

Gateway Gazette

March/April 2020

Volume 53 Number 2



Paralyzed Veterans
of America
Gateway Chapter

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

www.gatewaypva.org

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**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

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.



President's Message

Passing of James Russell

BOD Elections

Baseball Ticket Giveaway

Free Google Pixel 2 Phones

by Stanley D. Brown

Passing of PVA stalwart James Russell

In January, one of PVA's great assets and one of my best friends passed away unexpectedly, after a long 10 month stay in the San Diego VA. Jim Russell was a recipient of the coveted PVA Speedy Award, PVA's highest honor, in 2018. He is featured in the latest PN magazine. He served on the Cal Diego Board of Directors and as their National Director for many years and was a voice that everyone listened to during our National PVA meetings. He also served as the PVA's Chairman of the Judicial Committee. His august wisdom shepherded the committee handling numerous ethical and standards of conduct complaints against members. Several years ago a complaint was filed against me, in spite of our friendship, he never contacted me while the case was pending, and only called me when they finished their deliberations to tell me the case had been dismissed "with complete exoneration." Jim was a Marine and served two tours in Vietnam. He rose from the enlisted ranks to "mustang"

into the officer ranks and was medically retired as a Major from active duty. Jim was also very active in his community sitting on various boards in the Fallbrook, California area. After his injury he went back to school to earn both a bachelor's degree and an MBA from San Diego State. He was very active with PVA's shooting sports program, especially pistols. Although from a different Chapter, Jim Russell epitomized Gateway's vision statement of "living life to the fullest" after his injury. He was a good friend and I will miss him.

Gateway Board Elections are Now Upon Us Again

It is once again time to nominate Board members and all of Gateway's Officers, President included. Please take time to nominate people or even yourself for an Officer position or Board member position. There is no nomination form. Simply contact Amber or Chris at the Chapter office with nominations via email at info@gatewaypva.org or mail a nomination letter to the office at 1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center, St. Louis, MO 63132. Nominations

close at 3pm on April 24, 2020. Election ballots will be mailed out with the May/June edition of the Gazette and must be returned to the Chapter office by 5 pm on June 8, 2020.

Baseball Tickets

In this issue of the Gazette we announce that we have tickets for the entire St. Louis Cardinals home game schedule and 22 Kansas City Royals home games. You can find all game dates on our website for the available games at gatewaypva.org by clicking the "Events" tab. As in the past, you are able to purchase games (2 seats) at half price to ensure you get the games you want or merely choose those games you want and we will draw names by the lottery again.

Last Chance for Free Google Pixel 2 Smartphones

This is our final effort to distribute those free phones we have "advertised" before. Those not given away, and there are many, will be given to Paraquad for them to distribute. If you would like to receive one of these phones, please contact the Chapter office at 314-427-0393.

New Changes to Commissary, Exchange, and MWR Benefit Programs

by Jeremy Lile, National Service Officer

For many years, access to Commissaries, Exchanges and Morale/Welfare/Recreation benefits were limited to active duty military, their families, and military retirees. As of 01/01/2020, new changes have expanded Commissary, Exchange and MWR privileges for veterans. Installation access is now granted to all service connected disabled Veterans, Purple Heart recipients, and former Prisoners of War. This benefit also includes individuals designated as the primary family caregivers of eligible veterans under the VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC).

A valid Veteran Health Identification Card must be presented to gain access to both the installation and commissary/exchange. The card must also display the veteran's eligibility status (i.e., Purple Heart, Former POW or Service Connected). Veterans cannot be issued a VHIC without first enrolling in the VA Health Care System.

Eligible caregivers will receive an eligibility letter from VA's Office of Community Care. If a primary family caregiver under PCAFC loses their eligibility letter, it is necessary to call 1-877-733-7927 and request a replacement letter. You can also visit www.va.gov/health-care/family-caregiver-benefits/comprehensive-assistance for more information regarding the PCAFC.

