

Gateway Chapter

Paralyzed Veterans of America

A member chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America



Annual Report 2014-2015



“Veterans with Spinal Cord Injury or Disease, Living Life to the Fullest”

Gateway Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America

Annual Report
July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015

Officers

President.....**Stanley D. Brown**
Vice President **Rose M. Ganz**
Treasurer**Dennis L. Durrwachter**
Secretary **James F. Trombley**

Board of Directors

Doug Barnes	Chad Buder	Steve Birkemeier
Troy Bucklew	James Holland, PhD	Robert Huskey, PhD
Ruth Kult	Scott Richards	James Smith

Appointments

VAVS Representatives-Jefferson Barracks Rose Ganz
Membership OfficerSusan Lyle
Legislative Director Stanley Brown
Sports DirectorJames Trombley
National Director Stanley Brown
Newsletter EditorSusan Lyle
Hospital Liaison-Kansas City Troy Bucklew
Hospital Liaison-St. Louis (JB)..... Scott Richards
Hospital Liaison-St. Louis (JC) Stanley Brown



President's Message

Stanley D. Brown



Welcome to the FY 2014-2015 Annual Report of the Gateway Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America. We were chartered in Missouri in 1976 and are one of 34 chapters nationally. Fiscal year 2014 was extremely successful. Our fiscal year successes include the fact that we again received an A+ grade from the St. Louis Better Business Bureau and earned Honor Roll Charity status in meeting all of their governance and financial performance requirements. Out of 34 PVA Chapters nationwide, we were named “Most Outstanding Chapter” for 2015 (see front cover). As indicated by our latest independent audit on the last pages of this report, 90.5% of our expenditures went to programs! I am proud of that program expense ratio; to my knowledge it's the highest program percentage we've ever had. The new audit will soon be available on the St. Louis Better Business Bureau website, where we are also listed on their "Wise Giving Guide." Our tax filing (Federal Form 990) can be found on Guidestar.com. Our Chapter remained a 501(c)(3) nonprofit veterans organization serving honorably discharged veterans of the United States Armed Forces who have sustained a spinal cord injury or disease. We receive no federal subsidy. We are governed by a 12-member volunteer board of veterans like myself, paralyzed in an automobile accident 18 years ago while on active duty in the U.S. Army. The vision statement of the Gateway Chapter is “*Veterans with spinal cord injury or disease living life to the fullest.*”

For the eleventh year in a row, we finished the year with a positive cash flow. In fiscal year 2015, thanks again directly to our most successful charity golf tournament every held, we were able to expand our programs to provide more services to our members. Some of these programs include free bus transportation for members, holiday meals and monthly catered lunches to the Spinal Cord Injury Unit hospitalized patients at Jefferson Barracks, housing renovation grants for members, sports/recreation travel for members, grants for accessible van modifications, and cosponsoring our second outdoor camp. In 2015 we increased the dollar amount for home modifications to \$10,000 and provided \$5,500 for home generators. During fiscal year 2015 the voted board approved approximately \$70,000 and \$10,000 grants for trade ins for vehicles.

Most importantly, this year our Board of Directors remained vigilant in monitoring and improving the care members received at the St. Louis VA medical facilities. Improving this care, continues to be one of our primary missions. There is now a six bed acute care unit for SCI/D veterans opened on the seventh floor of the John Cochran facility. We, in addition to PVA Service Officers, monitor patient care at the unit. The renovation of the 32 inpatient beds in building 52 at Jefferson Barracks continues to expand from one wing to two wings on the ground floor. Family members of our inpatients continue to stay at the Fisher House which was opened at Jefferson Barracks in 2010 and is within walking distance of the existing Spinal Cord Injury unit. Our Gateway Chapter gave \$10,000 for the project. The Jefferson Barracks campus continues to undergo renovations to coincide with the adjacent National Cemetery expansion. The gymnasium complex will be destroyed, including the 6 lane bowling alley. Our Chapter also donated \$5,000 toward new bowling facilities in a proposed new recreation center.

