

**RAO NEWSLETTER 7A**  
**07/03/2019**

**RAO CLOSURE**

**4 July, AMERICA'S BIRTHDAY AND ITS GREAT AGAIN**

**BLUE WATER NAVY BILL NOW LAW**

# **President signs Blue Water Navy Veterans Act into law**

JUN 26, 2019

The decades-long fight for Blue Water Navy veterans to receive VA disability benefits for illnesses linked to exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War is over.

On Tuesday, June 25, President Trump signed into law H.R. 299, the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019. The American Legion-supported legislation will extend disability benefits covering medical conditions associated with Agent Orange exposure to those who served on ships off the coast of Vietnam, known as "Blue Water" Navy veterans.

Veterans who served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1975 are presumed to have been exposed to Agent Orange if diagnosed with a medical condition associated with the herbicide, according to the Agent Orange Act of 1991. Presumptive diseases of exposure to the herbicide include certain cancers, Parkinson's disease and diabetes. However, this act applied only to veterans who served on land and in Vietnam's inland waterways. H.R. 299 extends these benefits to any military personnel who served on any vessel during the Vietnam War that came within 12 nautical miles of the coastlines of Vietnam.

H.R. 299 further expands coverage and includes the provision that every veteran exposed to herbicides like Agent Orange should receive the same presumptive benefits. A provision in H.R. 299 states, "A veteran who, during active military, naval, or air service, served offshore of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975," will be eligible for disability compensation for presumptive conditions of herbicide exposure. This will allow veterans who fall into that category and whose claims have been denied or held in pending status to gain access to VA medical care for conditions on the presumptive list.

H.R. 299 will afford spouses of certain veterans whose death was caused by a service-connected disability access to pension benefits. The bill also provides the children of

veterans of covered service in Thailand who suffer from spina bifida access to health care, vocational training and rehabilitation, and monetary allowance.

IF YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM ONE OF THE DISEASES ON THE LIST YOU SHOULD IMMEDIATELY BEGIN PUTTING YOUR CLAIM TOGETHER! IF YOU HAVE ONE OF THE DISEASES LISTED BELOW, AND CAN DOCUMENT DUTY ABOARD A NAVAL VESSEL THAT WAS WITHIN 12 NAUTICAL MILES OF VIETNAM YOU MAY NOW BE ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION.

### [AL Amyloidosis](#)

A rare disease caused when an abnormal protein, amyloid, enters tissues or organs

- [Chronic B-cell Leukemias](#)

A type of cancer which affects white blood cells

- [Chloracne \(or similar acneform disease\)](#)

A skin condition that occurs soon after exposure to chemicals and looks like common forms of acne seen in teenagers. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10 percent disabling within one year of exposure to herbicides.

- [Diabetes Mellitus Type 2](#)

A disease characterized by high blood sugar levels resulting from the body's inability to respond properly to the hormone insulin

- [Hodgkin's Disease](#)

A malignant lymphoma (cancer) characterized by progressive enlargement of the lymph nodes, liver, and spleen, and by progressive anemia

- [Ischemic Heart Disease](#)

A disease characterized by a reduced supply of blood to the heart, that leads to chest pain

- [Multiple Myeloma](#)

A cancer of plasma cells, a type of white blood cell in bone marrow

- [Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma](#)

A group of cancers that affect the lymph glands and other lymphatic tissue

- [Parkinson's Disease](#)

A progressive disorder of the nervous system that affects muscle movement

- **Peripheral Neuropathy, Early-Onset**

A nervous system condition that causes numbness, tingling, and motor weakness. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10 percent disabling within one year of herbicide exposure.

- **Porphyria Cutanea Tarda**

A disorder characterized by liver dysfunction and by thinning and blistering of the skin in sun-exposed areas. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10 percent disabling within one year of exposure to herbicides.

- **Prostate Cancer**

Cancer of the prostate; one of the most common cancers among men

- **Respiratory Cancers (includes lung cancer)**

Cancers of the lung, larynx, trachea, and bronchus

- **Soft Tissue Sarcomas (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or mesothelioma)**

A group of different types of cancers in body tissues such as muscle, fat, blood and lymph vessels, and connective tissues

To find if your navy or coast guard ship on the list go to  
<https://www.Benefits.va.Gov/compensation/docs/shiplist.Docx>

They are listed by type ship side number. Ships that did not tie up to dock or weren't documented to have had crew going to land are not listed, so we will likely see a new list or those that were within 12 nautical miles added to the current list.

