

# **FACES OF AGENT ORANGE**

## **Town Hall Meeting**



**Presented by: Marc McCabe**

**Combat Veteran RVN 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn 9<sup>th</sup> Marines**  
**And 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn 5<sup>th</sup> Marines “Dark Horse”**

**Regional Director/Bureau Chief VVA**

**WWII, Korea and Vietnam (6 tours Vietnam) Veterans One Family  
1 KIA Vietnam 1968, Col. USAF Ret, FMF Corpsman USMC RVN**



**1 Silver Star, 6 Bronze Stars "V", 5 Purple Hearts, 21 Campaign Stars, 10 Air Medals, 3 Gallantry Crosses Individual, Combat Action Ribbon, CIB with 2 Stars**

## **The Boys from the Class of 1968 RVN**



**20 Million Gallons of Dioxins were Sprayed  
on RVN**

# Requirements for Compensation Based on Agent Orange Exposure

- “ Veterans qualify for presumptive service connection of diseases related to Agent Orange (Herbicides) exposure if they meet two or three requirements:
- Service in Vietnam during the Vietnam Era (or other proof of Agent Orange Exposure)
  - Agent Orange-related disease
  - Some diseases must appear within a certain time after Vietnam service/exposure to Agent Orange



# Vietnam Service

- “ Active military, naval or air service in the Republic of Vietnam at some point between January 9, 1962 and May 7, 1975, including:
  - Duty in or visitation to the country (boots on the ground)
  - Service on the inland waterways of Vietnam, including:
    - “ All ships designated: LST, LCVP, PCF, and PBR
    - “ Blue Water+ships that conducted operations on the inland waterways of Vietnam
    - “ Service on a ship tied to a pier in Vietnam
    - “ Service on a ship present in DaNang Harbor (perhaps maybe at best)



# Presumptive Illnesses Due to Exposure

AL Amyloidosis

Chronic B-cell Leukemias

Chloracne

Diabetes Mellitus Type 2

Hodgkin's Disease

Ischemic Heart Disease

Multiple Myeloma

Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

Parkinson's Disease

Peripheral Neuropathy, Acute and Subacute

Porphyria Cutanea Tarda

Prostate Cancer

Respiratory Cancers

Soft Tissue Sarcomas



## **An Hoa Fire Base 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn 5<sup>th</sup> Marines “Dark Horse”**



**The U.S. military dumped some 20 million gallons (75 million liters) of Agent Orange & other herbicides on a quarter of former South Vietnam between 1962 and 1971, decimating about 5 million acres (2 million hectares) of forest — roughly the size of Massachusetts**



## **A Grand Child of a Vietnam Veteran born with Level III Spina Bifida**



**This is my niece's daughter so it effects us all  
This is a personal war to save the generations from  
Suffering even more serious defects/illnesses**



# Level II and Level III Spina Bifida Children



**The children of Vietnam veterans are the innocent victims of Agent Orange dioxin:**

**Some of the diseases/illnesses can be passed on to children of Vietnam veterans by conception are, but not limited to: spina bifida, variety of cancers, diabetes, learning and developmental delays, endometriosis, variety of minor to major birth defects and immune system abnormalities.**

**As statistics are accumulated, birth defects associated with Agent Orange dioxin begin to become common.**

**Likewise, as children mature in age, diseases associated to Agent Orange dioxin can be realized.**

**Dioxin resides in fatty tissue of the body, until such time it may decide to show its ugliness. Much depends on the strength of an individual's immune system.**

**To avoid any misconception, not all children are infected by elements of Agent Orange.**



### **Ocular Deformities :**

**Agent Orange contained a chemical called dioxin. This chemical acts like a hormone when it is absorbed into the human body. When it gets to cell receptors in developing fetuses before the real hormones that are supposed to guide development, they cause the cells to effectively malfunction and deviate from a normal developmental path. One of the most common effects of Agent Orange on children whose parents were exposed is aberrant ocular development. This deformity can take the form of blindness due to children being born without retinas, without lenses in their eyes, and sometimes without eyes or even eye sockets at all.**

### **Physical Deformities :**

**In addition to being born without eye sockets, or eyes at all, children born to parents exposed to Agent Orange can suffer from a host of terrible physical deformities. These deformities can include stunted or missing limbs, limbs that are longer and shaped differently from healthy ones, cleft lip or palate and heads that can be over-sized or conical in shape. These children can also be born with organ problems, such as heart defects**



### **Still Birth :**

**Children born to parents exposed to Agent Orange have a high likelihood of being still born, or having such health issues that they don't survive long after birth.**

### **Mental Handicaps :**

**Children born to parents exposed to Agent Orange can be born with severe mental handicaps. These handicaps can vary from learning disabilities and low IQ, to near catatonic states and severe behavioral disorders.**

### **Increased Risk of Cancer :**

**Children born to parents exposed to Agent Orange are at a higher risk for developing cancer, especially leukemia and adrenal gland cancer.**

### **Loss of Parents :**

**People directly exposed to Agent Orange have themselves developed health problems at a higher rate than the average population, including cancer  
And diabetes**



# Not “Vietnam Service”

- “ The VA will NOT presume that a veteran was exposed to Herbicides based on the following types of service:
  - Flying over Vietnam without landing (high altitude flights)
  - Service in the waters offshore Vietnam (Blue Water Vietnam Service)



