



GATEWAY GAZETTE

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



19th Annual Jack Buck/Gateway PVA Golf Tournament

Fundraising Dollars Come In, Program Dollars Go Out By Stanley Brown

We've just completed our FY 2013-14 audit with great results. Out of every dollar we spent, \$0.91 went to programs! We are again accredited by the St. Louis Better Business Bureau with an A+ rating. Pictured above is a group photo of members with some of the firefighters who made our biggest fundraiser of the year successful. Pictured below is one of our biggest program expenditures, funding member athletes to attend events like the 34th National Veterans Wheelchair Games. We receive no federal funding and special fundraisers, like the golf tournament, are crucial in enabling our members to "live life to the fullest."



Inside—Important Upcoming Events & More...

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19th Annual Golf Tournament Photos

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

**Gateway Chapter
Paralyzed Veterans of America**
<http://www.gatewaypva.org>

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**Veterans Day
Parade**

Saturday, November 8, 2014

**Meet at Olive and 13th in Downtown St. Louis at
11:00 a.m.**

We will have lunch together after the parade.



GPVA Holiday Party / Open House

**At Our Office on Tuesday, December 9th
11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

**Appetizers & beverages will be served.
MEMBERS WELCOME!!!**



FREE HOCKEY TICKETS

St. Louis Blues Ticket Drawing

The Gateway Chapter PVA has purchased six (6) sets of accessible seats to upcoming Blues games. Tickets for three of the games (6 tickets in all) are going to Jefferson Barracks VA Recreation Therapy to take inpatients. We also purchased three other games, two tickets each game, for outpatient members. There are two seats to each game and each seat is accessible or capable of being changed to an able-bodied seat. Please call or email our office no later than end of day on Wednesday, November 19, 2014, with your interest in all or individual dates. If you win one game, you will not be considered for the other dates. The drawing will be held at our monthly luncheon at the Jefferson Barracks SCI Unit—Building 52, on Thursday, November 20.



We have tickets for the following 7:00 pm dates/games:

**Friday, November 28, 2014, vs Edmonton
Saturday, December 27, 2014, vs Dallas
Thursday, January 29, 2015, vs Nashville**



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

President's Message

By Stanley Brown



VA and Gateway PVA Vehicle and Housing Accessibility Grants

I want to take this opportunity to clarify what grants are available through the VA and Gateway PVA to both modify your vehicle and make your housing accessible. In both areas, you must first apply and exhaust your VA grants and funding before receiving Gateway PVA assistance. To receive funding from the VA or Gateway PVA, you must first get approval from either the VA or Gateway PVA for the modifications. For Gateway PVA grants or funding, you will always need two quotes or bids for any contemplated work. I have detailed below the requirements for both VA and Gateway PVA funding. Please contact your PVA Service Officer with any questions on the VA grants and our office with questions concerning Gateway PVA grants.



VA Vehicle Grants

It is of the utmost importance to contact one of our PVA Service Officers to determine your eligibility for these grants to modify your vehicle. They are absolutely the best source of information in this area. A veteran who has a service-connected condition that causes loss of use of either a hand or a foot, or a combination, would be entitled to vehicle modifications such as lifts, locking mechanisms, lowered floors, and hand controls if they are eligible to drive. Non-service-connected veterans may be eligible for some of these vehicle modifications. Generally, vehicle modifications are covered expenses every four years. In addition to the modifications, there is a one-time grant in the amount of \$20,114.34 for service-connected members to purchase a vehicle that can be made accessible. This grant can only be used one time, regardless of whether the grant amount has increased over time. Service-connected blindness may also qualify for a grant. Again, contact a PVA Service Officer for complete and exact details.



Gateway PVA Vehicle Grants (hand controls)

Non-service connected members, after exhausting any eligible modifications through the VA, **may receive** funding to obtain and have installed hand controls. Members must obtain two bids/quotes from reputable sources to obtain and have installed the necessary equipment for hand controls to drive the vehicle. The bids will be presented at an upcoming Gateway Board of Directors' meeting for approval. We will pay the vendors directly after the work is successfully completed. **Do not** have the work done prior to board approval because you will not be reimbursed after the fact.

