The following article was submitted by one of the Texas Councils of Chapters leaders as information to other MOAA members who might be in the same situation that he is. You will need to consult with your local VA to avail yourself of these important services.

VA Low Vision Services



This article is a personal testimony of my experiences with the Dallas VA hospital Low Vision Clinic. I have Stargardts, a genetic disease that affects the macular. I first noticed a problem around 2012 and my vision has deteriorated over the years. I stopped driving in 2019 and was diagnosed as legally blind earlier this year. I was able to cope with my vision loss over the years because changes came gradually. I enlarged the fonts on my computer screen, used the magnifier on my

iPhone to read menus, and used a portable magnifying device from my low vision optometrist to read documents. However, by about 6 months ago, I was having to use my iPhone to read my computer screen and I gave up reading long documents.

I learned about the VA Low Vision clinic late last year and scheduled an appointment in May. The Low Vision team is more than a low vision optometrist; it includes a support assistant, orientation and mobility specialist, blind rehab specialist, visual impairment treatment specialist and low vision advocate. The team thoroughly tested my eyesight and recommended devices tailored to my eyesight and lifestyle. They provided glasses to improve my ability to watch TV; they provided a software application that allows me to selectively enlarge the font on my computer screen; and they provided a device that allows me to read an entire page of text. Low vision problems are not curable. However, the VA Low Vision Clinic has given me the ability to continue my volunteer activities for MOAA, the Veterans Center of North Texas and the George W. Bush Presidential Library. With their help I have been able to maintain my quality of life.

It is important to note that low vision problems do not have to be service connected for a veteran to be eligible for treatment by the VA. My condition is genetic and not service connected. Feel free to contact me, Dave Schafer, at 214-577-4107 or moaaschafer@att.net if you have questions or would like additional information. You can also click on the following link to learn more about VA low vision services: VA Blind And Low Vision Rehabilitation