7 p.m.

June 16 – District #16, Beaufort #207 @ 10 a.m.

District #7, Williston #75 @ 2 p.m.

June 17 – District #10, Laurens #25 @ 7 p.m.

**Aiken Cty Vets
Office**

Following is the new address of the Aiken County Veterans Affairs Office, now located in the new county administration building: Aiken County Veterans Affairs
1930 University Parkway, Ste 2305
Aiken, South Carolina 29801

The telephone numbers will not change. The above is from the VAO Jim Harris.

Pro Bono Info

Lawyers4Vets - Monthly Pro Bono Veterans Legal Clinic

Introduction: As a service to area Veterans, the South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center has partnered with the Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center and members of the private bar to establish Lawyers 4 Vets, a Pro Bono Veterans Legal Clinic.

Purpose:

Lawyers 4 Vets connects low income and homeless Veterans with attorneys who provide legal advice and representation on certain issues.

Legal Issues and Services: The clinic will ONLY address the following topics:

- Obtaining identification (Social Security, South Carolina State ID, birth certificates)
- Child support and visitation issues (in South Carolina)
- Expungements and pardons (for convictions from South Carolina courts)
- Consumer protection
- Simple wills and healthcare power of attorney

Eligibility:

Veterans will be screened for eligibility, and if eligible will be given an appointment at the clinic. Lawyers 4 Vets will assist eligible Veterans regardless of military discharge status.

Appointments: Veterans who would like to be screened for eligibility should call the number listed below and leave a message including their name, phone number, and legal issue. The Veteran will be contacted within 2 business days by an intake volunteer who will ask the veteran a number of questions to determine if they are eligible. If the Veteran is eligible and has a qualifying legal issue, they will be given the next available appointment at the legal clinic. Appointments are required for a Veteran to receive a face-to-face meeting with a lawyer. Walk-ins will not be seen and will be directed to contact the telephone intake.

Number to call: Toll Free 1-877-289-6000

Clinic Dates: The Clinic will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month. The 2014 Clinic dates are:

- * May 15, 2014
- * June 19, 2014
- * July 17, 2014
- * August 21, 2014
- * September 18, 2014
- * October 16, 2014
- * November 20, 2014
- * December 18, 2014

Where: (BY APPROVED APPOINTMENT ONLY AND SPECIFIC LOCATION PROVIDED UPON CONFIRMATION): Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center, 6439 Garners Ferry Road, Columbia SC 29209.

What's Happening

June 8 – 6:30 p.m. Palmetto Boys State Legion night Anderson University.
June 8 – 13 Boys State in session, Anderson University

Post Officer Listings

District Commanders Please Note: Even though you may have the same officers in the same positions for the 2014-2015 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.

Proud To Serve

Lloyd H. Woods
Department Adjutant