

GATEWAY GAZETTE

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

Annual SCI Chili Cook-Off and PVA Luncheon

By Matt Luitjohan

Come and be part of the greatest chili cook-off known to the VA. It's time once again to start getting your chili recipe perfected and then put it to the test on January 19, 2012. All crock pots of chili must be in the SCI dining room by 11:30 am. There will be chili tastings and voting by all, followed by a wonderful luncheon provided by the Gateway Chapter PVA. Please inform us if you plan to bring a pot of chili so that we can have adequate table space for the entries.

To reserve your spot, for more information, or to have any questions addressed please contact Matt at 314-894-6602 or Charley at 314-652-4100 Ext. 64590. Below are some photos from past years' chili cook-offs.



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

Gateway Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America

<http://www.gatewaypva.org>

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Has your address changed? Please inform us by email: susanlyle@gatewaypva.org, or you may write or call us at the following:

Gateway Chapter PVA
1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center
St. Louis, MO 63132
Office (314) 427-0393 or (800) 426-4058
Fax (314) 427-4183

Annual Steak Dinner

For Members, SCI Inpatients &
 Staff
 Jefferson Barracks SCI, Bldg. 52
 January 5, 2012
 4 pm



Annual SCI Chili Cook-Off and Gateway PVA Luncheon

Jefferson Barracks SCI, Building 52
 January 19, 2012
 Noon

(All entries must be in the dining room by 11:30 am.)

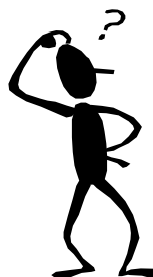


VA's Got Talent

JB Theater, Building 61
 February 16, 2012
 5:30 pm-8 pm

VA Art Show

JB Gym, Building 63
 February 24, 2012
 11:30 am-2 pm



VA Trivia Night

Jefferson Barracks Gym
 February 25, 2012
 Doors open at 6 pm, the game
 begins at 7 pm. See page 6 for more
 info!



**Gateway Chapter
Paralyzed Veterans of
America**

The material contained herein expresses the opinions of the writer and not necessarily the opinions of the editor or the Gateway Chapter, Paralyzed Veterans of America. All material in the *Gazette* may be reprinted unless specifically prohibited. Readers are encouraged to submit their articles or rebuttals to:

editor@gatewaypva.org or via US mail at the address shown to the left and send to the attention of the editor.

President's Message

By Stanley D. Brown



Holiday Message

I would like to extend the warmest holiday message and wishes for a joyous season to all our members. As this winter approaches I hope we are all able to endure the cold and inclement weather that may be forthcoming. As this year ends I think it's worthwhile to reflect on the blessings we have received during the year. Not too long ago the "experts" predicted short but difficult times ahead for all of us. It's a testament to many of our older (seasoned) members who daily serve as example and inspiration, at least to me, that those "experts" misjudged the determination and character of disabled veterans to not only survive, but to flourish and indeed "live life to the fullest." A perfect example is long-time irascible member Bob Kiger, who after numerous respiratory issues and a dreadful short stay in a nursing home, is now back at home and e-mailing his often off-color but always humorous anecdotes and news. Bob now uses a head control mouse to operate the computer. Another example is longtime Gateway leader and former Gateway President and Vice President, Dr. Robert Huskey. After a disastrous trip to Europe where airline personnel let him fall out of an aisle chair and fracture his hip, he is now preparing a trip to South America. Someone forgot to tell Bob he is in retirement and supposed to take things easy. Lastly I want to note the spirit and determination of Gateway's new Vice President, Rose Ganz. As I write this article Rose is in the hospital recovering from knee surgery but still is planning to attend the Winter Sports Clinic in March. Nothing slows her down and her determination reminds us of what we can do regardless of our individual disabilities. Please don't write to tell me I have violated several HIPAA laws in this article!

To All Our Inpatient Members

We should all give a special thought and prayer for all of our members that remain as inpatients in hospitals during this holiday season. As I visit many of our inpatients at the SCI unit at Jefferson Barracks, I continue to be astounded and impressed with their continued good cheer and adapting to endure those many days (months) in a hospital bed. In the past I've spent maybe three weeks in bed at one time nursing a pressure sore. These men and women have spent months in bed and endured an overwhelming boredom and lack of independence. If you're at the SCI unit, please stop by and say "Happy Holidays" to those veterans, spend a moment talking to them and find out if Gateway can do anything to make their inpatient stay better.

