

# GATEWAY GAZETTE

*The Official Publication of the Gateway Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America*



Veterans Day 2005. Members of Gateway PVA gathered in downtown St. Louis for the annual Veterans Day Parade. Members in picture from left to right: Roy Gantt (with US flag), Lonnie Crider, Stan Brown, Bob Huskey, James Williams, Don McCoy, Ruth Kult, Gerald Brown, Bobby Jackson. Members of Gateway Tech Air Force Junior ROTC were once again on hand to assist and push members from beginning to end of the parade. Thank you Gateway Tech JROTC!

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Meat Shoot at High Ridge Elks Lodge on Sunday January 8 at noon. Located at High Ridge Blvd and Hunning Road in High Ridge Missouri. See ad inside for additional information..

Chili Cook-off and Bowling Tournament to be held at JBVAMC Thursday January 19. For more details see the Sports Director's Report on page 5.

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*Veterans with Spinal Cord Injury or Disease . . . Living Life to the Fullest*

## Gateway Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America

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**Has your address changed? Please inform us by telephoning us or writing to us at the below address:**

**Gateway PVA**  
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**St. Louis, MO. 63114**  
**(314) 427-0393 (800) 426-4058**  
**FAX (314) 427-4183**

From the Editor

When you received this copy of the Gateway Gazette you probably noticed that we've made changes to the newsletter. As part of our cost cutting efforts we have gone to a black and white format to save significant monthly expenses associated with the color copier we had leased. We believe that money will be better spent on more direct member benefits rather than on a "prettier newsletter." This was first suggested to us by our National Liaison Vice President Greg Joyce during his visit to our chapter. There are many chapters that have black and white newsletters, so we are not alone. Also, we are transitioning to the more popular MicroSoft publisher to produce the newsletter. I believe it is the content of the newsletter that is important, which leads me to a second point. This is your newsletter and for the most part only board members are writing articles. I believe that many of you have something to offer whether it be sporting events that you participate in, hobbies, work or any other activities of interest. Have you figured out something related to mobility that might help some of the rest of us? If you are a participant in the Winter Sports Clinic or the Summer Wheelchair games, published articles can earn you sports points for a share of our funds we have dedicated to sports. Yes, even though we are going through financial hard times, we still have a sports budget. So send something in for inclusion in the newsletter. We could use some new talent! You can mail it to me at the Chapter (address at bottom of page) or send it to me via email at [ddurrwachter@gatewaypva.org](mailto:ddurrwachter@gatewaypva.org). If there are any suggestions that you might have to make this a better newsletter, please let us know.



### Wanted:

To share apartment space and rent with another person with SCI, and a small amount of caregiver services. I am a 55 year old male veteran, diagnosed with T12 paraplegia in 1992. I am fairly independent, but would like someone to assist me with a few things, such as shopping, etc. I am on a modest pension, so am unable to live on my own. I prefer to avoid the option of living in a nursing home. I receive medical services through the VA, and am currently in the hospital there. I expect to be discharged pretty soon. If you are interested in an apartment/rent-share situation, or know someone who is, please call 314-894-5727 and ask to speak with me, Robert Boos.



## President's Report

By Stan Brown



On November 8th our Board of Directors approved a significant change in our organization to meet our financial crisis. In previous newsletters I've spoken of our difficulties and the possible reduction of services. In the past our organization and our numerous activities for paralyzed veterans have been significantly funded by our in-house telemarketing operation where we sell household and office supplies to individuals and businesses. These telemarketing revenues have dramatically dropped as reflected in our audited statement of activities for fiscal years 2002, 2003 and 2004. Fiscal year revenue minus expenses was a positive \$171,784 in 2002, dropped to a -\$49,008 in 2003, and further dropped to a -\$101,419 in 2004. Our fiscal year 2005 statements are currently being audited; our internal books indicate our end of fiscal year operating loss will be -\$112,313.

