

Gateway Gazette

July/August 2019

Volume 52 Number 4



**SOLDIERS
MEMORIAL**
MISSOURI HISTORY



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

Gateway Chapter

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

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**Paralyzed Veterans
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Gateway Chapter

Time to update your address or email?

Please email us at info@gatewaypva.org or write or call us at the following:
Gateway Chapter PVA•1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center•St. Louis, MO 63132
(314) 427-0393 or (800) 426-4058 •Fax (314) 427-4183

We are offering the option to receive our Chapter's newsletter by email. Members taking advantage of electronic delivery will help to reduce the cost of printing and postage. In turn, this will allow the Chapter to put more funds toward our members and member programs. If you have not done so already, please contact Administrative Assistant Amber Lee at amber@gatewaypva.org, or Executive Director Chris Blanchard at chris@gatewaypva.org, if you would like to start receiving your newsletter electronically.



by Stanley D. Brown

President's Message

Accessible Vehicle Grants

Chapter Hospital Liaison

PVA Field Advisory Committee

Barrier Free America Award

VEHICLE GRANTS WILL NOW BE OPEN FOR TWO MONTHS

Gateway will now open its vehicle accessibility grants for members. Like in the past, we will give one or two \$35,000 grants for members with no accessible vehicle or any vehicle that can be traded in for an accessible vehicle. The \$10,000 grants (number to be determined based upon our finances) are for members who currently have an accessible vehicle that is about ready for the junkyard or a regular vehicle that they can trade in for something accessible with the assistance of a \$10,000 grant. Preference will be given to members who have not received any vehicle grants in the past. Please email or send a completed application, explaining why you need the grant, which grant you think is appropriate, and how the grant and the accessible vehicle you are able to purchase would change your life. Applications can be found on our website www.gatewaypva.org on the 'Forms' page. Submissions must be received no later than 5 PM, Friday, August 9, 2019. You may call the office to see if we are in receipt of your submission. Also as in the past, the Gateway Board of Directors will review each submission to determine eligibility but not try to rank eligible submissions, but rather randomly draw the winners.

GATEWAY IS LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEN/WOMEN

PVA has a Chapter Hospital Liaison (CHL) program whereby Gateway members will visit both the SCI Hub Jefferson Barracks and John Cochran six bed acute care unit, as well as the Missouri spokes in Kansas City, Columbia, and Poplar Bluff; the Kansas spokes in Leavenworth, Topeka and Wichita; the Kentucky spokes in Lexington and Louisville; and the Illinois spoke in Marion. We only have volunteers

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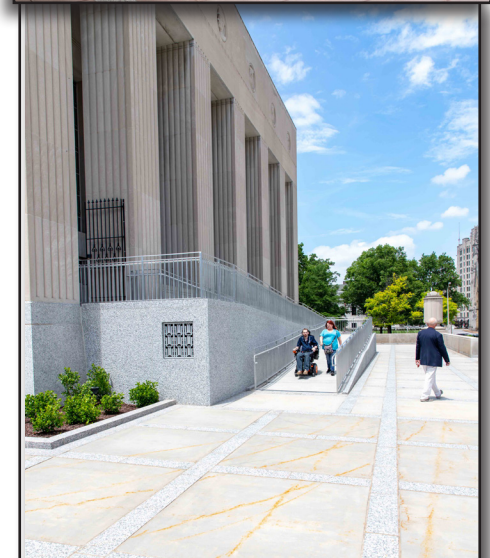
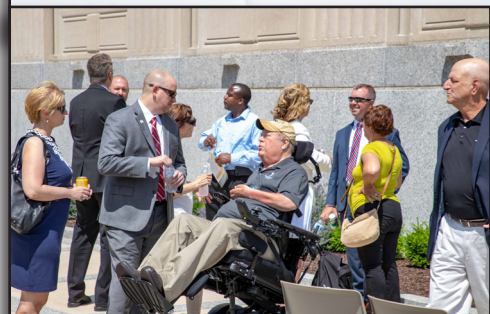
(Scott Richards and Harry Brown) for Jefferson Barracks and John Cochran, but need people for all the spokes. Your only requirement is to visit the spoke at least once every three months and submit a one-page report on how many people you saw, any issues you heard from patients or staff, and generally tell us how our members/people are being treated. You will receive participation points for the position per every visit. If you travel more than 50 miles one way, you will be reimbursed at the rate of \$.40 per mile. Please call the office if you are interested and I will talk to you.