New Leadership at the SCI Unit

In case you've been asleep or haven't heard, the SCI unit has changed leadership. Dr. Peter Taylor is the new St. Louis SCI Chief. Dr. Taylor started his career with the VA as an OT with the New Orleans VA, completed medical school, and came back to the VA in a physician status. Ms. Lucretia Jones is a registered nurse and is our new Nurse Manager at the SCI unit. She has previously worked both in the private sector and the VA. Please welcome these new individuals, both of whom I am confident will work with us in ensuring quality care for our members. I believe they are extremely qualified for their new positions and look forward to working with them.



Free Rams tickets for the January 1, 2012, game against the 49ers. Please call or email the office by 4 pm on December 28, 2011, to have your name entered in the drawing. The winner will be notified.



In memory of...

| | | |
|---------------|-----------------|----------|
| Samuel Hall | Kansas City, MO | 10/04/11 |
| Richard Ingle | Goddard, KS | 12/01/11 |



Please have someone contact our Chapter in the event of a member's death so that we can inform other members who might wish to pay their respects to the departed.

Government Relations Director's Report

By Jessica Dunsmore

News and Notes

Gateway PVA Grants – A Refresher!

Home Accessibility – The chapter offers a grant of up to \$2,500 to non-service connected members who want to increase accessibility in their homes. This is available only to those who have exhausted their Home Improvements and Structural Alterations (HISA) grant **or** to those who are applying for the HISA grant and it won't cover all of the modification expenses.

Vehicle Modifications – Up to \$1,000 may be awarded to members whose injury/disease is non-service connected to assist the veteran with driving (e.g. hand controls, steering knobs and break extensions if necessary). The veteran must have VA approval to operate a vehicle (successfully completed VA training).

How the Grant Process Works – Please first contact our office to see if you qualify - we will then provide you with a request form. Along with the form, please obtain at least 2 price quotes from reputable contractors/vendors and send them to our office. The request will be reviewed and voted on at the next upcoming Board of Directors meeting, and you will be promptly notified of the decision. The chapter's grants are non-retroactive (cannot be used for work already completed), can only be used up to the current approved amounts (\$2,500 maximum for home and \$1,000 maximum for vehicle), either in one application or more if needed. Grants are paid directly to the contractor/vendor, and cannot overlap or duplicate payments made by other agencies/sources. Please contact our office with any questions.



Vantage Mobility International and PVA – Operation Independence Campaign

Operation Independence is a program designed to improve mobility for disabled veterans by connecting them with the vehicle that fits their needs and ultimately helps them achieve the independence they deserve. Vantage Mobility International (VMI) and their Select Dealer Network are now offering \$1,000 off the purchase of a VMI wheelchair accessible van to veterans who qualify for the Auto Allowance Grant (VA Form 21-4502) and have not already used it to purchase a mobility vehicle in the past. **This offer is valid until November 11, 2012.** Visit <http://www.vantagemobility.com/promotions/operation-independence-for-veterans.aspx> for more information.

The Social Security Administration announced that there will be a 3.6% Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for social security beneficiaries in 2012. There has not been a social security COLA since 2009. The annual COLA is determined by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) from the third quarter of the last year a COLA was determined to the third quarter of the current year.

Legislative News

Congressional Supercommittee and Budget Update – On November 21, the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (a.k.a. the "Supercommittee"), released a statement saying they failed to reach an agreement on plans for federal deficit reduction over the next decade. Major disagreements centered on cuts to entitlement programs (such as Medicare) and tax increases. As approved in the Budget Control Act of 2011, \$1.2 trillion in across-the-board budget cuts will be triggered in January 2013 (this process, called sequestration, will split the budget cuts between defense and domestic spending). Several members of Congress have stated that they vehemently oppose these across-the-board cuts (in large part due to the cutbacks to the defense portion), and will continue to work on legislation to change this course of action. At this juncture, implications on VA funding remain uncertain.

Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Act of 2011 (S. 894) was signed into law on November 9. Effective December 1, disability compensation and pensions as well as dependency and indemnity (DIC) compensation for survivors will increase by 3.6%, consistent with the 2012 social security COLA.

