

The following information has been copied from the Veterans Administration web site. It is not meant to be anything other than a place to start if you feel as though you are entitled to benefits. Each issue of this newsletter will have info from the VA on benefits. (That is of course only if I don't get arrested for plagiarizing their web site.)

This issue is concentrating on agent orange.

Please don't be hesitant to get help if you need it. You served your country well and you have earned these benefits.

Department of Veterans Affairs

Vietnam Veteran Fact Sheet

For VA benefits, two dates are used for the "Vietnam era:"¹

Feb. 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975, for veterans who served in Vietnam

Aug. 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975, for other veterans

Vietnam Veterans

- 9.2 million served on active duty (Aug. 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975)²
- 2,590,000 served in the combat zone
- 109,000 died in service²
- 58,184 died in the combat zone or from combat wounds⁴
- 8,113,000 are still alive²

Vietnam Vets and VA Health Care³

- 125,275 vets were hospitalized 206,763 times in VA facilities last year
- 989,833 vets visited VA clinics 12,704,963 times last year
- 991,672 vets received some VA health care last year

Vietnam Vets and VA benefits⁵

- 737,397 vets received disability compensation in February
- 112,207 family members of dead vets receive survivors benefits
- 102,088 vets received VA pensions for non-service disabilities

Vietnam Veterans and Agent Orange⁶

- 297,194 vets took exams under Agent Orange Registry since March 2000
- 99,226 filed claims alleging Agent Orange affected their health
- 7,520 receive VA disability compensation for Agent Orange related causes

Notes

1. 38 U.S. Code, 101 (29).
2. "America's Wars," Department of Veterans Affairs, August 1999.
3. "Inpatients and Outpatients by Period of Service, FY 1999," April 2000, Office of Program and Data Analyses VA.
4. "U.S. Military Casualties in Southeast Asia," March 31, 1997, Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Service, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports. (<http://web1.whs.osd.mil/mmid/casualty>).
5. "Active Compensation, Pension and Retirement Cases By Period of Service," February 2000, Office of Program and Data Analyses, VA.
6. "Agent Orange: Statistical Update," March 2000, VA Office of Public Affairs, Media Relations Office (80-F).

How Can I Apply for VA Benefits?

To apply for benefits, apply on-line or send the VA Regional Office a letter stating that you have a specific health problem and that you claim it is due to your exposure to Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam. This is called an informal claim and will set the effective date for your benefits payments, if your claim is granted. The VA Regional Office will then send you an application form, which you must fill out and return. To get the address of your VA Regional Office, call 1-800-827-1000.

Can I Get a Representative to Advocate for Me?

You may get a representative to help you present your claim to the VA. Most veterans service organizations and state and county veterans service agencies offer free representation. A listing of veterans service organizations is available on the Internet at: www.va.gov/vso/index.htm. A listing of state veterans agencies is available on the Internet at: www.va.gov/partners/stateoffice/index.htm.

Registry Programs

Veterans who claim exposure to Agent Orange are provided with free, comprehensive medical examinations, including laboratory and other diagnostic tests deemed by an examining physician necessary to determine health status. Results of the examinations, which include review of the veteran's military service and exposure history, are entered into special, computerized databases, called registries. These databases assist VA in analyzing the types of health conditions being reported by veterans. Registry participants are advised of the results of their examinations in personal consultations. Veterans wishing to participate should contact the nearest VA health care facility for an examination. Additionally, the VA has established an Agent Orange Helpline at **1-800-749-8387**

Vietnam Veterans Benefit From Agent Orange Rules

They are society's leaders. They run businesses; direct organizations; hold political office. In their mid-50s, they are at the height of their social and economic power, earning more than others in their age group. Yet, with their success, they can't escape the inevitable health concerns of a graying population.

They are Vietnam veterans, and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is concerned they may regard diseases associated with aging, such as prostate cancer, as just another illness rather than as the result of their military service in Southeast Asia.

