

GATEWAY GAZETTE

*The Official Publication of the Gateway Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America
A Member Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America*

Gateway Garners Honors at PVA Annual Convention In Miami

Stanley D. Brown
National Director

With temperatures in the steamy 90s, the PVA Florida Chapter excelled in hosting the 63rd Annual PVA Convention in Miami the week of August 18-21. Our hotel and meetings were on the beautiful Biscayne Bay, the southernmost tip of mainland Florida. Arriving early, my aide and I ventured to the celebrated Miami Beach and "walked" around the Art Deco District. I was looking for Michael Weston from *Burn Notice*, as well as Sonny Crockett and Ricardo Tubbs from *Miami Vice*. My aide reminded me those were just television shows.

The Convention was especially noteworthy in recognizing the dedication and service of long-time Gateway members Gene Crayton and Dr. Robert Huskey. Gene was elected as President of our national PVA organization. He had previously served as Gateway President for 10 years and has been a Gateway member since 1983. He was PVA Senior Vice President, the number two spot, coming into the convention. Gene is the first African-American elected to lead our 63-year-old national PVA organization. We know he will succeed in this most important PVA leadership position.

Dr. Robert Huskey was awarded PVA's Cliff Crase Award for Professionalism. The award is named in honor of deceased PVA member Cliff Crase who served as editor of PVA *Sports' n Spokes* and *PN* magazines for 30 years. The award is given to recognize an exceptional member who has dedicated himself to PVA's mission, demonstrating truly professional traits. Bob was the perfect choice for this prestigious award.

Retired St. Louis VAMC SCI Chief, Dr. Robert Woolsey, was recognized as PVA's 2009 Speedy awardee in the non-member category. This award is given once a year for outstanding accomplishments in the field of paraplegia. The award winner is selected by vote of the national directors from all the 34 PVA chapters. The list of past winners is indeed impressive; the list includes world leaders in spinal cord medicine and former President John F. Kennedy.



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Gateway Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America

<http://www.gatewaypva.org>

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St. Louis Service Office

400 South 18th St., Room 109—St. Louis, MO 63103

Office: (314) 552-9887 or (800) 795-3614

Fax: (314) 421-3709

Tony Timmons	National Service Officer II
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Fred Bradley, SBO—Senior Benefits Advocate
JB SCI, Room 2S25

#1 Jefferson Barracks Drive—St. Louis, MO 63125

Office: (314) 894-6467 or (866) 328-2670

Fax: (314) 894-6465

Kansas City Service Office

(800) 795-3612 (816) 861-4700 extension 6032/33
Bonnie Hilburn Senior National Service Officer

GPVA Staff

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Sannita Brown	Administrative Assistant
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Has your address changed? Please inform us by email to: susanlyle@gatewaypva.org, or you may write or call us at the following:

Gateway Chapter PVA

9738 Lackland Road

St. Louis, MO 63114

Office (314) 427-0393 or (800) 426-4058

Fax (314) 427-4183

We would like to extend our warmest welcome to the new NSOC at the Regional Office. His name is Thomas Herrington. “Tom” just joined us in September and we look forward to working with him in the future.



Join Us!

The Veteran's Day Parade is around the corner. It will be held Saturday, November 7th, 2009 in downtown St. Louis. The parade starts at noon near 14th Street and Olive Street. This would be a great opportunity to show your support and gain participation points. Contact the office for details.

Tax Exemptions for Retirement Benefits

House Bill 82 creates an income tax exemption for several retirement benefits. First, it creates an exemption for military retirement income. Other states in the Midwest have tax deductions for military pensions, which makes them a more attractive destination for military personnel retirement. Beginning next year, Missouri will exempt 15 percent of a retiree's military pension from state income tax. The exemption will increase by 15 percent each year over the next six years until the entire military pension is exempted.

In addition to the tax deduction for military pensions House Bill 82 removes the age requirement for the income tax exemption for publicly funded retirement benefits and changes the limits for publicly funded retirement benefits when a person receives both the retirement benefits and Social Security.

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 or rebuttals to:

editor@gatewaypva.org or in the US mail at the address shown to the left and send to the attention of the editor.