The VOW to Hire Heroes Act was signed into law on November 21. The legislation creates incentives for companies hiring unemployed veterans, and increases veterans' job training and counseling programs. "Paralyzed Veterans of America is very pleased with the passage of these tax credits and other vital measures to help our jobless veterans," said Bill Lawson, national president of Paralyzed Veterans of America. "We now encourage businesses to take the next important step — to create more jobs and hire veterans."

Missouri General Assembly – The special session ended in late October with no major bills passed. The circuit breaker property tax credit for low-income/disabled individuals who rent has been preserved for the time being.

VA Trivia Night

By Debbie Gray

What does February mean to you? Cold winter temperatures, dreary skies, or a feeling of claustrophobia?? Well, the solution can be found at VA TRIVIA NIGHT!!

The 9th Annual VA Trivia Night will be held on Saturday, February 25, 2012, in the VA Gym. Doors open at 6 pm and the game starts at 7 pm. Activities for the night include the fun game of Trivia, a Silent Auction, and 50/50 raffles. QuikTrip will once again generously donate sandwiches, snacks and sodas. The result? A fantastic time, and all for the most reasonable price of \$15 per person.

If you're wondering what Trivia Night is or if you'll even be good enough to participate, then hear this: all of us store random information in our heads. During this event, you will pull out that information you thought was useless and use it to help your team of eight answer questions during the ten rounds of ten questions. If you don't have a team of eight? No worry! We will find you a spot with another group.

Of course, believe it or not, this is not everyone's cup of tea. In that case, you might choose to donate money to VA General Post Fund #1841. Or sponsor a round for \$100. Or you might like to solicit contributions for the Silent Auction. The organizing team appreciates any way you choose to support this great event!

VA Trivia Night continues to grow each year. We had over 400 attendees last year and hope to top that in our 9th year. Through the years, funds have been used to support veteran athletes to attend the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

Come on out and have a good time and support a great cause! Contact Debbie Gray, SCI OT (314-652-4100, Extension 64504 or Deborah.Gray@va.gov) for more information or to reserve a table.



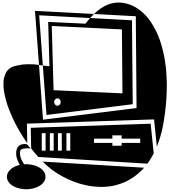
The Gym at Jefferson Barracks fills up quickly!



The judges' table—it's a tough job.

MS Support Group

Kathy Ricker, SCI Coordinator (Clinical Support) and Nikki Williams, RN in Neurology, at the Kansas City VAMC, have joined together to start a Multiple Sclerosis Support Group. Following several teleconferences involving VA staff and the MS Society of Kansas City, a student intern and veteran, were identified as co-facilitators for the new peer support group. Kevin Bye, the veteran peer facilitator, is an Army veteran and former DOD counselor advocate for the military severely injured program at the Palo Alto VAMC before moving to Missouri in 2010. The group is tentatively slated to begin monthly meetings after the first of the year. There is also some consideration being given for a caregiver support group in the future. If you would like additional information, you may email Kevin at KCMS1988@yahoo.com or contact Bonnie Hilburn, PVA Senior National Service Officer at 816-922-2882, Kathy Ricker at 816-922-2741, or Nikki Williams at 816-922-2500, ext. 56765.



Hello Members! We have been told to expect a few donated computers from a local law firm. The spouse of one of our members thought of us when her office decided to upgrade. The donated computers are Dell with Pentium(R)4 CPU 3.00 GHz 2.99 GHz, 1.00 GB of RAM. If anyone is in need of a computer that is several years old, but has been wiped clean (no monitors will be included with this donation), please call our office to have your name added to the reservation list. We will call to arrange pick up once the computers have arrived. This will be done on a first come, first serve basis, so don't procrastinate.

Congratulations to James Williams, 2011 Trap Shoot Grand Champion.

At our final Trap Shoot of the season, on September 16, 2011, James Williams was once again named Grand Champion. Does he ever get tired of winning?!?

We should have mentioned this in our last issue, but unfortunately didn't have the room! We couldn't go without recognizing James for his tremendous athletic ability. We would be remiss not to mention the runners-up: Steve Straatman and Tim Fornachon. They did a great job as well!

Our Trap Shoots are open to all of our members free of charge. The Gateway Chapter PVA provides lunch and pays for the shells. The events are held at the Olin/Winchester Trap and Skeet Facility in East Alton, Illinois. Olin provides guns and assistance from their instructors at no charge to our members.