VA wants these Vietnam veterans to know that they may be eligible for compensation and health care for certain diseases associated with Agent Orange, the defoliant sprayed to unmask enemy hiding places in the jungles throughout Vietnam.

Special health care and compensation benefits are available to the 2.6 million men and women who served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1975, only 3,300 of whom remain in uniform today. Those discharged during that period are the largest group of veterans receiving VA health care and monthly compensation.

Yet a small percentage of their disability claims are for illnesses scientists have listed as being associated with Agent Orange. VA presumes that all military personnel who served in Vietnam were exposed to Agent Orange, and federal law presumes that certain illnesses are a result of that exposure. This so-called "presumptive policy" simplifies the process of receiving compensation for these diseases since VA foregoes the normal requirements of proving that an illness began or was worsened during military service.

Based on clinical research, the following diseases are on VA's Agent Orange list of presumptive disabilities: chloracne, Hodgkin's disease, multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, porphyria cutanea tarda, respiratory cancers (lung, bronchus, larynx and trachea), soft-tissue sarcoma, acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy and prostate cancer. A regulation is being developed to add diabetes mellitus.

In addition, monetary benefits, health care and vocational rehabilitation services are provided to Vietnam veterans' offspring with spina bifida, a congenital birth defect of the spine. A new law authorizes health care and monetary benefits to children of female veterans who served in Vietnam for certain additional birth defects. Those additional benefits under the new law will not be payable to the beneficiaries until Dec. 1, 2001.

Veterans who served in Vietnam during the war also are eligible for a complete physical examination. If a VA physician suspects a disease might be related to Agent Orange, VA will provide free medical care. Those who participate in the examination program become part of an Agent Orange Registry and receive periodic mailings from VA about the latest Agent Orange studies and new diseases being covered under VA policies.

Vietnam veterans and their families can contact VA for more information about these benefits. For the Agent Orange Registry physical examination, call a local VA hospital or clinic listed in the government pages of your phone book. To file a compensation claim for a current disability related to Agent Orange, veterans can call 1-800-827-1000 for an application form or visit VA's Web site at: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov>.

As a Vietnam Veteran, What Kind of Benefits Can I Get?

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) pays disability compensation to Vietnam veterans with injuries or diseases that began in, or were aggravated by, their military service. These are called "service-connected" disabilities. VA has several pamphlets describing VA benefits. They are available on the Internet at: www.va.gov/publ/direc/eds/edspamph.htm. If you do not have Internet access at home, you can get free access at most public libraries. Publications are also available at your VA Regional Office or by calling these offices at 1-800-827-1000.

How Much Compensation Will I Get?

These monthly payment rates (for the year 2000 and 2001) are based on the veteran's combined rating for his or her service-connected disabilities. These ratings are based on the severity of the disabilities. Additional amounts are paid to certain veterans with severe disabilities ("special monthly compensation") and certain veterans with dependents.

10%	\$101	20%	\$194	30%	\$298	40%	\$427	50%	\$609	60%	\$769	70%	\$969	80%	\$1,125	90%	\$1,266	100%	\$2,107
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On This Rock

To all you guys out there, if you have questions or need help with VA benefits ask. Don't be so proud that you can't ask us B Co. or your local VA. There is much help out there. Take advantage of it now, as the sign says Uncle Sam owes you. I know your feelings first hand, we have to deal with many health problems from agent orange to diabetes to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. We can deal with these things together, like we did when we were in Viet Nam. Trust in your fellow comrades again, we won't let you down. As your Chaplain I will do anything within my power to help you guys out at this time of your life.

