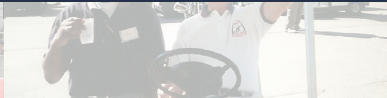




MAR/APR 2023

VOL.47 NO.2





VETERANS WITH SPINAL CORD INJURY OR DISEASE, LIVING LIFE TO THE FULLEST

www.gatewaypva.org
www.twitter.com/PVA_Gateway
www.facebook.com/PVAGatewayChapter

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**NEED TO UPDATE
YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION?**

••••

**DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE
YOUR NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL?**

••••

Contact us at one of the following:

Gateway Chapter PVA
1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center
St. Louis, MO 63132

314.427.0393 or 800.426.4058
Fax 314.427.4183

info@gatewaypva.org

••••

The material contained herein expresses the opinions of the writer and not necessarily the opinions of the editor or the Gateway Chapter, Paralyzed Veterans of America. All material in the Gazette may be reprinted unless specifically prohibited. Readers are encouraged to submit their articles to info@gatewaypva.org or via US mail at the address shown above.

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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, Senior National Service Officer

St. Louis Service Office

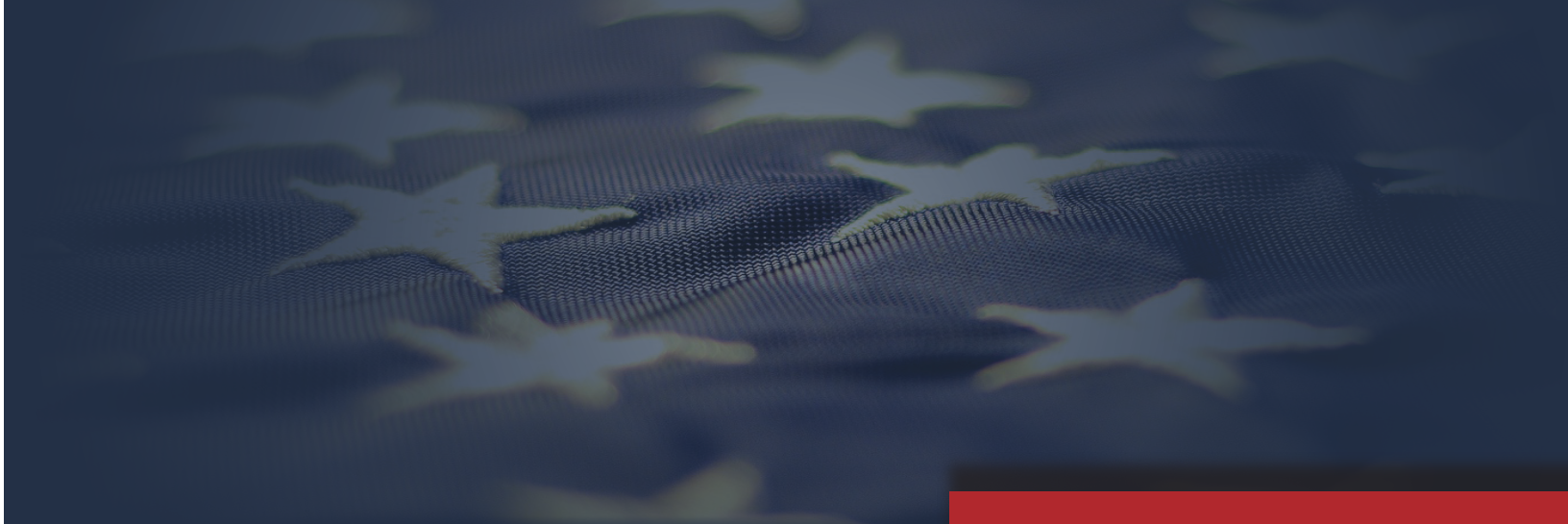
9700 Page Blvd. Suite 101, Room 1-114
St. Louis, MO 63132
Office: (314)253-4480 or (800)795-3614
Fax: (314) 253-4170
Susan White, Accredited Administrator

Jefferson Barracks VA Medical Center

JB SCI, Room 2S25
#1 Jefferson Barracks Drive
St. Louis, MO 63125
Office: (314) 894-6467 or (866) 328-2670
Fax: (314) 894-6465
Rodney Harris, Senior Benefits Advocate

PVA National Liaison VP

Josue Cordova



stretching, and my personal favorite is boxing. We also have Trivia on Thursdays and cooking with Jackie on Fridays.



