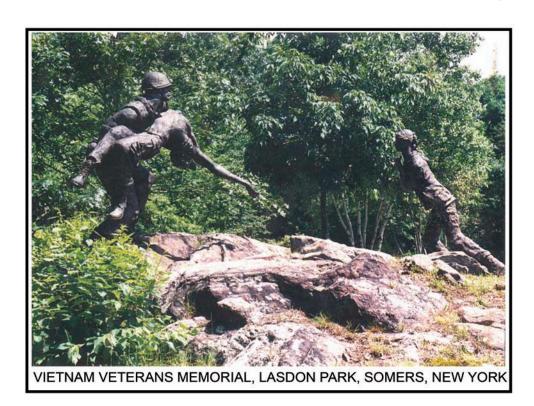
Vietnam Veterans of America





Westchester County Chapter #49

If box is checked your dues are due now.

All the POW's are not home yet!

Do you care?



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Vietnam Veterans of America
P.O. Box 224
Pleasantville, New York 10570
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 462-0782

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 937-4443

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 238-3514

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State Council Delegates: (7)

Edward Fox Barney Puleo
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Terry Keogh Al Zawiski

Jim LaManna

WESTCHESTER COUNTY VETERANS MUSEUM

HOURS: 11:00-3:30

SUMMER DAYS WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY WINTER DAYS SATURDAY & SUNDAY AND HOLIDAYS

864-7263

Chapter 49

Veterans Offices:

Yonkers: Dan Morea......377-6700 (914) 682-4949
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 Website:

 www.vietnamvets49.org

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 Vet Center:
 Mail to: Chapter49@aol.com

Westchester County
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35 Bedford Rd.
Armonk, NY 10504

Dan Griffin 995-2145/2146

This newsletter is a publication of Chapter 49, however the opinions expressed herein are those of the contributors, and as such, they do not necessarily represent those of Chapter 49. All views are welcome for publication. Submit items of interest, including poems, short stories, photographs, etc., to the Editors at the Chapter address or call for other arrangements. Materials submitted will not be returned unless otherwise requested.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

May all of you have a happy and healthy new year.

Whenever I receive notice of events or news about veteran benefits I send out the information on the internet. I understand that not all of you have a computer or go on the internet; so please call our Chapter office at 914-682-4949 and leave your phone number. That way I will call you and inform you, so you will not miss out on events and benefit information.

We had a very good turnout to our Candlelight vigil.

Elsewhere in this newsletter is the notice about our annual Scholarship, we send out packets to all of the High Schools in Westchester County. But you do not have to live in Westchester County to apply, so call us at 914-682-4949 and we will send you the application.

In 2019 our foundation-Basecamp Westchester sent kitchen kits and bath room kits to formally homeless veterans at a cost of over \$22,000.00. Our motto is "give them a hand up, not a handout"

The businesses on the back of this newsletter are owned by Chapter members, so please support them.

Please check the calendars in this newsletter for upcoming events.

Take care of yourself and each other

Dan Griffin

Welcome to our newest members

Salvatore Mondello from Harrison

Peter Stolatis from Pleasantville

Samuel J. Marasso Jr. from Riverside, CT

Law Extends Benefits for Eligible Veterans

Public Law 116-23, (Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act 2019)

Public Law 116-23, (Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act 2019) was signed into law on June 25, 2019 and takes effect January 1, 2020. The law extends a presumption of herbicide exposure to Blue Water Navy Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam and the offshore waters. Blue Water Navy survivors, and certain dependents may be entitled to benefits if the Veteran was exposed.

Under the law, certain Veterans, who served in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam and Cambodia, or who had service in the Korean Demilitarized zone (DMZ), may be entitled to disability compensation for conditions that are related to herbicide exposure. The law also provides benefits for children born with spina bifida whose parent was a Veteran with verified herbicide exposure in Thailand.

To be entitled to VA benefits, these Veterans must have served between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, and have one or more of the conditions that are listed in section 3.309(e) of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations.

Conditions related to presumed herbicide exposure¹:

- » Amyloid light-chain (AL) amyloidosis
- » Chloracne, or other acneform disease consistent with chloracne
- » Chronic B-cell leukemias
- » Diabetes mellitus, Type 2
- » Ischemic heart disease
- » Hodgkin's lymphoma, formerly known as Hodgkin's disease
- » Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
- » Multiple myeloma
- » Parkinson's disease
- » Peripheral neuropathy, early-onset
- » Porphyria cutanea tarda
- » Prostate cancer
- » Respiratory cancers (lung, bronchus, larynx or trachea)
- » Soft-tissue sarcoma (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or mesothelioma).
- ¹ A Veteran who has experienced any of the conditions on this list may be eligible for presumptive service connection under 38 CFR 3.309(e). A Veteran may be entitled to service connection on a direct basis under 38 CFR 3.303, if herbicide exposure is established and scientific or medical evidence shows that the claimed condition is medically associated with the exposure.

