L-R, Ed Courtney, D-8 Cmdr/P-178 Cmdr, Walt Richardson, Dept Cmdr, Bruce Donegan, D-4 Cmdr

L-R, Harry Malpass, Chapter 178 Director, Mark Kobovitch, Post 178 mbr, Steve Rittweger, Post 178 mbr, Walt Richardson, Dept Cmdr, John Wilson, Post 178 mbr.

SEPTEMBER 18, 2020 AT MURRELLS INLET POST 178—NATIONAL POW / MIA RECOGNITION DAY, honoring those who were prisoners of war and those who are still missing in action.
Left: Post 178 mbr John Wilson sets up the POW/MIA table

Below: Edgefield Memorial Park Dedication L-R, Alt NEC Bob Scherer, Dept Cmdr Walt Richardson, Dept Sgt-at-Arms, Post 71 Cmdr, Kevin Joy.

Above: The Veterans Victory House in Walterboro gives Walterboro Post 93 a wish list for the Victory House. Woodruff Post 33 teamed up with Walterboro Post 93 to donate items and Woodruff Post 33 also donated $150 cash to the Victory House.

L-R right Mr. and Mrs. John Funke, from Post 33 Randi Blitz VVH Activities Director and Victoria Polston Assistant Activities Director and Blakely, who helped Pop-Pop. If you would like to coordinate with Walterboro Post 93 to donate to Veterans Victory House, please contact Bob Tiegs, Post 93 Adjutant at ltiegs@gmail.com.

Above: L-R: Post 6's 2nd Vice Cmdr Kim Brown, 1st Vice Cmdr John Arnold, Mrs. C.J Kittle, Mr. Robert Kittle, Eagle Scout William Kittle and Post 6 mbr Matthew Gates attended the United States Flag Retirement Drop Box presentation on Saturday, 3 October 2020.
Fort Mill # 43’s 2020 entry for the “Scarecrow Crawl” - Scarecrow contest in Fort Mill, SC

Project Contributors:

Nick Blankenship, Stephanie Blankenship, Chris Figueroa, Melissa Figueroa, Maria Figueroa, Angie Whisonant, Becky VanCise, Brandon VanCise, Marie Feeley, Keith Feeley, Renee Walley, Wyatt Smith
**WWII Story: William J. Reid, 659th Tank Destroyer Battalion, one of the few African-American tank destroyer units.**

In addition to being a WWII veteran, William J. Reid is also the oldest member of Chesterfield American Legion Post 74, District 12, Department of South Carolina. He celebrated his 100th birthday in November 2019. Mr. Reid served three years in the U.S. Army, 1943–1946, after being drafted in Fort Washington, N.Y., where he was living at the time. He was honored by the South Carolina General Assembly, 123rd Session, 2019, H.4216, "for his outstanding contributions to his community and the state of South Carolina."

This is his story as told to Post 74 Post Commander Hough, who is also the Post Historian.

I had never heard anything about Pearl Harbor. I never will forget that it was on a Sunday afternoon, and, I was in the butler’s pantry at the house where I was working, getting ready to serve lunch. Some of the family was already seated. There was a radio in the pantry, and it came over the radio that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor just before 8 o’clock that morning, Dec. 7, 1941. That was the first time I had ever heard of Pearl Harbor or anything about it.

I had gone to Newport News, Va., and was working in construction in the shipyards. I was working on USS Yorktown, one of 24 aircraft carriers built during World War II for the United States Navy. I had avoided the draft for a while, but after they reached me I went back to Grand Central and was drafted on April 27, 1943. From there, I went to Camp Upton, N.Y. This camp had been created in 1917 to house troops who were waiting for ships for their overseas deployment. I stayed there for a few days before being shipped out. I went to Camp Hood, Texas, for basic training. Camp Hood was made up of two camps, North Camp and South Camp. My outfit was the 659th Tank Destroyer Battalion. It was formed on May 15, 1943, at Camp Hood and disbanded on Dec. 1, 1944. The 659th was one of the few African-American tank destroyer units.

