



Lexington County Veteran Newsletter

WINTER EDITION 2026

**“SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED AND
SACRIFICED FOR AMERICA”**



**Lexington County
Veterans' Affairs Office
605 West Main Street Suite B
Lexington, SC 29072
Phone: (803) 785-8400**

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Happy New Year!

This issue of our newsletter has been restructured in an effort to give Veterans more information on VA benefits and programs. Each issue will now feature something on VA healthcare and on a benefit or program, as well as office, community and local updates. We hope you find it informative, colorful and helpful.

Our office celebrated milestones in 2025; and I want to share those with you. Kathy DeBerry, our Senior Veterans' Affairs Benefits Counselor, retired in April after 12.5 exemplary years serving Veterans and their families. She made a huge impact in this office, and to us, her work family. Although we do miss her, she is enjoying retirement and caring for her first grandchild. We wish her well.

Brittany Gunter was promoted to the Senior Benefits Counselor position after the retirement of Kathy DeBerry. Congratulations to Brittany! We are proud of her! Veterans' Affairs Benefits Counselor, Lee Harley, moved on to the County Animal Control Office in September. He serves as an Animal Control Officer. He seems to enjoy it. These team departures brought us two new teammates, Jolene Bailey and Michelle Schrock. They have hit the ground running. Jolene is an Army Veteran. Michelle has family members who are Veterans. Please stop by and welcome them if you have the time.

Our Nation celebrates its 250th birthday this year as a free and democratic republic and hundreds of events are scheduled nationally and locally. I hope you can attend at least one celebration to show your support for the freest country in the world.

Lastly, I began my 15th year as your County Veterans' Service Officer. I am truly honored and humbled to serve in this capacity. I really enjoy the work we get to do every day. There is no greater joy than to call a Veteran or a survivor to tell them their VA benefits have been awarded. We see and hear the struggles of the people we serve. At times, they want to give up on their claim for benefits due to the long wait for an answer or the volume of documents needed to substantiate a claim. However, we always encourage them to ride it out and wait to see what the VA says in their decision. We thoroughly love this work and believe in the VA process and the VA system.

Enjoying the journey,





Email Us

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Benefits Counselor

Annastasia Blake
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Administrative Assistant

IMPORTANT INFO



Daylight Savings
Time

March 8, 2026



We will be closed:
February 16th
for
Presidents' Day

Ed Lundeen will be at the libraries
below:

Gaston library 1st Thursday of each
month between 10am – 12pm

Chapin library 1st Friday of each
month between 10am – 12pm

Batesburg library 2nd Friday of
each month between 10am – 12pm



Stay up to date with weather issues
www.scemd.org



HELPFUL LINKS

<https://scdva.sc.gov/>

<https://www.myhealth.va.gov/mhv-portal-web/home>

<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage>

<https://benefits.va.gov/columbia/>

<https://www.fisherhousecolumbiasc.org/>

· Veterans Crisis Line 24/7
1-800-273-8255, press 1 or
Call/Text 988
Chat: 988lifeline.org

· Vet Center counseling 803-765-9944

· Women Veterans Hotline 1-855-829-6636

· Homeless Veteran call center 1-877-424-3838

· VA pharmacy refills 1-800-293-8262

· VA claims self-help line 1-800-827-1000

· Mission Lexington 803 785-6930

· CHAMPVA 1-800-733-8387

· VA Regional Office 1-800-827-1000
· Dorn VA Medical Center 803-776-4000
· VA Home Loans 1-877-827-3702
· VA Education Hotline 1-888-442-4551
· Ft. Jackson National Cemetery 1-866-577-5248
· Healthcare Eligibility 1-877-222-8387
· Tricare (Southeast Region) 1-800-444-5445
· DFAS 1-800-321-1080

We Want YOU

To Volunteer!



Veterans are needed to lead the Pledge of Allegiance at Lexington County Council meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month.

County Council Meetings are held in the Council chambers located on the second floor of the County Administration Building
212 South Lake Drive
The meeting starts at 4:30.

We will meet you inside the chamber at 4:15.
Please contact our office at 803-785-8400 or email ablake@lexingtoncounty.sc.gov if you are interested!



Thank you to everyone who volunteered to say the Pledge!

- William Taylor
- Steven Turner
- Ed Lundeen
- Lexington Veterans' Group
- Lewis Hiltz
- Robert Crawford
- Ted Koon

CHAPIN AMERICAN LEGION POST 193



LET'S PLAY BINGO!

Chapin American Legion Post 193 hosts BINGO on the 1st Thursday of each month at the Chapin Town Hall, 157 Columbia Ave, Chapin, SC 29036. Admission is \$3.00, and Game packets (13 games) are just \$20.00.

Doors open at 5:30 pm and games begin promptly at 7:00 pm. Concessions are available on-site so please no outside food or beverages.

Ages 6 and up can play! All proceeds benefit Chapin American Legion Post 193 New Building Fund.

Monday Morning Veterans ONLY Breakfast

Every Monday morning unless otherwise posted on our website

<https://www.americanlegionpost193.com>

Coffee is on at 7:30 am with breakfast served from 8:30am-9:15am.