We have been running at a deficit monthly and have about exhausted our savings to continue to provide programs, hoping donations and telemarketing revenues would increase. As stated in the October 15th St. Louis Post Dispatch article, I said that unless we dramatically increase revenue we would no longer be able to provide all services. That crisis point came in November. The budget constraints forced us to eliminate three of our remaining four paid staff positions; in September we eliminated the Government Relations position. On November 8th we eliminated the Transportation Director, Administrative Assistant, and Development Director positions. Our transportation program, taking outpatients to activities and some board members to visit hospitalized patients, stopped pending recruiting volunteers. We are seeking help from veterans' organizations and other groups. Our plans are to add volunteer drivers to our insurance policy. In addition to transportation needs, administrative office help is desperately needed. The one paid staff position remaining is our Executive Director whose salary is 50% reimbursed from our national organization; in addition to now covering all office administrative duties, she is overseeing telemarketing.

The newspaper article quoted my belief as to the causes of decreased telemarketing revenue to include unfair competition from a terminated employee working for what has become a "competitor" charity and Missouri's expanding no-call list. As an organization we are trying to move forward in seeking new funding sources as well as ideas for fundraising activities. We are continuing to evaluate our telemarketing business. Our building is now up for sale or perhaps partial lease. There is good news to this message. With our reorganization we will finally be operating in the "black" starting December and continuing to build with a surplus each month. We will continue to furnish holiday meals and quarterly luncheons to all inpatients at Jefferson Barracks. Our special fundraising activities for the wheelchair games and other recreation activities will begin again in the new year. And, I believe most importantly, our board members remain actively involved in ensuring member health care needs are being met.

We are one of 24 area "Honor Roll Charities" as designated by the Better Business Bureau. As reported on our last audit, 66% of what we raised actually went to programs. We do good work and account for all the funds we receive. Any assistance you might render, ideas you might have, or volunteer services you or someone you know could offer, would be welcomed. Please help us by getting involved in some way. In today's difficult climate for charities we will emerge stronger, enabling members to realize our vision of "living life to the fullest."



### *In memory of....*



Richard Callahan	O'Fallon, MO	10/19/2005
Gregory Felton	St. Louis, MO	10/26/2005
Leonard E Walker	Fredericktown, MO	11/16/2005
Harold E McKinnon	Glencoe, MO	11/24/2005



## Not so fast. I'm back again.

By Ruth Kult



I know I like to be informed about what's going on in the world as much as the next person, but sometimes I can't handle the news. It is way too depressing. So, I thought let's hear some good things. I received an ATTABOY in the mail from Phyllis Boyer, wife of PVA member Clarence Boyer. She gave me permission to share her great letter with everyone. I'm going to share it because it is very nice and pats the SCI Unit as a whole on the back.

*When we come to the SCIU it's sort of like coming home. Everyone is gracious, helpful, enthusiastic and cheerful. We are always greeted very warmly. In spite of its age, the facility is always spotlessly clean with an inviting atmosphere.*

*The staff strives to provide any medical or durable supplies that might make life better for my husband, Clarence. Nurses, doctors and support personnel work together to compliment each other's skills and areas of expertise. Each person in the Spinal Cord Unit deserves praise and thanks for doing much more than a "job". Every individual truly makes a difference.*

*Clarence has been afflicted with a degenerative, progressive neuro-muscular disease for many years. He saw Dr. McGeary in his private practice for years. In January of 2000 he was hospitalized at a local hospital because of an insidious urinary tract infection. His Primary Care Physician, called on Dr. McGeary for consultation because his mobility deteriorated so rapidly. After the medical problem was cleared up, Dr. McGeary suggested a stay at Jefferson Barracks for rehabilitation. He made all the arrangements and had Clarence transferred to Jefferson Barracks.*

*What a pleasant surprise it was to find a not only a great medical staff, but also a wide range of related support staff. During a six-week stay at Jefferson Barracks, Clarence and myself came to consider the personnel as an extended family. At the end of six weeks a helpful seminar was presented for family members. A book entitled "Yes, you can!" was given to each participant. This book has been a frequent resource for both of us. I have even copied sections of it to share with others!*

*The following summer we returned several times for Clarence to receive driver's education in a vehicle equipped with hand controls. The driving instructor, a young man named Clint, subjected himself to bumpy starts, jolting stops and a few near misses in the attempt to introduce Clarence to hand controls. He deserved a purple heart for his valor.*

