#### **GATEWAY GAZETTE**

The Official Publication of the Gateway Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America

A Member Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America



### HIGH RIDGE ELKS HELP PARALYZED AND MOBILITY IMPAIRED VETS

On January 18th at the annual Jefferson Barracks Chili-Cook-off and Bowling Tournament, Ken DeClue, representing the High Ridge Elks Lodge 2455, presented a \$1748 check to Mike Norris and Amy Will for the Post 2342 fund. This fund is used to assist mobility impaired and disabled Veterans in attending annual events such as the Winter Sports Clinic in Colorado, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG, held at varying locations) and the National Arts Festival (this year to be held in St. Louis). Over the years the High Ridge Elks have tirelessly held events designed solely to help disabled Veterans attend these events, to the tune of \$19.614. Examples of the events held are Meat Shoots and Veterans Appreciation Day and every year the Elks host a billiards tournament just before the NVWG for the members of the team representing the St. Louis VA at the Wheelchair Games.

Ken DeClue heads up these efforts with support from his wife Jan and their granddaughters (Danielle and Cassidy) but it is *all of the Elks collectively* that make these events happen. We would like to also thank the Elk *Continued In next column* 

Ladies and the High Schoolers who cheerfully lend a helping hand. PVA members are always made to feel welcome and appreciated for the service we rendered to our country by all the High Ridge Elk members while attending these events. These events wouldn't be possible if it wasn't for many local businesses that always can be counted on to make donations. We would specifically like to thank Anheuser-Busch Inc., and H.W. Herrell Distributing Inc. who is the Jefferson County Anheuser Busch Distributor. Also making regular contributions are the local Schnucks, Dierbergs, Shop and Save, Walmart, Dobbs Tire Centers, H-J Enterprise Inc, Laborers Local 110, Hale Vending, and Marty's Bistro.

Thank you High Ridge Elks and local business sponsors!

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# Gateway Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America http://www.gatewaypva.org

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A gentleman named Terry Prott is offering our St. Louis area members volunteer work of varying types. If you need a hand around the house for miscellaneous work call Terry at 314-965-6880.

#### Some Chapters Web sites:

Arizona: azpva.org

Bay Area and Western: bayareawesternpva.org

Buckeye: buckeyepva.org
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Cal-Diego: caldiegopva.org
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ddurrwachter@gatewaypva.org or in the US mail at address shown to the left and mark with attention to the editor.

March/April 2007 Gateway Gazette Volume 40 Number 2

#### President's Report

By Stan Brown

As we start the new year the federal VA budget and how we plan to take care of our returning servicemen and servicewomen comes into focus. My comments this month will address those issues. On February 5, 2007 the Administration submitted its budget request for fiscal year 2008; the request is \$34.2 billion and is an increase from last year. That amount however is \$2.1 billion below what is recommended in the *Independent Budget* which is a



budget document co-authored by the PVA, VFW, DAV, and AMVETS. The Administration recommended \$411 million, a cut of \$2.7 million below FY 07 amounts, for Medical and Prosthetic Research. Also recommended was an increase in prescription drug co-payments and enrollment fees. On February 8, PVA testified before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on the importance of funding levels to be in line with the *Independent Budget* recommendations. Shortages in the Administration's major and minor construction budget will cause projects such as expansions to medical facilities and new medical clinics to be placed on hold. During this current 2007 fiscal year the VA is still operating under a continuing resolution for funding levels of fiscal year 2006. *The failure to pass that budget and operating under the continuing resolution has put back the planning for renovating Building 52 (Jefferson Barracks) and the construction, one year to fiscal year 2008 and 2009*. On January 31, the House passed a resolution increasing that appropriation by \$3.6 billion but the same appropriation increase remains stalled in the Senate. Next month a representative from our chapter and the other 33 PVA chapters will go to Washington in a concerted effort to contact our Congressional representatives concerning needed VA funding. When the country sends its men and women off to war, there is a moral obligation to provide for their necessary care when they return.