# Exposure to Herbicides Outside of Vietnam

- “ Veterans without Vietnam Service+are entitled to presumptive service connection to Herbicide . related disabilities if they can prove herbicide exposure
  - Service along the Korean DMZ, April 1968 to July 1969 (presumed exposure)
  - If a veteran served along the fenced perimeters of airbases in Thailand during the Vietnam War, C&P Service will determine the likelihood of exposure (this is changing to include other factors)
  - In other places the DOD has admitted to spraying, testing, or storing Agent Orange, the veteran must prove actual exposure



**The \$43 million joint project with Vietnam is expected to be completed in four years on the 19-hectare (47-acre) contaminated site, now an active Vietnamese military base near Da Nang's commercial airport**





# Exposure to Herbicides Outside of Vietnam

- “ According to the VA C&P Service, no evidence supports claims based on:
- Loading Agent Orange on ships for delivery to Vietnam;
  - Serving on ships that transported, stored used or tested Agent Orange;
  - Working on shipboard aircraft or equipment that was used in Vietnam





# Disease Linked to Agent Orange by VA

- “ Cancers: Cancer of the bronchus, larynx, lung, prostate, and trachea; Hodgkin's disease, multiple myeloma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, chronic lymphocytic leukemia, and numerous soft tissue sarcomas
- “ Other diseases: Type II Diabetes, peripheral neuropathy, chloracne, porphyria cutanea tarda, and all AL Amyloidosis
- “ Diseases in children of veterans: certain birth defects (children of female veterans) and spinal bifida





# Disease Linked to Agent Orange by VA

- “ VA recently announced that ischemic heart disease, Parkinson's disease, and B Cell leukemia's would be added to the list
- “ VA will grant service connection for cancers not linked to Herbicides if the cancer is caused by a cancer associated with Agent Orange
- “ VA will NOT grant s/c if the cancer was caused by another cancer not associated with A/O







# Time Limits

- “ Some disease must first appear within a certain time frame after service in Vietnam and be 10% disabling within that period
    - Chloracne and porphyria cutanea tarda : 1 YEAR
    - Peripheral neuropathy: appearance within months and cure within 2 YEARS after the symptoms first appear
    - Children with spinal bifida and birth defects must have been conceived after the veteran first set foot in Vietnam
- Until 2002, the VA required that respiratory cancers appear within 30 years after the veteran left Vietnam



# THE TITLE

IT CANNOT BE INHERITED,  
NOR CAN IT EVER BE PURCHASED.

YOU AND NO ONE ALIVE  
CAN BUY IT FOR ANY PRICE.  
IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO RENT,  
AND IT CANNOT BE LENT.  
YOU ALONE AND OUR OWN  
HAVE EARNED IT  
WITH YOUR SWEAT, BLOOD AND LIVES.  
YOU OWN IT FOREVER.

THE TITLE,  
UNITED STATES MARINE



# Special Rules for Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma

- “ In addition to the under which VA presumes service connection for the NHL based on Agent Orange Exposure, another regulation ( 38 CFR 3.313) allows VA to presume S/C for NHL (or its residuals) based merely on service in Vietnam. Veterans qualify for the presumption if they served in the waters offshore of Vietnam (Blue Water Vietnam Veterans), even if they did not set foot in the country.







# Disease Recently Linked to Exposure

- “ What is ischemic heart disease (IHD)?
- “ IHD encompasses many heart conditions
- “ It is the foremost cause of death among people in industrialized nations
- “ There will likely be tens of thousands of Agent Orange-related claims associated with IHD
- “ Therefore, you should know about IHD





# Disease Recently Linked to Exposure

## “ Medical Definition of IHD

- Ischemia refers to a failure of the cardiovascular system to deliver adequate oxygenated blood to a body tissue. Myocardial ischemia or cardiac ischemia is ischemia of the heart muscle, or a failure to deliver an adequate supply of blood or oxygen to the heart. IHD is the health condition characterized by the existence of myocardial or cardiac ischemia.
- Coronary Artery Disease (:CAD+) also know as coronary heart disease, is a term related to atherosclerosis, which is the thickening and hardening of the walls of the arteries near the heart or the clogging of such arteries. CAD is the most common for of IHD.
- Artery spasms are another form of IHD



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USHING • JOHNNIE C SMITH Jr  
MITH Jr • HOWARD A TH



# Disease Recently Linked to Exposure

- “ The Social Security Administration's Definition of IHD:
  - The results of one or more coronary arteries being narrowed or obstructed or in rare situations, constricted due to vasospasm, interfering with the normal flow of blood tot the heart muscle
  - It includes CAD by any cause, including atherosclerosis, coronary spasm, coronary artery embolism, dissection, aneurysm, and vaculitis
  - Symptoms are often caused by CAD, but IHD may also result from noncoronary artery impairment, such as aortic stenosis, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, pulmonary hypertension, or anemia





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## Disease Recently Linked to Exposure

“ The VA Clinician's Guide states:  
%Ischemic heart disease may be  
either absolute(e.g., coronary artery  
disease) or relative (e.g./  
cardiomyopathy with a greatly  
enlarged heart).+



# Disease Recently Linked to Exposure

- “ Final advice on IHD Claims:
- “ If a veteran has any type of heart condition, and you are unsure if its considered IHD, file the claim to be safe, get evidence and submit.



“QUESTIONS?”



# Boots on the Ground in Vietnam