The cost is \$6.00 per person. (Eggs including made to order, hash browns, grits, various types of meat, fruit, a yogurt bar, and home-baked goods, juice, and coffee.)



**Chapin American Legion Post 193
102 Lexington Ave, Chapin, SC 29036**

This Veteran ONLY event is to foster fellowship and conversation.

Chapin American Legion Post 193 is actively recruiting new members! We are a dynamic Post! One of the fastest growing Posts in the State of SC For more information; please contact our Post Adjutant, Steven Goulet: (803) 553-2806 or adjutant@americanlegionpost193.org

LEXINGTON COUNTY VETERANS GROUP



**The group meets on
Tuesdays from
10am-12pm at:**

**American Legion Post 7
211 American Legion Dr
(off Harmon St.)
Lexington, SC 29072**

**All Lexington County
Veterans are cordially
invited to attend the
weekly meetings.**

**Please reach out to
members below for more
information about joining!**

**E.C. Murray 803-606-9571
Rich (Richard) Little 803-422-1113**



The Meritorious Service Medal (MSM)

The Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) ribbon was established in 1969. It is purplish-red with thin white stripes along each edge, representing outstanding noncombat service. The colors are similar to the Legion of Merit but are used for roles with less responsibility. The MSM recognizes significant peacetime contributions and, since 2004, meritorious achievement in combat zones. Multiple awards are shown with oak leaf clusters or gold stars.

History & Background

The medal was created by President Lyndon B. Johnson through Executive Order 11448 on January 16, 1969. It serves as a counterpart to the Bronze Star, but for noncombat meritorious service. The MSM recognizes members of the U.S. Armed Forces for outstanding achievement or meritorious service to the country. It is similar to the Legion of Merit but is given for roles with less responsibility.

At first, the MSM was awarded only during peacetime. After 2004, it began to be given instead of the Bronze Star for meritorious service in certain combat areas.

Ribbon & Medal Design

The ribbon is purplish-red with a 1/4-inch white stripe set 1/8-inch from each edge. These colors are similar to those of the Legion of Merit. The medal is a bronze medallion featuring an eagle on laurel branches, symbolizing achievement and the nation. Rays come out from a central star.

Devices for Multiple Awards

Army/Air Force: Oak Leaf Clusters.

Navy/Marine Corps/Coast Guard: Gold Stars.

Coast Guard: Operational Distinguishing "O" Device.

Mission Lexington



No one should go through hardship alone. Mission Lexington is here to guide you toward resources and services to get on your feet.

Seniors - Children - Families in Need



Food Pantry

Monday-Friday
10:00a-3:00p

Social Services

Monday-Thursday
9:00a-1:00p
walk-in only

Have any questions?
Please don't hesitate
to call at 803-785-
6900

Have something to
share? Email us at
[info@missionlexington
sc.org](mailto:info@missionlexingtonsc.org)



FOOD FOR LIVING
2026 FFL Sign-Up
Available NOW

You can now come to the social services office
and get your 2026 FFL program in place. Please
make sure you have the necessary requirements
when you arrive.

REQUIREMENTS:

AGE 62 AND OVER

- No benefits letter needed if you have one submitted previously
- Photo ID
- Social Security Card

UNDER AGE 62

- MUST have 2026 Benefits Letter from Social Security Administration
- Photo ID
- Social Security Card

2025 Mobile Food Pantry Schedule

January: 13th-16th
February: 10th-13th
March: 10th-13th
April: 21st-24th
May: 19th-22nd
June: 16th-19th
July: 21st-24th
August: 18th-21st
September: 15th-18th
October: 20th-23rd
November: 17th-20th
December: 8th-11th

Mondays: Pine Ridge Senior Center & Tri-City Senior Center
Tuesdays: Pelion Senior Center & Swansea Senior Center
Thursdays: Gilbert Senior Center & Batesburg-Leesville

*Dates subject to change

2026 MOBILE FOOD PANTRY SCHEDULE



Monday Stop 1

9:30am-10:30am

**Tri-City
Senior Center**
485 Brooks Avenue
West Columbia, SC 29169

Monday Stop 2

11am-12pm

**Pine Ridge
Senior Center**
1123 Courtney Drive
West Columbia, SC 29172

Tuesday Stop 1

9:30am-10:30am

**Pelion
Senior Center**
210 Pine Street
Pelion, SC 29123

Tuesday Stop 2

11am-12pm

**Swansea
Senior Center**
197 N. Lawrence Street
Swansea, SC 29160

Thursday Stop 1

9:30am-10:30am

**Gilbert
Senior Center**
409 Broad Street
Gilbert, SC 29054

Thursday Stop 2

11am-12pm

**Batesburg
Senior Center**
241 Highland Ave.
Batesburg, SC 29006

Mission Lexington

Mission Store

FOLLOW THE MISSION STORE ON FB FOR DETAILS ON MORE GREAT DEALS!

Every item has a story.
Every sale serves our Mission.