I have just completed reading a January 2007 research paper from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government on the long-term costs of providing medical care and disability benefits for our service persons returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. The analysis and conclusions are troublesome. The paper's executive summary had three main conclusions: 1) the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is currently overwhelmed by the volume of returning veterans and their health care needs, and the large wave of returning veterans will require greater funding and increased capacity; 2) the Veterans Benefits Administration is in need of structural reform to deal with the current high volume of pending claims and is completely inadequate for the future demand of returning war veterans; and 3) the cost of providing disability benefits and medical care for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans will be \$350-\$700 billion over the course of their lives. The report recommends increased staffing and funding for veterans medical care particularly for mental health treatment. As of September 30, 2006 more than 50,500 US troops have suffered non-mortal wounds in Iraq, Afghanistan, and nearby staging areas. All 1.4 million service persons that have been deployed in the current war effort are potentially eligible to claim some level of disability or medical treatment. The Veterans Benefits Administration has a backlog of 400,000 claims and takes an average of 177 days to process a claim while the private sector processes claims on average in 90 days. In the area of medical care, the paper reports the largest unmet need of veterans is in the area of mental health care. Extended deployments, stop-loss policies, stressful ground warfare, and the uncertainty of discharge dates has taken a toll on our servicemen and women. The paper suggests one of the ways the VA can responsibly handle the increasing number of returning troops is by expanding the use of "Vet Centers," which function as storefront centers where veterans and their families can obtain counseling and integration services in a cost-effective and quick manner. The report's final conclusion is that "the US is not adequately prepared for the influx of returning servicemen from Iraq and Afghanistan."

#### **Local St Louis area Hospitals**

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(314)652-4100
(314)286-6988

Bellville Clinic 6500 West Main Street Belleville, IL. 62223 (314)286-6988 St. Louis Vet Center 2345 Pine Street St. Louis, MO 63103 (314)231-1260

Veteran's Home Clinic

St. Louis, MO. 63166

(314)286-6988

10600 Lewis & Clark Blvd.

East St. Louis Vet Center 1269 North 89th Street Suite 1 East St. Louis, IL 62203 (618)397-6602

#### **Bob Larkin Speaks**

It seems to me we have a very confused group in Washington trying to keep their jobs. As I see it, Congress is selling out our long-term future for their short-term reelection. The far left House and Senate leadership are poised to do more harm than good to the future of America and the world. They have no in-depth plan and are so determined to embarrass the President that they are blinded to the realities of the military and political situation. So much for the bipartisanship and self-sacrifice. The semi-educated, spoiled types, and their bought and paid for left-leaning media propaganda machine know not what they do. They are more delusional than our President is.



Taking a look at military history, it shows that an army suffers high casualties during a retreat. And, a pre-announced wholesale "cut and run" from Iraq will come under devastating fire from the bad guy, after which, there will not be a civil war, but an ethnic cleansing, the magnitude of which would make Saddam proud. Then, as a nuclear Iran and Syria move to make their attempt to control the area's oil, the rest of the free world will be hung out to dry. The Arabs will flex their power, not by raising the price of crude, but by cutting off the flow of crude. Oil does not mean money, oil means power. If we don't give Iraq this final opportunity to stabilize itself, in the not too distant future, our grand-children will have the choice of fighting a nuclear World War, or converting to Islam.

Hell, they may not even get to choose. Absolutely no good can come from denying our Commander in Chief this one last push under the type of nonpolitical rules of engagement that were finally granted us (1972) in the Vietnam War. It is my opinion, had we had the same rules of engagement in 1965, the Vietnam conflict would have been over in six months, and the world would be a better and safer place. The techniques of deal making, compromise, and posturing with endless challenging of those with more power may be how Capitol Hill works, but it most certainly has not worked in a war or on the battlefield.

I thank the Lord for our leaders and the soldiers with the courage to stand up and put it all on the line, as our President is doing. I pray a kind and just God protects our soldiers as they protect us. I pray they are kept safe from harm. I give thanks for a President, who I am not real keen on, but who earns my respect by ignoring supposed polls, misguided political pressure, and his place in history, as he attempts to make the best of a bad situation. It is amazing that seventy years after the isolationists of the 1930's, and given our shrunken and nuclear world, many well-meaning but simple people think that philosophy will work today, that we can go hide and all will be well. Not for long, my friends. If we hide, we had better keep a copy of the Koran handy.