FY24 Board and Officer Nominations

It is time to nominate seven Board members and the Office of Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. 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. Please note that all Officers and Board members must have completed the National PVA Certification Form. If you are unsure of your certification status, please contact the office. Nominations close at 3pm on April 21, 2023. 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 2, 2023.

Welcoming a Familiar Face

I would like to welcome Kat McDonald to full time employment in the Spinal Cord Unit at Jefferson Barracks. Although Kat is new to full time, she is no stranger to our SCI/D family, those of us who have been participating in the daily VVC calls Monday through Friday. With her new employment she has extended the number of calls to twice a day. The VVC (Veteran's Video Conference Zoom classes are an hour long, Kat offers instruction in Tai Chi, yoga, strength and

FROM THE DESK OF GATEWAY CHAPTER'S **EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT**

Amber Lee

BASEBALL TICKET GIVEAWAY

As the Chapter does every season, we have purchased all home games of the St. Louis Cardinals and thirty-two of the Kansas City Royals. Both the St. Louis Cardinals and Kansas City Royals are two accessible spots (KC Royals comes with paid parking). Please carefully read the points below for further details:

*****CARDINALS*****

Members can win up to FOUR total games for the St. Louis Cardinals (for the full season). Members can put their name "in the hat" for more than the allowed amount to win. Priority will go to members that have not yet won a game.

Members may enter the giveaway by purchasing tickets at half price (\$80 to purchase) to ensure a specific game. If more than one member wants to purchase the same game, the names will be put into a hat and the winner will be drawn at random - the winner will still need to purchase said tickets.

Members may also enter the giveaway solely by lottery method for any available game or a specific game. If more than one member has put in for the same game, the names will be put into a hat and the winner will be drawn at random.

Entries must be given to myself or Chris (chris@gatewaypva.org) no later than Wednesday, March 20 at 12pm for Cardinal tickets. We will contact winners. If we leave you a message, please make sure to contact us ASAP so that we can make sure all

tickets will be used. Please email us instead of calling the office so that we have a paper trail of the games that you have requested.

Please be aware that if you are wanting us to mail your tickets, we cannot guarantee that the USPS will get your tickets to you in time. You may otherwise call the office to schedule picking them up. Games available for giveaway can be found on page 12.

*****ROYALS*****

Members can win up to TWO total games for the Kansas City Royals. Members can put their name "in the hat" for more than the allowed amount to win. Priority will go to members that have not yet won a game.

Priority for Kansas City Royals games goes to Kansas City area members.

Members may enter the giveaway by purchasing tickets at half price (\$60 to purchase) to ensure a specific game. If more than one member wants to purchase the same game, the names will be put into a hat and the winner will be drawn at random - the winner will still need to purchase said tickets.

Continued on page 7

The Pact Act

The PACT Act is a new law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances.

The PACT Act adds to the list of health conditions that VA will assume (or “presume”) are caused by exposure to these substances. This law helps VA provide generations of Veterans—and their survivors—with the care and benefits they’ve earned and deserve.

The PACT Act will bring these changes:

- Expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam, Gulf War, and post-9/11 eras
- Adds 20+ more presumptive conditions for burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic exposures
- Adds more presumptive-exposure locations for Agent Orange and radiation
- Requires VA to provide a toxic exposure screening to every Veteran enrolled in VA health care
- Helps us improve research, staff education, and treatment related to toxic exposures

VA has added more than 20 burn pit and other toxic exposure presumptive conditions based on the PACT Act. This change expands benefits for Gulf War era and post-9/11 Veterans.