How do I file a claim for disability compensation or survivor benefits?

- » Apply using the guidance at <u>www.va.gov</u>, <u>www.va.gov/burials-memorials/dependency-indemnity-compensation **OR**</u>
- For initial compensation claims, submit a VA Form 21-526EZ; For initial DIC claims, submit a VA Form 21P-534EZ; For previously denied claims, submit a VA Form 20-0995 OR
- VA-accredited Veterans Service Organization representative, attorney, or claims agent OR
- So to a VA regional office and have a VA employee assist you. You can find your regional office on our Facility Locator page at https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp

What should be included when filing a claim?

- State on your application that you are filing for one of the conditions related to presumed herbicide exposure such as Agent Orange.
- » Include any evidence you have of service in the offshore waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the required timeframe. Include the name(s) of the vessel(s) and the date(s) you served within 12 nautical miles of the Republic of Vietnam, if you have that information.
- » Provide medical evidence showing a diagnosis of a current condition related to exposure to herbicide such as Agent Orange or tell us where you are being treated.
- » For more information on how to apply and for tips on making sure your claim is ready to be processed by VA, visit our Disability Compensation web page at www.va.gov/disability/



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need to prove contact with Agent Orange?

No. You don't need to show that you came into contact with Agent Orange. Congress has provided that conditions on the list of presumptive diseases will be deemed to have been caused by contact with Agent Orange through service in the Republic of Vietnam, including offshore waters as defined by the Blue Water Navy Act of 2019.

What will be the effective date for benefits for Blue Water Navy Veteran claims?

Presumptive Agent Orange conditions granted for Blue Water Navy Veterans will generally be payable from the date VA received your original claim. If you had a previously denied claim and you resubmit your claim, the effective date will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

When do the Blue Water Navy presumptions go into effect?

The Blue Water Navy Act of 2019 will take effect on January 1, 2020. Veterans can file claims at any time, and they will be decided after the law is implemented. Blue Water Navy claims and appeals currently in process have been placed on hold (stayed) until the new rules go into effect.

How will the previously denied claims be handled?

If you had an Agent Orange claim with one or more presumptive conditions denied in the past, you are urged to file a new supplemental claim on VA Form 20-0995, Decision Review Request: Supplemental Claim. Provide any new and relevant information regarding your claim such as dates you believe your ship traveled within 12 nautical miles of the Republic of Vietnam, or updated medical information. Claims that are currently in the VA review process or under appeal will be reviewed under the new policy.

If a Blue Water Navy Veteran has not applied for benefits in the past, but would like to apply now will the presumption of exposure be extended to them?

Yes, VA will apply the provisions of the law to Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans who file new claims based on presumption of exposure to Agent Orange.

What happens if the Veteran dies before his or her claim is decided?

If the claimant dies while his or her claim is pending, a living dependent, such as a spouse or child, may file a request to be substituted as the claimant.

May the surviving spouse of a Blue Water Navy Veteran who passed away from a condition related to Agent Orange exposure, and who was previously denied compensation for such condition, become entitled to Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)?

If the Veteran served on a Navy or Coast Guard ship that that operated not more than 12 nautical miles from the demarcation line of the waters of Vietnam and Cambodia as defined in the <u>Blue Water Navy Act of 2019</u> and the cause of death was from a condition related to exposure to Agent Orange, then VA may award entitlement to DIC on that basis.

Where can I get additional information on disability compensation for Agent Orange?

Veterans with questions about benefits or filing a claim can visit the VA Agent Orange website https://www.va.qov/disability/eligibility/hazardous-materials-exposure/agent-orange/ They can also call the disability benefits call center at 800-827-1000.





from AUSA's Institute of Land Warfare



Until They All Come Home: The Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Agency

As important as it is to return the fallen to their families, it's equally if not more important to the nation. This is our sacred promise that we make to our sons and daughters when we put them in harm's way and ask them to do the most difficult tasks around.

Brigadier General Mark Spindler, Deputy Director, DPAA

Introduction

With more than 83,000 personnel still missing from past and current conflicts, the Defense Prisoner of War/ Missing in Action Accounting Agency (DPAA) will not rest until all American servicemembers are recovered, identified and returned to their families. DPAA's mission is to provide the fullest possible accounting for missing personnel to their families and the nation. Over the past year, DPAA, which employs more than 600 military and civilian personnel, was created by consolidating the three organizations that were previously responsible for the accounting mission. The merger of the Defense Prisoner of War Missing Personnel Office (DPMO), the Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command (JPAC) and the Air Force Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL) has led to better oversight of case research, recovery operations and family communications.