VA Home Modification Grants

It is likewise of the utmost importance to contact your PVA Service Officer for the exact and detailed information on these grants. The Home Improvement and Structural Alterations (HISA) grant is available to non-service connected veterans in the amount of \$2,000 and service-connected members in the amount of \$6,800. Detailed questions on the veterans' rating/percentage, and grant used in combination with other VA grants, need to be answered by the PVA Service Officer. In addition, the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant is available to certain service-connected veterans in the current amount of \$67,555. You do not need to use that entire amount at one time, and if you previously used a portion of that amount, you may be eligible for additional funding for the same house or a new house, up to the \$67,555 amount. I recently used another \$22,000 to adapt a new house. Be advised, this process is arduous and you must begin by contacting the VA representative on these grants (SAH). There is also the Special Housing Adaptation (SHA) grant in the amount of \$13,511 for certain service-connected veterans, with the loss of eyesight in both eyes or the loss of use of both hands, to do further adaptation of their current home. Contact your PVA Service Officer for your eligibility.



Gateway PVA Home Modification Grants

Like the vehicle modification grants, Gateway PVA also provides additional home accessibility grants. Members must first obtain two quotes from reputable contractors for the accessibility work on their home. If one of the quotes is from a family member who is a contractor, that contractor must be accredited by the Better Business Bureau and have a recorded performance bond. The two bids must be obtained and presented to the Gateway Board of Directors for approval **prior to any work being started**. The bids likewise must be for the exact same accessibility work on your home. As of October 14, 2014, the Gateway PVA housing accessibility grant is now up to \$7,500 for non-service connected members and \$5,000 for service-connected members. Funds will be paid directly to the approved contractor after successful completion of the work. This grant is available only after a member has exhausted all other available VA funding.

National Director's Report

By Stanley Brown

I have just returned from the Fall 2014 PVA Board of Directors' meeting (not the same as the Annual Convention) in Dallas. Still with a soft cast on my broken right foot, I was advised not to fly and drove instead (12 hours each way!). It rained for eight hours straight on the way back. When I left Dallas it was 92° and upon my return to St. Louis it was 52°! But enough about me (I'm not vying for the "Joey" award), below are the highlights of the meeting:

Keynote Speaker

The keynote speaker was VA Interim Under Secretary for Health, Carolyn M. Clancy, M.D. She was named to the position July 2, 2014, following all the turmoil in the VA that started with the whistleblower complaints at the Phoenix VA. She is well credentialed and acknowledged the VA's current problems, pledging "change." I was able to ask one question and presented her with the VA staffing problems, in particular the fact that the St. Louis VA has an acting Medical Center Director, acting Deputy Director, and acting Chief of Staff. I pointed out that our own beleaguered Acting SCI Chief, Dr. Park, has been acting in that position for 21 months and has basically been doing the work of two physicians. I commented that I believed the shortage of medical professionals has been negatively impacted by all the press concerning VA problems. Later in the meeting, the PVA acting Government Relations Director informed us that there is an acknowledged 28,000 shortage of medical professionals in the VA system to include 9,000 RNs and 4,000 physicians.

PVA Resolution Highlights

Amendment of Judicial Committee Rules of Practice & Procedure for Complaint Proceedings- This resolution partially passed and partially failed. The ability of an individual PVA member to file a judicial complaint (which may result in expelling a PVA member) was expanded to the PVA Executive Committee as a group, as long as each individual signed the complaint. The resolution was originally submitted allowing the Executive Committee to not be individually responsible for filing the complaint, instead allowing them to file a complaint as "a whole." That portion of the resolution was eliminated.

Judicial Committee Complaint Response Time- I submitted this resolution on behalf of Gateway and it narrowly failed. The resolution proposed that if "exigent circumstances" existed for a respondent (person against whom a complaint had been filed), the amount of time to respond would be up to the Judicial Committee. The resolution was amended with expanded, but still set time limits. My position was and remains that a bed-ridden or hospitalized member may need additional, hard to define, time to respond.

Judicial Committee Neutral Counsel- I also submitted this resolution on behalf of Gateway and it failed by a narrow vote with the passing of a motion to postpone indefinitely. The resolution will not be heard. The resolution proposed that if a PVA attorney was involved in researching or preparing a judicial complaint, or in doing the same for a respondent, that same PVA attorney could not advise the Judicial Committee in the same case. Opponents successfully argued the individual attorney's professional ethics would suffice in conflict areas.