These cancers are now presumptive:

- Brain cancer

- Gastrointestinal cancer of any type
- Glioblastoma
- Head cancer of any type
- Kidney cancer
- Lymphatic cancer of any type
- Lymphoma of any type
- Melanoma
- Neck cancer of any type
- Pancreatic cancer
- Reproductive cancer of any type
- Respiratory (breathing-related cancer of any type

These illnesses are now presumptive:

- Asthma that was diagnosed after service
- Chronic bronchitis
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Chronic rhinitis
- Chronic sinusitis
- Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis
- Emphysema
- Granulomatous disease
- Interstitial lung disease (ILD)
- Pleuritis
- Pulmonary fibrosis
- Sarcoidosis

Based on the PACT Act, VA has added 2 new Agent Orange presumptive conditions:

- High blood pressure (also called hypertension)
- Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS)

Toxic exposure screenings are available at VA health facilities across the country.

Every Veteran enrolled in VA health

care will receive an initial screening and a follow-up screening at least once every 5 years. Veterans who are not enrolled and who meet eligibility requirements will have an opportunity to enroll and receive the screening.

The screening will ask you if you think you were exposed to any of these hazards while serving:

- Open burn pits and other airborne hazards
- Gulf War-related exposures
- Agent Orange
- Radiation
- Camp Lejeune contaminated water exposure
- Other exposures

VA will then give you information about any benefits, registry exams, and clinical resources you may need.

Ask about the screening at your next VA health care appointment. If you don’t have an upcoming appointment, or if you want to get the screening sooner, contact your local VA health facility. Ask to get screened by the toxic exposure screening navigator.

Ask your local PVA service officer for assistance in filing any new claims with VA. PVA NSOs will work with you to get the benefits you are entitled to due to your exposure.

For further information go to: https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/?utm_source=bing&utm_medium=paid_search&utm_campaign=ar_pact_fy22_veterans

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 vehicle is more than two years old, you may even qualify for a brand new conversion. Veterans discounts available. Check out our daily rental rates!

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.



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Continued from page 4

Members may also enter the giveaway solely by lottery method for any available game or a specific game. If more than one member has put in for the same game, the names will be put into a hat and the winner will be drawn at random.

Entries must be given to myself or Chris (chris@gatewaypva.org) no later than March 20 at 12pm for Royals tickets. We will contact the winners. If we leave

you a message, please make sure to contact us ASAP so that we can make sure all tickets will be used. Please email us instead of calling the office so that we have a paper trail of the games that you have requested.

Royals ticket winners MUST be able to receive their tickets virtually with the MLB Ballpark app on a smart phone. Chris will need your email that you used for the MLB Ballpark app so that he can forward the tickets to you. Games available for the Royals ticket giveaway are listed below on this page.