Mission
Store

Like · 1 · 0 · 0 · 0

Thrift Store

Monday-Saturday
9:00a-3:00p

Donation Center

Tuesday-Saturday
9:00a-3:00p

Donations Center

ITEMS WE DO ACCEPT

NEW & Gently Used:

Clothing

Shoes

Purses

Jewelry

Books

Household Goods
(Decor and electronics)

Furniture

Mattresses
(based on storage space)

Large Appliances
(working)

Seasonal Items

ITEMS WE DO NOT ACCEPT

Cribs

Car Seats

China Cabinets

Older Mattresses

Older TVs

Computer Monitors

Exercise Equipment

VHS Tapes

Tires

Printers

Desks

TV Armoires/ stand

Pianos

Ceiling Fans / Wired Fixtures

Broken or Damaged
Furniture & Appliances

Used Paint

Blinds (used)

Toys (unless new in box)

Aquariums

Any items left at the
Donation Center after
hours will be
discarded.

Thank you for
your cooperation!

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT-VA SUPPORTIVE HOUSING (HUD-VASH) PROGRAM HOMELESS VETERAN CARE

If you're homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, we can help. We offer many programs and services, including free health care. And we can help you connect with resources in your community.

HUD-VASH is a collaborative program that pairs HUD's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance with VA case management and supportive services. These services are designed to help homeless Veterans and their families obtain permanent housing and access the health care, mental health treatment, and other supports necessary to help them improve their quality of life and maintain housing over time.

Why Make the Call to 1-877-4AID VET (877-424-3838)

- It's free and confidential
- You'll get access to trained VA counselors
- It's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- You'll get information about VA homeless programs, health care and other services in your area

Homeless Veteran Care Program - Columbia
803-776-4000, ext. 55190
BLDG. 106
2nd Floor, Rm. A243
803-776-4000 Main Phone
Visit our office, with or without an appointment

HCHV Program, Columbia
803-776-4000, ext. 57887

HCHV Program, Upstate
864-299-1600, ext. 22755

Service Hours

Mon: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tue: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Wed: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Thu: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Fri: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Sat & Sun: Closed

MARCH FORWARD:



CAREER TRANSITION VIRTUAL WORKSHOP SERIES FOR TRANSITIONING SERVICE MEMBERS & VETERANS



EVERY FRIDAY
IN MARCH



11:30 - 1:00 ET
VIRTUAL

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE



Session 1 - March 6

Writing a Riveting Resume

Create standout resumes that navigate Applicant Tracking Systems and highlight military skills.



Session 2 - March 13 Network Smarter: Online Strategies for Career Growth

Leverage LinkedIn, email, and other digital tools to connect, engage, and advance your career.



Session 3 - March 20 Deploy Your Story: Interview Skills for Post-Military Careers

Translate military experience, master interviews, and avoid common interview pitfalls.



Session 4 - March 27 Reviewing and Accepting Job Offers

Evaluate offers, compare terms and benefits, and confidently negotiate your next role.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- ✓ Transitioning service members
- ✓ Veterans
- ✓ Spouses of veterans
- ✓ In South Carolina or considering relocating to South Carolina

SCAN THE QR CODE
TO REGISTER



PRESENTED BY:

REZREV®

www.therezrev.com

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VA HEALTHCARE

WM. JENNINGS BRYAN DORN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER



Eligibility

All Veterans who meet basic service and discharge requirements and who were exposed to toxins and other hazards while serving our country—at home or abroad—are now eligible for VA health care. This includes all Veterans who served in the Vietnam War, Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, or any other combat zone after 9/11. Apply today.

Apply in person

Fill out an Application for Health Care Benefits (VA Form 10-10EZ). Bring your completed application to one of our patient registration offices.

What to bring with your health care application

To get a faster decision on your application, bring these documents and information with you:

- Copies of your DD214 or other discharge documents
- Copies of any VA disability award letters you may have
- Your income information from the previous calendar year, if you have a 0% VA disability rating or if you're a non-service-connected Veteran
- Copies of your current ID cards for any other types of health coverage you may have (like Medicare, Medicaid, Tricare, or private health insurance)

6439 Garners Ferry Road
Columbia, SC 29209

Main phone: 803-776-4000

VA health connect: 855-679-0214

Mental health care: 803-776-4000, ext. 56325

Welcome Center

Bldg. 100
1st Floor, Rm. 1B131
Welcome Center
803-776-4000, ext. 55815

Service Hours

- Mon: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Tue: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Wed: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Thu: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Fri: 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Sat: Closed
- Sun: Closed

WM. JENNINGS BRYAN DORN VA MEDICAL CENTER

Welcoming All Veterans!

For Veterans in the Midlands, Dorn VA Medical Center is the main hub for VA health care in Columbia, SC. This is where Veterans can establish primary care, manage medications, get referrals, and build a long-term care record within the VA system.

The first primary care appointment is very important. It sets up the baseline for future care. This includes specialty referrals, labs tests, imaging, and mental health care. Even minor changes in health are worth mentioning early. Providers use that information to track changes over time.

One of Dorn VA Medical Center's biggest strengths is coordination. Providers across the VA health care system can see the same Veteran's records. This helps Providers treat medical issues as a team. Like any large medical center, it can take patience and follow-ups.

