



TOWN OF ACTON
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Veterans' Services
James R. MacRae, District Director

November 2, 2020

Greetings Acton and Boxborough Veterans and family members,

It's apparent that this pandemic has changed what we are able to do in our everyday lives. As we have all adapted as best we can to this situation, so has my office. Even though my physical office is currently closed to the public I want to let you all know that we can still accomplish most Veteran benefit related tasks. There is a lot that can be done over the phone and through email. Additionally, there is seating available to meet outside of my office when weather permits and I am able to make home visits, with proper preventative measures, to obtain any signatures for benefits we may work together on. State and Federal Veterans benefits are not a handout; they are benefits you've earned through your service to our country. There are no costs associated with my services and confidentiality is completely respected. Please contact my office if you wish to learn more.

Regards,

James R. MacRae, District Director
Acton and Boxborough Veterans' Services



Veteran's Day Observances in Acton and Boxborough



Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic Veterans Day Ceremonies in Acton and Boxborough are cancelled. However, there will be a Veteran's Day Broadcast on Acton TV on November 11th, at 11am. In addition this this, it will be available to stream any time after November 11th on Acton TV's YouTube channel.



Bugles Across America

On the first Sunday of every month at 5 p.m., we gather at our War Memorial Site, next to the Acton Fire Station across from the Common, to honor all our fallen men and women. We are not alone in doing this; people just like us are doing the same thing all over the United States at the same time. All are invited to attend.

Check out our website:

www.buglesacrossamerica.org/www.buglecall.org.

In closing, let's never forget the fallen.

VETERANS TRIBUTE PROJECT UPDATE

October 21, 2020 - The Boxborough Veterans Tribute Committee is happy to report that significant progress has been made on the construction of the tribute at the Sargent Memorial Library.

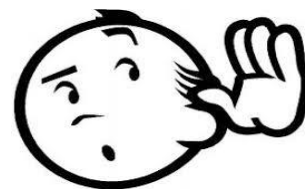
The design of the monument was established over a year ago by LWDA, an architectural firm in Concord MA, and after an extended bidding process "Ludlow Memorial Company" out of Ludlow MA, was awarded the contract to construct the monument. Recent actions have been to approve the proofs for the bronze plaques and to begin cutting the large granite blocks.

Future updates will be posted on the town website.



V.A. Disability Claims for Hearing Loss and Tinnitus

Was your job in the military directly related to loud noise exposure? If the answer is yes there may be additional benefits available to you. If the V.A. awards a Veteran hearing loss it is usually a 0% disability rating. This 0% rating entitles you to free hearing aids and batteries at NO COST TO YOU. If the V.A. awards a Veteran tinnitus, a high pitched ringing that doesn't have to be constant, it will be a disability rating of 10%. Currently, any Veteran with a 10% rating from the V.A. receives a monthly award of \$142.29. V.A. disability is TAX EXEMPT. Please contact my office to learn more.



Littleton VFW Post 6556
21 TAYLOR STREET, LITTLETON MA
PHONE: 978-486-3966



***RESPONSIBLE FOR VFW MEMBERS LIVING IN ACTON,
BOXBOROUGH, HARVARD AND LITTLETON***

We are located in the Littleton Depot at 21 Taylor Street which is the corner of Taylor Street and Whitcomb Avenue. A key land mark is our 3-inch Maxim QF naval gun painted haze gray backed by three flagpoles with the National, State, and POW/MIA flags.

The VFW was established to assist veterans. Our mission is to foster camaraderie among United States veterans of overseas conflicts and to serve our veterans, the military and our communities and advocate on behalf of all veterans. The purposes of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States are fraternal, patriotic, historical, charitable, and educational; to preserve and strengthen comradeship among its members; to assist worthy comrades; to perpetuate the memory and history of our dead, and to assist their surviving spouses and orphans; to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States of America, and fidelity to its institutions of American freedom, and to preserve and defend the United States from all her enemies.

There are three qualifiers for membership in the VFW, as set out in our By-Laws. An individual must meet all three in order to become a member. They are as follows:

- 1: Citizenship** – must be a U.S. citizen or U.S. National.
- 2: Honorable Service** – must have served in the Armed Forces of the United States and either received a discharge of Honorable or General (Under Honorable Conditions) or be currently serving.
- 3: Service in a war, campaign, or expedition on foreign soil or in hostile waters***. This can be proven by any of the following:
 - An authorized campaign medal (see a full list of qualifying medals and badges)
 - Receipt of Hostile Fire Pay or Imminent Danger Pay (verified by a military pay statement)
 - Service in Korea for 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days

Check us out on Facebook! - search Littleton VFW Post 6556

Flu shots available through the VA Healthcare system

If you are enrolled in VA health care, you can receive the seasonal flu vaccination at more than 60,000 locations through the Community Care Network in-network retail pharmacies and urgent care partners. VA will pay for standard-dose and high-dose flu shots. Even if you haven't had a flu shot lately, make this the year that you do!

Potential Flu vaccination options include:

- Costco, CVS, Kroeger, WalMart, Safeway, Wegmans or Urgent Care- free of charge, no co-pay with Veteran ID.
- Or contact the Office of Community Care National Contact Center to find a location at 1-877-881-7618.