President's Message

By Stan Brown

Gateway Purchases Office Building in Creve Coeur

Our Chapter has a signed contract to purchase a 10,000 ft², single story, office building in mid-county St. Louis. As part of the contract, the existing tenant who occupies 5000 ft², has committed to a three-year lease of his space. Gateway plans are to occupy 4000 ft² and seek a tenant for the remaining 1000 ft². The area we plan to renovate and occupy is almost ideal, in that it was a medical clinic for a St. Louis area hospital. We have been looking and saving for a suitable building for several years. In today's depressed commercial real estate market, we feel it was a great time to buy. The address is 1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center Drive; the new property will be easier to access by local highways.



Membership Involvement

As we plan to remodel a conference area in the new building, there's been a great discussion on improving our teleconferencing and videoconferencing capability. With that in mind, it is our hope to increase involvement from our membership living outside the St. Louis area. Ideally, elected board members from other parts of the state could participate by teleconference or videoconference for some of the monthly Board of Directors meetings. If you have other ideas on increasing your involvement by the redesign of our new office, please contact us. Of course, if you have other ideas on increasing membership involvement in general, we welcome those suggestions. As I read other PVA Chapter Presidents' columns, I see the same pleas for members to get involved. As a quadriplegic, I am well aware that the requirements of our daily living and assistance can be all-consuming. If we can do anything in that regard to maximize your involvement, let us know.

Successful 14th Annual Gateway PVA/Jack Buck Golf Tournament

On September 22, we held our annual major fundraiser in the form of a charity golf tournament. We pay no middlemen or fundraisers, and there are no salaries in producing this event. We have several non-PVA members whose involvement as volunteers in staging the event, and most importantly, securing donations and golf teams, who make this tournament a success. Our board members all appeared at the event, as well as Gateway members Jim Jordan, Bill Skiles, and LaRoy Smith. We all lined up in our wheelchairs to cheer the golfers as they began the course. There are pictures from this tournament below. My special thanks again this year goes to Bob Rives and Kathy Hamby of Professional Equities, along with Fred Waelter, Jerry Hollingsworth, and Charlie & Shirley Carlson, plus many more. Our fundraising efforts grew exponentially from their involvement and network of bighearted friends!



Attaboy by Ruth Kult

HELLO EVERYONE!

As our old Government Relations Director, Rich Daley, always said, "This will be short and sweet." Daley's comments were never short or sweet, and mine will be no exception; maybe even a little sour.



First of all, I really appreciate the few individuals that voted in this year's most recent election. Thank you for voting for me or just taking a few minutes and voting period. After asking around a bit, many people said the main reason they didn't vote was because they didn't know any of the people running. I thought about that for a little while...then I thought and thought some more, and came to the conclusion that was kind of a lame excuse. Many of the individuals running for the Board of Directors have been in the newsletter one or more times throughout the years, so they weren't completely unknown. Strictly guessing, people do read their newsletters, right? If you don't, maybe you should. At the very least, you might find out what's going on in your chapter.

Well, we had nearly double the amount of votes this year as last year, which is still a very sad turnout. We had 632 voting members and just a few over 40 ballots returned. Now here comes the "sour" part of my article...this is totally unacceptable. I'm not sure what the problem is. Come on now members, we can do better than this.

I guess all of my attempts to get people more involved with their chapter is just a waste of time, but I'm not going to back-off. Persistence, persistence, persistence. Call me a nag, but I've been called worse. I thought the giving of gift cards in exchange for participation was a very good idea. It gives people an incentive to be involved in their chapter. Honestly, it seems like we have to bribe people to do something for their own good. If that's what it takes, then that's what it takes. Thanks for reading!

The Paralyzed Veterans of America's primary goal has been to assist it's members and their families in improving the quality of their lives. This goal has been addressed through a wide variety of activities, including support of programs designed to provide education and training. PVA established an Educational Scholarship Program to assist PVA members and their immediate families in gaining a post-secondary education. Fifteen (15) \$1,000 scholarships were awarded this year to the following people:

Gateway Chapter

Brian Gavin, son of member Gregory Gavin

Oregon Chapter

Mackenzie Magee, daughter of David Magee

Buckeye Chapter

Christopher Powers, member

Cal-Diego Chapter

Callie Martin, daughter of Phillip Martin

Southeastern Chapter

Alexa Martin, daughter of Wilson Martin, Jr.