TICKET GIVEAWAY

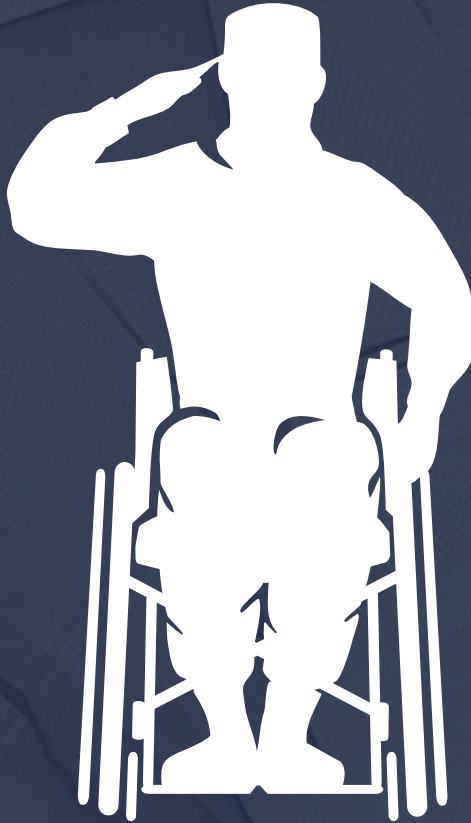
KANSAS	CITY	ROYALS	BASEBALL
Saturday, April 1 @ 3:10pm	vs Twins	Sunday, June 18 @ 1:10pm	vs Angles
Sunday, April 2 @ 1:10pm	vs Twins	Friday, June 30 @ 7:10pm	vs Dodgers
Friday, April 14 @ 7:10pm	vs Braves	Saturday, July 1 @ 6:15pm	vs Dodgers
Saturday, April 15 @ 3:10pm	vs Braves	Sunday, July 2 @ 1:10pm	vs Dodgers
Sunday, April 16 @ 1:10pm	vs Braves	Saturday, July 15 @ 6:10pm	vs Rays
Friday, May 5 @ 7:10pm	vs Athletics	Friday, August 11 @ 7:10pm	vs Cardinals
Saturday, May 6 @ 6:10pm	vs Athletics	Saturday, August 12 @ 6:15pm	vs Cardinals
Sunday, May 7 @ 1:10pm	vs Athletics	Friday, September 1 @ 7:10pm	vs Red Sox
Friday, May 26 @ 7:10pm	vs Nationals	Saturday, September 2 @ 6:10pm	vs Red Sox
Saturday, May 27 @ 3:10pm	vs Nationals	Sunday, September 3 @ 1:10pm	vs Red Sox
Sunday, May 28 @ 1:10pm	vs Nationals	Friday, September 15 @ 7:10pm	vs Astros
Friday, June 2 @ 7:10pm	vs Rockies	Saturday, September 16 @ 6:10pm	vs Astros
Saturday, June 3 @ 3:10pm	vs Rockies	Sunday, September 17 @ 1:10pm	vs Astros
Sunday, June 4 @ 1:10pm	vs Rockies	Friday, September 29 @ 7:10pm	vs Yankees
Friday, June 16 @ 7:10pm	vs Angles	Saturday, September 30 @ 6:10pm	vs Yankees
Saturday, June 17 @ 3:10pm	vs Angles	Sunday, October 1 @ 2:10pm	vs Yankees

ST. LOUIS BLUES HOCKEY TICKET GIVEAWAY

After requests from multiple members asking about St. Louis Blues hockey tickets, the Chapter did a trial run with ten games of the St. Louis Blues 2022-2023 season to gauge interest. We did this drawing via email due to time constraints - if you are unsure if we have your email in our system, please email me at amber@gatewaypva.org so that I can add or update your email. We had GREAT interest in the ten Blues home games and the winning members had a wonderful time.

The tickets are for two accessible spots, in Section 123.

Due to this interest, the Chapter has bought all home games of the 2023-2024 St. Louis Blues season. As of this newsletter, the dates for the 2023-2024 season has not been announced yet. Keep an eye out in future newsletters for the official announcement for the opening of the St. Louis Blues ticket giveaway!



GATEWAY G.I.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Larry Buchanan
John Carter
Richard Danda
John Dickinson
Samuel Edwards
Ronald Elson
Robert Gregory
Barbara Jones
Marcus Moody
Craig Morton
Dana Odle

Jose Ortiz
Tommy Remington
David Roscher
Jordan Schilling
Dustin Simmons
Keith Terrell
James Titus
Tabrina Wallace
Joseph Weber
Robert Wilson

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 contact the Gateway office with current contact information for the following members:

Ronnie Anderson
Amos Brown
Curtis Herrington
Jarid Hill
Kevin Jackson
Davett Jones
Robert Melchior
Charles Packard
Sylvester Roddy
Laurice Sappington
Curt Sidmore
Jeremy Talley
Donnell Thames

IN MEMORY OF

James Spencer of Sullivan, MO	12/25/2022
Edward Burnett of Coulterville, MO	12/26/2022
Martha Lowe of Overland Park, KS	12/29/2022
John Becker of Shiloh, IL	12/30/2022
Steven Grubbs of Richmond, MO	01/15/2023
Steve McIntosh of St. Joseph, MO	02/19/2023
Anthony Hasting of Florissant, MO	02/26/2023

GENERAL INFORMATION



MARCH

MARCH 5 at 1pm to 4pm
Meat Shoot
@ American Legion 162
20 points for members

MARCH 14 at 11:30am
Board of Directors meeting
Via Zoom (contact office for link) and
in person w/proof of COVID vaccination
and signed waiver
15 points for nonBOD members

MARCH 16 at 1:30pm
Quarterly Membership Meeting
Via Zoom (contact office for link)
15 points for members

MARCH 17 to 19
National PVA Bocchia Tournament
@ The Pavilion at Lemay

MARCH 25 to 31
Winter Sports Clinic
@ Snowmass Village, CO

APRIL 2 at 1pm to 4pm
Meat Shoot
@ American Legion 162
20 points for members

APRIL 11 at 11:30am
Board of Directors meeting
Via Zoom (contact office for link) and
in person w/proof of COVID vaccination
and signed waiver
15 points for nonBOD members

APRIL 21 to 23
KIPVA Bass Tournament
@ Skuttawa, KY



APRIL



Sales, Service, Rentals, Leasing, &
Financing

PROUD SUPPORTER OF:



VA BENEFIT UPDATE!

DID YOU KNOW?

- Congress passed new legislation that could provide additional benefits for qualified veterans.

- Contact your Southern Bus and Mobility sales rep today to find out what this might mean for YOU!



Breese, IL

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+618-526-4131

Valley Park, MO

80 S Highway Dr., Valley Park, MO 63088
+636-825-0700

ReWalk is Working to Put Veterans First



“It changes your whole perspective. It takes your life up a notch. I may not have everything else back, but I’ve got this part back.”

John Benner - Air Force Veteran Spinal Cord Injury in 2007 ReWalker since 2021

ReWalk is proud to work with the VA to provide Veterans with access to personal exoskeleton evaluations and training as soon as they are medically eligible and interested in the benefits of walking again.

Put Veterans First | Think ReWalk First



Contact ReWalk for more information

rewalk.com/refer-a-veteran • 508.251.1154

TICKET GIVEAWAY

SAINT

Thursday, March 30 @ 6:45pm
 Saturday, April 1 @ 1:15pm
 Sunday, April 2 @ 1:15pm
 Monday, April 3 @ 6:45pm
 Tuesday, April 4 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, April 5 @ 12:15pm
 Thursday, April 13 @ 6:45pm
 Friday, April 14 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, April 15 @ 1:15pm
 Sunday, April 16 @ 1:15pm
 Monday, April 17 @ 6:45pm
 Tuesday, April 18 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, April 19 @ 12:15pm
 Tuesday, May 2 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, May 3 @ 6:45pm
 Thursday, May 4 @ 12:15pm
 Friday, May 5 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, May 6 @ 1:15pm
 Sunday, May 7 @ 1:15pm
 Monday, May 15 @ 6:45pm
 Tuesday, May 16 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, May 17 @ 6:45pm
 Thursday, May 18 @ 6:45pm
 Friday, May 19 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, May 20 @ 6:15pm
 Sunday, May 21 @ 1:15pm
 Monday, May 29 @ 1:15pm
 Tuesday, May 30 @ 6:45pm
 Friday, June 9 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, June 10 @ 1:15pm
 Sunday, June 11 @ 1:15pm
 Monday, June 12 @ 6:45pm
 Tuesday, June 13 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, June 14 @ 12:15pm
 Tuesday, June 27 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, June 28 @ 6:45pm
 Thursday, June 29 @ 6:15pm
 Friday, June 30 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, July 1 @ 1:15pm
 Sunday, July 2 @ 1:15pm