There are a plethora of charities today and numerous new “veterans” charities. Gateway continues to be an excellent steward of the money we receive and are proud of the Better Business Bureau “Wise Giving Guide” approval and A+ grade we have achieved.

Your support and interest are crucial. We always need volunteers for special functions at Jefferson Barracks or within our office. Donations are, of course, always accepted and tax-deductible. Please call with any questions on our local line 314-427-0393 or toll-free 1-800-426-4058.

GATEWAY CHAPTER PVA PROGRAMS

ADMINISTRATION

The Chapter office is located at 1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center, St. Louis, Missouri, a St. Louis County municipality. The space in our office building is extremely accessible and we are able to accommodate many members at our board meetings. The Chapter office is overseen by Ms. Susan Lyle, who is beginning her 10th year as Executive Director of the Chapter. Her duties include the day-to-day administration and management of the building, all programs, as well as supervising Gateway's part-time staff. Ms. Lyle is assisted by our part-time Administrative Assistant, Jaclyn Wetteroff, who has been with our Chapter for nearly 5 years now.

SERVICE

Our National Service Officer (NSO) staff had 4,934 total contacts for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. There were 3,821 member or member-eligible targeted contacts of the 4,934 total. Staff assisted in eligible veterans receiving \$7,465,110 in benefit claims. The Gateway members were served in a very professional manner by PVA Senior Benefits Advocate, Rodney Harris, whose office is at the Jefferson Barracks Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Unit, and Senior Benefits Advocate, Fred Bradley, whose office is located on 18th Street in downtown St. Louis. Fred is assisted by NSO II, Alan Knabe and Sr. Secretary, Susan White. NSO II, Brent Follas is located at the Kansas City VAMC office, and is assisted by Sr. Secretary Rebecca Warchola.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Gateway Gazette is our bi-monthly newsletter. Our Executive Director and Administrative Assistant accomplish all functions in the creation, publication, and mailing of the newsletters. We mail out over 800 newsletters to members, associate members, and volunteers, as well as email newsletters to those who prefer that method of receipt. Newsletters are also personally distributed to hospital inpatients and VA staff. The newsletter is an important document for our members and supporters, keeping everyone apprised of the ongoing good work our Chapter does. Our members are encouraged to contribute articles to the *Gazette* on a regular basis. The Gateway Chapter PVA maintains a website at www.gatewaypva.org, with helpful links and membership forms, prior newsletters, a photo gallery, and a calendar of upcoming events, just to name a few of its benefits. Our Chapter also has a Facebook page where our "fans" can see pictures of our events and keep up with what we are planning next.

MEMBERSHIP

Susan Lyle serves as the official membership officer for the Chapter. At our fiscal year end on June 30, 2015, we had 655 total members. Of those 655 members, 225 were service connected and 429 were non-service connected. Our President, Executive Director, Administrative Assistant and Transportation Drivers all work hard to serve and increase our membership. An accurate membership database requires constant vigilance; keeping track of contact information for new and current members, and accounting for deceased members and those who transfer to other chapters. Membership applications are offered to member-eligible veterans at each monthly Jefferson Barracks SCI Unit luncheon that Gateway sponsors. Membership meetings are held after Gateway-sponsored luncheons on a quarterly basis. These meetings give our members the opportunity to discuss issues and learn about the many facets of their Chapter. Consequently, membership meetings are scheduled on clinic days at the SCI Center to give the greatest number of our members a chance to participate. In addition to meeting in St. Louis, the Chapter president drives to Kansas City for an annual membership forum at the KC VAMC. This effort affords our distant members an open forum to ask questions and make suggestions, all while partaking in a free lunch hosted by the Gateway Chapter. The Chapter also provides, free of charge, an annual membership picnic for our members and local SCI patients at area parks - complete with BBQ, sides, beverages, fun and games.

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In an effort to increase our membership involvement, we fund “nights out” at restaurants and entertainment events for members who are active in or on behalf of the Gateway Chapter. In 2014/2015, the Chapter gave several free Rams and Chiefs football and Cardinals and Royals baseball tickets, to our members, both inpatients and outpatients. To also increase membership, the Gateway President, peer support counselors, and St. Louis PVA service officers regularly visit area rehabilitation centers to find eligible members.