Northwest Chapter

Callie DeWolf, daughter of George DeWolf

Wisconsin Chapter

Elizabeth Ness, daughter of Kenneth Ness

Member-At-Large

Michael Hadley, son of
Brian Hadley

Virginia Mid-Atlantic Chapter

Danielle McGhee, daughter of Ronald McGhee
Heather Patterson, daughter of James Patterson

New England Chapter

Rachel Cuellar, daughter of Anne Marie Cuellar
Jacqueline Dion, daughter of Andre Dion
Heather Dupuis, daughter of Gary Dupuis

North Central Chapter

Jonathan Gobczynski, son of Alan Gobczynski

Great Plains Chapter

Kiley Oberhauser, daughter of Thomas Oberhauser

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 e-mail us if you know where any of these members are! Our contact info is on page 2. Thanks for your help!

Chapman, Flanagan
Jones, Roy G.
Monahan, James M.

Claxton, Frederick
Lauderdale, Charles
Saighman, Donald

Frye, Kenneth
Lowery, Samuel
Washpun, Odell

Just a Friendly Reminder

By Bonnie Hilburn

It's that time of the year again for those that are entitled to receive "clothing allowance." If you are a veteran who has a service-connected disability, or a disability compensable under 38 U.S.C. 1151 as if it were service-connected, and you meet the below mentioned criteria, then you may be eligible for this once a year lump sum payment of \$716.00.

Under the provisions of 38 CFR 3.810 states the criteria is:

- (1) A VA examination or hospital or examination report from a facility specified in §3.326(c) discloses that the veteran wears or uses certain prosthetic or orthopedic appliances which tend to wear or tear clothing (including a wheelchair) because of such disability, and such disability is the loss, or loss of use, of a hand or foot compensable at a rate specified in §3.350(a), (b), (c), (d), or (f); or
- (2) The Chief Medical Director or designee certifies that because of such disability a prosthetic or orthopedic appliance is worn or used which tends to wear or tear the veteran's clothing, or that because of the use of a physician-prescribed medication for a skin condition which is due to the service-connected disability irreparable damage is done to the veteran's outer garments. For the purposes of this paragraph "appliance" includes a wheelchair.

Effective August 1, 1972, the initial lump sum clothing allowance is due and payable for veterans meeting the eligibility requirements. Subsequent annual payments for those meeting the eligibility requirements will become due on the anniversary date thereafter, both as to initial claims and recurring payments under previously established entitlement.

Please note that to be eligible for this clothing allowance, a VA facility has to have seen you for your disability and have noted in your VA medical records that you require the prosthesis /wheelchair/ointment for your service connected disability.

The only exception to these rules are if you are incarcerated. 38 CFR 3.810 stipulates "...If a veteran is incarcerated in a Federal, State, or local penal institution for a period of more than 60 days and is furnished clothing without charge by the institution, VA shall reduce the amount of the annual clothing allowance by 1/365th of the amount otherwise payable for each day the veteran was incarcerated during the 12-month period preceding the anniversary date for which entitlement is established. No reduction shall be made for the first 60 days of incarceration."

In some cases, if your disability has not been confirmed as permanently disabling, you may have to apply every year until it has been established as "static." Once permanence is established, you will no longer have to apply annually. You will receive a check from the Department of Treasury with no explanation. If you have direct deposit, it will be automatically deposited into your account. The amount may increase year to year depending on the cost of living increases set forth by Congress. The check usually shows up sometime between the end of August and the middle of September.

The application for clothing allowance must be filed within 1 year of the anniversary date (August 1) for which entitlement is initially established. Otherwise, the application will be acceptable only to effect payment of the clothing allowance becoming due on any succeeding anniversary date for which entitlement is established, provided the application is filed within 1 year of such date. The 1-year period for filing an application will include the anniversary date and terminate on July 31 of the following year.

Where the initial determination of service connection for the qualifying disability is made subsequent to an anniversary date for which entitlement is established, the application for clothing allowance may be filed within 1 year from the date of notification to the veteran of such determination.