LOUIS

Blue Jays
 Blue Jays
 Blue Jays
 Braves
 Braves
 Braves
 Pirates
 Pirates
 Pirates
 Pirates
 Diamondbacks
 Diamondbacks
 Diamondbacks
 Angels
 Blue Jays
 Angels
 Tigers
 Tigers
 Tigers
 Brewers
 Brewers
 Brewers
 Dodgers
 Dodgers
 Dodgers
 Dodgers
 Royals
 Royals
 Reds
 Reds
 Reds
 Giants
 Giants
 Giants
 Astros
 Astros
 Astros
 Yankees
 Yankees
 Yankees

CARDINALS

Friday, July 14 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, July 15 @ 6:15pm
 Sunday, July 16 @ 1:15pm
 Monday, July 17 @ 6:45pm
 Tuesday, July 18 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, July 19 @ 1:15pm
 Thursday, July 27 @ 6:45pm
 Friday, July 28 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, July 29 @ 6:15pm
 Sunday, July 30 @ 1:15pm
 Tuesday, August 1 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, August 2 @ 6:45pm
 Thursday, August 3 @ 6:45pm
 Friday, August 4 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, August 5 @ 6:15pm
 Sunday, August 6 @ 1:15pm
 Monday, August 14 @ 6:45pm
 Tuesday, August 15 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, August 16 @ 5:45pm
 Thursday, August 17 @ 6:15pm
 Friday, August 18 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, August 19 @ 6:15pm
 Sunday, August 20 @ 1:15pm
 Monday, August 28 @ 6:45pm
 Tuesday, August 29 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, August 30 @ 1:15pm
 Friday, September 1 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, September 2 @ 6:15pm
 Sunday, September 3 @ 1:15 pm
 Friday, September 15 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, September 16 @ 6:15pm
 Sunday, September 17 @ 1:15pm
 Monday, September 18 @ 6:45pm
 Tuesday, September 19 @ 6:45pm
 Wednesday, September 20 @ 6:45pm
 Thursday, September 21 @ 12:15pm
 Friday, September 29 @ 7:15pm
 Saturday, September 30 @ 6:15pm
 Sunday, October 1 @ 2:15pm

BASEBALL

Nationals
 Nationals
 Nationals
 Marlins
 Marlins
 Marlins
 Cubs
 Cubs
 Cubs
 Cubs
 Twins
 Twins
 Twins
 Rockies
 Rockies
 Rockies
 Athletics
 Athletics
 Athletics
 Mets
 Mets
 Mets
 Mets
 Padres
 Padres
 Padres
 Pirates
 Pirates
 Pirates
 Phillies
 Phillies
 Phillies
 Brewers
 Brewers
 Brewers
 Brewers
 Reds
 Reds
 Reds

Jacqueline Black, PT, ATP

I would like to focus on the topic of mental health this newsletter. It's a hot topic in today's world, and I believe we have improved awareness that this is an extremely important part of our health and wellness.

Here at St. Louis SCI/D Center, we are grateful to have amazing professional support programs in place, primarily led by our SCI/D psychologists, chaplains, and social workers. Since the pandemic, much of our in-person programming was put on pause. Some programs switched to virtual options, and some were temporarily suspended. Our Rec Therapy community integration programming was put on pause during the pandemic, and recently restarted with some modifications.

For those of you that completed your SCI/D rehabilitation during the pandemic, we know you missed some of these essential components of SCI/D rehabilitation. I have worked for the VA for over 20 years, and I am completely awestruck and humbled by the support you provide one another through your military camaraderie and SCI/D experience. It is something that is so awesome and do not see in any other hospital, I believe.