With the Love of the Easter Season.
Your Chaplain

Ted



Chaplains Corner

Ted Rowley

Easter Message

On That Hill

*It's all about three crosses upon a hill,
God choice, His love, His eternal will
Three crosses of wood made from a tree
To erase the sins of you and of me
Greater love can be had by none,
Than to sacrifice your only begotten Son
Greater love has never been known by another
not a comrade, sister or even a brother
Gods love for us is as big as the sky
Sometimes when things happen we can only ask why?
He is so much bigger than us don't you see
With the blink of an eye he can part the great sea.
He appears to us often in the kindness of a friend
As branches of a willow we learn how to bend
He has given me much more than I can afford
He has given me many friends,
ones name is Richard "Crazy" Ward
So remember during the special Easter season
That Jesus Christ is the only real reason
He bled as the white sap runs from a rubber tree
Instead of white, it was crimson, for all the world to see
So today we can share a true friends embrace
Only a shadow of Him, but filled with his grace
For that is the way it was meant to be
That day, on that hill, when God set us
ALL FREE!!!*

Our Circle of Peace and Love

Our "Bravo Regulars Prayer Circle" would like to hear from you with news of anyone who is in need of our special thoughts and prayers. We need your help because in reality, this newsletter is the product of just a few people. Please send an Email or call John, Bill or myself with any info you may have.

Hopefully, together we can help those who need our help and support.

Please remember in your prayers:

John GORITY
Althea Flikkema
Roger Beegle
John Rainbolt and Family
Joe Stein

Vietnam — Its Customs & Traditions

The customs and traditions practiced by the Vietnamese people, in whose country you are a guest during your tour with the Free World Forces, may be traced back through many centuries.

The people are courteous, patient, sensitive and quiet. To get along with them well and to mix with them easily and courteously it is important to gain an understanding of their way of life.

It is crucial that American servicemen cultivate an awareness of the Vietnamese culture and appreciation of the aspirations of the people. Begin now!

Here are some of the do's and don'ts when dealing with the people.

VIETNAMESE HOME

The Vietnamese regards his home differently than does a westerner. He gives all the loyalty, concern, interest and respect to his home that Americans feel for their community nation and entire earth.

His home is the focal point of his life. All other considerations are secondary to the family and home. Yet he considers himself a furnishing in his home, temporary and unimportant in the long run of time.

The Vietnamese code of behavior fosters courtesy, patience and kindness. Do not mock it as it will negate the objectives of the assistance we are giving the people.

TABOOS FAMILIAR

Some of the taboos are familiar to readers of Emily Post or Dear Abby. They include:

Do not put your feet on any part of the furniture; do not be loud or overly emotional in public (Vietnamese of opposite sexes will seldom hold hands in public); do not ask about the price of personal possessions, do not shove your opinions or advice upon others unless it is asked for; respect those older than yourself.

The Vietnamese practice these rules of etiquette much more than Americans and regard violations seriously.

EXAMPLES CITED

Some taboos offend both the Vietnamese and his family, perhaps even his ancestors.

Never pat anyone on the head and never cross your legs so that your feet point toward anyone or to a shrine. These are based on the philosophy of humiliation and veneration.

It is a good rule to avoid gregarious "convention" manners in Vietnam. One should not offer to shake hands unless the Vietnamese does so first. Do not be a back slapper.

Vietnamese people do not permit use of their first names lightly. Call each by his rank or the proper form of the polite address. Incidentally, when writing a Vietnamese

name, spell it out in full.

BEWARE OF GESTURES

Gestures are a booby trap for Americans in Vietnam.

Each gesture has so many variations between our intent and a citizen's interpretation that trouble may arise unwittingly. Save hand and arm signals for Americans only.

At the dining table, do not eat until the eldest present has started. Clean your own plate but not the serving platter.

If you repay hospitality, do not take him to a "hamburger joint" even though the food may be better. Status is important. The senior in age always picks the tab up.

If you send gifts to a Vietnamese, send them to the children if possible. Never send an odd number. Two boxes of candy are much better than one.

DIFFERENCES ENDLESS

The number of differences goes on and on but the basic difference is one of degree. The Vietnamese are much more formal and traditional, almost exaggerated, in observing the amenities of life because they believe everything is integrated since the beginning of time.