If you feel you qualify for a VA Clothing Allowance, and you have never applied before or haven't received your check, please contact your nearest PVA National Service Office for assistance in acquiring this VA hospital benefit. Applications and authorizations are done within the VA Medical Centers. We highly recommend that you work through PVA so that we can keep a copy of your application in your office file. This will enable us to follow the progress of your claim. Thank You!



Pat Yourself on the Back

By Paul "Rusty" Ezzell

After reading an "Attaboy" in the last Gazette, I thought why does a person need an attaboy? So as I ate supper and pondered my own existence in the PVA, I thought "Everyone deserves one!" My request is that all ya'll get one. Let me explain.

My name is Rusty and I have been paralyzed for eighteen years. Many know me and many don't. I would love to be able to spend more time with all of you. I would like to be a board member someday on the Gateway Chapter PVA Board of Directors. I have competed in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games in the past, although it has been a while, and I loved it. However, I am not service connected, so that forces me to work 40+ hours a week. I will get back to it, I promise.

Anyway, about that "attaboy." I believe that all of the Wheelchair Games' competitors, staff, the people that volunteer, and basically everyone who is involved with the care and training, or just help to make things happen for us, deserves a huge pat on the back. Let's not forget the handicapped individuals, as well. Those of us that find the inner strength to deal with our own demons, to step out of our protective worlds and say, "Here we are, we are capable, we are handy, and we are not afraid." Here's to us!

So, Ruth don't get too frustrated. To each and every one of you, I give my personal "pat on the back." Please stay strong in your hearts and in your faith. Never stop striving to reach that next level or being that next spark of hope.

I'll see you around the bend! Thanks.



Gateway Chapter PVA Wishes to Welcome the Following New Members:

Devon Carter—St. Louis, MO

Richard Feldt—South Fulton, TN

Robert Kendall—Joppa, IL

Harry Owen—Belton, MO

Rene Peterson—Belton, MO

Charles Rusher—Independence, MO

Gerry Fannon—Kansas City, MO

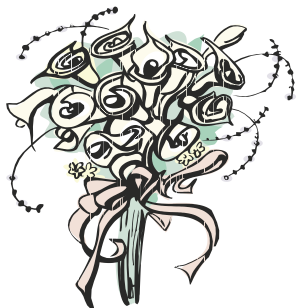
Robert Gibson—Kansas City, MO

James Nash—King City, MO

Terry Person—Brashear, MO

William Phelps—Kansas City, MO

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



In memory of...

Forest McGuire	Greenfield, MO	9/14/09
Harold Smith	Clinton, MO	9/02/09
Larry Halemeyer	Brussels, MO	8/29/09
Mary Martin	St. Louis, MO	9/23/09



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ST. LOUIS IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR

By Rose Ganz

Friday through Sunday, September 11 - 13, Camp Penuel welcomed SCI/D veterans and their families to a free camping experience for the fourth year. Camp President Rev. Harry Douma is a Navy veteran and is an American Legion District Chaplain. Harry describes himself as a "Gung Ho American and a Gung Ho Christian."

VA nurse, Cheryl Wurtz, is no stranger to camp and was a welcomed sight to the veterans. Her presence eased our minds, for we were all thinking: "What if I need some help with medicine or a medical situation?" She worked at the JB SCI for seven years, and now works at the Poplar Bluff VA Hospital. She came right after work that Friday to help out, and even sang special music at the Sunday Morning Worship Service.

The Camp President, Reverend Harry Douma (with the camp 36 yrs), and his wife, dined with the veterans Saturday evening. The Camp Director, Pastor Michael Pounds (with the camp 17 yrs), helped barbeque and drove the pontoon boat for us. Mandy (7 yrs with the camp) took care of the pantry and cooked for us. Even though camping was free, the PVA gave us a grant for the food and equipment for the fishing tournament. All these helpers came early, stayed the weekend, and continually asked, "What else can I do to help?"

Terri Fuda caught the Biggest Fish (8 oz), the Most Fish (oodles), and the Smallest Fish (3 oz), winning a grand total of THREE TROPHIES! And bragging rights for a YEAR! Can anyone beat this record next year?



Top Left: The Camp Penuel Group.