GATEWAY VP, ROSE GANZ, ELECTED TO PVA FIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Gateway's very own Rose Ganz has been elected to this important committee without a single negative quote from the 31 PVA Board of Directors. Rose will hold a position on the National PVA Field Advisory Committee, whose members accompany National Medical Services nurses and doctors to do site visits at the 24 spinal cord injury units throughout the country. Rose will be an important voice as PVA tries to put a special focus on women's health now in these site visits.

JUNE 4TH CEREMONY OF THE SOLDIERS MEMORIAL PVA BARRIER FREE AMERICA AWARD

As seen on the front page and this page, numerous Gateway members and I attended this award ceremony at the renovated Soldiers Memorial in downtown St. Louis. This is the same Memorial where I broke the accessible lift in 2004, almost to the day (Memorial Day) 15 years ago. If you have a beer for me and 60 minutes I'll tell you the "whole story."





VA Launches New Health Care options under MISSION Act

by Brent Follas, National Service Officer

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) launched its new and improved Veterans Community Care Program on June 6, 2019, implementing portions of the VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act of 2018 (MISSION Act), which both ends the Veterans Choice Program and establishes a new Veterans Community Care Program.

The MISSION Act will strengthen the nationwide VA Health Care System by empowering Veterans with more health care options. “The changes not only improve our ability to provide the health care Veterans need, but also when and where they need it,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “It will also put Veterans at the center of their care and offer options, including expanded telehealth and urgent care, so they can find the balance in the system that is right for them.”

Under the new Veterans Community Care Program, Veterans can work with their VA health care provider or other VA staff to see if they are eligible to receive community care based on new criteria. Eligibility for community care does not require a Veteran to receive that care in the community; Veterans can still choose to have VA provide their care. Veterans may elect to receive care in the community if they meet any of the following six eligibility criteria:

1. A Veteran needs a service not available at any VA medical facility.
2. A Veteran lives in a U.S. state or territory without a full-service VA medical facility. Specifically, this would apply to Veterans living in Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire and the U.S. territories of Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
3. A Veteran qualifies under the “grandfather” provision related to distance eligibility under the Veterans Choice Program.

4. VA cannot furnish care within certain designated access standards. The specific access standards are described below:

- Drive time to a specific VA medical facility
- Thirty-minute average drive time for primary care, mental health and noninstitutional extended care services.
- Sixty-minute average drive time for specialty care.

Note: Drive times are calculated using geomapping software.

- Appointment wait time at a specific VA medical facility
- Twenty days from the date of request for primary care, mental health care and noninstitutional extended care services, unless the Veteran agrees to a later date in consultation with his or her VA health care provider.

- Twenty-eight days for specialty care from the date of request, unless the Veteran agrees to a later date in consultation with his or her VA health care provider.

5. The Veteran and the referring clinician agree it is in the best medical interest of the Veteran to receive community care based on defined factors.

6. VA has determined that a VA medical service line is not providing care in a manner that complies with VA's standards for quality based on specific conditions.

In preparation for this landmark initiative, senior VA leaders will visit more than 30 VA hospitals across the country to provide in-person support for the rollout.

The VA MISSION Act:

- Strengthens VA's ability to recruit and retain clinicians.
- Authorizes "Anywhere to Anywhere" telehealth across state lines.
- Empowers Veterans with increased access to community care.
- Establishes a new urgent care benefit that eligible Veterans can access through VA's network of urgent care providers in the community.



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General Information

JULY 2019

July 4 to July 5 -
OFFICE CLOSED

July 9 -
BOD Meeting
11:30am @ GPVA Office
15 pts for non-BOD mbrs

July 11 to July 16 -
NVWG @ Louisville, KY

July 18 -
JB Luncheon
12pm @ JB, Building 52
5 pts for members

July 24 to July 29 -
USA Boccia Nationals
@ San Antonio, TX

AUGUST 2019

August 13 -
BOD Meeting
4pm @ GPVA Office
15 pts for non-BOD mbrs

August 15 -
JB Luncheon
12pm @ JB, Building 52
5 pts for members

August 24 to August 31 -
Scuba Diving
@ Cozumel, Mexico



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Welcome to Our New Members

Carlos Blair • John O'Brien • Michael Penrod • Jimmy Wanner

In Memory Of

Charles Wilson of Topeka, KS	Unknown
Walter Taylor of Syracuse, MO	06/10/18
Ronald Lagemann of Edwardsville, IL	02/02/19
Kenneth Myers of St. Louis, MO	03/12/19
Henry Tipton of St. Louis, MO	04/23/19
Michael Paxon of Warsaw, MO	05/29/19