*In May of 2003 our little town of Desoto, was struck by a devastating tornado. Fortunately our home was only slightly damaged. The front porch where the wheelchair ramp was attached wasn't so lucky. It received much of the damage. This made entering and exiting dangerous. Thanks to the VA, who offered a grant to assist with repairs, he didn't remain house bound too long.*

*About a year ago, Clarence's mobility deteriorated to the point where he could no longer be cared for at home. He became a resident at a local long-term care facility. The facility tried to meet all of his needs but there were a few areas that were unsatisfactory.*

*I finally contacted Bob Sontag. He listened sympathetically and said, "we can help." Of course he knew just what to do. He scheduled a clinic appointment, notified the nursing home, arranged transportation and got the ball rolling. About a week later, Nurse Kathy made a home visit to the care facility. She implemented effective solutions to meet the most pressing problems. Thanks to the VA, his quality of life once again improved!*

*We are truly grateful to the VA staff for doing so much for us and for being "like family".*

*Phyllis Boyer*

I hope everyone gets a little message out of this letter.  
Thank you for reading.

## Sports Director's Report

By Joey Avellone



Hello sports fans this is your Sports Director, Joey Avellone, I have some great news for you. On January 19th I'm hosting a bowling tournament for everyone to enjoy at the JB VAMC bowling alley after everyone is finished eating at the Chili Cook-Off which will probably be around 1:00 pm. Amy Will and the rest of the JB staff will be holding the annual Chili Cook-Off in the SCI dining room. Have your chili there around 11:45AM. Taste testing and judging will start at noon. All are welcome to bring their own home cooked chili to be judged, just make sure there's plenty to go around. The bowling tournament should be lots of fun. The PVA will provide refreshments, non-alcoholic refreshments that is. We will also be giving medals to the top three bowlers in each class. I'll be using the NVWG rules to officiate and score the tournament. However, there will only be two classes, quads and paras/M.S. The tournament may be condensed depending on how many participants we have. The length of the tournament will depend on volunteer participation, so I cannot give you an exact departure time. There is no entry fee, this is not a fundraiser. I am just simply trying to be a good Sports Director and give you a chance to compete in some sports without having to travel too far. I also have other ideas of sports to compete in at JB such as; obstacle courses, table tennis, nine ball, and even swim meets. If you have any suggestions call me at (618)257-1927 or E-mail me at [jfavellone@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jfavellone@sbcglobal.net). I hope everyone had a great Christmas and will have a great New Year.

Thanks,  
Joey Avellone USMC

## Hospital Liaison's Report

By Matt Wilcox



I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and will have a healthy, happy and prosperous new year. And especially, to members that are separated from family and friends.

We are continuing the Charter Team to continue good SCI inpatient care at John Cochran. Please get with us if you have any input. At the last meeting we emphasized issues on training and increasing staff for 6-North. Currently, all the plastic surgery is being done at St. Louis University Medical Center, many patients have procedures at St. John's MC and when emergencies arise at Building 52, inpatients are diverted to St. Anthony's MC. We will follow the care at those facilities.

A Peer Support Program has been set up. We all know part of rehab is hearing from someone that has "been there" and what to expect. Our first meeting will be held soon and we want to emphasize peer support for new injuries and some "old timers".

The VA Volunteer Services met recently and many veterans groups were concerned. In the FY budget for 2007 the gymnasium, bowling alley and swimming pool will be signed over to the cemetery division and be removed. A small swimming pool for therapy would be built but no one is sure about the gymnasium or bowling alley.

Some of the National PVA Site Visit will be in St. Louis in late January. An area that will be addressed is the SCI Center outpatient clinic. They are concerned about the outpatient clinic only available twice a week. Does this address all the needs of patients needs? Again -- how do you feel about your clinic visits?

Matt Wilcox

## MIA

Have you seen or know the where these members are? They are in danger of being dropped from the PVA Roster. Please call us, write to us or Email us if you know where any of these members are! Contact info is on page 2.