I want to highlight some of our formal programming to support your mental health. Our wonderful SCI/D Chaplain Wayne-Lupkey leads a **SCI/D Caregiver Support Group**. Caregivers- we recognize that you are an essential

part of our SCI/D veterans' healthcare! This support group provides SCI/D caregivers an opportunity to meet and support each other in a group setting, as well as to learn and experience a variety of self-care and wellness strategies to improve personal well-being. This group also provides information about caring for your SCI/D veteran. There are both in-person and virtual options for participation. This group meets the first and third Wednesday of the month, 2-3pm Central time. For more information, please contact Chaplain Cynthia Wayne-Lupkey at Cynthia.waynelupkey@va.gov, Heather Rowland RN heather.rowland@va.gov, or call Chaplain Service at 314-894-6566.

We are also in the process of reviving our **SCI/D Peer Mentor program**, thanks to the outstanding leadership of Dr. Alvarez. This program will have both in-person and virtual options. Peer mentoring is a one-to-one relationship between someone who has successfully coped with SCI/D and someone trying to cope with it. Mentoring provides confidential, consistent commitment to someone in need. There is a process and training required to become a SCI/D Peer Mentor. There is great value in working with a mentor, whether you have a new injury, or have new challenges with an older injury. You also have a unique perspective and insight to share with others. Please let us know if we can help you in this area. If you are interesting in being a Peer Mentor or have interest in being contacted by a SCI/D veteran mentor, please contact Alex Alvarez, PhD, 314-652-4100, ext 63179, for more information.

Finally, we have an excellent **SCI/D Recreation Therapy** staff that can help you with goals of increasing your activities in the community. While we all took a step back during the pandemic, our SCI/D Rec Therapy staff can help you with a personalized plan to increase your engagement in community activities. Please contact Matt Luitjohan or Charley Wright for more information. Matt.luitjohan@va.gov, Charles.wright@va.gov, 314-652-4100, ext 64590, or ext 66602

If you have questions, concerns, or kudos about SCI Therapy/ SCI Programming- please contact me at Jacqueline.black@va.gov or 314-652-4100, ext 64691.

LIVING LIFE TO THE FULLEST

ROSE GANZ

RUSTY EZZELL



Rusty spent four years as an Airborne Engineer stationed at Fort Bragg NC. His Job in the Army was to throw a bulldozer out of a plane, then jump out after it. When he got out of the service Rusty worked construction until a motor vehicle accident, that left him a T-5 Para.

He went back to school at Eastern University in Charleston IL He finished school in 1997. He was

hired by Sonnenberg Landscaping Material and Supply located in Columbia, IL. He worked part time until 2020, when his supervisor retired he was hired as an interim supervisor, then in 2021 they offered him the management position.

When he is not working he is an avid motorcycle rider, he loves to camp and just be outdoors, doing just about anything outdoors. He loves to garden in the summer and mow 6 acres of grass once a week at his Uncle Bob's house. He said he loves doing it because he can just get on my tractor and go 4-5 hours without a care in the world. Just make the lines and enjoy God's earth.

In his free time he sings in a band called 'Dazed N Confused' STL.

They have been playing together for six years and have opened for such acts as Styx, 38 Special, Brett Michaels, Night Ranger, and Columbia's own Lexi the country singer. He also participated in a charity started by his drummer called Songs 4 Soldiers, to raise money for combat Vets all over the Bi-state area.

He enjoys attending the National Veteran's Winter Sports Clinic when he can, and trying new sports.

He enjoys spending as much time as possible with his 16 year old grandson Colin. He truly is an example of living life to the fullest.





Thank you to everyone that
helped make our Trivia Night
fundraiser successful





Gateway Chapter
1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center
Saint Louis, MO 63132



Generosity can be found anywhere.
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Donating clothes and other household goods
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of America**

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