The Search

Over the past 20 years, DPAA has been able to locate, account for and identify more than 1,530 missing personnel. The agency conducts research and analysis and travels worldwide to investigate losses; disinters gravesites of unidentified American personnel; excavates crash sites; and meticulously pieces together evidence found at these sites. Once remains are found, the agency uses several techniques to accurately identify individuals. The collaboration of effort from the Armed Forces DNA Identification Lab at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, and the DPAA laboratories

in Hawaii and at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, analyze DNA, dental records, medical records and skeletal remains to identify missing personnel.

Of the more than 73,000 missing persons from World War II, only 4 percent have DNA family reference samples (FRSs) to find a potential match. FRSs are DNA cheek swabs from family members that could provide a probable link to the individual when recovered remains are tested for DNA. Of the missing Cold War personnel, 83 percent have an FRS on file; FRSs for the Korean War total 89 percent; and FRSs are on file for 81 percent of missing personnel from the Vietnam War. While DNA testing is an integral part in the identification of remains, each case requires the investigation of material evidence, such as airplane parts and uniform pieces; odontology; witness accounts; and anthropological analysis of the skeletal remains.

In 2015, Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work released a memo allowing Department of Defense (DoD) to include remains from the USS *Oklahoma*, which was attacked on 7 December 1941 in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in its identification efforts. In November, DPAA completed the disinterment of 388 sets of remains from the USS *Oklahoma*. The remains were originally commingled into 61 caskets at 45 gravesites marked "UNKNOWNS, USS OKLAHOMA" at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii. With the persistent efforts of DPAA, it is estimated that 80 percent of the remains will be identified and returned to their families within the next three to five years.



DEFENSE REPORT is published by the Association of the United States Army's Institute of Land Warfare (ILW). The series is designed to provide information on topics that will stimulate professional discussion and further public understanding of the Army's role in national defense. Questions regarding the **DEFENSE REPORT** should be directed to: AUSA's Institute of Land Warfare (Attn: **DEFENSE REPORT**), 2425 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22201. For more information about AUSA and ILW, visit our website at www.ausa.org.

Recently, a 13-person team from DPAA conducted search-and-recovery efforts on the Himalayan Mountains in the Arunachal Pradesh region in India, searching for eight U.S. Army Air Corps members who crashed in a B-24J aircraft in 1944. The recovery team hiked through 10 miles of treacherous terrain to set up their basecamp. Each day, they walked more than a mile and a half, climbing upwards of 1,000 feet to the excavation site, which was a mountain slope with a 60-degree incline. After nearly two weeks of excavation, the team unearthed potential evidence of the aircrew for whom they were searching. With thousands of people still missing, recovery efforts like this will continue for the foreseeable future. Teams have also recently returned from search-and-recovery missions in Vietnam and the Solomon Islands, where they spent nearly two months completing their missions. Additional searches resumed in January 2016.

For the families

Since 1995, DoD has held annual briefings around the country for family members of the missing. These government briefings keep families informed of the agency's worldwide mission to account for those still missing. During

the briefing held in Portland, Maine, in mid-November 2015, nearly 200 family members attended, representing almost 100 missing personnel. Families shared stories of their loved ones, provided DNA family reference samples, learned of new DNA technology and gained information on site excavations. The next briefings are scheduled for 20 February 2016 in Atlanta, Georgia, and 19 March 2016 in Seattle, Washington. As long as American personnel are missing, the DPAA will continue to search and identify missing personnel and return them to their families.

Conclusion

The DPAA, formed from the consolidation of the DPMO, JPAC and LSEL, is committed to locating, identifying, and returning the remains of the 83,000 missing personnel to their families. To identify remains, DPAA requires FRSs from family members of the missing personnel and continued funding. The families of the missing are encouraged to contact DPAA at http://www.dpaa.mil to provide a FRS and stay informed about their search efforts. Americans owe a great deal to the servicemembers who gave the ultimate sacrifice to protect their freedom; DPAA is dedicated to ensuring that they are not forgotten.

Key Points

- The resolve of servicemembers and civilians serving abroad is strengthened by knowing that America, through the DPAA, will do what is necessary to bring them home.
- As the nation adjusts to a security environment plagued by persistent conflict, Americans cannot forget the personnel that made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their freedom.
- DoD must ensure that DPAA is adequately funded despite the decline of resources to fulfill the promise to bring everyone home.



VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA WESTCHESTER COUNTY CHAPTER #49 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS PROGRAM

Vietnam Veterans of America - Chapter #49, awards six scholarships of \$700 each year to high school graduates in Westchester County. The awards are granted to assist with a college or vocational school education. These scholarships honor five outstanding individuals from our area and are named the Pete Lambert Memorial Scholarship, the Congressman Hamilton Fish Jr. Memorial Scholarship, the Peter T. McCauley Memorial Scholarship, the Anthony Shine Memorial Scholarship, the Jonathan Shine Memorial Scholarship, and the William Suddereth Memorial Scholarship.