To break or mock these culture codes is to invite disgrace and disaster by offending God, ancestors and nature.

If the American serviceman thinks before he speaks or acts, he will save unnecessary grief. Common sense, courtesy and application of the Golden Rule will help him

This came out of a 25th Infantry handbook that was supposed to be given to all personnel entering Viet Nam. I don't remember the part about being loud in public.

Bill

Misunderstanding terms

One reason the Services have trouble operating jointly is that they don't speak the same language.

For example, if you told Navy personnel to "secure a building," they would turn off the lights and lock the doors.

Army personnel would occupy the building so no one could enter.

Marines would assault the building, capture it, take a lot of pictures and defend it with suppressive fire.

The Air Force, on the other hand, would take out a three-year lease with an option to buy.

Reunion 2004 update

While it still seems a long way off, the planning for Bravo Reunion 2004 has already begun. The dates, July 22-25, 2004 and the place the Log Cabin at Fort Lee, Virginia are both firm. Now, one hundred rooms for lodging at a reduced rate have been secured, 75 rooms at the Holiday Inn Express in Hopewell, VA and 25 rooms across the street at the EconoLodge also in Hopewell. Presently, the only suitable and convenient camp grounds for those committed to RV's is at Pocahuntas State Park some 15 miles north west of the reunion site.

Since summer is always a big time for tourism and the Richmond/ Petersburg area has many tourist attractions, reservations should be secured at either hotel as early in the season as possible. Within the next six months, the reunion web site should be up and operable with instructions for registration both for the reunion and elective reunion events, hyper links to the sites for lodging, as well as maps and directions to the reunion location.

The program is still sketchy; however, Fort Lee is most excited about our visit as are all the local merchants. Tentatively, the reunion activities will include opening ceremonies on Thursday evening, lunch, dinner, and fellowship as well as registration on Friday; sight seeing or shopping excursions to Millennium Studios, Williamsburg, and Richmond during the day on Saturday if there are enough who wish to subscribe, and the closing ceremonies at a dinner on Saturday evening with a speaker who will address Bravo Company directly. Sunday morning will be devoted to good-byes with the next reunion only two years away.

As can be seen, there is plenty of room for both imagination and amusement. If anyone has suggestions for activities or items they wish to be included, let Walt Shugart, the reunion coordinator, know. He can be reached at wshu2@comcast.net or (804)739-5288.

Something for Everyone

For all you history buffs out there, the Richmond, VA area has a lot to offer. Here is a list of just a few places to visit and learn about United States Presidents.

THOMAS JEFFERSON. Monticello, Jefferson's home
Route 53
Box 316
Charlottesville, VA 22902

JAMES MADISON. Montpelier, Madison's home
11407 Constitution Highway
Montpelier Station, VA 22957

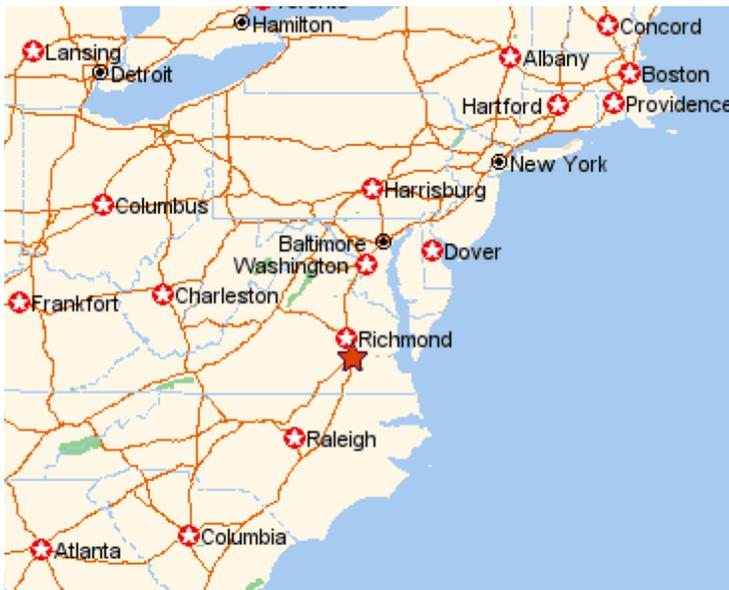
JAMES MONROE. James Monroe Museum
908 Charles Street
Fredericksburg, VA 22401