Bob Larkin



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Pictures from the recent Chili-Cookoff and Bowling Tournament held at Jefferson Barracks VAMC on January 18th. Placing first in the Best Chili contest was Whitney Cadagin, 2nd was Rose Ganz, and 3rd place was Joe Avellone. Results from the Bowling Tournament were: First place, Roy Gant, 2nd Deny Canoy, and 3rd Dennis Durrwachter.

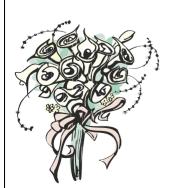
#### MIA

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 Email us if you know where any of these members are! Contact info is on page 2.

Downs, Garry W Gore, Steven G Horras, Phillip W Marrone, Karen A Maxwell, Darrell L Miller, Ronald L Ohen, Robert L Reese, Joe Salyer, Dale Stone, Shelby L Turner, John E Washpun, Odell White, Eric D

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

#### In memory of....



St. Louis, MO Matthews, Frank 10/26/2006 Mullin, Ernest A Kansas City, MO 11/21/2006 Beasley, John H Farmington, MO 12/23/2006 Harris, Eugene St. Louis, MO 12/31/2006 Rhodes, Pervis Kansas City, MO 01/10/2007 Thompson, John W Grandview, MO 01/10/2007 Christensen, Gerald Potosi, MO 01/17/2007 Onstott, Dawn L St. Louis, MO 01/24/2007 Winterrowd, Charles Effingham, IL 02/03/2007 Weingand, Richard Afton, MO 02/06/2007 Halsey, Roy R St. Louis, MO 02/07/2007

#### Hospital Liaison's Report

By Matt Wilcox

It sounds like much of the membership and National PVA have the wrong idea as far as SCI Patient Care at the St. Louis VAMC. I'll try to clear up some of the confusion. The St. Louis Veterans Administration Medical Center and spinal cord injury Center are different from others. The SCI Center is separated by 18 miles (30 to 60 minutes depending on time and conditions) from the major trauma center. So, surgeries, clinics, and other procedures for



inpatient care require transportation and often admittance. Many of you know how uncomfortable and sometimes dangerous the situation can become with someone not familiar with spinal cord injury care. My articles deal with patient care and we are going through a period of poor care for SCI patients. I am reporting eighty percent of the complaints concentrating on other health-care facilities. The SCI Center is a separate unit and usually receives above-average on its overall evaluations. This does not mean I am inviting you in to "Take in the sites!" Stay well and stay out. Let us know when you go to private facilities and the VA. We can not help if we are not informed!

#### **National Director's Report**

By Stanley D. Brown

New to this position I was invited to attend "New Directors" training at our national head-quarters in Washington, DC for two days at the end of January. The training was very informative even to someone as jaded as I am. In the past I had spent a lot of time in our nation's capital, having gone to school there a million years ago plus done a lot of training on active duty and reserves in the Army in nearby Charlottesville, Virginia. Washington, DC is a very



accessible city with the Metro (subway) transportation. Aside from lodging, which is very expensive, the entertainment of the national museums are mostly all free.

The second week of February I attended for the first time as Gateway's representative PVA's Midwinter National Convention in San Diego. There were numerous resolutions of which three stood out as the most contentious and I believe most important. Prior to the convention I informed all the board members of the resolutions and asked for their input. A National Director is supposed to vote for what's best for the entire organization as opposed to his individual chapter, but I thought it worthwhile to get the opinion of other board members. Issue number one was basically a "one chapter/one-vote" resolution that failed. The 34 PVA chapters' representatives have historically had weighted votes based upon the size of their membership. The resolution had a majority approval vote but was short of the two thirds majority needed for a bylaw change. Reasonable people can differ on the more appropriate form of governance-U.S. Senate or U.S. House of Representatives. I supported the change. Issue number two was a resolution for our national organization to go on record in support of certain types of embryonic stem cell research. Regardless of my personal belief in the research, I spoke and voted in opposition to the resolution because I believe our current position of just following federal guidelines is more prudent because of the controversial nature of this issue. That resolution failed. The third issue was a resolution submitted by our chapter requiring in the future that a local host chapter at least be consulted prior to a decision being made on the location of PVA's National Convention. I obviously spoke and voted in favor of that resolution which in fact passed, but barely, with 51% of the vote.