My next assignment was with 693rd Combat Engineers at Camp Shelby, Miss. During wartime, the camp’s mission was to serve as a major independent mobilization station of the United States Army Forces Command. From there, I went to Camp Livingston, La. Next, my unit received orders to ship out to Fort Lawton, Wash. By the time we reached Fort Lawton, the European theater was over. The rumor was that we were going to ship to the South Pacific. Instead, the unit went to Fort Ord, Calif. There was a shortage of local farm help in the area, so the soldiers in the unit could work during our off time at Spreckels Sugar Mill to make extra money. From there, we went by rail to Fort Knox, Ky. A funny incident was that when we got to Hamlet, N.C, I told my sergeant that I was going to jump off the train when it went through Cheraw, S.C., and I would follow them later. Well, I went to sleep after we boarded and did not wake up until the train reached Atlanta. From there we went to Fort Knox. That’s where I was discharged on Dec. 7, 1946.

In Company B, 659th Tank Destroyer Battalion, the company commander was slow about promoting his men. Soldiers in Company C who had come into the military at the same time were given promotions much more quickly. My platoon sergeant was SSG Johnson, and he was rough. For the most part, in the military, it was good. I didn’t do anything out of the ordinary. I did what I was told to do. (Continued on page 21)
After I got discharged, and thought back, I saw that the fellows who had an education were getting promoted. I didn’t want to go back to school with the folks who were children when I left home. I had to do something; so in 1946, I wondered what I could do to make a living and have status over the long haul. I took advantage of the GI Bill and enrolled in a program of Mortuary Science at Eckels College of Mortuary Science in Philadelphia. In November, I came on home and went on to do my apprenticeship at Johnson’s Funeral Home in Columbia, S.C. In 1947, I left Johnson’s and a cousin of mine and I opened a mortuary here in Cheraw on Oct. 26, 1947. He had the money and I had the know-how. We didn’t have much business because we were competing with Morris Funeral Home, which had been here a long time. Our business burned down, and when we got the insurance money he took his share and left. Sadly, all of my military pictures and memorabilia were in the building when it burned. I rebuilt and I have been here since then working in the Cheraw community.

Some of the organizations that I have been involved with are: Dizzy Gillespie Board of Trustees, Chesterfield County Court House Planning and Construction Board, Chesterfield Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees, Cheraw Housing Authority, life member of the NAACP, president of the Chesterfield County Citizen's Committee and of the Cheraw Civic Action League, vice executive chairman of the Chesterfield County Democratic Party, and vice president of the Foundry Hill Cemetery Association. I am an active member of Wesley United Methodist Church.

Being in the military helped me gain a perspective of life I would not have ordinarily had. You learned acceptance of authority; you learned cooperation; you learned how to lead and to follow. The combination of those things, for me, made me a better person because if you didn’t know how to accept authority and cooperate, you didn’t get along at that time. First of all, it was segregated. Secondly, the officers over most black units were white. The noncommissioned officers were just tough. You went through some things at that time that are unheard of now. I hear people in the military now talking about how they went to work at such and such a time, and I say, “That didn’t happen, not during that time.” Reveille was 5 or 6 o’clock or when the first sergeant called it. Retreat, sometimes, but most of the time you were training and learning how to fight war.

Regarding my longevity, clarity of mind and physical health: the first, I think, above and beyond anything else you have to have good religion. When I was coming up, we believed that it took a village to raise a child. A whole lot of folks helped to raise a child. At Wesley Methodist Church, if you got caught out of line, other folks helped correct you. Sometimes, I find myself thinking about the ladies and the men from Wesley. They had influence on my life. Not only that, it wasn’t just at Wesley, it was wherever you got caught out of line that you got your chastisement.

When I first joined The American Legion, there were two posts in Chesterfield; one was for blacks and one was for whites. When the posts came together, it was definitely a benefit. Ours was dying completely out, except that we integrated and combined. That was what saved our post. I wish I could participate more, but I can’t. Being in the military was a great experience, and I do believe every young man ought to have the experience of at least one year in the military. Most of all it teaches discipline, and that discipline will help you through everything you do.