Mark your calendar for 10 a.m. on April 20, 2012—our first Trap Shoot of the season. Hope to see you there!



Gateway Chapter PVA Wishes to Welcome Our New Members

Perry Burch.....Sedalia, MO

Cara Combs.....Independence, MO

Martin Klaus.....Camdenton, MO

William McDowell, Jr.St. Charles, MO

Randy McGahan.....Atlanta, MO

Michael PowellAlton, IL

William SandquistCape Girardeau, MO

Gary SchaeferFenton, MO

Larry Schillinger.....O'Fallon, MO

Robert VagoMascoutah, IL

MIA



Have you seen or know the whereabouts of these members? They are in danger of being dropped from the PVA roster. Please call us, write to us, or e-mail us if you know where any of these members are! Our contact info is inside the front cover.



**Mark Beel
Paula Lemon
Danny Proctor**

**Alfred Ross
James Sullivan-McGuire
Rick Taylor**

Bowel and Bladder Care for Veterans with SCI/D

By National Service Officer, Tony Timmons



A question that is often asked by SCI/D veterans, whether they are newly injured or diagnosed or not, is “will the VA pay someone to complete my bowel and bladder care for me?” The answer to the question is, “Yes.” Before I continue, I want to clarify that this program has nothing to do with a veteran being paid for aid and attendance. This program is totally separate and distinct from the entitlement for aid and attendance.

Bowel and bladder care for certain veterans with SCI/D are considered supportive medical services. VA pays for this under the Fee Basis program when these veterans are dependent upon others for this care. Bowel and bladder care at VA expense may be authorized based on clinical need for any veteran with a spinal cord injury or disorder who meets the eligibility requirements for Fee Basis care, including veterans in receipt of aid and attendance benefits.

When bowel and bladder care is not desired or cannot be procured through a skilled licensed provider or agency, a family member or any individual employed by the veteran as a home health attendant, when trained and certified as competent by the VHA personnel, may receive reimbursement for provision of this care.

Bowel and bladder care for veterans with spinal cord injury or disorder must be authorized in advance by VA. The proper diagnostic code(s) must be included on the VA consult requesting bowel and bladder services. A claim for bowel and bladder care may be filed by the veteran (if seeking personal reimbursement), the designated family member or home health attendant, or by the home health care agency. Claims filed by the family member or VA designated home health attendant may be filed in any form but must include the following information: (1) name and SSN of veteran, (2) claimant’s name, address and SSN, (3) units of service by date, and (4) claimant’s signature and date signed.

Bowel and bladder care at VA expense performed by a home health agency for an eligible veteran will be procured in accordance with VHA Geriatric and Extended Care guidelines. Bowel and bladder care performed by a family caregiver or other individual employed by an eligible veteran as a home health attendant will be paid through the VistA Fee application. Payment for such services shall be equivalent to Step 5 of the General Schedule (GS) hourly rate paid to nursing assistants employed by VA performing the same services in a VA medical facility.

As with any VA program or benefit, there is a lot to know that cannot always be included in the space provided. Therefore, please contact your local PVA service officer for additional assistance. (Contact information is located on page 2.)

SLED HOCKEY

The DASA St. Louis Blues Sled Hockey Team will be having their home tournament at the Lindenwood University hockey rink. The rink is located at 910 Main Plaza Drive, Wentzville, MO 63385. For directions, call (636) 332-4600.

Friday, January 6, 2012

6:00 pm-7:15 pm

RIC Blackhawks vs.
DASA St. Louis Blues



Saturday, January 7, 2012

8:00 am-9:15 am

San Antonio Rampage vs. DASA St. Louis Blues

1:00 pm-2:15 pm

2nd Annual MWSHL All Star Game
(Billy Hanning will be playing)

6:30 pm-7:45 pm

Colorado Avalanche vs. DASA St. Louis Blues

Sunday, January 7, 2012

10:00 am-11:15 am

DASA St. Louis Blues vs.
Minnesota Northern





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Creative Arts Festival

By Becky Ballard

The week of October 17 created a memorable and rewarding experience for five St. Louis veterans and their families. The artistic, musical, dance and creative writing talents of our nations veterans were highlighted at the 2011 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, held this year in Fayetteville, Arkansas.