ELIGIBILITY: Students who will complete high school in Westchester County this year, are the child or a grandchild of an active duty service veteran, and plan to attend an accredited college/university or vocational/technical school are eligible to compete for the scholarships. **Please note** that service in the Reserves or National Guard does not constitute veteran status, unless you were activated for more than 90 days for purposes other than training. **Also note** that the child/grandchild of any veteran is eligible; service does not have to be during the Vietnam era.

HOW TO APPLY: There are four selection criteria that the student must submit in order to be considered for a scholarship:

- 1. DD-214 or honorable discharge of parent/grandparent
- SAT/ACT scores; no other test score will be accepted. Note; for those who will be attending a vocational/technical school this requirement will be waived.
- A resume of extracurricular activities to include school clubs, sports and student government, work experience, volunteer experience and other interests. Relevant references, with addresses and phone numbers, should be provided.
- 4. A written statement, not to exceed two typed pages, on the topic "The affect (if any) of my parent's/grandparent's military service on my attitudes toward life and country."
- Application must be signed by student, parent/guardian and School staff.

Students should complete the attached application and return it, along with the other requested items, by **April 1, 2020** to: Vietnam Veterans of America #49

Scholarship Committee P.O. Box 224 Pleasantville, NY 10570

SELECTION OF AWARDEES AND PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS: VVA #49 Scholarship Committee is solely responsible for the selection process. In late April the Committee will notify those selected for scholarships and their high schools and the acceptance and enrollment of those selected in an accredited college or technical school will be verified. Scholarship awards will be presented at our May meeting.

THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE WILL NOT CONSIDER APPLICATIONS THAT DO NOT CONTAIN ALL OF THE REQUESTED INFORMATION IN ITS REQUIRED FORM OR ARE RECEIVED AFTER THE SUBMITTAL DATE.

NOTE TO CHAPTER MEMBERS OUTSIDE OF WESTCHESTER COUNTY: YOU DO NOT HAVE TO RESIDE IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY TO APPLY FOR OUR SCHOLARSHIP. PLEASE CALL THE CHAPTER AND WE WILL SEND YOU AN APPLICATION package.

JANUARY 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday 1 New Year's Day	Thursday 2 meeting 6:00 Board 6:30 dinner 7:30 meeting	Friday 3	Saturday 4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 pizza Party FDR Stress unit 5:00 pm	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6 meeting Board 6:00 Dinner 6:30 Meeting 7:30	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15
16	17 President's Day	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 pizza Party FDR Stress unit 5:00 pm	26	27	28	29

MARCH 2020						
Sunday 1	Monday 2	Tuesday	Wednesday 4	Thursday 5 meeting	Friday 6	Saturday 7
'				6:00 Board 6:30 dinner 7:30 meeting		,
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 pizza party FDR Stress unit 5:00 pm	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday 3	Saturday 4
			1 April Fool's Day	2 meeting 6:00 Board 6:30 dinner 7:30 meeting	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Easter	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 pizza Party FDR Stress unit 5:00 pm	29	30		



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

WE NEED YOU IN THE VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA



MEMBERSHIP TYPES and ELIGIBILITY

<u>Individual Membership</u> is open to any Vietnam-era Veteran who served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces between January 1, 1959 and May 7, 1975.

<u>Associate Membership</u> in the VVA is open to all who share our concerns – both men and women, friends, supporters, and families – Veteran or not.

<u>Life Membership</u> / <u>Associate Life Membership</u> is available to all who wish to demonstrate a greater commitment to the ideals and work of the V.V.A. (Economically a great deal!)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

cneck one	Life Membership - \$50.00
Vietnam-era Veteran Application: Individual Membership (must provide a copy of applicant's DD-214)	()
Non-Vietnam-era Veteran Application Associate Membership	: Life Membership - \$50.00
Non-Member Financial Contribution:	\$
Report of Address Change:	
Name:	Phone:
Address:	Date of Birth:
City:	State:Zip Code:
E-mail Address:	



Please make checks payable to: V.V.A. Chapter #49

Send application and check to: Membership Chair, V.V.A. Chapter #49 PO Box 224, Pleasantville, NY 10570

Questions? Call the Chapter: Phone/Fax (914) 682-4949 or e-mail: Chapter49@aol.com wwwVietnamVets49.org



Chapter #49 meetings are held the 1st Thursday of each month at: The Armonk American Legion Hall ● 35 Bedford Rd. Armonk, NY 10504 Dinner at 6:30 pm / Meeting at 7:30 pm

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