Redeeming Sports Points

For those members who have not participated in sports/athletic events this fiscal year, (July 2018—June 2019) 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 \$300 annually and only awarded in a non-cash distribution such as gift cards or event tickets (minimum of 25 points). A Sports Year begins the day after the BOD's (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 11, 2019 is the end of the fiscal year for sports points. You have until August 31, 2019 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 FY19 do not carry over to points for FY20. If you have any questions concerning your sports points total, or any other questions, please contact the GPVA office. Sports points accumulation for FY20 begins June 12, 2019.

Dude's Playground

Dude's Playground is a country haven for disabled veterans to fish, relax, and soak up some country air. It is a place to get away from the everyday challenges that a disabled veteran may experience on a daily basis. You will experience the serenity of the sounds of nature, breath taking scenery, and most of all, great fishing. Dude's Playground's objective is to give a small piece of gratitude back to all the great men and women who gave so freely of themselves to protect this great nation. Dude's Playground is a non-profit organization that is by appointment only. Call Rich at 618-781-2658 with any interest.

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If you have a **service-connected disability**, you may qualify for VA funding assistance for wheelchair accessible vehicles or driving modifications. If your current mobility is more than two years old, you may even qualify for a brand new conversion.

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via My HealtheVet at www.myhealth.va.gov

To locate a contracted Urgent Care facility call 866-620-2071 or go online at vaurgentcarelocator.triwest.com

You've probably seen news about the MISSION Act, which expands same day services in primary care and mental health, as well as expanded telehealth to Veterans in their homes. Under the MISSION Act, urgent care is now supplemental benefit for eligible Veterans. Urgent care in the VA or the community (i.e., non-VA) is for those minor injuries and illnesses that do not require emergency room care. This support for urgent care does not replace the important relationship that you have with your VA health care team.

If you need to use the urgent care benefit, it is important that you go to an urgent care location in your community that is within the newly established VA contracted network.

It is also important to know the following details about the prescription component of the benefit:

- If the urgent care provider gives you a prescription, you can fill a 14 day supply of that medication at the VA or in a pharmacy within the VA contracted network.

- If you choose to fill an urgent care prescription at a pharmacy outside of the VA network, you will be required to pay for the prescription at the time of pick up and then file a claim for reimbursement at your local VA medical facility.

If you arrive at an urgent care network location and have any difficulty receiving care, you can call 866-620-2071 to receive assistance.

You can also call your local VA facility 24/7 for advice, or logon to MyHealtheVet and send a Secure Message (login required) to your health care team. Any Secure Message should get a response within 3 business days (usually fewer).

Kim's Korner

by Kim Vonder Haar, LCSW

Hi everyone! I am the Spinal Cord Coordinator for the VA at Jefferson Barracks and John Cochran. I manage the admissions for both spinal cord areas, and help veteran's with any social work needs. I thought that I would start a small column for tips and new information I hear along the way. If my information is incorrect at any time, please let me know and I will print a correction.

So here goes:

- There will be a free legal clinic at Hope Recovery Center 515 N. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63103 on August 2. Call and leave a message for an appointment 314-845-5055 by 7/30.

- Please mail non VA medical bills to: St. Louis Veterans Health Care System 1 Jefferson Barracks Dr. Attention: 04F JB POM St. Louis, MO 63125. Make sure to include your name, date of birth, and Social Security Number on the bill.

- If travel says you are not eligible, you may need to update your financial information. Please contact (314) 652-4100 ext 56415 and let them know you need

a form to update your information.

- Please don't forget to fill out a VA Advanced Directive, or Power of Attorney for Health Care. If you receive your care at a hospital other than the VA, you will need a different document that needs to be notarized. You can Google Power of Attorney for Healthcare- Missouri Bar Association for forms but it is recommended you get legal assistance from your own attorney one of PVA's free legal clinic's or for example the free legal clinic described in the first bullet above. You may get a VA form from any of the social workers. Make sure that whomever you choose to make decisions for you knows your wishes and agrees to honor them. This is as much a tool for discussion as it is a document for the hospital.

I think I will end with this for the first column. Please let me know if you need more information about the information provided, or if there are other topics of interest. You may reach me, Kim Vonder Haar, 314-652-4100 ext. 64819. Be safe and it is an honor to assist you.



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

Gateway Chapter

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