

# Gateway Gazette

*July/August 2017*

*Volume 50 Number 4*



**Paralyzed Veterans of America**

**Gateway Chapter**





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4801 Linwood Blvd, Rm. M1-566  
 Kansas City, MO 64128  
 (816) 922-2882 or (800) 795-3612  
 Fax: (816) 922-3369  
 Brent Follas, National Service Officer II

**St. Louis Service Office**

9700 Page Blvd. Suite 101, Room 1-114  
 St. Louis, MO 63132  
 Office: (314)253-4480 or (800)795-3614  
 Fax: (314) 253-4170  
 Fred Bradley, Senior Benefits Advocate  
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**Jefferson Barracks VA Medical Center**

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**Time to update your address or email?**

Please email us at [info@gatewaypva.org](mailto:info@gatewaypva.org) or write or call us at the following:

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# President's Message

## By Stanley Brown

### Summer 2017

#### *August Launch of Veterans Complaint Hotline*

The VA has been directed by the Executive Branch to open a new hotline for veterans' complaints with the Department of Veterans Affairs. The hotline number will be (855)948-2311, and should be available for complaints this August. I will email further exact start date information when I get it. Details on the new hotline bill can be found at the following newspaper article website: [www.washingtonexaminer.com/white-house-to-launch-veterans-complaint-hotline/article/2624554](http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/white-house-to-launch-veterans-complaint-hotline/article/2624554). This announcement may look familiar because Gateway distributed this same message to its members on June 23, 2017. Our national PVA organization has encouraged members to especially call in complaints with VA prosthetics issues concerning Automobile Adaptive Equipment Reimbursement and Clothing Allowance benefits for service-connected veterans. You are encouraged to first contact your PVA Service Officer to verify you have an unresolved problem in these areas.

#### *Veterans-Directed Care - You May Be Losing Money*

Gateway members living in Missouri and Illinois may be eligible for the VA's Veteran-Directed Care program. If you meet the clinical needs for the services and they are available in your area, you may be eligible for the program. You may save considerable money you are currently spending out of pocket for attendants. This program and benefit used to be called the Veterans Independence Program (VIP). Under this new program you will meet with the contracted agency (Mid East Area Agency on Aging in most Missouri counties) to determine your allotted hours to assist you with activities of daily living (dressing, feeding, meal preparation, bowel and bladder, etc.). Unlike previous VA programs, you are then able to select your own caregiver and once they are enrolled, they will be paid directly by the VA contract provider. Contact your social worker immediately if you have not heard of this program to see if you are eligible and to see if services are available in your area. You may lose certain other VA benefits if you enroll in the program, but your social worker will explain these tradeoffs to you. I've been enrolled for some time and it is saving me over \$1200 a month for attendants I was previously paying myself. If you are already enrolled or become enrolled, you need to be aware that if you don't use all of your monthly allotted hours/dollars, the unused portion will go into a reserve/savings account that you must get contractor "permission" to access. There is a limit to what your reserve/savings account can be, and I found out the hard way that if you exceed that limit, those funds are lost forever. In my case, I lost over \$4,000, because I didn't get "permission" and draw down that reserve account to stay under the limit. I've unsuccessfully met a few times with VA officials to make it easier for us to access those reserve funds.

**Continued on Page 8**

# Camp Lejeune

## By Brent Follas, National Service Officer II

### Exposure to Contaminated Drinking Water at Camp Lejeune

In the early 1980s contaminants were found in two wells that provided water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. The contaminants included the volatile organic compounds trichloroethylene (TCE), a metal degreaser, perchloroethylene (PCE), a dry cleaning agent, vinyl chloride, as well as benzene, and other compounds. It is estimated that the contaminants were in the water supply from the Mid-1950's until February 1985 when the wells were shut down. There is evidence of an association between certain diseases and the contaminants found in the water supply at Camp Lejeune during the period of contamination.