For Veterans who later decide to file VA claims, having care documented at Dorn VA Medical Center creates a clear medical history within the VA system. This is not required for claims, nor a guarantee of benefits. However, it does help with medical documentation for claims.



ADDRESS

6439 Garners Ferry Road
Columbia, SC 29209-1638

PHONE NUMBERS

Main phone: [803-776-4000](tel:803-776-4000)
Mental health care: [803-776-4000, ext. 56325](tel:803-776-4000,ext. 56325)

~75%

Veterans use VA health care as
their primary care source.

VA.gov

DORN VA MENTAL HEALTH

Dorn VA Medical Center offers on-site mental health services, including same-day walk-in care during clinic hours. Veterans do not need a diagnosis to get started. Many begin with a simple conversation and are routed from there.

Mental health care goes beyond PTSD. Sleep problems, depression, anxiety, irritability, and stress-related symptoms are common reasons Veterans seek help. Mental health care can also start through primary care.

You do not need to be enrolled in VA health care to ask for help. The priority is support and care.



VETERANS AFFAIRS MENTAL HEALTH MOMENT

IT DOESN'T ALWAYS LOOK THE WAY PEOPLE EXPECT

When people hear "military mental health," they often think only of PTSD. But service-related mental health concerns are broader and don't always show up right away. Depression, anxiety, sleep problems, irritability, and difficulty adjusting after service are all common reasons Veterans seek VA mental health care.

Many Veterans have learned to push through their symptoms while in uniform. Many don't always recognize when stress, poor sleep, or emotional changes are affecting daily life both in uniform and in civilian life. VA mental health providers are trained to understand military culture; and how physical conditions, pain, and sleep issues can overlap with mental health. VA mental health care is about finding a better quality of life and stability, not be embarrassed to ask for help. It is also important to know that VA allows Veterans to walk in to any VA medical center for mental health help at any time! Even if they are not yet enrolled in VA health care!

Just like physical care, ongoing mental health treatment creates a documented history. If symptoms worsen or begin to interfere with work or relationships, that record may later support a VA claim.

HOW CAN I DEFEND MY MENTAL HEALTH?



PROTECT

Even practicing a few of these habits daily can build coping skills by increasing:

- Exercise
- Balanced nutrition
- Quality sleep
- Relaxation and meditation
- Goal setting
- Social support connections



SEEK HELP

There are many different professionals and resources available, including:

- Counselors
- Chaplains
- Social workers
- Behavioral health consultants
- Psychologists
- Psychiatrists
- Psychiatric nurse practitioners



OPTIMIZE

These practices and strategies may enhance your mental health and improve quality of life:

- Practice mindfulness
- Journaling and creative expression
- Challenge negative thinking
- Find meaning in everything you do

Veterans Crisis Line



DIAL 988 then
PRESS 1



**Local Vet Center Contact
Information:**

Columbia, SC (803) 765-9944

Augusta, GA (706) 729-5762

Charleston, SC (843) 789-7000

Greenville, SC (864) 271-2711

What They do:

Vet Centers are community-based counseling centers that provide a wide range of social and psychological services, including professional counseling to eligible Veterans, service members, including National Guard and Reserve components, and their families. Counseling is offered to make a successful transition from military to civilian life or after a traumatic event experienced in the military to include military sexual trauma (MST). Individual, group, marriage and family counseling is offered in addition to referral and connection to other VA or community benefits and services. Vet Center counselors and outreach staff, many of whom are Veterans themselves, are experienced and prepared to discuss the tragedies of war, loss, grief and transition after trauma.

Vet Centers

Life isn't always easy after a deployment. That's where we can help. We offer confidential support for Veterans, service members, and their families at no cost in a relaxed, non-medical setting. Our services include counseling for needs such as depression, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and the psychological effects of military sexual trauma (MST). We can also connect you with more support in VA and your community. All services are strictly confidential.

Vet Center Call Center

1-877-927-8387 is a free, around the clock confidential call center where Veterans, service members and their families can talk about their military experience or any other issue they are facing in transitioning after military service or trauma and get connected to their nearest Vet Center. Our call center team is comprised of combat Veterans from several eras as well as family members of Veterans.

For more information:

<https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/>



Opportunities

- Regularly Scheduled weekly Volunteer
- Volunteer Drivers
- Amazon Wish List
<https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/34WSPD1QVCW19?sort=default>

Columbia VA Medical Center Voluntary Service Office

In our ever-changing environment, we recognize that the needs of our Veteran patients are dynamic. So, we encourage you to view our most current Wish Lists.

All donations may be sent directly to us at the following address or dropped off at the Columbia VA Hospital and we will ensure they are distributed according to the needs of our Outpatient Clinics, Veteran Centers and Veteran patients.

Voluntary Service Office
6439 Garners Ferry Road
Columbia, SC 29209
Phone: 803-776-4000 Ext. 56780

Complete a Voluntary Service Application Packet and email it to us, or mail it to our Voluntary Service Office.

Voluntary Services Office email
vhacmsvoluntarieservices@va.gov

Volunteer Drivers will also need to submit a copy of your SC driving record

After review of your application, we will send you instructions to attend orientation, complete the medical screening, complete the required background investigation. We conduct orientations the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. once you have completed the prerequisite requirements.

