

By JOSEPH G. LARIOSA

(© 2009 *Journal Group Link International*)

Filipino Veterans Denied Lump-sum Claims to Sue Department of Veterans' Affairs

CHICAGO, Illinois (*JGLI*) – A group representing some 16,000 Filipino veterans, who were denied lump sum claims at close of the deadlines last Tuesday because they were not part of the “Missouri List,” is suing the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs for denial of their “equal rights before the law and exclusion of veterans, their widows and right heirs.”

According to the press release issued by Arturo P. Garcia, national coordinator of the Los Angeles, California-based Justice for Filipino American Veterans (JFAV), the exclusion of the 16,000 Filipino veterans “is an outrage considering that the U.S. and Philippine governments made so much political capital of the lump sum. This proves injustice still prevails.”

FilVets Denied Lump-sum Claims to Sue DVA - MabuhayRadio

Written by Joseph G. Lariosa

Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:22 - Last Updated Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:32

The JFAV is set to file a case of mandamus and a declaratory relief in court against the DVA for the Filipino veterans who were denied because they are not on (the) so-called "Missouri List," which is housed at the military records of the

National
Personnel
Records
Center
in
St. Louis
,
Missouri
.

{xtypo_quote} **Editor's Notes:** According to World War II veteran then Major Dominador S. Reyes (1909-1999), the father of this editor, the so-called "Missouri Roster" of legitimate WWII Filipino soldiers and recognized guerillas (who had Army serial numbers) was supposed to have been finalized in 1945 to 1946. It was necessary then to separate the real WWII soldiers and guerillas from the so-called 'Liberation-time fighters (sic)' that filed bogus claims for back salaries and other fake claims in 1945. Major Reyes was assigned with the Judge Advocate General's Office (JAGO) until he resigned in 1946 to return to private law practice in

Sorsogon
Province

. Before he died on

Jan. 10, 1999

, Atty. Reyes was laughing at some alleged WWII 'guerillas' in
Los Angeles

,
California

, who were only in their mid-60s. This meant that in 1942, the alleged 'guerillas' were only eight-to 10-years old. {/xtypo_quote}

Additional Editor's Note: To read the wartime exploits of Dominador S. Reyes, please click

FilVets Denied Lump-sum Claims to Sue DVA - MabuhayRadio

Written by Joseph G. Lariosa

Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:22 - Last Updated Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:32

on this hyperlink, [My Father Was the Birdman and Butcher of Bulusan during the War and a Don Quixote Later in Life](#)

The JFAV is filing the case in collaboration with the Migrant Heritage Commission based in Washington

,
D.C.

, headed by Atty. Arnedo S. Valera.

Garcia pointed out that this is a case of denial of the equal rights before the law and exclusion of veterans, their widows and rightful heirs.

Garcia added the widows of the veterans should not have been excluded from the Stimulus benefits. "The number of widows is three times than the number of living veterans. Widows of the deceased veterans and their rightful heirs must also be compensated for their 'human suffering' as provided by the Stimulus Act."

Under the Stimulus Act also known as American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, the widow of the veteran only becomes a recipient of the lump sum if her veteran-husband was able to file a claim for the benefit. Widows of veterans who did not file claims cannot get benefits.

FilVets Denied Lump-sum Claims to Sue DVA - MabuhayRadio

Written by Joseph G. Lariosa

Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:22 - Last Updated Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:32

Meanwhile, a press release issued by the U.S. Embassy in Manila furnished the media in Wash

ington
,
D.C.

, said out of the 40,000 applications received, 12,846 were eligible to receive the benefits, 7,000 were duplications and 14,500 cases remain pending.

It said a total of 7.2-billion pesos (\$156-M) in benefits have so far been given away out of the \$198-M appropriated by U.S. Congress in the ARRA. Veterans, who are U.S. citizens were to receive \$15,000, while those, who are non-U.S. Citizens were to receive \$9,000.

News from the USDVA Office in Manila

U SDVA-Manila Director Jon Skelly and his staff appeared in dozens of TV-and-radio interviews to explain the benefits and the processes, and to remind veterans of the application deadline. The USDVA office remained open on Monday, February 15, when other Embassy offices were closed for the George Washington's Birthday and US Presidents' Day, a holiday.

FilVets Denied Lump-sum Claims to Sue DVA - MabuhayRadio

Written by Joseph G. Lariosa

Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:22 - Last Updated Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:32

USDVA teams were also stationed at the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) in Quezon City .

“Thanks to the Philippine news media and our partners at the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office, we were able to get the word out about the benefit to veterans living all over the Philippines and in the United States,” said Director Jon Skelly.

“We had thousands of applicants on the final two days at our office and at PVAO, so we really did get the word out.”

The USDVA-Manila staff includes 222 Filipino employees, working hard every day to serve these honored veterans.

Veterans who have already applied for this one-time benefit will receive an acknowledgement receipt from USDVA. There is no need to obtain additional military service information unless requested by USDVA.

FilVets Denied Lump-sum Claims to Sue DVA - MabuhayRadio

Written by Joseph G. Lariosa

Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:22 - Last Updated Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:32

“I want to remind people that we continue to pay around \$8 million monthly in previous and continuing benefits to Filipino veterans and their family members,” said Mr. Skelly. “My staff will gladly review records of individual Filipino WW II veterans or their survivors because we want to make sure these heroes are receiving all benefits to which they are entitled,” he added.

JFAV and the MHC pointed out that the mere fact that the DVA denied more veterans than they approved is proof of grave injustice.

Way back in 2001, the Veterans Federation of the Philippines, PVAO and JFAV stood for the figure of 54,000 living veterans in the Philippines and 18,000 in the United States . This pit against the DVA 's small estimate of 24,000 veterans shows that the DVA always gives the smallest number, as it was probably afraid that its budget would be affected.

Garcia pointed out: “Now the problem is out: there is less money to give out to the living veterans thus (the policy adopted was) just (to) deny veterans their benefits. The DVA is just too arrogant to say they were wrong. And the Filipino World War II veterans are again the hapless victims.” (

lariosa_jos@sbcglobal.net

)

FilVets Denied Lump-sum Claims to Sue DVA - MabuhayRadio

Written by Joseph G. Lariosa

Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:22 - Last Updated Thursday, 18 February 2010 21:32

© opyright 2009 The *Journal Group Link International*. The contents provided in the JGLi may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or otherwise distributed without the prior written authority of the *Journal Group Link International*.

(**Editor's Note:** Watch out for the upcoming outlet-oriented, subscription-based website of *Journal Group Link International* that guarantees originally sourced stories, features, photos, audios and videos and multi-media contents.)

[Joomla SEO powered by JoomSEF](#)