



Rensselaer County  
 Unified Family Services  
 Veterans Service Agency  
 1600 Seventh Avenue  
 Troy, NY 12180  
 Phone: (518) 270-2760  
 FAX: (518) 270-2956

# Rensselaer County Veterans Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 1  
 January 2008

KATHLEEN M. JIMINO

County Executive

Joseph W. Cybulski  
 Commissioner

Robert M. Reiter  
 Director

## Guide to Agent Orange Benefits:

### Van Transportation...

- \* Don't drive and need to get to the VA Medical Center or the Troy VA Clinic!?
- \* We offer complimentary van transportation to and from the VAMC and the Troy VA CBOC for any morning medical appointments.

For more details call 270-2760

Maintenance is complete and van transportation has resumed.



This guide is for Vietnam Veterans and their family members. It is our goal to ensure that all veterans understand and receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

During the Vietnam War herbicides were used to rid the trees of leaves in order to expose enemy troops. These herbicides, the most famous of which is Agent Orange, may have harmed some veterans who were exposed to them. The Department of Veterans Affairs presumes herbicide exposure for veterans who served in Vietnam if they become ill with particular conditions (see list at right). Compensation is available for these veterans or their families.

Public Law 107-103 (signed into law on 12/27/01) amends existing law providing a presumption of exposure to herbicides for all veterans who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam Era. Proof of exposure is not necessary for claim purposes. However, evidence of service in Vietnam during the war and supporting medical documentation need to be submitted. The law also removes the 30-year limitation on presumptive service connection for respiratory cancers due to herbicide exposure.

### Conditions currently recognized by VA as related to Agent Orange:

- Chloracne

- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
  - Multiple myeloma
  - Respiratory Cancers: lung-trachea-bronchus
  - Prostate cancer
  - Soft tissue sarcoma
  - Hodgkin's disease
  - Porphyria cutanea tarda
  - Periphel neuropathy (acute or subacute)
  - Type II Diabetes
  - Lou Gehrigs Disease (ALS)
  - Spina bifida in children of veterans
- (continued page 2)

### BEING HOME HAS CHANGED.....

Soldiers, Marines and Seaman who have been returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan are increasingly running afoul with the law, bringing the stress of War home.

Most of it is small-time stuff, but some allegations against the Service Members in the past three years have been serious. The volume of crime being reported to law enforcement authorities has seen a jump over 100%. Some of the Service Members have been home for three years and the problems are just coming to light. Drunk driving, domestic violence, drug addictions, child abuse and reports of thefts have been on the rise.

I don't know if anyone is tracking the numbers, but the cases reported to our office are becoming a disturbing trend. Most of the veterans have had no history of wrong doing before being sent to war, they are returning and making bad decisions. I believe that the reason they are increasingly running afoul of the law is from the stress of war; better known as PTSD due to their experiences in combat.

As one of our friends tells me, what do you expect? A year of testosterone build up, they are making split-second, life or death decisions, and someone is always telling them when to dress, what to eat, and how they can spend their free time.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is what they are bringing home with them, caused by what they are seeing and dealing with in this war. Behavioral symptoms have many different signs and we need to do a better job of screening our Troops for this problem and quickly before we allow more undiagnosed soldiers go home alone. If you are aware of one of our veterans who is in need of help, please call our office and we will do everything in our power to help (270-2760). **PLEASE NOTE: Disregard any emails in regards to telling veterans they must register or re-register for their VA benefits before Jan. 17, this is not true.**

Yours in Patriotism, *Bab*

## A Message From County Executive Kathleen M. Jimino:

Happy New Year! I wish you all much happiness and success in the New Year. As we begin 2008 I would like to recognize the sacrifices made by the men and women of our armed forces who through their actions have afforded us the freedom we are so fortunate to enjoy. Thank You!

As we enter the New Year I again urge all Veterans to review the benefits afforded them through their service to our nation. Many times these programs and/or your health may change over time making you eligible for other services. As an example, on the horizon is a Veterans real property tax exemption for those who served in the Cold War. Further information will be available soon so again, please schedule an appointment with our County Veterans Service Agency. They will ensure you are receiving the services and benefits you have earned and certainly deserve.

Sincerely,  
*Kathleen M. Jimino*

**Kathleen M. Jimino**

### **Agent Orange (continued from page 1):**

#### **Spina Bifida (agent Orange Act of 1996):**

- Created benefit eligibility for children of Vietnam Veterans diagnosed with Spina Bifida
- Cash allowances are awarded for job training, health care and rehabilitation
- Assistance may also be found at the Shriners Hospital for Children

#### **Eligibility for Agent Orange Related Compensation**

**Claim for a condition officially recognized by VA as related to**

#### **Agent Orange Exposure:**

Exposure to Agent Orange is conceded if a veteran served in Vietnam. However, the veteran will still need to submit the following evidence:

- proof of service in Vietnam during wartime (January 9, 1962 to May 7, 1975)
- Medical documentation of the condition(s) officially recognized by the VA

**NOTE:** Some conditions require that a veteran prove his/her symptoms started within a specific time frame after departure from Vietnam.

#### **Claim for a condition not officially recognized by VA as related to Agent Orange exposure:**

If a veteran has been diagnosed with a condition(s) not shown at the left, he/she may submit a claim with the following supporting evidence:

- Medical documentation (preferably a confirmed diagnosis) of the claimed condition and
- An opinion from a doctor stating that it is as likely as not that the condition is the result of Agent Orange exposure.

## **Upcoming Events:**



*Call us by the 15th of the month and we will list your event.*

January 1... New Year's Day—**Office Closed**

January 14... Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m., Delford R. Hilton, US Army, Korea

January 21... Martin Luther King Day—**Office Closed**

February 11...Honor-a-Deceased Veteran Ceremony in the Legislative Chambers, 8:15 a.m., **TO BE ANNOUNCED**

February 18... President's Day—**Office Closed**

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Please watch next month's newsletter, included will be our Annual Report. *Happy Holidays and Happy New Year from all the staff at Rensselaer County Veterans Service Agency!*