Please feel free to contact me with any concerns over the operation of our national organization and as always our local Gateway Chapter.

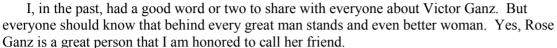
#### **Useful/Interesting Web Sites:**

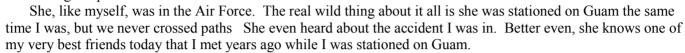
Invacare http:/www.invacare.com Military Info http:/www.military.com Mavo Clinic http:/www.mayoclinic.com Veterans Canteen Serv http:/www.vacanteen.va.com **SCI Statistics** http:/www.neuro.wustl.edu/sci/statisti.htm http:/www.gatewayguide.com St. Louis area traffic Independent Living http:/www.ilusa.com AnyWho http:/www.anywho.com Independent Living http:/www.aarp.org Aarp Research Utilization http:/www.ilru.org St. Louis Post Dispatch http:/www.stltoday.com **TVGuide** http:/www.tvguide.com/listings Kansas City Star http:/www.kansascitv.com Life Expectancy Calc http:/www.livingto100.com Columbia Tribune http:/ww.columbiatribune.com

#### Attaboy

By Ruth Kult

As luck would have it I wasn't going to write an article for this newsletter because absolutely no one has bothered to submit anything. But, the newsletter just wouldn't be the same if I didn't get to add my two cents. I thought of someone very deserving of an ATTABOY: Here's to you my dear friend, Rose Ganz.





Rose and I became kind of acquaintances as roommates in Aspen. We couldn't find a suitable room at the Silver Tree. They booted us over to Wildwood and gave us a suite for the same price as a regular room. We made out like bandits.

Rose is a go-getter. While we were at the games last summer she was in the hand bike race. She was doing very well until something unthinkable happened. The cameraman messed up. He jumped out of the way, but left his camera bag lying there. Sadly she hit it, crashed, but still managed to get back on her bike and finish the race. What a trooper. She has mostly recovered now and as soon as the snow melts and weather warms a little she'll be out pedaling on her hand bike. The hand bike is not my cup of tea.

Rose seems like she would be one of the easiest people to write an article about because she does so many different things. It's almost difficult because she is involved in a wide variety of areas. I'm almost afraid I might miss something. Let me start with the areas I'm sure about. This is because I participate with her. She swims on Monday, Wednesday., and Friday. She skis on Monday nights out at Hidden Valley. On Tuesday and Thursday she works out in the gymnasium.

Camp Penuel. I'm not too sure if people know this, but she is the groundbreaking force behind the camp, but AMY WILL helped too. This was one great idea. She goes as far as to fund-raise for the camp. What a great getaway. By the way, the Camp Penuel outing is in September. Hope to see you there.

When she's not participating in the before mentioned activities I know about, she's off volunteering for things. Also, as her husband Victor said, "she is the Chapel everything". She sits on the parish council, JB Bible studies, Sunday worship, helps with concerts, plays, dance troops, and etc.

One of her main focuses is on Mental Health. She sits on the STL VAMC Mental Health Advisory Council. She's really informed and tries to make it better. Watches out for veteran's rights and the quality of care.

She helps me out quite a bit. There are other females around, but she seems to be the only other female outpatient that really participates in many things. A rarity is a female athlete in a male dominated field. I'm glad she's here.

Rose is a very active member of the PVA Gateway Chapter. She serves on the Gateway BOD. She also is a committee member of the Gateway Accessible Housing Units II and III.

Rose is the best. She is a participant of the summer wheelchair games as well as the winter sports clinic. She is a huge fundraiser for the Honor Roll Sport's Team.

If Rose sees that a program is working, she informs, encourages and prompts qualified veterans to join in on the activity. I know she gets people involved in things after they've come to their own conclusion of giving up. Rose has MS and may not use a wheelchair all of the time, but she's a veteran with a disease that effects her spinal cord. She tries to make life a little easier for everyone by devoting her time and energy.