VOLUNTEERS

The bulk of the Chapter’s volunteers help out at the Jefferson Barracks VA Medical Center. Our volunteers assist with our holiday activities and meals, monthly membership luncheons, and recreation and crafts programs. The Chapter provides a diet drinks and snacks for distribution to the hospitalized patients in the Jefferson Barracks SCI Unit five days per week by our volunteers. The same service has been made available to patients at the new six-bed acute care SCI/D unit at John Cochran. We also have volunteers who assist with our trap shoot, annual golf tournament, and our annual membership picnic. Gateway board members are active volunteers in the St. Louis VA Medical Center services. Rose Ganz, Gateway Vice President, serves as Gateway PVA liaison for Volunteer Services. Rose serves on several VA patient councils, as well.

The Gateway Chapter PVA would like to thank all of our volunteers, without whom we would not have been able to provide the high level of service that we achieve for our members each year. We look forward to another successful year.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS/ADVOCACY

Gateway PVA’s Government Relations/Advocacy program is focused on several areas of concern to our members, in addition to veterans in general, and individuals with disabilities nationwide. The Government Relations Director (GRD) position was vacated December 2012. Since that vacancy, Gateway’s President, the Executive Director, and volunteer Board Members, have been fulfilling the GRD/Advocacy duties. Representing our Chapter at local, state, and national levels, the Government Relations (GR) program advocates for PVA membership, as well as the disabled community, in the areas of healthcare, VA benefits, civil rights and accessibility, and stays in tune with relevant legislative affairs. In March 2015, Gateway’s President joined other chapter representatives in the PVA Advocacy/Legislation Week training and visits to legislators. In addition to the perennial funding issues, Gateway focused its presentations on recent VA equipment procurement changes in prosthetics orders and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The Chapter continues its vehicle and home modification grant program. We provide funding grants up to \$10,000 to make members’ homes accessible, as well as provide funds (approximately \$1,000) for members to have hand controls installed in their vehicles, which enables them to drive independently. Finally, we added assistance (\$5,500) with home generators. Any pertinent news regarding advocacy, legislation, and members’ benefits is included in the monthly Board of Directors GRD report, the quarterly membership meetings, and in the Chapter’s bi-monthly newsletter, the *Gateway Gazette*. As always, it is of the utmost importance that the GR/Advocacy program maintains a strong emphasis on serving our members. Gateway President, Stanley Brown, serves on the St. Louis County Commission on Disabilities. The Commission held its monthly meetings at the Gateway Chapter office free of charge. The Commission is represented by leaders from the various St. Louis disability agencies and foundations. This past fiscal year there was a focus on universal design criteria for all new housing construction.

The River/City Arch project is another area where President Brown is lending his accessibility knowledge to architects and urban planners, and U.S. Park Service. President Brown sits on a disability consulting panel for the Federal plans to renovate and make more accessible the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial project (the Gateway Arch). These plans include direct pedestrian access to expanded Arch grounds.

FUNDRAISING & DEVELOPMENT

In September 2015, the Chapter held our 20th Annual Jack Buck/Gateway PVA Golf Tournament. Even in the economic recession, our tournament was extremely successful thanks to the volunteer efforts of The Pattonville Firefighters, with special assistance from Mark Woolbright, Rodney Bland, and Judi Bernardon. Bob Rives and Cindy Howell from Professional Equities, as well as longtime friends Fred & Michelle Waelter and their son, Devin. We also received great support from Bob Soutier and Jack Martorelli, as well as their organized labor contacts. Our auctioneer Jerry Hollingsworth, as well as many others who made this a great tournament. We owe a special thanks to Anheuser Busch and Overland-St. Ann VFW Post 3944, for their \$5,000 Silver Sponsorships. Lastly, a very special thank you to Patrick Sly and Emerson, who again facilitated our largest single golf tournament contribution as a Double Diamond Sponsor.

