



RAO CLOSURES-

April 9- Day of Valor- anniversary of Bataan Death March/ April 18- Maudry Thursday/April 19- Good Friday

BPI SERVICES CURTAILED-

BPI Systems Upgrade Advisory

We will undergo a major systems upgrade from April 5, 2019 (Friday), 10:00PM to April 7, 2019 (Sunday), 5:00AM to provide you an enhanced banking experience. During this time, our online banking, mobile app, ATMs and CAMs, as well as Debit and Prepaid Card services will be temporarily unavailable.

INCREASE IN U S STAMP COSTS

As a result the Embassy no longer having sufficient stocks of stamps, we are having to buy stamps online at market costs. Therefore we will be charging \$.65 for stamps effective immediately.

VA COULD ADD 4 NEW ILLNESSES TO AGENT ORANGE REGISTRY-

Several years after a scientific body recommended that the [Department of](#)

[Veterans Affairs](#) consider adding four conditions -- bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, hypertension and Parkinson's-like symptoms -- to the list of qualifying diseases tied to [Agent Orange](#), affected veterans may soon find out whether they are eligible for disability compensation and VA health care.

Good time to get your intent to file ready.

MORE FROM VA ON BLUE WATER NAVY

The [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) will not appeal a January court ruling that [ordered it to provide health care and disability benefits](#) for 90,000 veterans who served on [Navy](#) ships during the Vietnam War, likely paving the way for "Blue Water Navy" sailors and [Marines](#) to receive [Agent Orange](#)-related compensation and VA-paid health care benefits.

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie told members of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on Tuesday 26 March, that he will recommend the Justice Department not fight the decision, handing a victory to ill former service members who fought for years to have their diseases recognized as related to exposure to the herbicide Agent Orange.

WHY SHOULD I JOIN THE RAO?

Recently, we had a Veteran come in with a duffel bag full of problems. He had allowed his passport to expire in 2012, is in an overstay condition with his visa, has been told by his bank that if he is unable to show a ACRI card or valid I. D. in 30 days, they were going to close his account and he would have no access to his retirement pay. If all that wasn't bad enough he has previously been repatriated with the assistance of the Embassy, and owed them money. He was not a member, but true to our mission of helping our heroes, Jeff jumped into action and again went above and beyond. Personal assistance was given to open a U S bank account and have his funds sent there. Contact with the Embassy resulted in approval of a new passport and his debt resolved. Action on his visa status is in the works. He told us he had previously been a member but quit as get doesn't get much mail. When his problems came up he didnt know where to turn, he tried contacting the Embassy and wasn't able to get all the help he needed, he thought everything was hopeless, but as happens more times than not he turned to the only place he thought he could possibly get any help. I guess the above events go to prove we're not just mailboxes. Being a member is definitely worth it.