

Gateway Gazette

March/April 2019

Volume 52 Number 2

Dr. Robert M. Woolsey



Paralyzed Veterans
of America

Gateway Chapter

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

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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:
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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.



President's Message

★ *Get Your Legal House in Order*

★★ *Gateway Mourns*

★★★ *Baseball Tickets Available*

by Stanley D. Brown

GET YOUR LEGAL HOUSE IN ORDER, BOTH MEDICAL AND FINANCIAL

Recently a long time board member and I both had entered civilian (non-VA) emergency rooms less than fully coherent. We were both grilled on whether or not we wanted to be resuscitated or put on life support. I was alert enough to say "yes" and tell them that my cousin would be arriving shortly with a copy of my durable power of attorney for healthcare. The next two rooms (floors) that I went to I was asked the same questions. The other board member, in a separate hospital was not coherent enough to answer that question, but his long-term caregiver who was there said she knew he wanted to be resuscitated and that she had his medical power of attorney for VA hospitals. After a long debate the hospital staff apparently accepted her statement and then during the next day or two she was able to obtain a general medical power of attorney good at any facility whether VA or not. I am no doubt biased, but there seems to be a presumption that our quality of life is perhaps not the same as "normal" people and our desire to "give up" is greater. Which brings me to my point that we should all have medical power of attorney legal documents for facilities other than just for the VA. Those documents will stipulate your designated

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person who can make healthcare decisions on your behalf and have your healthcare issues and records discussed by medical personnel with your designated power of attorney. The documents will also make clear your desire to be resuscitated and put on life support if necessary. The documents can also elaborate when you no longer want those life-support measures. The hospital(s) you use and your power of attorney individual, should have copies of the medical power of attorney. We all should have a general power of attorney that designates an individual to conduct business and financial matters on our behalf when we are unable to do so. Obviously this should be someone you completely trust. Those powers should include the ability to deposit and withdraw money on your behalf as well as pay bills. It may also be necessary to sell a vehicle that you will no longer use or you may need the funds. I remember my power of attorney 20 years ago selling my pickup truck while I was in the ICU, convinced my truck driving days were over. *I am currently trying to schedule another legal clinic day where we can have these documents prepared and executed. As in the past, I will try to have this clinic scheduled during one of our luncheons and will notify everyone by email or newsletter if*

there is time. Make sure that we have your email address.

GATEWAY MOURNS THE PASSING OF DR. ROBERT WOOLSEY

All SCI/D veterans should pause and remember Dr. Robert Woolsey whose name is on the back by the lunch room for Building 52. He was the longest serving SCI Chief, serving in that capacity for 25 years. He passed away on February 18, 2019. He was a great friend to all of us and Gateway PVA in particular. He was the 2009 PVA Speedy Award Winner for nonmembers. The first ever award winner, member or nonmember, from our area. He will be missed by all of us and the St. Louis medical community. He taught many years at the St. Louis University Medical School.

KANSAS CITY ROYALS AND ST. LOUIS CARDINALS BASEBALL TICKETS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

We have again this year purchased the entire Cardinals home game season (82 games) with two great field box seats behind home plate (one wheelchair space and one attendant seat). This year we purchased 20 Royals games that are also an attendant seat and a wheelchair spot. See page 5 of this newsletter on how to purchase at a reduced price or receive free tickets to the games of your choice.

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The Basics of RAMP

by Jeremy Lile, National Service Officer

Rapid Appeals Modernization Program

Every veteran that has ever had a claim for service connection denied, fully understands that the appeals route is a long and arduous journey. In 2017, there were 470,000 veterans awaiting appeals decisions on their disability claims. And so, President Trump signed the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act into effect on August 23, 2017. The president's primary goal was to speed up the appeals process on disability ratings and enable veterans to get decisions in a fraction of the time.

Since that time, veterans who have a pending appeal not at the Board of Veterans' Appeals may have received an invitation to opt in to the Rapid Appeals Modernization Program (RAMP). RAMP is a voluntary program with no guarantees other than a decision will be made much quicker than usual. Consequently, veterans who decide to choose the RAMP route will not be able to opt out and return to the regular legacy appeals process.

There are two lanes for which someone can opt in to RAMP. There is the Supplementary Review where the veteran will have to provide new evidence. A second option to consider is the Higher-Level Review, which is performed by an experienced adjudicator without any new evidence. If a higher level review is selected and then gets denied, the veteran can choose to go back and do a supplementary review with new evidence. If a claim is denied in one or both of the options, that is not the end of the road. A third option is to submit a Notice of Disagreement and a VA Form 21-4138 that is attached to the RAMP denial letter. This option will allow the claim to be reviewed by the Board of Veterans Appeals under a program called the Board's Early Applicability of Appeals Modernization (BEAAM). The primary benefits of RAMP is potentially faster decisions, earlier resolutions, and multiple review options.