Top Right: Terri Fuda showing one of her catches.

Bottom Left: Rose Ganz & Ann Malburg posing with friends.

Bottom Right: Rose Ganz awarding Terri Fuda with her 3 fishing trophies.





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A big "Thank You" goes to the dedicated people at the Elks Lodge!

Yearly, they host several events and donate the proceeds to our veterans. During the past seven years, the High Ridge Elks Lodge #2455 has raised \$41,551.00 for the Jefferson Barracks Sports team.

Pictured is Ken DeClue, from the High Ridge Elks Lodge, presenting Pete McBrady, Acting Director of the St. Louis VAMC, with another generous contribution.

Be sure to join us for the next High Ridge Elks Meat Shoot in January 2010. The specifics will be announced in the next newsletter.

September Shoot for the Gold

By Susan Lyle

The 2009 trap shoot season was our best ever regarding attendance. Hence, the expense was up, so we were grateful to get a \$1,000 grant approval from the national PVA office for our event. We spent nearly \$2,600 this year for the ammunition, food & soda, and trophies, but it was well worth it. Our Grand Champion was Steve Stratmann. Lonnie Crider took 1st place in the Para division and James Williams took 1st place in the Quad division. Plus, a special prize was given to the person who attended almost every trap shoot and placed rather high on the score cards, too. That prize went to Fred Williams from the Missouri Veterans Home.

I can't remember when our Veterans had a better time. We even saw the return of some past participants who decided to rejoin the group once again for some fun in the sun. One of whom we were fortunate enough to spend one last shoot with -- our dear member, Larry Halemeyer. Larry passed away at the end of August; he will be missed. Our sympathy goes out to his family.



Lone Elk Park in the Fall

By Susan Lyle

Well, at least it wasn't raining! Yes, we had a great turnout for our annual membership picnic, but the wind was relentless. Dave Lyle did the grilling for us for the second time in 4 years. He managed to keep the brats, burgers, and buns from blowing away, while I ran around anchoring down the plates, napkins, and cups! In spite of the wind, our members had a special day to "shoot the breeze" with one another - no pun intended. Okay, well, maybe a little intention meant there!

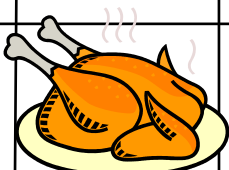
We set aside a few moments at this gathering to say our goodbyes to the JB Physical Therapist, Amy Will. She has taken a job assisting the director of the Golden Age Games and will be traveling quite a bit. I know she will do a great job for them, but if she finds herself missing all of us too much and ends up back at JB someday, that would be great, too!

As for the rest of the day, we stuffed ourselves with an array of food provided by the Chapter, watched deer run through the field in front of us, and enjoyed the opportunity to just get out of the house and socialize with others. There's just no therapy like sharing your struggles and your solutions to difficult situations with people who can empathize.



Whether they were posing for photos as a group, sharing funny stories, or enjoying nature, everyone had fun in the park!

November 2009

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 Veterans Day Parade—downtown St. Louis
8	9	10 BOD Meeting in Overland 11:30 AM	11 Veterans' Day Office Closed	12 Patient Support Group @ JB 1:30 - 2:30 PM	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 Thanksgiving Lunch @ JB—Noon, Bldg 52	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Happy Thanksgiving Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28
29	30					

December 2009

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 BOD Meeting in Overland 4:00 PM	9	10 Patient Support Group at JB 1:30 - 2:30 PM	11 Newsletter Articles are Due	12
13	14	15	16	17 JB Holiday Member Lunch @ Noon & Qtrly Meeting @ 1:00 PM	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Office Closed	25 Merry Christmas Office Closed	26
27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve Office Closed		

Address Service Requested

Gateway Chapter
Paralyzed Veterans of America
9738 Lackland Road
St. Louis, MO 63114



Above: Bob Rives helps member LaRoy Smith out of the golf cart during the 14th Annual Jack Buck Golf Tournament.

Top Right: Nathan Beard & Don McCoy enjoy the trap shoot food.

Bottom Right: Terri Fuda shows off her "BIG" catch of the day at the 4th Annual Camp Penuel PVA Fishing Tournament.



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