Black, Woodrow F  
Brown, Raymond E  
Bunch, Jack  
Curran, Kathryn M  
Dawson, Ted  
Gillispie, Richard L  
Hanley, Michael  
Johnson, Richard D

Kerr, Bobby L  
Kiherman, James V  
Miller, Ronald L  
Modafari, James P  
Parker, Solomon I  
Rains, Randy J  
Rasmus, Thomas G  
Reynolds, Jerold L

Rice, Otis  
Shaw, Charles  
Tittes, Tim  
Watson, Ferne R  
White, Eric D  
Woods, John T

## Wheelchairs in the Media

By Stan Brown



Most recently I have both cried and laughed at the portrayal of wheelchair users in movies and on television. In early October on an episode of the HBO comedy "Curb Your Enthusiasm," the show's writer and star Larry David (original writer for "Seinfeld") tickles our funny bone and perhaps irritates some at the same time. David in other episodes pokes fun at religious and race issues and leaves us either snickering or laughing out loud. In the most recent episode David, able bodied, uses a disabled bathroom stall when others are full and upon exiting is chastised by a paraplegic waiting to use the disabled stall. Later the same day David sees a man walk out of his car in a disabled spot and David questions the man's use of the disabled spot. The man responds by saying he suffers from a stutter that qualifies him as "disabled." Under Missouri law and I suspect most states a stutter would not qualify someone for the disabled parking placard or license. Regardless, we laugh because we all know or have seen questionable disabled people jump out and briskly walk from disabled spots into a store. But while we're laughing we are also aware of the cold wintry days when we've searched in vain for a disabled spot near an entrance only to see placards that have either expired or have a few days remaining.

If you haven't seen Clint Eastwood's "Million-Dollar Baby," skip this paragraph and see the movie. If you have, you know what I'm going to talk about. Eastwood's protégé female boxer breaks her neck in an accident between rounds of a fight. We then see her life as a high-level quadriplegic in what appears to be a nice nursing home/care facility. A lot has been written about the only negative coverage of her life, including pressure sores on her legs, and the lack of any positive spin on her existence as a quadriplegic. She elicits her manager, Eastwood, to assist her in a suicide. This movie has produced a large debate in the disabled community on "assisted suicide." Likewise, the constitutionality of Oregon's assisted suicide law is now pending before the US Supreme Court. Having personally lived in the nursing home environment as a quadriplegic and also seen the end-of-life agony of some of the residents, I believe a person's rational choice to end their life should be honored. Others argue to accept that premise diminishes everyone's opinion of the disabled community, our lives are not worth the same as the able bodied. Whatever your predisposition, this movie will invoke a strong response.

Two Vietnam era movies have always come to my mind the last nine years in my wheelchair. "Coming Home" and "Born on the Fourth Of July" I believe correctly portray the challenge and struggle of wheelchair existence and yet offer hope to all of us in chairs. A rich and full life may be possible even if confined to a wheelchair is a message in both movies. In "Coming Home" the protagonist struggles with inadequate VA medical care, his opposition to the war, and a personal/sexual relationship with a woman whose husband is still on active duty. All powerful themes in this 1978 movie that could just as easily be made today. The 1989 "Born on the Fourth Of July" is accurately based on Ron Kovic's autobiography of the same title. Tom Cruise, if you can believe it, does an Oscar-nominated performance in the title role as a gung ho young Marine quickly shot in Vietnam and rendered a quadriplegic. At first he believes hard work and a positive attitude can basically overcome his physical injury. Not being able to walk again he turns to alcohol and begins to self-destruct. He gradually accepts his injury and finds fulfillment in the antiwar movement. Regardless of your opinion on the Vietnam war, both movies I believe accurately portray the difficult and successful transition of victims of traumatic spinal cord injury. From denial to depression and bitterness, to ultimate acceptance and fulfillment, is the recurring theme in both movies.

From television to the big screen, the public perception of us (wheelchair users) gets molded. Our own opinions likewise I believe can be shaped or at least challenged. My favorite portrayal is the young wheelchair-bound friend of Malcolm from the television comedy "Malcolm in the Middle." He is accepted as one of the guys, listened to because he's smart and given an extra push by his friends when there are no curb cuts. We, like everyone else, like to be recognized for what we do well and given a little help when we need it.





Pictures above of Veteran's Day Parade downtown St. Louis

Pictures above of activities at JB at Thanksgiving and Christmas parties.