As of May 14, 2018, 15,645 veterans have opted into RAMP from the legacy appeals process. From those cases pending in RAMP, 64.6% have opted into the Higher Level Review lane, and 35.4% have opted into the Supplemental Claim lane. The monetary total for RAMP payments thus far is \$15.5 million. Contact your local NSO for any questions.

Baseball Tickets Available for **St. Louis Cardinals** and **Kansas City Royals**

St. Louis Cardinal tickets are for a regular stadium seat and a spot for a wheelchair in Section 147, Seats 3 and 4. A folding chair can be placed in the wheelchair spot if need be. We are offering to sell at half price, up to four (4) games per member. The list of games with prices of each game will be posted on our website. If you want to be assured of a particular game as opposed to requesting the game with a lottery drawing, tell us what games you want to purchase. The vast majority of the tickets we will give away by drawing names. Please submit a list of those games you wish to purchase or receive free by lottery, in order of your preference by *end of business (5pm) Wednesday, March 27, 2019.*

Kansas City Royals tickets are in Section 212, Row RRWC, Seats 5 and 6. They will be distributed the same way, except you will be allowed to purchase up to two (2) games at half price per member. Kansas City area members will have priority for these tickets. Please submit a list of those games you wish to purchase or receive free by lottery, in order of your preference by *end of business (5pm) Friday, May 3, 2019.* See below for Royals tickets games and prices.

All tickets must be picked up in person, nothing will be mailed.

SUNDAY, MAY 12, 2019 @ 1:15PM	VS PHILLIES	\$47
FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2019 @ 7:15PM	VS YANKEES	\$52
SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 2019 @ 1:15PM	VS WHITE SOX	\$47
SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 2019 @ 1:15PM	VS TWINS	\$47
FRIDAY, JULY 26, 2019 @ 7:15PM	VS INDIANS	\$47
TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2019 @ 7:15PM	VS CARDINALS	\$52
SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 2019 @ 6:15PM	VS METS	\$47
FRIDAY, AUGUST 30, 2019 @ 7:15PM	VS ORIOLES	\$47
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2019 @ 1:15PM	VS ORIOLES	\$40
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2019 @ 7:15PM	VS ASTROS	\$47
SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2019 @ 1:15PM	VS INDIANS	\$40
SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2019 @ 1:15PM	VS ANGELS	\$40
SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2019 @ 1:15PM	VS YANKEES	\$52
SUNDAY, MAY 26, 2019 @ 1:15PM	VS YANKEES	\$52
THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2019 @ 12:15PM	VS RED SOX	\$40
SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 2019 @ 1:15PM	VS TWINS	\$47
SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2019 @ 6:15PM	VS INDIANS	\$47
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2019 @ 7:15PM	VS CARDINALS	\$52
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2019 @ 6:15PM	VS ASTROS	\$47
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2019 @ 1:15PM	VS ASTROS	\$47

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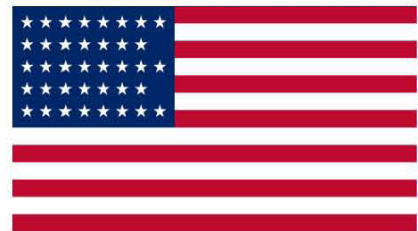
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General Information



REMINDERS:

National Veteran
Wheelchair Games
registration deadline is

April 15, 2019

Trout Lodge

registration deadline is

June 15, 2019

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



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March 3-

Meat Shoot

1:00pm @ Legion Post 162

10 pts for members

March 12 -

BOD Meeting

11:30am @ GPVA Office

15 pts for non-BOD mbrs

March 21 -

JB Luncheon

12pm @ JB, Building 52

5 pts for members

March 21 -

Qtrly Membership Mtg

Following Luncheon

@ JB, Building 52

15 pts for members

March 31 to April 6-

Winter Sports Clinic

@ Snowmass, CO



April 7 -

Meat Shoot

1:00pm @ Legion Post 162

10 pts for members

April 9 -

BOD Meeting

4:00pm @ GPVA Office

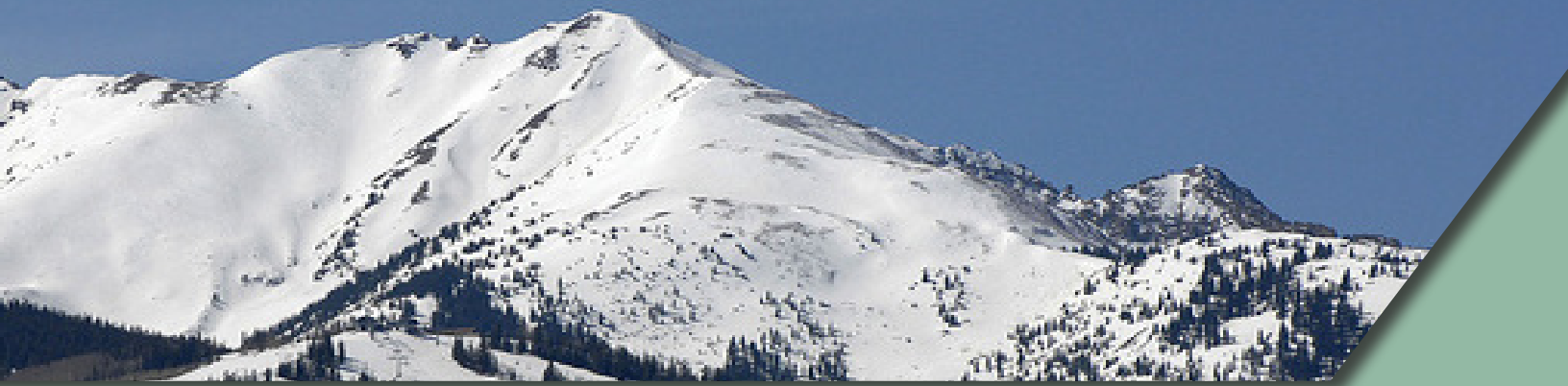
15 pts for non-BOD mbrs

April 18 -

JB Luncheon

12pm @ JB, Building 52

5 pts for members



Welcome to Our New Members

Robert Avery • Larry Blue • Sandra Campbell • Bradley Glass
Stephen Huffmon • Denzel Jines • Gordon Langerock • Larry Porter • Alvin Stiger

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.

Victor Stieben

In Memory Of

Clifford Green of St. Louis, MO	11/02/11
James Ridder of Alton, IL	12/02/12
Delbert Mitchell of St. Louis, MO	10/05/15
Donald Biggs of Harrisburg, IL	12/07/18
Robert King of Jerseyville, IL	12/31/18
John Avery of St. Louis, MO	01/06/19
Stanley Powell of Maryland Heights, MO	01/24/19

Y7 Trout Lodge

If you have never been to the Veterans Outdoor Adventure at YMCA's Trout Lodge near Potosi, Missouri, ask one of your fellow members that have attended about the amount of fun that can be had! There is a multitude of adapted activities including Archery, Rifle Range, Fishing, Kayaking, Trapshooting, Action Track Trails, Boccia, Golf, Zip Line, and Water Skiing. Trout Lodge applications are due on June 15, 2019. If you have any questions, please contact Matt Luitjohan at 314-894-6602 or Charley Wright at 314-652-4100 ext. 64590.

We proudly support Gateway PVA



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.

St. Louis North

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Toll-Free: 877.501.8267

St. Louis South

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We're here to help!

Call us today or stop by and take a test drive.



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I'd like to invite you to the meat shoot that is sponsored by Legion Hall Post 162. It is held on the first Sunday of the month. There is more than just the meat shoot. There are raffles for baskets, 50-50, and they also have a couple money rounds. You have a choice of food like chili, hot dogs, and brats. It's a lot of fun competing and socializing with other members and friends, or you can do as I did and bring a couple grand kids if you want. There is no better satisfaction in life than watching grandkids having a good time and seeing their faces when they win. It was somewhere for me to go away from the tv and computer. I hope to see you there.

Bob Weigand



Recently after a PVA luncheon, I was invited to the South Day Room of Building 52 to participate in a virtual reality experience. I had no idea what awaited since I've never had this kind of opportunity before. The specialists who were operating the system put a headset on me that covered the top half of my head, mostly my eyes and ears. When the experience started, I was whooshed away. My body was still there in my wheelchair, but I was free of its constraints. It was like my spirit had let go of the tethers of a body that no longer moves freely in this world. I was on an island; I was surrounded by lush tropical growth that I could have reached out and touched. The ocean was there, I could see it and feel it inside my brain, so real that I could almost smell the salt air and walk around (yeah, me walk around) with the waves lapping at my feet. I was free and relaxed. Whatever pain I had had, for those moments they were gone. It was like a trance but so realistic. Everywhere I looked was a three-dimensional view of this comforting paradise. It was like really being there. It was a surprising and wonderful opportunity I was offered to share in. When the headset was taken off me, it was like being ripped out of a different time and place; it took a few seconds to get acclimated back to the real aworld. Hey, everybody, if you get a chance to try this – do it! I hope we can get this type of system here at the VA so I can try it again. It can help with relaxation and pain control. All I can say is WOW!!



LaRoy Smith



**Paralyzed Veterans
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Gateway Chapter

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