For five of our local veterans, their journey began in February at the VA's Got Talent Night and Visual Arts Show. A panel of judges selected their talents as being the best in their given category. From there the entries were sent onto the second phase of judging, where each earned the distinction of being one of the top three in the nation! The third and final phase was the selection of the best of the best, resulting in an invitation to attend the weeklong festival in Fayetteville.

As the fall colors reached their peak and displayed their brilliance, so did our talented veterans.

WWII veteran Everett Booten's latch hook of "Midnight Wolves" delighted viewers as he told his audience how creating a project helps him cope with loss and keeps him focused on something positive. While 87 year old army veteran Millard Pursley was unable to make the trip to Fayetteville, his string art project "Sail Away" was proudly on display at the Walton Art Center. Millard who fought with General Patton in the 3rd Army, stayed home to work on his entry for 2012.

On Sunday, October 23, our local performers engaged an audience of 2,000 with their spectacular solo performances. Army veteran and poet Emil Saint Pellicer's poem "Shadow Under the Bridge" was used effectively to highlight the plight of the homeless veteran and bring awareness to the Homeless Veteran Program. Terence Nelson combined his creative writing skills and his flair for dramatic reading to move the audience with his original dramatic reading "The Sandbox."



Emil Saint Pellicer

Although Joseph Hosner was not selected to perform his spirited Polka dance at the final performance, his dance was captured on video as the audience got a glimpse of other talented Gold medal winners that were not chosen for the show. Joseph, at age 90, drove with his wife to Fayetteville to see the fabulous stage show.



Terence Nelson

The St. Louis VAMC and our volunteers proudly support healing through the arts and we hope that you consider entering the 2012 local talent and visual arts shows. If you don't feel artistically inclined, come join the fun on February 16 for the VA's Got Talent Night and February 24 for the Visual Arts Show. Please call Karen at Extension 64535 or Becky at Extension 64512 for details. The 2012 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival will be held in Boston.

Jefferson Barracks Halloween Party

By Jim Schmitt

The Jefferson Barracks P-38 Halloween pizza party was a really fun event. At first glance I was sure the Cardinals' farm club had come to visit. Ahh...but I saw through their disguises and it was our very own SCI unit "A-Team." There was "Swing for the Fence Charley," Jody, Whitney, Cindy, Debbie, and batting 4th, in the "clean-up" was none other than Becky Ballard! The "A-Team" works so hard to make these events fun for the patients, staff and all. The Gateway Chapter PVA even provided the salad and salad dressing for the party. I'm crazy not to come to more of these. Say...you should, too!



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January



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|-----------------------------|---|--|-----------|---|--------|----------|
| 1 Happy New Year! | 2 <div>New Year's Holiday- Office Closed</div> | 3 | 4 | 5 Annual Steak Dinner at JB Bldg 52 @ 4 pm | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 BOD Meeting 11:30 am <div>15 pts. non-BOD Mbr.</div> | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 M. L. King's Birthday- Office Closed | 17 | 18 | 19 Chili Cook-Off at JB @ Noon 5 pts. | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |



February

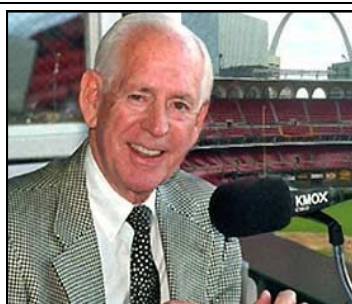


| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|---|--|---------------------------------|---|---|--|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 Newsletter Articles Due | 9 VA's Got Talent 2/16 at JB Theater 5:30 pm | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 Happy Valentine's Day | 15 | 16 Member/Patient Luncheon at JB @ Noon 5 pts. | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 Presidents' Day- Office Closed | 21 BOD Meeting 4 pm <div>15 pts. non-BOD Mbr.</div> | 22 | 23 | 24 VA Art Show JB Gym 11:30 am | 25 VA Trivia Night 7 pm @ JB Gym |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | | | |



Address Service Requested

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Paralyzed Veterans of America
1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center
St. Louis, MO 63132



**Congratulations to the 2011
World Series Champs
The St. Louis Cardinals!**



"That's a Winner!"



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