Submitted by:
Commander Hough, American Legion Post 74, Chesterfield,
REMINDER! OUR PO BOX IS OFFICIALLY CLOSED.

SO YOUR MAIL WILL NOT BE RETURNED, ALL MAIL SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO:

THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH CAROLINA
103 LEGION PLAZA ROAD, COLUMBIA, SC  29210

SOUTH CAROLINA AMERICAN LEGION HEADQUARTERS HOURS

We are always monitoring our service to our American Legion Family here at Department Headquarters.

We have found that telephone calls are coming in much earlier in the day and later in the evening and have found our selves staying late many, many evenings in order to follow up on all calls and emails received throughout the day.

It is our standard professional practice not to leave any telephone or email messages unanswered.

A number of you have heard from us after our official closing hours, and asked us why we are working so late. When, in fact, it’s become quite routine for us to leave well after our official closing time.

To better serve each of our blue-cappers, we will be extending the hours four days a week but limiting the number of days the building is open to four.

Department Headquarters will be open one hour earlier in the morning and stay open one hour later in the evening to better serve our Legionnaires. The new hours will be:

7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Thursday.

Closed Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

As always, we can be reached at 803-612-1171 or via email.
South Carolina
Department Legion College
(SCDLC)

MISSION STATEMENT

TO PROVIDE THE FOUNDATION AND KNOWLEDGE TO THE LEGIONNAIRES OF SOUTH CAROLINA FOR A MORE COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AND ALL OF ITS PROGRAMS.

Fellow Legionnaires – we (the Department of South Carolina) are going to start the South Carolina Department Legion College (SCDLC). Your Department Leadership has a very good idea for what should be taught during the college, but now it is your time to step forward and give the leadership what you would like to be seen in the curriculum. We are looking forward to your input for this important endeavor. Without you, we just might miss the mark and that would be an extreme waste of time and energy for the Department.

Some of the ideas that the Department is discussing:

- Two day session for the college at an offsite location. (looking at costs)
- Courses that could be included
  - Post Operations
  - Officers’ Positions and how to conduct a meeting
  - Amendments and Resolutions
  - MyLegion.org and what it can do for you and your post

These are the ideas that the Department is looking into. As I said, here is your opportunity to let the Department know what you; the Legionnaires would like to see in the College curriculum.

So contact the Department, Department Commander, Vice Commanders or your District Commanders and give us your input. Remember this is your College.

Jim Kvam
3rd Vice Commander
843-607-1015/j.kvam@comcast.net
THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH CAROLINA
2021 RULES AND REGULATIONS

83rd H.W. DARE MANESS HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
“A CONSTITUTIONAL SPEECH CONTEST”

The purpose of The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program “A Constitutional Speech Contest” is to develop a deeper knowledge and appreciation of the Constitution of the United States on the part of high school students. Other objectives of the contest include the development of leadership, the ability to think and speak clearly and intelligently and the preparation for acceptance of the duties and responsibilities, the rights, and privileges of Americanism Citizenship.

Inquiries may be directed to:
The American Legion
Department of South Carolina
103 Legion Plaza Road,
Columbia, SC 29210
803-612-1171 x 35 or 40
depsc@outlook.com
dep.tprograms@outlook.com
OR
Debanjan “Joy” Datta, Department Oratorical Contest Chairman
843-270-6049
joydatta@comcast.net

ALL DEPARTMENT & QUADRANT AWARDS MUST BE USED WITHIN FIVE YEARS OF GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL

DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIPS
1st Place $2,500.00
2nd Place $1,500.00
3rd Place $750.00
4th Place $750.00

QUADRANT SCHOLARSHIPS
1st Place 1,000.00
2nd Place 500.00

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS
The winner of the Department Finals Contest who is certified into and participates in the National Contest receives a National $2,000.00 scholarship. Those who advance past the first round receive an additional $2,000.00 National Scholarship.