Rose is a prime example of the PVA's motto: Veterans with Spinal Cord Injury or Disease Living Life to the Fullest.

Thank you for reading.

If you incurred monetary losses due to the recent ice storms that swept through Missouri there may be a chance that you can recover some of you costs associated with these storms. Get in touch with the Chapter or our PVA representatives (contact information shown on page 2).



Spinal Cord Injury/Dysfunction Service invites you to our

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March/April 2007 Gateway Gazette Volume 40 Number 2

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR MEMBERS BORN IN MARCH AND APRIL!

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James E. Spencer	March 06
Daniel T. Perez	March 07
Robert J. Krogman	March 08
Robert D. Milleville	March 08
Patrick L. Cambron	March 10
Timothy J. Holmes	March 10
Gabriel J. Russell	March 10
	March 11
Peter L. Coffelt	
Floyd L. Porter	March 11
Steve Beakley	March 12
Steven G. Gore	March 12
Richard Jones	March 12
Denzil W. Ridenour	March 12
Robert A. Rosenthal	March 12
Leandro Garcia	March 13
Paul T. Schmitz	March 14
Gary D. Sims	March 15
Gary L. Walden	March 15
Robert F. Ditmeyer	March 17
Todd L. Meyer	March 17
Clay A. Doss	March 18
Joseph H. Morton	March 18
Leon E. Rigby	March 18
	March 19
Mike H. Ready	
John D. Frame	March 20
Rayetta P. Reed	March 20
Theodore L. Sinker	March 20
Ronald J. Alexander	March 21
Jamey L. Bollinger	March 22
Lowell D. Lasater	March 22
William Fuqua	March 23
Joe Reese	March 23
Carl J. Cox	March 24
Dennis L. Durrwachter	March 24
Edward W. Phillips	March 24
Will J. Watson	March 24
Raymond A. Boyer	March 26
Donald R. Walker	March 26
Thomas L. Kraft	March 27
Harry V. Brown	March 29
Douglas P. Cook	March 29
•	March 30
Ricky D. Bogart	
William J. Criswell	March 30
Gerald L. Scarbrough	March 30
Glennon J. Braun	March 31
Victoria K. Freeland	March 31
Dale E. Hutson	March 31









Walter E. Musgrave	March 31
Jan R. Schrader	March 31
Kenneth F. Voege	March 31

Joseph D. Reichmuth	April 01
Jon W. Clifton	April 02
Stephen V. Moyes	April 02
Llyod J. Fosdick	April 03
Michael B. Gano	April 03
Matthew T. Wilcox	April 03
David A. Johnson	April 05
Danny R. Saunders	April 05
Terrance W. Weber	April 07
Larry W. Vandiver	April 08
David T. Salzman	April 09
Cecil D. Walker	April 09
Ralph E. Houston	April 10
Robert W. Hess	April 12
April S. Kuhl	April 12
Joel Pettus	April 12
Gary E. Gardner	April 14
John W. Hill	April 15
Louis F. Sutton	April 15
Joel T. White	April 15
James S. Grant	April 17
Jimmy C. Price	April 17
Terry Nelson	April 18
Ronald A. Norwood	April 18
William B. Harward	April 19
Gary Z. Montgomery	April 19
Brian B. Rollin	April 19
Marc A. Risse	April 20
Curley G. Ruff	April 20
Norbert Sellmeyer	April 20
James W. Gebhart	April 21
Eric Statler	April 21
Raymond H. Douglas	April 22
Joseph F. Avellone	April 23
Lloyd L. Dailey	April 23
Billy Pankey	April 23
Joseph H. Strickland	April 27
Charles J. Marino	April 29

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8 Patient Support Group at JB 1:30 - 2:50	9	10
Daylight Savings Begins	12	13 BOD Meeting Overland 11:30	14	15 Membership Lunch 12:00 Meeting 1:00 JB	16	St. Patricks Day
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

April 200	07					
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Easter	9	10 BOD Meeting Overland 11:30	11	Patient Support Group at JB 1:30 - 2:50	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	Trap Shoot 10:00 AM Newsletter Articles due	21
22	23	24	25 Admin Professionals Day	26	27	28
29	30					



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