This new access to Commissaries, Exchanges, and MWR activities is for installations in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and the participating U.S. territories and possessions. Access at installations overseas in foreign countries is subject to status of forces agreements, international laws, and other agreements with host countries. MWR benefits include access to golf courses, bowling centers, recreational lodging, RV campgrounds, movie theaters, marinas and kennels.

Some veterans may not have a service connected disability, or meet the Purple Heart/POW criteria. And so, all honorably discharged veterans and reservists do have the opportunity to shop through the online Exchanges. The first step to gain online Exchange privileges is to verify eligibility. Go to VetVerify.org and submit a verification form. Veterans are required to submit verification of their military service. Veterans will also be asked to provide their full name, last four digits of their Social Security Number, date of birth, and a contact email.

Authorized veterans can utilize any of the four (AAFES, NEXCOM, MCX and CGX) military Exchanges. These Exchanges can be found at shopmyexchange.com, mynavyexchange.com and ShopCGX.com. Additionally, veterans can use all of the online Exchanges mentioned regardless of their branch of service. Online shopping privileges exclude the purchase of uniforms, alcohol and tobacco products.

Contact your local NSO for any questions or visit: <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2020/01/01/your-questions-answered-new-commissary-access-vets-and-caregivers.html>

Getting Paralyzed Veterans Walking Again with Indego®



New VA Program offers eligible veterans an Indego® Exoskeleton at no cost.

What is Indego?

A robotic device that enables veterans to walk again.

Indego is an FDA-approved exoskeleton worn around the waist and legs that enables individuals paralyzed from spinal cord injuries to stand and walk, offering a new level of independence.

Indego can currently be used with spinal cord injury levels of T3 to L5 in community or home settings. The device offers:

- Lightweight, modular design
- Slim profile compatible with most wheelchairs
- Rapid setup and breakdown for easy transportation
- Can be used with forearm crutches or walker

Contact us today to find out if you are eligible to receive an Indego exoskeleton.

Email: support.indego@parker.com

Phone: 844-846-3346



Watch Marine Veteran Steve Holbert's story at www.indego.com/veterans



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Did You Know That Paralyzed US Veterans May be Eligible For a ReWalk Exoskeleton?

Contact ReWalk for More Information

**rewalk.com/contact
or 508.251.1154 Option 2**

What is *Your* Mission?

Whether your goals include experiencing the proven health-related benefits of exoskeleton assisted walking, standing to hug a loved one or completing an entire marathon, ReWalk can you help you achieve them.

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www.rewalk.com



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locations



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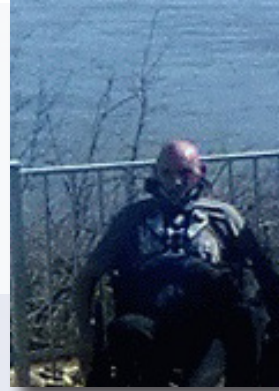
www.southernbusandmobility.com





GATEWAY GI

General Information



MARCH 2020

March 10 -
BOD Meeting
11:30am @ GPVA Office
15 pts for non-BOD mbrs

March 19 -
JB Luncheon
12pm @ JB, Building 52
5 pts for members

March 19 -
Qtrly Membership Mtg
Following Luncheon
@ JB, Building 52
15 pts for members

March 28 to April 4 -
Winter Sports Clinic

APRIL 2020

April 14-
BOD Meeting
11:30am @ GPVA Office
15 pts for non-BOD mbrs

April 16 -
JB Luncheon
12pm @ JB, Building 52
5 pts for members

April 24 to 26 -
KIPVA Bass Tournament

Donated Google Pixel Phones

A company has generously donated Google Pixel 2 cell phones, with accessories, to the Gateway Chapter to give out to membership for free. These phones will work with any provider. If you are interested in receiving a phone and live within 50 miles of the Gateway office, we ask that you contact the office to schedule a time to pick it up. If you live further than 50 miles from the Gateway office, please verify your address with our office so that we can mail it to you.