### Camp Lejeune Presumptive Diseases

As part of VA's ongoing commitment to provide quality care to Veterans, the Department of Veterans Affairs has established a "presumption of service connection" for eight diseases associated with exposure to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. Active duty, reserve, and National Guard members who served at Camp Lejeune or MCAS New River, N.C. for a minimum of 30 days (cumulative) from August 1, 1953, through December 31, 1987, may be eligible for disability benefits. The presumption rule was published on January 13, 2017, and is effective either 60 days after publication in the Federal Register, or following conclusion of the 60-day Congressional Review, whichever is later.

The presumptive diseases are:

Adult leukemia, Aplastic and Other Myelodysplastic Syndromes, Bladder Cancer, Kidney Cancer, Liver Cancer, Multiple Myeloma, Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and Parkinson's Disease.

### Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for benefits, you must:

- Be an active duty, reserve or National Guard member who was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Have served at Camp Lejeune for at least 30 days (cumulative), between August 1, 1953, and December 31, 1987.
- Have a current disease on the list of presumptive conditions related to Camp Lejeune.

### Evidence Requirements

- Records that show you served at Camp Lejeune or MCAS New River for at least 30 days (cumulative), between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1987, in an active duty, reserve, or National Guard capacity.
- The medical evidence must show you have a current disease on the list of presumptive conditions related to Camp Lejeune.

### How To Apply for Disability Benefits

- Contact your local Paralyzed Veterans of America National Service Officer or Accredited Secretary.
- Include evidence of service at Camp Lejeune during the required timeframe.
- Provide medical evidence showing your diagnosis.

### Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012

#### Veterans' health care

In accordance with the 2012 Camp Lejeune health care law, VA provides cost-free health care for certain conditions to Veterans who served at least 30 days of active duty at Camp Lejeune from January 1, 1957 and December 31, 1987.

Veterans eligible for health care under the 2012 Camp Lejeune health care law may enroll in VA health care and receive medical services for the 15 covered health conditions at no cost (including copayments).

**Continued on Page 5**



## Continued from Page 4- Camp Lejeune

Qualifying Health Care Conditions include:

Esophageal Cancer, Breast Cancer, Kidney Cancer, Multiple Myeloma, Renal Toxicity, Female Infertility, Scleroderma, Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, Lung Cancer, Bladder Cancer, Leukemia, Myelodysplastic Syndromes, Hepatic Steatosis, Miscarriage and Neurobehavioral Effects.

### Family Member Health Care Reimbursement

Family members of Veterans who also resided at Camp Lejeune during the qualifying period are eligible for reimbursement of out-of-pocket medical expenses related to the 15 covered health conditions. VA can only pay treatment costs that remain after payment from your other health plans.

Apply online for reimbursement or call 1-866-372-1144 for help.

### What Type of Evidence Can You Submit with My Application?

1. Documentation showing dependent relationship to a Veteran who served at Camp Lejeune, such as marriage license or birth certificate.
2. Documentation showing you lived on the base for 30 days or more between Aug. 1, 1953 and Dec. 31, 1987 such as copies of orders or base housing, records that you paid health care expenses for a covered condition respective to the following date ranges.
3. If you lived on Camp Lejeune between January 1, 1957 and December 31, 1987, then you can be reimbursed for care that you received on or after August 6, 2012.
4. If you lived on Camp Lejeune between August 1, 1953 and December 31, 1956, then you can be reimbursed for care that you received on or after December 16, 2014.

## Rentals, Leasing, and Financing Available



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# Sports Report

## By Mike Norris, Sports Director

In the last few months I have seen the Boccia ball team moving at a furious pace. We practice two or three days a week and we hold local tournaments at the the American Legion Hall #162. These practice sessions and tournaments have been increasing the skill of all the players on the Cluster Buster team. As a team, with our headquarters here in St. Louis, we have been noticed across the country.

At this time, we have three members of our local team who have advanced on to Team U.S.A. - Bobby Jackson, Joey Avellone, and Scott Richards - and they represent our great Nation at international games with great pride and humility, just as they do with their Cluster Buster team. These are veterans who have served in the military and now continue to serve.

