



**Department of
South Carolina
The American Legion**

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August 14, 2014

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.

2014 Fall Conference

At this point in time, plans for the 2014 Fall Conference at the Marriott in Columbia are being made. The hotel has notified us that the block of rooms is still available and that not many have made reservations to attend. If you plan on attending, please call the hotel and make your appropriate reservations as soon as possible. The tentative agenda is published on the Department website for review, however, it is subject to changing as programs require. Let's make this one a good conference and see how many we can get to attend. It promises to be a learning one this year.

Legacy Run

On Sunday, August 17 the 2014 Legacy Run will begin in Indianapolis, Indiana and will end Thursday, August 21, in Charlotte, North Carolina. The run will pass through the states of Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and back to North Carolina for The American Legion's National Convention in Charlotte. Since the first run in 2006 almost \$5 million dollars have been raised. Some of the participants use their vacation time each year to participate in this great event. They cover their own gas,

meals and lodging costs. The full ride can cost up to \$1,000. For more information about the American Legion Riders and the Legacy Run visit <http://www.legion.org/riders>.

American Legion World Series

Thousands of people visit Cleveland County each August for the American Legion World Series. And, in recent years, attendance for the entire tournament has numbered 100,000 or more. Out of town visitors eat at local restaurants, stay in county hotels and explore local businesses. “Obviously we have a lot of people from out of town in the community,” said David Dear, an official with Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership. “Hotels are booked and people are staying even out of the county and surrounding counties. They are eating in restaurants and shopping in local businesses.” The average spending for the families visiting Cleveland County is expected to be \$244 each night they stay, said county tourism head Jackie Sibley. “Local tax income from this event is expected to be \$118,350 just from people staying in our local hotels,” Sibley said. “We know that people are staying as far away as Charlotte and those people will be spending money on food, entertainment, shopping, etc. on a daily basis which will increase this income.” The money the visitors spend here pumps dollars into the local economy, helps decrease the burden on county taxpayers and also gives Cleveland County exposure. “The big thing for us is that we can expose Cleveland County and what we have to offer to those visitors,” Dear said. “Not only will the visitors see it, but we will have national and international exposure when the finals are broadcasted on Tuesday on ESPNU.” During the broadcast, local community commercials will be shown and viewers can see what Cleveland County has to offer, Dear said. “It’s hard to put a price tag on that,” he said. When new industries visit Cleveland County with the possibility of creating new jobs here, the ALWS is always brought up by the county's economic development team. “We always get a positive comment when telling people about it,” Dear said. “Sometimes they want to see the stadium. It’s a good tool to show we have an engaged community.” Visitor spending in Cleveland County in 2013 was \$35,505,548 with local taxes at \$2,677,671. About half of that income was from ALWS which comes to roughly over \$17 million, Sibley said. “ALWS brings Shelby and Cleveland County a community wide project,” Dear said. “It brings the whole community together.”

National Convention

The American Legion will be streaming live several events from its 96th National Convention, Aug. 22-28, in Charlotte, N.C. These events include: (1) Color Guard Competition - Aug. 22, 5 p.m.; (2) Memorial Service - Aug. 24, 11 a.m.; (3) General Session Day 1 - Aug. 26, 8 a.m.; (4) General Session Day 2 - Aug. 27, 9 a.m.; and (5) General Session Day 3 - Aug. 28, 9 a.m. All times are Eastern Standard Time, and are tentative and/or subject to change. The events will be streamed live on the [American Legion Livestream webpage](#). Visit the [American Legion website](#) for stories, videos and photos during the national convention.

Legion Regional Baseball Results

The team from Florence, Florence #1 went to Asheboro, NC and played some excellent American Legion Baseball. On August 7, Florence went up against Shelbyville, KY and won the game 5 to 4. On August 8, Florence won the game with Charlottesville, VA 6 to 5. On August 9, Florence went up against Jacksonville, FL

and lost 9 to 3. On August 10, Florence came back from the previous days' loss and beat Tuscaloosa, AL 4 to 1. On August 11, Asheboro, NC beat Florence 9 to 7. The South Carolina state champions played hard and made all of us proud by playing excellent baseball. Congratulations to the team players, managers and coaches for a great baseball year.

PTSD

Four decades after the Vietnam War, 11% of its veterans still suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, according to new research suggesting that for some people it is a condition unlikely to ever go away. The findings, presented Friday at a meeting of the American Psychological Assn., provide a rare look at the long-term course of PTSD in veterans. The research updates a landmark study conducted in the 1980s, when researchers found that 15% of Vietnam veterans had the disorder. Despite the passage of many years and the increasing availability of effective treatments for PTSD, the picture remains much the same.

“People who develop PTSD, if they are going to recover, they tend to recover in the first months or years,” said Dr. Charles Marmar, a psychiatrist at New York University who worked on the original study and the follow-up. “For everybody else it is very chronic.” Some experts not involved in the research suggested the new estimate is too high, because it relied on a standardized questionnaire to assess veterans rather than a structured clinical interview that is considered the gold standard for diagnosing the disorder. When the researchers used the interview method to assess a subset of veterans in the study, the PTSD rate fell to 4.5%. “How one assesses PTSD affects one's estimate of its prevalence,” said Richard McNally, a Harvard psychologist who believes the disorder is overdiagnosed. The original research, known as the National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study, included 1,632 veterans who had been deployed and 716 others who served during that era but never went to Vietnam. Based on that sample, researchers estimated that 31% of Vietnam veterans had suffered from PTSD at some point in their lives, but that by the late 1980s about half no longer did.

