



Well Happy June everyone!

### **VA OUTREACH**

The next VA OUTREACH is scheduled for 23 July, and will be held at the WESPAC SAILOR BAR AKA VFW). Registration is ongoing and there are still seats available, for the LOA/Appt scheduling and for the Regional Office Counselors.

### **EMBASSY OUTREACH**

We just got confirmation that due to a higher than normal personnel turnover rate, the anticipated Embassy outreach will not be possible. An outreach will likely occur during the month of September.

### **RAO CLOSURE June 2015**

We will be closed on 12 June in observance of Philippine Independence Day

### **NO MORE TAXES**

Thought that would grab your attention, haha. Actually, Ken our resident tax guru, will hold his last clinic for this year, this Friday the 5th

### **CLARIFICATION ON OPC AND FMP**

In my last email regarding the upcoming changes, I left out the fact that the VA Outpatient clinic is not anticipating any change to the services they currently offer. IE; appt's and meds etc. The only changes we are aware of will be in the services not normally provided at the OPC.

### **JUST A REMINDER**

It appears a few folks have forgotten to renew their FPO boxes. Membership renewal normally occurs during Jan each year. For those who are away or simply don't remember, we usually give a 60 day grace period. Some seem to have either not notified us of their

travels or have simply overlooked renewal. We will provide a 30 day grace beginning June 1 and will hold any incoming mail until July 1 at which time should there not be any contact, we will forward all unclaimed mail back to FPO for return to the sender. Those whose renewal for whatever reason is at some other period during the year will receive the same consideration of 30 days.

## **BEHIND THE SCENES**

Some of you are aware that the Director and Deputy also are assigned as U.S. Embassy Wardens, along with 2 other members Norman Tuzon and Mike Verville assigned as assistants. We cover a very large area in our duties, comprised of SBFZ, the whole of Zambales and Bataan provinces. What you aren't aware of are the episodes that occur involving Veterans and U.S. Citizens that quietly take place behind the scenes. This is a tale of one of those occurrences.

### **Out of sight, out of mind**

We received information that an American was in failing health and needed help. Initially this was an Embassy Warden case. Upon making contact we found that he was bedridden, had no food and was in dire need of medications. The house he was living in belonged to his wife, but she was in the U.S. and he had no income for the basic necessities of electric or water. They had gone to the states some years back and she stayed and became a citizen and he returned here. Initially she was sending him \$200.00 a month for food etc. That stopped 6 months before we became aware of his plight. The neighbors were donating food to him and that occurred intermitently. We notified the Embassy and they attempted contact with the spouse, to no avail. At this point we had completed our warden involvement. Now the RAO guys took over. We were able to obtain some of his documents and set out to see what we could do to get him some monetary assistance through the various government agencies. He was a Vet but not retired so there was no pension. He was 62 years old, so we began the docs for SSA. He also was a Vietnam Veteran and appeared possibly qualified for VA assistance. He had previously been diagnosed with Diabetes, PTSD, and Ischemic Heart disease at a hospital in Manila. He had never submitted claims for these ailments though. We began claims for him on the Diabetes and PTSD, but the Heart Disease proved to be a little more involved than first appeared. Although his service record indicated he was aboard a ship that was "Blue Water" there was nothing which indicated his having gone ashore or been in "Brown Water" in Vietnam. He had memories of going ashore in Danang as part of a loading party for another Navy ship, although there was no available documentation to support that. At this point we took on our Sherlock Holmes persona and began a search of associations/groups associated with his ship. Finding a website on his ship we were able to find and contact a shipmate who was on the working party with him in Danang, and obtained a "Buddy Letter" which indicated they were both on the working party and the details plus

some documents the friend had which proved the claim. Now we were able to file the Agent Orange claim. The biggest problem with the whole situation was the claims and SSA take time to process, although SSS and VA went into warp drive to get through them, that didn't resolve the immediate issues. Working with VA we found he would be eligible for a pension for low income. VA quickly set about processing that request. In the meantime we helped him with some out of pocket funds for food, electric and water. After making contact with the various Philippine agencies we were able to get his town Mayor to have him admitted to a local medical facility to receive some charitable treatment and care. This happened on a Saturday and we were informed he was improving. Monday morning the news came that he had passed away. Ironically, the following Wednesday he received his first pension check. Could of, would of, should of, quickly came into our minds. If only we had been made aware of his plight a little sooner, or if we could have done something else a little quicker, but as it went our efforts appeared in vain. However, we knew in our hearts he did get some relief near the end and we had restored his hope in his future. We can only hope that if you are aware of a vet or citizen in a similar situation, you will not hesitate in letting us know.

### **JUNE 6 THE 47<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ROBERT KENNEDY'S DEATH**

On a historical note, this Saturday is the anniversary of his assassination. Going back I recalled a poem I had penned at the time. Hope you find it enjoyable.

#### **MEN IN OUR HEARTS**

Five years ago we heard of John Kennedys fate  
And also of Bobby's on a more recent date  
A man so loved so strong so wise,  
Has died and brought tears to many men's eyes.  
A wound like his brothers made his life end,  
And to his grave did this great man send.  
You ask what is wrong in this land that we live,  
And to this question much thought you give.  
And after figuring out what the problem could be,  
You sit in a daze and still you can't see  
What drives a man to end another man's life?  
Make 10 children fatherless and widow a wife.  
Robert F. Kennedy has dies in 68,  
Four and a half years after John met his fate  
And in our hearts two names will stay,  
And of how they met their fates,  
on these two fateful days.

## **NEW RAO ASSOCIATION**

For some time we have been considering a way to better serve the widows and survivors left behind when our heroes pass away. Suddenly an angel appeared in the form of Jocelyn Dalhman. Jocelyn recently lost the love of her life and decided she wanted to give back to the community in an effort to help others who are thrust into a similar event. Almost single-handedly she has authored and prepared a pamphlet which informs others about the establishment of the Philippine American Surviving Partner Support Club (FILAM PSC). Working in conjunction with the RAO, forms and documents are being prepared to support this effort. It is planned to hold a getting acquainted event near the end of June. The club is designed to spread the knowledge of benefits available and to provide support to those who have lost their loved ones or may in the near future. Prior preparation is so very important. In the immediate aftermath of such an event, the confusion, on what to do, and how to do it becomes very difficult. Running around trying to find documents, pay the hospital and making decisions on services and burial, all the while trying to figure out expenses and future income and how to pay the bills becomes almost unmanageable. We also hope to encourage the preparation of a “widows package” to help bring some sanity to the process, and have everything needed to get through this period readily available. Please stop by, or email us and let us know your interest in becoming a member and we’ll help put you in contact with this fabulous lady.

## **APPROACH WITH CAUTION**

We have been made aware that the BPI teller machine directly across from the RAO, located next to the Mirage Hotel may have a virus in it. Members have reported that after using the machine, they have noticed their accounts missing money. BEWARE!

Have a great June!

