



**Department of
South Carolina
The American Legion**

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SOUTH CAROLINA NEWS LINE

What we need is more people that specialize in the impossible.

Commanders “Project 94”

Commander Collins' Commanders Project 94 is doing great. His project this year is to honor the 94 men and women who have given their lives for us and our country since 9-11. He had some pins made up and is handing them out to anyone who wants one to wear either on their jacket, Legion cap, wherever. He is not selling these pins but will accept donations of any size that will go to the National program called Operation Comfort Warriors where The American Legion obtains comfort items for those returning from war that need items. The Commander is hoping to raise \$100.00 for each of the 94 who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. If you desire to donate, please send a check to the Department Headquarters and earmark the check Project 94. Those funds will go into a special account and will be sent to National for O.C.W.

Legion Baseball

The Senior tournament starts with a banquet on **July 25** with games being played commencing on **July 26** and runs to **July 30**. The banquet and games will be held at the historic Riley Park, Sumter. To see the game times and team brackets, please go to the department website, scarolinalegion.org and click on **Programs-SC Baseball-2014 Brackets**. Any other information can be obtained from Mr. Legree Oswald. If at all possible, let's attempt to go see some up and coming baseball players in their early stages of play and support our program.

Vietnam Era Vets

Senator Tim Scott is hosting a Vietnam Era Veterans Recognition Ceremony scheduled for Saturday August 2nd. The Senator is honored to have the opportunity to express our gratitude to these Vietnam War Era veterans and will present each one with a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition and a pin.

The event is scheduled in a central location - downtown Columbia. At 10 AM on August 2nd, we will be recognizing these brave men and women at the First Baptist Church of Columbia, at 1306 Hampton Street. We are enlisting your help to spread the word about this event within your organization and throughout the community. This Recognition Ceremony cannot be a success without the involvement of our Veteran partner organizations. There is no fee to participate in or attend this event. We do ask these veterans and the surviving families of deceased veterans to contact us to register. You can do this online at: <http://scott.senate.gov/veterans> <https://outreach.senate.gov/iqextranet/iqClickTrk.aspx?&cid=quorum_scott-iq&crop=14308.6409133.5232973.7131919&redirect=http%3a%2f%2fwww.scott.senate.gov%2fveterans> or by phone, at 844-820-0146 (toll free). The Vietnam War era was one of the most challenging in our nation's history, and it is truly my honor to host these brave men and women who fought for freedom this year. Their sacrifices, as well as those made by their families, will never be forgotten.

Thank you for your support of our Veterans and the Vietnam War Era Veterans Recognition Ceremony. I hope to see you and your fellow veterans in Columbia on August 2nd!

New POW/MIA Agency

Defense Department officials testified Tuesday that the new agency to replace the troubled POW/MIA accounting community in charge of recovering and repatriating the remains of troops killed in past conflicts will be stood up on Jan. 1. The agency will consolidate the work of the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office and the Joint Personnel Accounting Command as ordered by the secretary of defense in February, said Michael Lumpkin, the assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low-intensity conflict. Lumpkin testified before the House Armed Services' military personnel subcommittee, which for years has pressed for reform and in 2009 helped pass a congressional mandate that the DOD recover at minimum of 200 remains annually beginning next year. On Tuesday, Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., chairman of the House subcommittee, said he was pleased that the DOD is moving ahead with the changes. "What a positive report — that is very unusual in Congress," he said. The DOD efforts to recover 83,000 Americans still missing from past conflicts have so far fallen far below the goal set by Congress and been dogged by incompetence and dysfunction, including claims agencies ignored leads, arguing against identifying remains in government custody, desecrated and mishandled of remains, and failed to keep critical records.

An interim inspector general report, obtained last week by ProPublica, outlined some of the problems:

- a remarkably low number of identifications each year — just 60 in 2013
- no standard operating procedures, or central database of the missing
- leadership and management problems resulting in a hostile and dysfunctional work environment
- no acknowledgment that as many as 50,000 missing at sea are unlikely to be recovered

- Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel ordered the overall and consolidation in February and called maximizing the number of identifications a top priority for the DOD.