VSO Now Available at RAO

Mike Verville the newest VSO will be available at the RAO beginning tomorrow and every following wed to assist you in your VA claims. You can make an appt by calling 045-321-0084 and speaking with his secretary mitch, make sure you tell her its for subic.

Under Construction

As you know we have been making adjustments to the building to try to enhance your safety. We are now in the process of adding a veranda so you'll be out of the rain sooner and have less chance of slipping. The widening of the street has caused us some additional problems with possible flooding. The RAO was one of the first buildings here on national highway. As the years went by they repaved the street and made

"improvements" to the point that the street is now almost 3 ft above the original height. Any rain that comes off the street goes directly to our door on the downward slope. We have put drains and reverse slope concrete and just about anything we can do to combat the problem, but it looks like our efforts are becoming futile. That leaves 2 possible options. 1- move or 2 do more construction. Don't really like option 1 as this is a great location and we have a very comfortable setup. Option 2 looks like the winner, but will require we be closed for about 4 days, don't worry 2 of those will be a weekend. Were convinced that making the changes we have planned will give us positive results, so please bear with us as we try to make it safer and improve operationally.

## AA at RAO

If you missed it in a previous newsletter, we announced a number of folks are holding get-togethers at the RAO mon-fri, 12-1300. It's not lecturing or trying to make folks defensive. Its just a group of guys who have been there, who discuss the disease and most anything else, and are trying to help their fellow vets survive. The RAO is extremely supportive of their efforts as we just recently lost 3 younger vets who partied their lives away.

## The Rest of the Story

One of the greatest news personalities of all time, Paul Harvey, used to do a program daily which he called the rest of the story. He would tell of something most people knew about, but not the full story, it was quite entertaining and informative. Well we have one that happened very recently that i'd like to tell you the rest of the story on, am sure you'll get a great feeling at the end. A couple weeks ago a young retired veteran was taken to the hospital seriously ill and was pronounced dead shortly thereafter. We were notified by another veteran who happened to be visiting a family member at the hospital, we were able to contact his girlfriend and got a contact for his mom in the states. We called her and she already had been notified by the girlfriend. I asked her plans and she said she wanted to bring the body to the states for burial. I asked if she was aware of the costs being about \$10,000, to which she replied she was going to ask VA to ship him. Explained VA nor the embassy had a program which would do that. She then said she couldn't afford it either. I gave her the options she had which included cremation, and mailing the ashes to her at a cost of about \$1300.00. Said she would have a hard time coming up with that. The add on problem was there was a hospital bill of about \$2000.00. No way she could do that, but said she would do her best. She found a good friend who was willing to loan the \$2000.00 and they opened a "go fund me" for the rest. It took awhile to get everything organized and finally the hospital bill was paid, but the go fund me wasn't doing real well, only getting to about \$1000.00. Fortunately the girl friend did as i had asked when selecting a funeral home. He was placed in golden star who we have found to be understanding many times of the families financial situation and has helped out bigly on many occasions. All during this time the case became a soap opera,, with a former filipina girlfriend who is the mother of one of his kids and made it somehow to the states, an ex-wife, and a step mother and father, all vying for the meager possessions he had. That came to a quick halt when i told them they would

have to come here to claim them. Anyway, mom tried her best to raise the money but hit a wall at \$1000, i spoke to the funeral home and explained the situation and he agreed to drop an additional \$300.00 off the bill which he had already greatly discounted. We completed the cremation and the ashes were delivered to the RAO, which we boxed up and delivered to manila. Little problem there as mom had not given a complete address so they couldn't send it. Driver was headed back here and i had him turn around as i had figured out the right address and didn't want to wait another week before the box went out. We got it in the mail that day and i informed mom it could be 4-10 days for arrival, which she was really happy about as she had scheduled a ceremony in 7 days. It was delivered on sat.

Now the rest of the story----- the box was delivered to the best friends house who paid the hospital, as mom works and might have missed it, when she answered the door the mailman simply said to her, he is now home and you're together again and promptly snapped a salute and thanked her for his service and sacrifice, (apparently the mailman is also a veteran and had seen the customs label on the box stating it was cremated remains of US veteran.) I'm going to find this guys info and send him a thank you through his boss. The story here is no matter where you are, a brother isn't very far away.

**HAVE A GREAT 4TH, SEMPER FI**