Welcome to Our New Members

Nelson Donovan • Elmer Dyer • William Kusturin
Dhante Lampley • David Masnica • Dale Setzer

In Memory Of

John Wayne of Florissant, MO	12/13/17
Terry Person of Brashear, MO	07/21/19
Lewis Carroll of Forsyth, MO	07/29/19
Leonard Amsler of St. Louis, MO	09/17/19
John Cierpiot of Kansas City, MO	09/29/19
Richard McClanahan of Gardner, KS	11/17/19
Kenneth Lange of O'Fallon, MO	11/29/19
Stephen Fischer of Swansea, IL	12/15/19
Barry Langford of Cahokia, IL	12/31/19
Earl Scarborough of Palmyra, MO	01/07/20

Baseball Tickets Available for Cardinals and 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 is posted on our website under the "Event" tab. 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) Thursday, March 26, 2020. ***All tickets must be picked up in person, nothing will be mailed.***

Kansas City Royals tickets are in Section 144, Row VWC. They will be distributed by email, and 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) Thursday, March 26, 2020.

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

9389 Natural Bridge Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63134
Local: (314) 989-1010
Toll-Free: 877.501.8267

St. Louis South

980 S. Highway Drive
Fenton, MO 63026
Local: (314) 292-5150
Toll-Free: 877.501.8267



We're here to help!

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



Proud Supporters of the



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**



Kim's Korner

by Kim Vonder Haar, LCSW

For those of you contacting the call center at 314-894-6603, that number will no longer be in service effective February 7th and there will no longer be walk-in assistance in Building 18. You are asked to call 1-877-881-7618, the new call center for any questions regarding claims and bowel and bladder issues. Please let me know your experiences with this new number so I can pass on any feedback.

Participants in the bowel and bladder program - I know many of you are still experiencing trouble with back payments being delayed. I am passing on these concerns as I receive them. You are being asked to please mail your time sheets, don't fax any longer, to:

St. Louis VA Health Care System
1 Jefferson Barracks Drive
Attn: 04-JB-OCC
St. Louis, MO 63125

There may be more changes coming to the time sheets as they begin to electronically submit them. More to come as the changes happen. A reminder to fill out all the required lines, sign the form, and list each day individually.

A few happenings around Spinal Cord Injury:

- Kudos to Matt and Charley and the Virtual Reality featured on the front page of the Post Dispatch a few weeks ago
- Debbie Gray is officially retired as of January 31, and enjoying her grandkids and travel
- Jackie Black has begun as therapy supervisor - a great woman for the job
- Dr. Kate Fair, psychology, has left for another job opportunity. Dr. Goedeker is available in her absence

Take care all. Stay warm. Contact your social workers for any assistance you may need.

The Rolling Harmonica

by Robert Weigand

On December 6, 2019, The Rolling Harmonica, a group from Jefferson Barracks, was honored with a request to play for Neuwoehner School in the Special School District. There were a hundred students plus several teachers.

We were warned of a possible rowdy bunch, to my surprise, as soon as we started to play, I heard nothing but silence. We were invited in recognition of Pearl Harbor.

Our music was patriotic songs, and we played for approximately thirty to forty minutes. Every song was received with a round of clapping of approval after played. When the session was over, every student received their own harmonica with music,

for When the Saints Come Marching In.

When we left, we received hand painted rocks from the students with painted flags, stars, and some with uplifting words.

This all could not have happened without the support of the Gateway Chapter of PVA, Charley and Matt, and the Gateway Chapter driver, Martha. From the bottom of my heart, we thank you.

Any veteran who has interest in learning how to play the harmonica can meet us in Building 52, in the basement break room, on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11am.



Paralyzed Veterans of America

Gateway Chapter

1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center
St. Louis, MO 63132

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