For the new study, which was funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the authors tracked down the old research subjects. More than 500 had died. An analysis estimated that the death rate for veterans who served in the war was roughly 17% and not statistically different than the rate for veterans who did not go to Vietnam. Death rates from cancer and heart disease — the biggest killers — did not differ either. PTSD has long been associated with early death, so researchers were not surprised to find that among veterans who deployed to Vietnam, those who had the disorder in the 1980s were twice as likely as those without it to be dead today. Roughly 1 in 4 had died. Their death rate from cancer was particularly elevated, possibly because those with PTSD are more likely to smoke. Of the 1,839 veterans from the original study who were still alive, 1,450 participated in the new research. *Stars & Stripes*

New VA Program

Veterans waiting for a primary care appointment at a VA medical facility may now be able to get one at a private physician under a program that allows veterans to seek medical treatment outside the Veterans Affairs Department. VA announced Wednesday that primary care has been added to its Patient-Centered Community Care, or PC3, program.

The initiative originally was designed to provide specialty care, in-patient and mental health treatment to veterans who could not access a VA hospital or clinic because of distance or prolonged wait times and their

regular facility. But it was expanded to include primary care in an effort to expedite treatment to patients sitting on wait lists, according to a VA release. “With the addition of primary care services, VA medical centers can now use PC3 to provide additional types of care in order to reduce wait times,” VA Secretary Robert McDonald said in a prepared statement. In September, VA awarded contracts worth up to \$9.4 billion over five years to two health care companies to provide specialty care and mental health treatment in the private sector under the PC3 program. Former Tricare West Region contractor TriWest Healthcare Alliance and Health Net Federal Services, the company that manages the Tricare North Region, run the program.

According to VA, the change is part of the department’s “Accelerated Care Initiative,” a massive effort to move veterans — many of whom have waited months for care — off appointment wait lists. VA has been under fire since April for allegations that some facilities gamed the appointment system to meet VA metrics and excessive wait times for appointments and consults may have led to patient deaths. The scandal led to the resignation of several top officials, including VA Secretary Erik Shinseki, who left the department in May. While VA facilities have had the authority to outsource care, many facilities have been reluctant to use the option and in turn, many veterans prefer to use the VA, which they perceive as a benefit earned with military service. VA spent \$5 billion on private-sector care in 2013 and launched the PC3 program in January to provide care to veterans using established health care provider networks. TriWest President David McIntyre described the PC3 program as a “release valve” for overburdened VA facilities. “The first place care should be rendered is in the federal system with federal providers where it can be done. And where it can’t, we are that valve,” McIntyre told Military Times last month. For more information on obtaining private medical care through VA, the department recommends turning to its non-VA care web site.

LIT AD&D Online

The Legionnaire Insurance Trust is pleased to announce that online enrollment is now available for the LegionCare No Cost Accidental Death benefit. Please be sure to let your Department know about this one-of-a-kind benefit offered exclusively to Legionnaires.

LegionCare provides all Legionnaires with:

- \$5,000 in Accidental Death Coverage for covered accidents that occur if you are traveling on official Legion business.
- \$1,000 for all other covered accidents.
- 24/7 protection that covers Legionnaires at home, at work and while they are travelling away from home available for all Legionnaires in your Department.

To learn more or to sign up, please visit <http://www.thelit.com/no-cost-legioncare>.

New VA Burial Rule

An announcement dated July 7, 2014 regarding New Burial Compensation Rules, new regulations effective on 7/7/2014 will now allow the Department of Veterans Affairs, (VA) to automatically pay the maximum amount allowable under law to most eligible surviving spouses more quickly and efficiently, without the need for a written application. Under former regulations, VA paid burial benefits on a reimbursement basis, which required survivors to submit receipts for relatively small one-time payments that VA generally paid at the maximum amount permitted by law. “VA is committed to improving the speed and ease of delivery of monetary burial benefits to Veterans’ survivors during their time of need,” said Acting VA Secretary Sloan Gibson. “The recent

changes allow VA to help these survivors bear the cost of funerals by changing regulations to get them the benefits more quickly.”

This automation enables VA to pay a non-service-connected or service-connected burial allowance to an estimated 62,000 eligible surviving spouses out of a projected 140,000 claimants for burial benefits in 2014. Surviving spouses will be paid upon notice of the Veteran’s death using information already in VA systems. The burial allowance for a non-service-connected death is \$300, and \$2,000 for a death connected to military service. This revised regulation will further expedite the delivery of these benefits to surviving spouses, reduce the volume of claims requiring manual processing, and potentially make available resources for other activities that benefit Veterans and their survivors.

For more information on monetary burial benefits, visit www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/claims-special-burial.asp

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.

For Sale

Post #7, Lexington has a commercial grade gas 6 burner range and oven for sale. Price negotiable. It is a Franklin brand stainless steel gas oven and 6 burner range top. For more information contact Commander David Griffith, Post #7-Lexington at (803)359-1278 or email at dgriff4726@aol.com.

What's Happening

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

August 17, Sunday – Task Force Marshall Graduation 1p Bldg. 3900 McCrady Training Center

August 22-28 – National Convention, Charlotte, N.C.

August 23, Saturday – District 4, Grand Strand Senior Ctr, 1268 21st Ave., N. Myrtle Beach 1:00 p.m.

August 26, Tuesday – District 17 Post #15, 34 South Artillery, Sumter 6:00 p.m.

September 28, Sunday – Gold Star Family Day. Light a luminary at dusk. See luminaryinitiative.com website to honor, support and remember the families of our fallen heroes.

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