Voluntary Service Application

<https://www.va.gov/columbia-south-carolina-health-care/work-with-us/volunteer-or-donate/>



The DAISY Award

FOR EXTRAORDINARY NURSES

IN MEMORY OF J. PATRICK BARNES

The DAISY Award was established by the DAISY Foundation in memory of J. Patrick Barnes who died at 33 of an auto-immune disease. Patrick's family was awestruck by the clinical skills, caring and compassion of the nurses who cared for him. They created this national award to honor his memory and thank nurses everywhere.



The DAISY Award is presented quarterly to two Columbia VA nurses who are nominated by a Veteran, family member, employee, or volunteer witnessing extraordinary inpatient or outpatient care. Nomination forms can be found throughout Columbia VA's main campus, our outpatient clinics, or click below to fill out an online form.

Impact of DAISY Recognition

Three areas of profound impact are:

Nurse Engagement

- Ignites extraordinary compassionate care
- Improves satisfaction and retention
- Promotes well-being and resilience

Healthy Work Environment

- Celebrates all the right
- Reminds nurses why they became nurses
- Builds team spirit

Patient & Family Experience

- Communicates profound gratitude
- Reinforces patient and family-centered care
- Inspires community loyalty



THE COLUMBIA VA FISHER HOUSE

Our CAUSE

Fisher House Foundation is dedicated to providing a home away from home for military and veteran families during medical treatment. Our program ensures that families can stay together and support their loved ones without financial burden.

Since inception, the program has saved military and veteran families an estimated \$575 million in out-of-pocket costs for lodging and transportation.

To find out how you can support our military and Veterans' families at the Columbia VA Fisher House as a volunteer or with a donation, please contact the Fisher House at 803-647-5611

The Columbia VA Fisher House welcomes guests who:

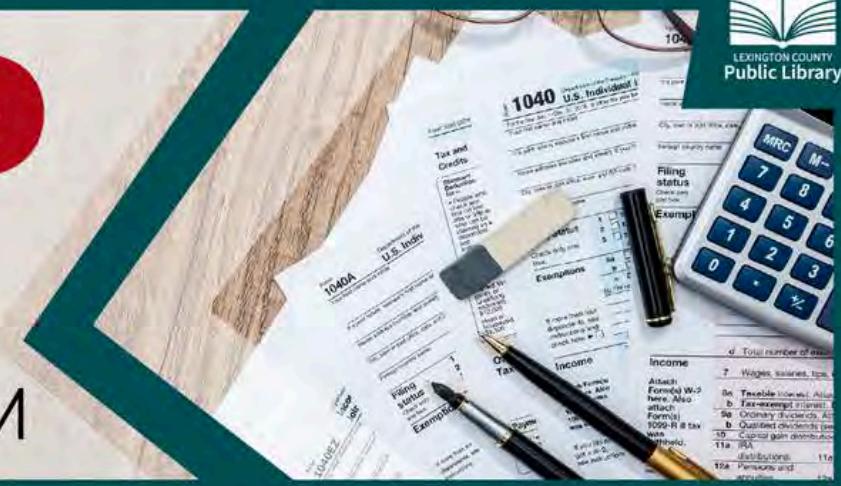
- Have a patient receiving care at the Columbia VA Health Care System
- Live 50 miles or more away from the medical facility
- Are able to stay in a non-medical, unsupervised setting
- Follow all Fisher House rules and respect fellow guests

Making Arrangements to Stay

Families seeking Fisher House lodging should contact the Veteran's social worker or VA provider for a referral.