NATIONAL 1st PLACE $25,000.00
NATIONAL 2nd PLACE $22,500.00
NATIONAL 3rd PLACE $20,000.00
ENTRY FORM
Students may submit the proper Entry to participate in the Program. This form may be obtained from The American Legion Department of SC website at www.scrolinalegion.org under “Programs” and “H.W. Dare Maness High School Oratorical Program.”

ORGANIZATION
The Contest will be under the direct supervision of the American Legion Department of South Carolina Oratorical Contest Chairman appointed by the Department Commander. Final authority on all issues remains with the Chairman.

LOCAL, DISTRICT AND QUADRANT CONTESTS
Students will participate multiple times. Contests are progressive. All Post contests must be completed on or before February 3, 2023. The location of each student’s contest is based on where they attend school. The dates and locations vary throughout the state. CONTACT THE CHAIRMAN FOR THE DATES AND LOCATIONS OF THE CONTESTS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

The state is divided into American Legion Districts and Quadrants as follows:
- Quadrant 1 - Districts 3, 5, 9, 10 & 13
- Quadrant 2 - Districts 1, 14, 15, 17 & 20
- Quadrant 3 - Districts 4, 7, 11, 12, & 18
- Quadrant 4 - Districts 2, 6, 8, 16 & 19

All Quadrant contests will be conducted on February 20, 2021.

THE SOUTH CAROLINA FINALS CONTEST
Each Quadrant sends one contestant to the Department finals in Columbia on March 13, 2023. The winner of the Finals contest will compete in the National Finals in Indianapolis, IN April 9-11, 2021.

ELIGIBILITY
Eligible participants in The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Program must be citizens of or lawful permanent residents of the United States. All contestants must be bona fide students herein described as any student under the age of twenty (20) years on the date of the National Finals who is currently enrolled in high school, (public, charter, parochial, military, private, or homeschooled) in which the curriculum of said high school is considered to be of high school level, commencing with grade nine (9) and terminating with grade twelve (12). Students must be enrolled in high school during the time of participation at any level of The American Legion National High School Oratorical Scholarship Program.

PREPARED ORATION
All contestants shall be required to deliver a PREPARED ORATION, which must be the original effort of each contestant, and must require not less than eight (8) nor more than ten (10) minutes for delivery. It must be delivered in the English language. Singing is NOT allowed. Before the contestant starts their oration, they will give the title of their Prepared Oration to the Chairman of the Contest. Quotations must be indicated as such. Where quotations are more than ten words in length, the author’s name must be given both orally and in the manuscript. The penalty for plagiarism will be disqualification.

The Prepared Oration must be based on some aspect of the Constitution of the United States which will give emphasis to the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen to our government. The same Prepared Oration is to be used throughout all levels of the Contests.

ASSIGNED TOPIC FEATURE
All contestants must participate in both the Prepared Oration and the “ASSIGNED TOPIC” feature at all levels of the Contest. The Assigned Topic Discussion must consume not less than three (3) nor more than five (5) minutes for delivery. The Prepared Oration quotation rule must be observed. The Purpose of the Assigned Topic feature is to test the speaker’s knowledge of the subject, the extent of his/her research, and the ability to discuss with minimal preparation the topic as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution. Each contestant speaks on the same topic which is drawn by the Contest Committee at the Contest. By action of the National Americanism Commission, the Assigned Topics to be used in this year’s contest are the following:

2021 ASSIGNED TOPICS

Article I, Section 2
All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with the Amendments as other Bills.

Article II, Section 3
The State of the Union.

Article III, Section 1
The judicial Power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court.

Amendment XXII, Section 1
No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice.

CONTEST REGULATIONS

DRESS – business attire is required.

ORDER OF APPEARANCE – Contestants shall draw for the order in which they appear, the drawing to be conducted by the Chairman, who will introduce the speakers as Number 1, 2, etc.

NOTES & ROSTRUMS – the use of notes, amplification, lectern or speaker’s stand by contestants or prompting in any manner, is not permitted. Props are not permitted. Singing is not permitted.