Despite the continued poor economic conditions, fiscal year 2014-2015 was a very good year for us. The Missouri Gateway Chapter of the Star Touring & Riding Association again graciously donated the proceeds from their 2014 annual motorcycle "Show Me" rally held in Lake of the Ozarks, Missouri. The Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association also donated a very generous amount to us. The Annual Kuk Sool Won demonstration held at the St. Charles High School and sponsored by the Kuk Sool Won St. Louis Martial Arts & Physical Fitness Group donated over \$4,000. The founder of this martial arts group, Master Harvey, has been a longtime supporter of our Gateway Chapter and we are extremely grateful for their continued support and for inclusion as a beneficiary of their fundraising events.

SPORTS & RECREATION

The Gateway Chapter continued providing recreational opportunities to our members. Board member Jim Trombley was our Sports Director for most of the year. We spent nearly \$32,000 on sports and recreation events for this fiscal year. Several members attended the 34th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Dallas, Texas, and the Winter Sports Clinic held annually in Snowmass, Colorado. Our Chapter continued the program of sponsoring "nights out" for members to attend movies, dinners, and sporting events by redeeming their participation points. In May 2015 our Chapter co-sponsored our annual local wheelchair games at the Jefferson Barracks VAMC. We also funded members to travel to Kentucky to join the Kentucky PVA Chapter members for some camaraderie in sporting events like Boccia, hand cycling, and bass fishing. Plus, the 3rd Annual YMCA Trout Lodge outing in Southeast Missouri is coming up again, which was extremely popular in the past and appears to be growing in numbers. This particular outdoor recreation event includes overnight lodging and daytime activities such as kayaking, archery, trap and skeet shooting, boating, and fishing. Finally, the board voted to add unlimited sporting events to our members who have earned the points to be eligible for funding reimbursements.

All of the aforementioned types of sports and recreation events provide a form a therapy, give a sense of ability and creates optimism for our members and can often be the springboard that helps them realize the vision of our Chapter - "living life to the fullest." In addition, our Chapter sponsors an annual trap shoot and provides food, beverages and ammo for our veterans, as well as transportation for free so they can attend that and many other events like our free annual membership BBQ/picnic.

In January 2015, the Chapter held our 10th annual Jefferson Barracks disabled bowling tournament for members in conjunction with our annual chili cook-off at the Jefferson Barracks Spinal Cord Injury Unit in building 52. The members truly enjoy chili tasting and choosing a winner.

A BIG Thank You to Everyone Who Made Fiscal Year 2014-2015 a HUGE Success!



"Veterans with Spinal Cord Injury or Disease, Living Life to the Fullest"

Congratulations Hank on your Gold Medal in Weightlifting!



WINNER OF THE "JOEY"



TRANSPORTATION

The Gateway Chapter PVA transportation program is overseen by the President and the Executive Director. Our bus can transport five veterans in wheelchairs and four individuals in seats. The 2010 bus has high mileage and consequently, frequent maintenance issues, so we'll be looking at getting a new one next year.

Our two part-time drivers are available five days per week and take the passengers to clinic appointments, appointments for therapy, grocery stores, banks and other events / activities such as our annual membership picnic, ball games, movies, and the St. Louis Veteran's Day Parade, which is always held in downtown St. Louis. Many area members without other means of transportation benefit from this program.

The Chapter continues to receive a transportation grant from the State of Missouri to help defray a small portion of the annual gasoline costs associated with running the bus. Other funding for this program comes from the monthly grant from our National PVA office, our fundraising events, annual golf tournament, and generous donors, like the Union Pacific Railroad Foundation. The cost of gas for our bus continues to be a major expense, especially since the bus gets so few miles per gallon. However, Gateway is determined to provide this service because it is, in many cases, the only way some of our members, especially those in nursing homes, get the opportunity to get out of their environment.