AARP Foundation TAX-AIDE PROGRAM

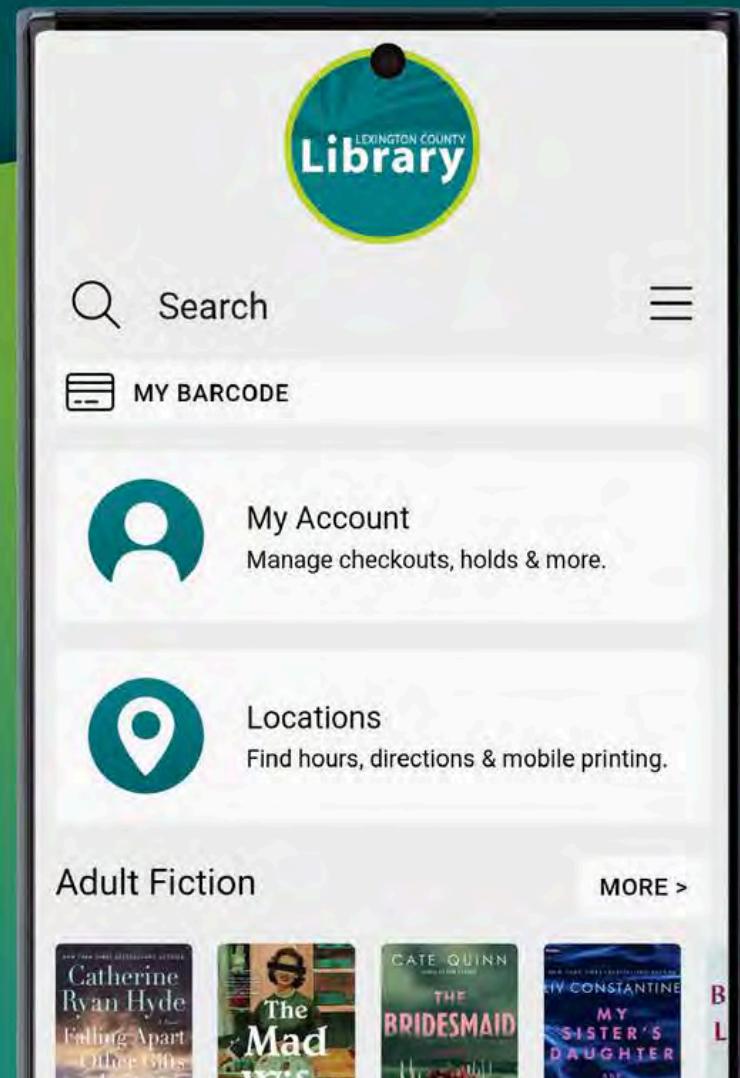


CALL TO MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT

Income limits and filing restrictions apply. All appointments must be made with AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program representatives. Library staff are not responsible for appointments.

IRMO BRANCH LIBRARY
6251 ST. ANDREWS ROAD, COLUMBIA, SC 29212
803-271-0780

LEXINGTON MAIN LIBRARY
5440 AUGUSTA ROAD, LEXINGTON, SC 29072
803-526-7949



**HELLO,
NEW APP**
LEXINGTON COUNTY LIBRARY



LEXCOLIBRARY.COM/DOWNLOADS



THE SOUTHERN SHUCKDOWN OYSTER ROAST 2026
MARCH 27, 2026 | 6:00 PM TO 10:00 PM | SENATE'S END
BENEFITING THE BIG RED BARN RETREAT'S PROGRAMS AND
SERVICES

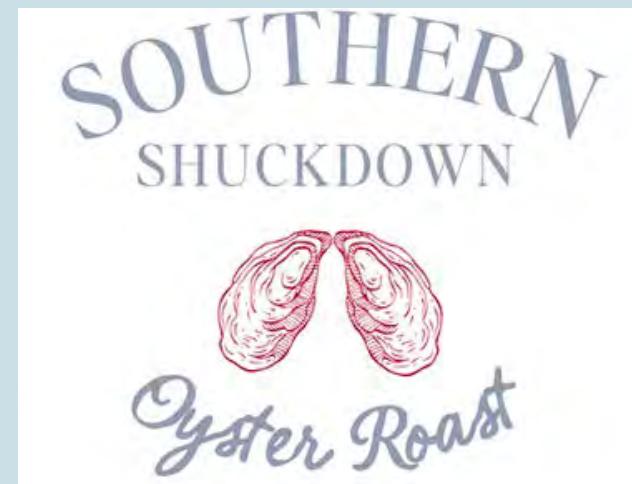


- Join us for a night of unlimited oysters, Southern fare, live music, and a silent auction, all in a brand-new location at Senate's End. Celebrate the best of Southern Hospitality with great food, great tunes, and a great cause!

TICKETS ON SALE NOW! \$75 EACH

- Entry tickets include:
- Access to the Southern Shuckdown Oyster Roast.
- Unlimited Oysters & Southern Fare.
- Two Drink Tickets.
- Participation in the Silent Auction.
- Live Music.

All proceeds from this event directly fund the Big Red Barn Retreat's programs and services.



Friday, March 27, 2025
6:00 pm–10:00 pm

**316 Senate St
Columbia, SC
29201**



PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

The Big Red Barn Retreat's Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) Programs like Warrior PATHH and Struggle Well are provided at no cost for combat veterans and first responders. No clinical diagnosis required to attend.

The ideal program candidate has a:

- Determination to win their personal battles
- Willingness to accept coaching
- Desire to embrace the process
- Vision of what they want despite not knowing how to get there
- Passion to live fully

For more information about Warrior PATHH or Struggle Well go to: www.thebigredbarnretreat.org



The Big Red Barn Retreat

8024 Winnsboro Road
Blythewood, SC 29016

P: (803) 716-9097

Email: Info@thebigredbarnretreat.org



www.thebigredbarnretreat.org





**Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP)
Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)
Form Up Fridays**