THE PREPARED ORATION AND ASSIGNED TOPICS AND MUST BE COMMITTED TO MEMORY.
2020 Boy Scout of the year, John ‘Jack’ Krompecher, nominated by Chapin Post 193

Bravery Officer of the Year, Corporal Travis Evans, nominated by Easley Post 52

Left: Good job, American Legion Post 179, American Legion Auxiliary Unit 179, Sons of The American Legion Squadron 179 & ALR Chapter 179 for achieving 100% membership for 2020.
2020 Department Convention awards presented at the Districts and Posts

2020 Firefighter of the Year, Fire Captain Thomas E. Niles, Jr. nominated by Columbia Post 6, presented by former D-1 Cmdr, Jim Jarvis & Post 6 Vice Cmdr, Kim Brown

Above: D-18 Cmdr Larry Pounce & P-60 Cmdr Jean Pate

Above: D-18 Cmdr, Larry Pounce, Post 32 Cmdr, Asa McDuffie & Post 32 Adj, Levern Hayes

Left: L-R, Dept Cmdr Walt Richardson, P-50 Mbrship Chairman. Judith McClain, Post Cmdr Herbert Vaugh, Dept Vice Cmdr Ron Price

Jeanne Culver Edwards, 2020 Teacher of the Year, nominated by Chapin Post 193

Above: L-R, Post 134 Cmdr Jack Campbell, P-134 Adj Jeff Buckner, Dept Cmdr Walt Richardson, D-12 Cmdr Charlie Davis

Kimberly Gooden, Columbia Post 215, Post Cmdr of the Year

Matt Gooden, Columbia Post 215, Post Adjutant of the Year
Hello Legionnaires,

I am working with the Department to update our Department history and I need the help of all Post Commanders and Adjutants throughout the state.

I need a list of your Post Commanders and Adjutants from 2010 - 2020. Also, please include Post name and location.

Please return this information to:

The American Legion Department of South Carolina

103 Legion Plaza Rd, Columbia, SC  29210

or

deptsc@outlook.com

Thank you all for your help with this vital part of our Department’s history. I appreciate it!  May God bless you!

For God and Country

James “Russ” Cantrell

Department Historian

(864) 554-4413

cantrell0926@yahoo.com
CORRECTED NOTICE 10/8/20

Post #: ______________________
Post Legal Name: ____________________________________________
Post Location: ________________________________________________

Commanders for the following years: Adjutant’s for the following years:

2011/2012________________________ 2011/2012____________________
2012/2013________________________ 2012/2013____________________
2013/2014________________________ 2013/2014____________________
2014/2015________________________ 2014/2015____________________
2015/2016________________________ 2015/2016____________________
2016/2017________________________ 2016/2017____________________
2017/2018________________________ 2017/2018____________________
2019/2020________________________ 2019/2020____________________
2020/2021________________________ 2020/2021____________________

Please return to:

The American Legion Department of SC
103 Legion Plaza Rd, Columbia, SC 29210

Or
deptsc@outlook.com
ALR fundraising efforts: 'We have to continue pushing forward' 

American Legion Riders Chapter 6 in South Carolina has raised $19,000 this year for the Legacy Fund. Chapter Director L.Z. Harrison said the coronavirus wasn't going to get in the way of the chapter's efforts. (Photo by Schelly Stone)

With the coronavirus forcing the cancellation of the 2020 American Legion Legacy Run – what was supposed to be the American Legion Riders’ 15th annual national fundraising ride – alternative plans have formed at the national and department level.

Nationally, the donation period for the 2020 Legacy Run has been expanded, while a new tiered donation program for The American Legion Legacy Fund also has been implemented.

While a handful of American Legion departments were able to conduct in-state Legacy Runs, following social distancing in the process, other departments have been forced to either cancel or postpone theirs until at least this fall.

South Carolina had conducted an in-state Legacy Run every year since 2012, raising more than $440,000 for the Legacy Fund. But the coronavirus forced the postponement of this year’s April ride to Oct. 24, along with scaling the ride back from two days to one.