More Veteran's Day 2005 Pictures. Do you know who the woman is shown riding in the white car above? It's Connie Stevens!



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## ***HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR MEMBERS BORN IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY!***

Gerald L. Brown	January 01
Nicole J. Trippany	January 02
Tee W. Rodgers	January 03
Edward R. Burnett	January 04
Edward L. Caldwell	January 06
Shane A. McCray	January 06
Odell D. Cornelius	January 07
Ron Standley	January 08
Betty T. Anderson	January 10
Gregory S. Hollingshead	January 10
Robert A. Long	January 10
Charles R. Winterrowd	January 10
Bruce M. Jantz	January 12
Matt R. Larkin	January 12
James M. Schmitt	January 12
James A. Sharp	January 12
Charles E. Reid	January 15
Chad Buder	January 16
Kenneth L. Garner	January 16
Gary D. Provence	January 16
Chester D. Turner	January 16
Aubrey Youngs	January 16
Guy F. Corbin	January 17
Hale B. Kennedy	January 17
Elbert Kimmel	January 17
Robert O. Enyard	January 18
Michael J. Jones	January 18
Robert W. Ayers	January 20

Alan L. Hampton	February 01
Doug W. Smith	February 01
Joseph L. Eschbacher	February 02
James B. Hook	February 02
Allen D. Hunt	February 03
Richard E. Jablonski	February 03
Jay D. Keehn	February 03
Holland L. Stephens	February 03
Gary E. Dole	February 04
Patro N. Olden	February 04
James R. Ridder	February 04
Carla C. Cline	February 05
Edward Welsh	February 05



Bodney Davis	February 06
Brian K. Elliott	February 06
Scott E. Kissee	February 08
Bradley W. Laux	February 08
Gerald F. Jones	February 10
Robert B. Korbus	February 10
Ben F. Bollinger	February 11
Edward P. Rodgers	February 11
George A. Hill	February 13
Dennis R. Badgley	February 14
Larry J. Emerick	February 14
Lawrence W. Hedden	February 15
Michael T. Hudson	February 15
Larry L. Kerby	February 15
Richard L. Mc Clanahan	February 15
Henry C. Mecey	February 15
John W. Perkins	February 15
Jose Colbert	February 16
James A. Boyle	February 17
John A. Moore	February 17
Kenneth J. Biby	February 18
Billy J. Hughes	February 18
Kevin P. Jackson	February 18
Robert M. Kiger	February 18
John M. Bryant	February 20
Charles R. Packard	February 20
William E. Berkholz	February 21
Matthew P. Erlund	February 21
Matthew Erlvnd	February 21
Walter L. Gardner	February 21
Frank B. Kalal	February 21
Scott K. Maness	February 21
Donald V. Merrick	February 23
Larry G. Deconcini	February 24
Gary L. Kenser	February 24
Tezzance L. Lane	February 24
John R. Eigel	February 26
Bradley Holloway	February 26
Roy G. Jones	February 26
Michael Calhoun	February 27
Camilleann Nelson	February 27
Garry W. Raybron	February 28
Kenneth R. Williams	February 28



*January 2006*

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
1 New Years Day	2  Office closed	3	4	5	6	7
8 Elks Meat Shoot 12:00	9	10  BOD 11:30	11	12	13	14
15	16 MLK Day Office closed	17	18	19 Chili 11:00 Bowling 1:00 - JB	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**SPORTS POINTS  
OPPORTUNITIES**

Elks meat shoot. See the ad included in this issue of the Gazette for more information. Come out and support Ken DeClue and the Elks. This event helps fund Veteran wheel-chair sports programs. 10 points.

Board of Directors meeting. We're looking for members to get involved. Come on out to one or both of these meetings and see your Board in action. 10 points

Chili Cook-Off/ Bowling. See the Sports Director's Report for more information. Come on out, get something to eat and see if you can beat Roy Gantt! 10 points

Have you noticed we don't have much going on in February? Got any ideas? Let us know!

*February 2006*

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7  BOD 11:30	8	9	10	11
12	13	14  Valentines Day	15	16	17	18
19	20 Presidents Day Office Closed	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				



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Paralyzed Veterans of America  
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St. Louis, MO 63114