Peer to Peer Coffee Groups



Tai Chi & Yoga



Gardening



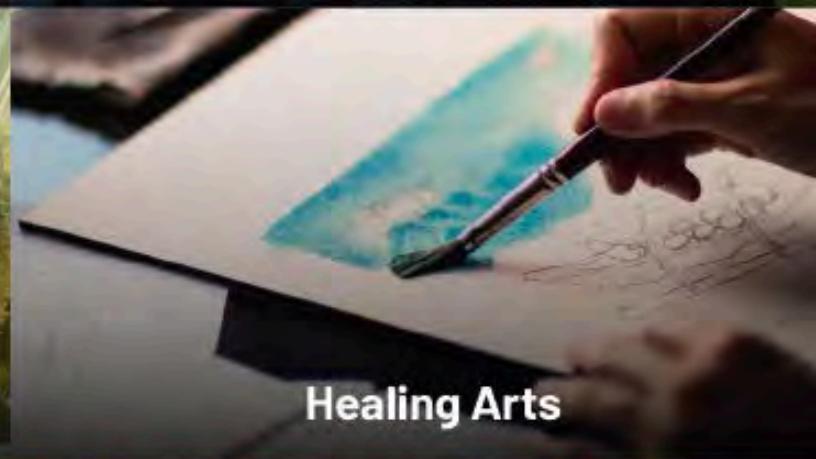
Volunteerism



Meditation



Farm to Table



Healing Arts

“PATHH didn’t change my life, it changed my perspective on life and now I have the ability to CHANGE MY LIFE”

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- WARRIOR PATHH PARTICIPANT

STRUGGLE WELL

First Responder Initiative

Struggle Well Trainings are based on the proven framework of Posttraumatic Growth, which is built on an environment of trust and connection. The objective of Struggle Well Training is to enable participants to prepare, practice, and implement an individualized plan for personal growth by transforming struggle into strength, enabling them to be of continued service to themselves, their family, their work, their community, and their country.

Thanks to a significant investment from FirstNet®, built by AT&T, and Boulder Crest, the Big Red Barn Retreat started the First Responder Initiative via a pilot program working with Sheriff Lott and Richland County Sheriff's Department in 2022.



WARRIOR PATHH

Turn Struggle into Strength

Warrior PATHH - Progressive & Alternative Training for Helping Heroes - is a transformative, lifelong, posttraumatic growth, peer-based, training program for veterans, active duty military and first responders that relies on a variety of educational and experiential activities for the purpose of teaching life skills, increasing community integration and involvement, and promoting physical, emotional, relational, financial, and spiritual health.

The training begins with a 7-day on-site initiation, followed by further training delivered by our PATHH instructors through the Struggle Well platform.

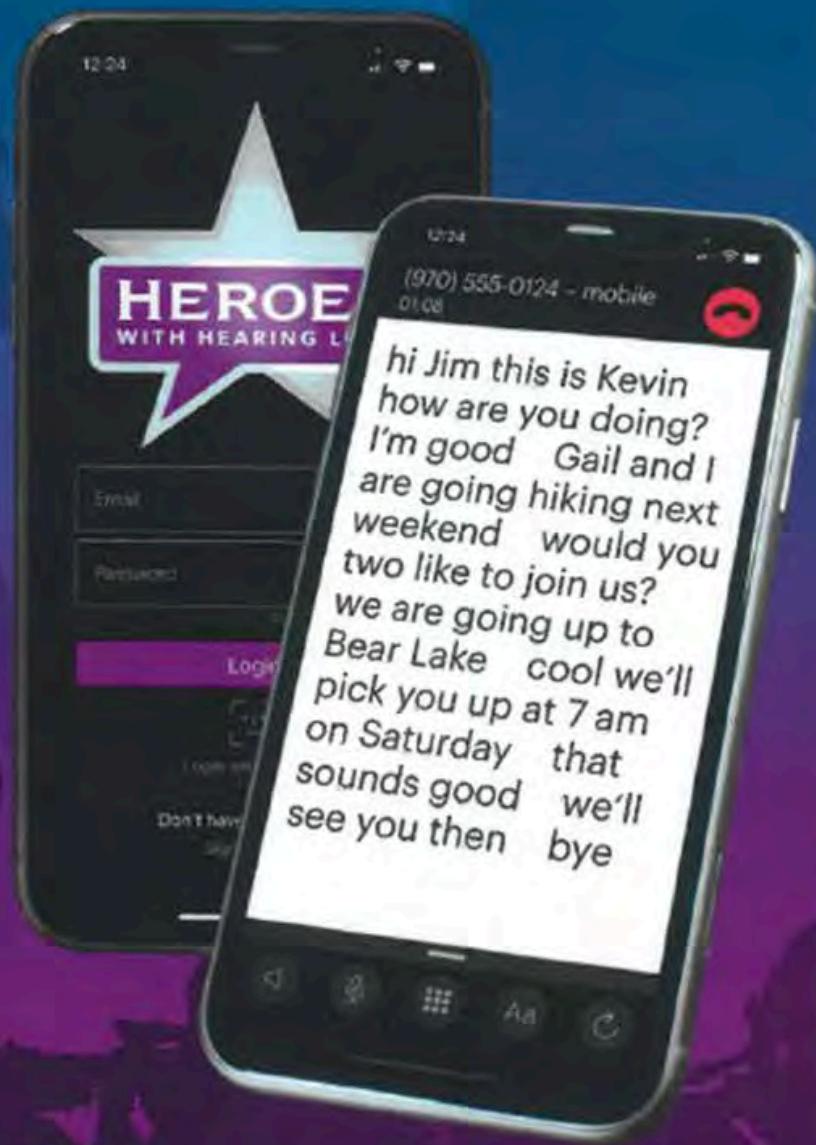




HEROES
WITH HEARING LOSS

Heroes Mobile™ CapTel®

Available now on the
Apple App Store for iOS



Veterans with hearing loss can experience the ease and confidence of fast, accurate captions of telephone calls on their mobile device.*

- Captions on incoming & outgoing calls
- Seamless syncing with device contacts
- Built-in Voicemail with captions
- Call Forwarding & Custom Caller ID
- Customize font style, color & size of captions
- Choose captioning method - Auto or Assisted
- Access call log & review captions
- Browser Caption Viewing – simultaneous viewing of captions on a larger screen

Download the App



Available on the
App Store

*Restrictions apply, click the QR code for full terms and conditions.