“But L.Z. Harrison, past state director and current state secretary of the South Carolina American Legion Riders, said even the fall in-state Legacy Run could be altered to a virtual ride or having chapters do their own ride if COVID-19 numbers start to peak in the state (Continued on Page 31)
Continued from Page 30

“But L.Z. Harrison, past state director and current state secretary of the South Carolina American Legion Riders, said even the fall in-state Legacy Run could be altered to a virtual ride or having chapters do their own ride if COVID-19 numbers start to peak in the state.

But that hasn’t stopped Harrison’s Richland County Chapter 6 ALR from continuing to raise money for the Legacy Fund, which provides money to cover college expenses for children whose parents are U.S. servicemembers who died while on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001, or whose parents are post-9/11 veterans with a combined Department of Veterans Affairs disability rating of 50 percent or greater.

I went out to all our normal donors and said, ‘Look, we can’t do a ride right now, but that doesn’t take into account that these children still need help with their education,’” said Harrison, Chapter 6’s director. “Our chapter alone, we collected $19,000. That is only through donations, through the members donating themselves and our corporate donors that we have.”

The expansion of American Legion Legacy Scholarship eligibility to the children of disabled veterans in 2016 has made soliciting donations easier for Harrison and Chapter 6. Since then, 188 scholarships totaling $3.2 million have been awarded through the fund. “I’m able to use those numbers to show corporate donors, as well as individuals, how the fund is getting used and how much it’s being utilized by the children of our disabled or fallen heroes,” he said.

Harrison and some other Chapter 6 Riders recently also provided an escort to longtime member Bernie Shankman, who passed away in February and was interred in Arlington National Cemetery in late July after a delay because of the pandemic. Harrison said Shankman, 96, was beloved by his fellow American Legion Riders; to memorialize the 32-year Legionnaire, Harrison had made “In Memory of Bernie Shankman” patches that are available for purchase in order to benefit the Legacy Fund.

“I wanted to have something to remember (Shankman),” Harrison said. “And he enjoyed the Legacy ride as well. It’s special for us to donate money in his honor.”

Even with the possibility of an in-state ride still months away, Harrison said his ALR chapter wasn’t going to stop its fundraising efforts. “We can’t say, ‘Well, this year we can’t help you out because of COVID.’ We have to continue pushing forward and doing the best we can, even though we wouldn’t do a ride,” he said. “It’s important to us to ensure that we donate money so these children will have a chance at a higher education.

“These families have paid a sacrifice, whether it’s the ultimate sacrifice or whether a parent is disabled from their military service. They paid a sacrifice to their nation, so we can’t forget their children.”

As the Legacy Run donation period continues, we want to share stories similar to that of Chapter 6’s in American Legion national media. If your chapter, district or department has found alternative ways to raise money for the Legacy Fund – or if you’re able to use traditional ways to bring in donations for the fund – please let us know. Email sbrooks@legion.org with the details of your efforts. We’ll follow up with you and feature those efforts on www.legion.org and via social media.

Excerpt from legion.org, August 12, 2020
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103 Legion Plaza Road - Columbia, South Carolina 29210

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"THE CONNECTOR" is published four to six times yearly beginning in January of each year.

Deadlines: 1) Last week of preceding month for publication; 2) article length 250 or less; 3) editor reserves the right to edit articles; 4) photos must be sent in jpg format and documents must be sent in Word format. .... Editor: Department Adjutant; Contributors: Department Commander, Headquarters Staff, Legionnaires

Publication: 550 copies; each issue reaching every SC Post Commander and Adjutant. all Department Officers, all PDC’s, all Department Chairman, all County Veterans Affairs Officers, all subscribers, All SAL Detachment and Squadron Officers, All ALR Chapter Directors & Asst Directors.

Phone: 803-612-1171 E-Mail: Deptsc@outlook.com

Web Site: www.scarolinalegion.org Address: 103 Legion Plaza Road, Columbia S.C 29210