Team U.S.A. recently (April 26th - May 1) competed in Montreal Canada against Canada, Mexico and Bermuda. In the end, the Canadian team won, but our team and our athletes put up a stiff competition and proved they had a place in international games. Also in Montreal were Doug Barnes and myself, Mike Norris. We did not play in the international games, we played in a Canadian National open. One step below the international team. Here too, the competition is at its best. We played against athletes from all over Canada and members representing a team from New York City. I made it to the Bronze medal game only to be beaten by one of the Canadian players. My teammate, Doug Barnes, went on to play in the Gold/Silver round and won the Silver Medal.

Upon our return to the U.S.A. there was little time to rest. Doug and I joined some of our Cluster Buster St. Louis teammates on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May, in Kansas City for a regional match against players from K.C. and Oklahoma. Although we were forced to play outside our classification, we were eager for the chance to compete. Here again St. Louis did well; Doug Barnes won Silver and I took Bronze. We were also able to witness our teammates compete. In the 2016 season, our most improved award went to Ruth Kult. Her improved skills were on display in Kansas City, as she by far played her best game ever.

At this point I must acknowledge the people who make this possible. We have a great coaches, Charley Wright and Matt Luitjohan, they instill a can-do attitude into all of us. They coach and mentor each member of the team. They keep up on the Boccia Ball sport, and so much more. We are lucky to have them and we thank them for all they do. Also thank you Gateway PVA. Using our Sports/Participation points, our local Chapter helps with the financial burden of traveling to and from the events. Their generosity has helped our team to compete without financial stress.

We have a lot of upcoming events, July 5 to July 9 is the Boccia Nationals in Chicago. July 16 to July 23 is the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, and in August, St. Louis and Gateway PVA are hosting a national Boccia tournament for Veterans. I urge everyone who can come to please attend and see the things that are happening. Look at the calendar of events in this newsletter and check out the web site, [www.gatewaypva.org](http://www.gatewaypva.org) for more events and news.





# GATEWAY GI

## General Information



## Welcome to our new members:

David Kliros • Rex Friend • Raynard Chapman

Bram Lucieer • James Shelby • Loyd Schroeder

## Missing in Action

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 they are! Our contact info is inside the front cover.

Allen Medford • Jeffrey Ford • Robert Melchior • Scott Geiger

Eddie Dillard • Randy McGahan • Frederick Claxton • Harry Knoblauch • Joe Reese

## Redeeming Sports Points

For those members who have not participated in sports/athletic events this fiscal year, (July 2016–June 2017) your earned points can be used for other forms of entertainment (such as movies, gift cards, concert tickets, etc.; not available to Associate members). This usage will be awarded at \$1 per point earned, up to \$150 annually and only awarded in a non-cash distribution such as gift cards or event tickets (minimum of 25 points). Participation points, if not used on sports or recreation may be redeemed for gift cards. A Sports Year begins the day after the BODs (Board of Directors) meeting that occurs at least 30 days prior to the start of the NVWG and ends the day of that BOD meeting (June 13, 2017).

June 13, 2017 is the end of the fiscal year for sports points. You have until August 31, 2017 to redeem your points for entertainment cards. You must contact the office and let us know what type of card you would like (i.e, Subway, AMC, etc.). Points will not be redeemed by Visa Gift Cards. Any unused points for FY17 do not carry over to points for FY18.

If you have any questions concerning your sports points total, or any other questions, please contact the GPVA office. *Sports points accumulation for FY18 begins June 14, 2017.*



## In memory of...

David Elam	St. Louis, MO	01/17/17
Steven Kanewinkel	Festus, MO	03/19/17
Robert Enyard	St. Louis, MO	04/05/17

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

Are you aware of the VA Home Modification Grants? Contact us!



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Click on VA Grants tab

### Continued from Page 3

I'm now waiting for the VA's response to our last meeting on June 21, 2017, and will keep you informed. Please contact your social worker or me for questions concerning this program and how to use, without losing those funds available to you.