PATIENT SERVICES/LIAISON

The Gateway Chapter is fortunate to have had three Hospital Liaisons during FY 2014-2015 to advocate for our members' healthcare. Board member, Scott Richards is our local Jefferson Barracks VA Hospital Liaison Officer and chairman of the Chapter Hospital Committee. Both Scott and President Brown (John Cochran VA Hospital Liaison) successfully completed the National PVA training requisites for "certification" as Hospital Liaison Officers. They, and other board members, visit spinal cord patients who are receiving care at the John Cochran Hospital and the Jefferson Barracks SCI Unit in St. Louis. The Hospital Committee meets with St. Louis VA staff, doctors, and PVA service officers, to stay abreast of all issues pertaining to the healthcare of our members and other SCI/D veterans who receive care at the St. Louis area VA hospitals.

Board member, Troy Bucklew, served as our liaison representative for the Kansas City VAMC. He worked closely with all of the VA staff, as well as with the K.C. benefits officer. The healthcare of our members remains the foremost important mission of the Gateway Chapter.

The Gateway Chapter members also remain active in the SCI Peer Support Program, whereby veteran members who have lived with spinal cord injuries/diseases meet with and provide guidance to the newly injured or diagnosed veterans. This program is invaluable in the rehabilitation of the newly injured and provides credibility to the statement, "I know what you're going through." Two Gateway board members serve on the governing council of the St. Louis VA Spinal Cord Injury Peer Support Program. In addition, our Chapter provides the popular "Yes You Can" guide to self-care booklets to the newly injured SCI patients at the Jefferson Barracks Spinal Cord Injury Unit, phone cards, monthly catered luncheons, and canteen books. Any assistance or resource we can offer which helps our members "live life to the fullest" is a "step" in the right direction.

GATEWAY CHAPTER OF THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICASTATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITIONAS OF JUNE 30, 2015 AND JUNE 30, 2014

<u>CURRENT ASSETS:</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Cash	\$ 117,291	\$ 90,895
Investment	<u>939,240</u>	<u>892,517</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>1,056,531</u>	<u>983,412</u>
 <u>PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT:</u>		
Building and improvement	752,881	752,881
Furniture and Equipment	<u>134,223</u>	<u>134,223</u>
	887,104	887,104
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>227,007</u>	<u>197,946</u>
Net Property and Equipment	<u>660,097</u>	<u>689,158</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$1,716,628</u>	<u>\$1,672,570</u>
 <u>LIABILITIES:</u>		
Accounts Payable	\$ 22,549	\$ 61,840
Accrued Leave	4,600	4,563
Deferred income	-0-	5,827
Deposits	<u>6,365</u>	<u>6,365</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>33,514</u>	<u>78,595</u>
 <u>NET ASSETS:</u>		
Unrestricted	<u>1,683,114</u>	<u>1,593,975</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$1,716,628</u>	<u>\$1,672,570</u>

GATEWAY CHAPTER OF THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICASTATEMENT OF ACTIVITIESFOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2015 AND 2014CHANGES IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS:SUPPORT AND REVENUE:

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Special Events	\$ 110,720	\$ 158,880
Contributions	69,876	72,818
Investment Income	18,153	20,282
Reimbursements	660	590
PVA Grant	155,000	155,000
Grants	15,772	11,191
Miscellaneous Income	9,203	7,728
Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investment	(8,830)	130,210
Rental revenue	81,036	74,283
Rental expenses	(45,951)	(56,208)
Net Rental Revenue	35,085	18,075
Realized Gain (Loss) on Investment	15,999	(3,455)
Total Support and Revenue	<u>421,638</u>	<u>571,319</u>

EXPENSES:

Program Services	<u>299,982</u>	<u>381,849</u>
Support Services:		
General & Administration	12,051	15,804
Fund Raising	20,466	24,246
Total Support Services	<u>32,517</u>	<u>40,050</u>
Total Expenses	<u>332,499</u>	<u>421,899</u>
Increase (Decrease) in Unrestricted Net Assets	89,139	149,420
Unrestricted Net Assets, Beginning of Year	<u>1,593,975</u>	<u>1,444,555</u>
Unrestricted Net Assets, End of Year	<u>\$1,683,114</u>	<u>\$1,593,975</u>



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

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1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center

St. Louis, MO 63132



We love attending our Cardinals' games! Thanks GPVA for the frequent game drawings and giveaways.

"Veterans with Spinal Cord Injury or Disease, Living Life to the Fullest"