You've earned this freedom

For millions of veterans, hearing loss is a very personal, solitary challenge. The Heroes With Hearing Loss* program brings veterans like you, veteran families and hearing healthcare professionals together to share proven, lifestyle-focused solutions that make a life-changing difference.

Now, veterans can **self-certify** their hearing loss for a captioned telephone and service*—available at no cost** from the program sponsor, Hamilton® CapTel®.

Just visit: HeroesWithHearingLoss.org/self-certify



HeroesWithHearingLoss.org • 800-974-1517 • info@HeroesWithHearingLoss.org

 Facebook.com/HeroesWithHearingLoss  Twitter.com/HwHLVeterans



www.Royalhannefordcircus.org

COLUMBIA SC
THE JAMIL SHRINETEMPLE
206 JAMIL RD, COLUMBIA, SC 29210

from

5
FEB

THURSDAY

7pm

FRIDAY

10am

7pm

SATURDAY

10am

3pm

7pm

SUNDAY

1pm

6pm

until

8
FEB



**American
Red Cross**

BLOOD DRIVE

When:

**Wed. Feb 4, 2026
11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

Where:

**Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical
Center
Building 5 Auditorium
6439 Garners Ferry Road
Columbia, SC**

Cost: Free

**To schedule an appointment
please visit www.redcrossblood.org
and enter sponsor code SCVeterans
Give blood and receive a \$20 gift card**

VetConnect

A MILITARY & VETERAN COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR



MIDLANDS
VETERANS ENGAGEMENT COUNCIL

WHAT TO EXPECT?

Participants will rotate through 10 interactive stations including:

- Financial & credit readiness
- Military & VA benefits guidance
- Housing & homeownership readiness
- Career planning & long-term financial strategy
- Wellness, mindset, and support networks

Connecting Veterans, service members, and families to trusted resources—all in one place.

VetConnect is the Midlands Veteran Engagement Council's (MVEC) first large-scale collaborative resource fair, designed to provide easy access to financial, benefits, career, housing, and wellness support for the military-connected community from federal, state, and local organizations.

Hosted in partnership with First Citizens Bank, this station-driven event brings together 20-40 Veteran-serving organizations in a welcoming, practical environment focused on guidance, confidence, and readiness.



Segra Park- Club Lounge



February 24, 2026



11 AM- 2PM



VetConnect is more than a resource fair—it's a coordinated commitment to serving those who have served.

Riverbanks Zoo



Free Friday at the Zoo

Friday, January 16, 2026, 9:00am-4:00pm

Friday, January 23, 2026, 9:00am-4:00pm

Friday, January 30, 2026, 9:00am-4:00pm

Friday, February 06, 2026, 9:00am-4:00pm

Friday, February 13, 2026, 9:00am-4:00pm

Friday, February 20, 2026, 9:00am-4:00pm

Friday, February 27, 2026, 9:00am-4:00pm

[Hide all dates](#)

[Location](#)

Riverbanks Zoo and Garden

500 Wildlife Pkwy

Columbia, SC

(803) 779-8717

[Directions](#)

[Price](#)

Free

[Description](#)

Fridays in January and February have free entry for Richland and Lexington County residents. Just show ID for entry.



Location
Barr Road Sports Complex
213 Barr Road, Lexington, SC, 29072

Date/Time
February 12, 2026
4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Admission
General Public Tickets: \$2 at the door
Chamber shareholders: FREE
Contact Information
Karen Johnston
Phone: (803) 359-6113

It's time for LEXPO! Join us on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2026, from 4:30 – 7:00 p.m. for one of Lexington's largest business expos.

LEXPO provides an opportunity for more than 90 businesses to network, promote their business, and showcase their products and services to both current shareholders and the general public.

SPRING CLEAN FOR CHARITY



**You can donate or find gently used Furniture
from charities below in Lexington County:**

Mission Lexington

Phone: 803-957-6656

Website: <https://www.missionlexingtonsc.org>

GoodWill - Lexington Location

Phone: 803-356-8680

Website: www.goodwillsc.org

His House

Phone: 803-951-3093

Website: <https://hishousesc.org/thrift-stores>

Habit for Humanity ReStore

Phone: 803-936-0088

Website: <https://www.habitatcsc.org>

Please check to verify what items are accepted.





“And now we welcome the new year. Full of things that have never been.”

-Rainer Maria Rilke

Ed, Jennifer, Brittany,
Anastasia, Jolene, and Michelle