### *Third Legal Clinic on July 20, 2017 (Thursday PVA Luncheon at JB)*

Students and supervising attorneys from the Saint Louis University Law Clinic, Saint Francis Community Services Veterans Law Clinic, City of St. Louis Veterans Advocacy Project, and Veterans for Peace will again be available for Gateway members for wills and trusts, powers of attorney, minor civil matters, and traffic cases on Thursday, July 20, 2017. The law students and attorneys will be available at the Spinal Cord Building (building 52) in the south dayroom from 10:30AM until 1:00PM. Please bring all your necessary documents. Old wills or trusts, full names of beneficiaries' contact information, bank and stock account numbers, CD numbers, owned property addresses, and anything else relevant to the work you want done need to be given to the clinic people on that Thursday. Please call our office to tell us you're attending on that Thursday for legal clinic assistance. Also, please contact me if you have questions about what you will need or whether or not the legal clinic will work with your issue.

### *Election Results - Everyone Welcome at BOD Meetings*

Congratulations to all the returning Gateway Board Members and our new Treasurer Hank Tipton (seen on the inside cover page). My thanks to everyone who ran and voted. We had a greater voter turnout, 39 votes this year, than in the past. The Gateway Board manages and supervises a non-for-profit organization with assets over 1 million dollars. For those members who unsuccessfully ran and all Gateway members, I encourage you to remain active by coming to board meetings and getting involved. Your opinions and questions in those meetings are always welcomed.





## We proudly support Gateway PVA!

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#### For users with no control of their hands **SESAME**

The Sesame solution works by tracking the user's head movements using the built-in, front-facing camera on the smartphone. These tracked movements create a cursor that appears on the screen of the smartphone, like a cursor on a computer screen.

All features of the device can be operated through the cursor.

Voice control is integrated to provide a truly hands-free experience for accessing the device. To turn the phone on users just need to say, "Open Sesame" and it will wake up and start tracking the user's head.

#### For users who can control a wheelchair joystick **SESAME CONNECT**

The Sesame Connect solution works by tracking the user's joystick movements. These tracked movements create a cursor that appears on the screen of the smartphone, like a cursor on a computer screen. All features of the device can be operated through the cursor without clicking.

Works with a sip-and-puff, head array, mouth joystick or hand joystick.

### What's included in the Sesame Solution set for Missouri customers?



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\* Missouri's Telecommunication Access Program (TAP) provides equipment to qualifying individuals who have difficulties using the phone or internet because of a disability. To get specific information, visit <http://at.mo.gov/telecom-access-program/> and click on the program in which you are interested.

To qualify for the Telecommunications Access Program, the applicant must:




- Be certified by a licensed physician, audiologist, speech pathologist, hearing instrument specialist or qualified agency as unable to use traditional telecommunications equipment or computer equipment due to disability;
- Be a resident of the state of Missouri;
- Have access to basic telephone service for TAP-T; have a computer and internet service for TAP-I. For the TAP Wireless pilot, you must have WiFi access or mobile phone service (depending on selected equipment).
- Meet financial income standards (Generally, the applicant's have an annual adjusted household income under \$60,000 for two people; with \$5,000 being added for each additional dependent.)

For more info, visit:  
<http://at.mo.gov/telecom-access-program/>  
or call 816-655-6700  
[www.razmobility.com](http://www.razmobility.com)

**RAZ** Mobility



# July 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	4 	5 	6 USA Bocce Nationals—Chicago, IL	7	8
9	10	11 BOD Mtg. @ GPVA 11:30 am 15pts. Non-BOD Mbr.	12	13	14	15
16 	17 <b>NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES</b>	18	19	20 Member/Patient Luncheon @ Noon Legal Clinic @ 10:30am to 1pm-Bldg 52	21 5 pts	22
23	24	25	26	27 National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day	28	29
30	31					

# August 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4  US Coast Guard Birthday	5 
6	7	8 BOD Mtg. @ GPVA 4:00 pm 15pts. Non-BOD Mbr.	9	10	11	12
13	14 Trapshoot @ MO Dept. of Conservation - 11am VJ Day	15	16	17 Member/Patient Luncheon @ Noon 5 pts.	18 PVA Bocce Nationals St. Louis, MO	19
20 	21	22	23	24	25 SCI Outreach Marion, IL	26
27	28	29	30	31		



**Paralyzed Veterans  
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Gateway Chapter

**1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center  
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## 2017 Local SCI/D Wheelchair Games



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