Lumpkin said the new central agency will open at the start of 2015 but will not be fully operational until January 2016. “Throughout this process, operations to account for the missing and to keep their families informed will continue,” he said. Jamie Morin, director of DOD Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, said JPAC and DPMO as well as the Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory, which handles forensic work, will continue on recovery efforts until the new agency is completely operational in 2016. “We are building something up while we are shrinking something down to ensure that this is seamless,” Morin said.

Plans for the new agency call for:

- Oversight by a newly created DOD policy under secretary who’s central task will be the recovery effort
- A medical examiner in charge of all identification and scientific operations
- Centralized data base and case management system containing all POW/MIA case information

Lumpkin said the department will also try to improve the way it treats the families of those still missing in action. From a business perspective, who is the customer here? We haven’t focused on the families as much as we could,” he said. “I think that is the underlying piece we all agreed upon.”

Remains Identified

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced that the remains of a U.S. serviceman lost during World War II have been identified and are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors, according to a DoD news release issued today. Marine Corps Pfc. Randolph Allen of Rush, Kentucky, will be buried July 29 in Arlington National Cemetery, Washington D.C., according to the release. In November 1943, Allen was assigned to the 2nd Marine Division. He landed with his unit on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll in an attempt to secure the island against stiff Japanese resistance. Over several days of intense fighting approximately 1,000 Marines were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded. Allen was reported killed in action Nov. 20, 1943. In the immediate aftermath of the fighting on Tarawa, U.S. service members who died were buried in a number of battlefield cemeteries, the release said. During World War II, U.S. Navy Combat Engineers, “SeaBees,” significantly restructured the landscape to convert the island for use by the military. In 1946 when U.S. Army Graves Registration Service personnel attempted to locate all of the battlefield interments, many of the burials could not be located. From Nov. 12-27, 2013, History Flight, a private organization, excavated what was believed to be a wartime fighting position on the island of Betio, according to the release. During this excavation History Flight recovered five sets of remains, personal effects and military equipment. Four sets of remains were determined to be Japanese service members and the fifth set was believed to be that of a U.S. Marine. Two sets of military identification tags which correlated to Allen were also found in the fighting position. In the identification of Allen’s remains, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools such as dental and skeletal comparison, which matched Allen’s records, the release said. Of the 16 million Americans who served in World War II, more than 400,000 died during the war -- more than 100,000 of them in the Pacific Theater alone.

RSVP Request

I recently was contacted by Ms. Beverly Brandt, Director, RSVP of the Midlands inquiring about veterans volunteering to assist in various avenues for seniors 55 and older. There are many areas that RSVP could use the assistance in and the only requirement is that the individual be 55 and older and have the time to do so. Anyone interested can either contact Ms. Brandt at 803-252-7734 ext. 246 or go to the following website www.seniorresourcesinc.org and check things out. Some of the many School volunteer liaison, cook book coordinator, receptionist, van driver, armed forces casework family follow-up volunteer, disaster services volunteer, military hospital/clinic volunteer, library assistant, volunteer shuttle driver, clerical assistant-women's clinic, packer, greeter, product rescue volunteer, thrift store attendant, food pantry and meals on wheels volunteer.

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:

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| * 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

July 25, Friday – Senior Baseball Tournament Banquet, Sumter, Riley Park

July 26, Saturday to July 30, Wednesday – State Baseball Tournament, Riley Park, Sumter,

July 26, Saturday – District 13 Easley Post #52, 118-A Legion St., 10 a.m. Light refreshments

August 16, Saturday – District 5, Boiling Springs Post #200 at Unity Presbyterian Church, 750 Rainbow Lake Rd. 10 a.m.

Post Officer Listings

District and Post 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.

Proud To Serve

Lloyd H. Woods
Department Adjutant