ZACHARY TAYLOR. Montebello
Highway 33, 5 mi west
of Gordonsville, VA

JOHN TYLER. Sherwood Forest Plantation
14501 John Tyler Highway (State Rte 5)
Charles City, VA

GEORGE WASHINGTON. Mount Vernon
P.O. Box 110
Mount Vernon, VA 22121

WOODROW WILSON. Woodrow Wilson House Museum
2340 S Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008



The reunion site is approximately:
30 miles from Richmond International Airport in Richmond, VA
130 miles from Reagan National Airport in Washington, DC
75 miles from Norfolk International Airport in Norfolk, VA
130 miles from Raleigh/Durham International Airport in Raleigh, NC

Please visit our new website at:
www.bravoregulars.com
For updates and the latest information concerning Reunion 2004.

From our

Webmaster

Being born in 1970, I was too young to know anything about the Vietnam War. By the time I was in high school the Vietnam War was somewhat of a quick history lesson to me rather than a recent war that left so many dead and so many others scarred either physically or mentally for life.

When asked to help do this webpage I figured it would be pretty easy. First off, I am a big History fan and have read extensively into World War II. I don't like war, yet there is something fascinating about it and it was that fascination that stirred my curiosity and got me reading years ago. So when it came to doing a web-page concerning the Vietnam War, I figured I knew enough to do this page. I've read a lot of the books and of course seen all the movies. I wouldn't be surprised if I've seen Platoon a hundred times, so again when it came to doing a web-page I figured "no problem". I quickly found out I was wrong.

I'm not doing a web-page on the Vietnam War, rather a webpage on and for the men who actually fought that war. I thought I knew a lot about it, I realized I knew books and film but nothing more. I am humbled by the sacrifice, courage and bravery of these men. I have dedicated both my time and research to this page so that I might give back just a bit of what was given to me. Although I hardly know any of the men in Bravo Company 3rd Battalion 22 Infantry, I want to personally thank each and every one of you for both your sacrifices and service.

I also want to add a special thanks to Richard Ward who has been nice enough to share his pictures, stories and friendships with me. He has spent timeless hours telling me about the B-3/22 and without him none of this would have come to be. I believe it would be safe to call him my friend. So for my friend and the rest of the B-3/22 I dedicate this site to you. May you always know that nothing you've ever done has been in vain and all you've done is appreciated. ~

Thanks

Joe Nylese
Jpwgnr88@msn.com



Editors Note

For many years, I used to think that our friends who were killed in Vietnam had touched our hearts only. Every time I heard dedications and Memorial Day speeches about those who died for their country; I thought well, that's a whole bunch of nice words, but they didn't really die as much for their country as they did for me. It's personal. No one else cares as much as I do.

I mean after all, who really cares about a bunch of guys who fought a war 35 years ago? Then, along comes a guy like Joe Nylese that blows my whole theory.

I encourage everyone to visit our new website. It is truly a great site, and at the expense of sounding prejudiced, I think it is one of the best Vietnam Veterans websites on

the internet.

Joe, I can't thank you enough on behalf of a grateful Bravoregulars organization. And to Richard Ward, (I can't call him Crazy Ward any longer) "thanks old friend".

We should not be surprised by the actions of our friends. After all, we learned to depend on each other many years ago. So in spite of anything negative that others may think or say about us, we know firsthand the meaning of:

Deeds not Words

Bill