Enrolled Veterans can visit <https://www.va.gov/communitycare/flushot.asp> to find locations to get a no-cost flu shot.

ATTENTION VETERANS AND SURVIVING SPOUSES OF VETERANS

Massachusetts State Chapter 115 Assistance for Veterans and surviving spouses

You may be eligible for monthly medical reimbursements if you meet the following criteria:

- Assets for single Veteran or surviving spouse do not exceed \$5000
- Assets for a married veteran do not exceed \$10,000

*Assets **DO NOT INCLUDE** your primary home or vehicle*

IRA's will NOT be counted as assets but rather as monthly income

- Monthly income should not exceed \$2126 for single veteran or surviving spouse
- Monthly income should not exceed \$2930 for a married veteran

If your monthly income is significantly less than the thresholds shown above, you may be eligible for additional compensation

- Monthly medical reimbursements may include the following:
- Prescriptions, prescription copays, hospital and doctor copays, supplemental coverage (Medex, Tufts, Blue Cross, etc), Medicare B (currently deducted from Social Security as much as \$144.60 per month), Medicare D and more

ACTON VETERANS GIFT ACCOUNT

A gift account has been established to help Acton Veterans and spouses as needed for basic needs. 100% of all donations go directly to assisting those in need. If you wish to help Veterans and surviving spouses on the immediate local level please contact my office to learn more.

Attention Vietnam Veterans

The VA assumes that certain diseases can be related to a Veteran's qualifying military service. We call these "presumptive diseases." The VA has recognized certain cancers and other health problems as presumptive diseases associated with [exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides](#) during military service. Veterans and their survivors may be eligible for benefits for these diseases. Please contact my office to learn more.

If you have ever been diagnosed with any of the following you may be eligible for compensation:

- **AL Amyloidosis** - A rare disease caused when an abnormal protein, amyloid, enters tissues or organs
- **Chronic B-cell Leukemias** - A type of cancer which affects white blood cells
- **Chloracne (or similar acneform disease)** - A skin condition that occurs soon after exposure to chemicals and looks like common forms of acne seen in teenagers. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10 percent disabling within one year of exposure to herbicides.
- **Diabetes Mellitus Type 2** - A disease characterized by high blood sugar levels resulting from the body's inability to respond properly to the hormone insulin
- **Hodgkin's Disease** - A malignant lymphoma (cancer) characterized by progressive enlargement of the lymph nodes, liver, and spleen, and by progressive anemia
- **Ischemic Heart Disease** - A disease characterized by a reduced supply of blood to the heart, that leads to chest pain
- **Multiple Myeloma** - A cancer of plasma cells, a type of white blood cell in bone marrow
- **Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma** - A group of cancers that affect the lymph glands and other lymphatic tissue
- **Parkinson's Disease** - A progressive disorder of the nervous system that affects muscle movement
- **Peripheral Neuropathy, Early-Onset** - A nervous system condition that causes numbness, tingling, and motor weakness. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10 percent disabling within one year of herbicide exposure.
- **Porphyria Cutanea Tarda** - A disorder characterized by liver dysfunction and by thinning and blistering of the skin in sun-exposed areas. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10 percent disabling within one year of exposure to herbicides.
- **Prostate Cancer** - Cancer of the prostate; one of the most common cancers among men
- **Respiratory Cancers (includes lung cancer)** - Cancers of the lung, larynx, trachea, and bronchus
- **Soft Tissue Sarcomas (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or mesothelioma)** - A group of different types of cancers in body tissues such as muscle, fat, blood and lymph vessels and connective tissue

Blue Water Navy Veterans and Agent Orange Exposure:

Veterans who served on open sea ships off the shore of Vietnam during the Vietnam War are referred to as "Blue Water Navy Veterans."

Veterans who served on a vessel operating not more than 12 nautical miles seaward from the demarcation line of the waters of Vietnam and Cambodia, as defined in Public Law 116-23 are eligible to apply for Service Connected Disability if you have any of the conditions listed above starting January 2020.



Come home to **ACTON**

Come Home to Acton was started by Mark Starr with the simple mission of cultivating a “Pay it Forward” movement

that honors and gives back to the men and women who gave themselves to protect and serve us. If every community can come together for one project, for one family – imagine the impact for those who have made such sacrifices for all of us.

Mark’s vision started with a visit 20 years ago to the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial Wall, where the loss of so many men and women of his age/generation was so eye-opening, that it struck him personally. These men and women who served and lost their lives were his peers. It was then that he felt those of us who were fortunate to live, grow up, and raise children in a nice suburban town owed a debt to veterans who sacrifice their lives every day so that we could live ours. So grew his desire to give back in some small way.

CHTA has both short term and long term goals: In the shorter term, he will leverage his expertise as a builder in Acton and professionally build an accessible home, placing a deserving family in a community that will embrace and welcome them. The longer term desire is that a successful completion will drive awareness and fuel a “movement” that will replicate Mark’s role in other communities to do the same.

Please visit comehometoacton.org to learn more.