Chapter Hospital Liaison Guidelines- This resolution passed and Hospital Liaison Officers (HLO) are now required to submit to their Field Advisory Committee point of contact, their reports no later than the 15th of the following reporting month.

Site Visit Team Members- I submitted this resolution to add another chapter representative, or a representative from a spoke chapter, be present as a member of the site visit at the hub SCI/D unit. I withdrew the resolution after being assured that a certified HLO from a spoke chapter could participate as a site visit team member.

National PVA Personnel Changes

In conjunction with PVA President Al Kovach, Executive Director Homer Townsend announced PVA would fill their number two staff position at the national office. There was much debate over whether to call the individual position "Chief of Staff" or "Deputy Director." The Deputy Director title was finally agreed upon and Associate Executive Director (AED) for Veterans Benefits, Sherman Gillums, was named to fill the position. PVA is now searching for someone to fill the vacated slot as AED of the Veterans Benefits Department.

Trout Lodge Adventure

By Ruth Kult

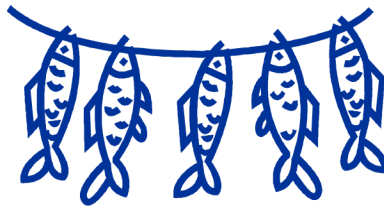


Whoa! What a trip. I'm referring to our awesome trip to Trout Lodge. The weather was beautiful, but downright hot at times... If the weather was too warm, there were lots of shaded areas, including the air-conditioned lodge or the air-conditioned rooms. Charlie Hampton said it best: "If a person didn't have a great time, it was their own fault." He was right on the money. There were quite a few things to do, plus many of the Jefferson Barracks staff volunteered to help. There was always a familiar face. Making new acquaintances is always an added bonus.

The events included trap shooting, fishing (either from shore or from a boat - see the picture below of Bobby Jackson entering an accessible boat), archery, kayaking and action track trail riding (this was way cool). It's a big power chair on tank traction wheels—very interesting idea. Tons of fun! There also was shooting at their rifle range, Boccia ball, a concert, movies under the stars, campfires and zip lining. There was a cruise on a pontoon, which was relaxing. I might have skipped a few activities, but there were enough to keep a person entertained and fairly busy for a few days.

It was a fun place and if you missed out, keep an eye on the newsletter; there is always next year! All the information is posted in the newsletter, including many different ways to earn points for monies to help with the costs of all the events. So, keep up with all the events by reading your newsletter. No excuses for not knowing. It's all in there.

At Jefferson Barracks, we are lucky. I know being in a chair, using a scooter, or having other physical limitations due to your spinal cord injury or disease, is a mess and we all hate it most of the time. On the flip side, though, we have an outstanding Recreation Therapy Department consisting of Charley and Matt, who care so very much about the veterans. They always want to put a little bit of fun back in your life and they do it so well. Thanks for reading!



In memory of...



Lorain Bennett
Lloyd Dailey
Michael Frey
Paul Frye
James Grant
Martin Klaus
Roger Presley
Leon Rigby

Lebanon, MO 06/01/14
O'Fallon, IL 07/28/14
Florissant, MO 09/15/14
Independence, MO 07/27/14
Steelville, MO 07/02/14
Camdenton, MO 08/29/14
Union, MO 09/11/14
Berryton, KS 07/21/14



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

Independent Living Services

By Rodney Harris, Senior NSO



The VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) program offers eligible veterans a wide range of vocational and educational counseling services designed to help them choose and train for a vocation. Assistance may include administering interest and aptitude testing, exploring potential occupations, and researching the availability of jobs in those occupations. Additional services include setting occupational goals, locating appropriate educational and training programs, and finding employment.

What about veterans who have severe disabilities that prevent them from becoming employed? For many of these individuals, the answer may be independent living services.

Created to Assist

The purpose of independent living services is to assist eligible veterans whose ability to function independently in family, community, or employment is limited by the severity of their service-connected disability. When these are coupled with their non service-connected disabilities, the vocational or rehabilitative services **must** be appreciably more extensive than for veterans whose disabilities are less severe.

The goal is to allow individuals to participate in family and community life to the maximum extent possible, as well as to increase the potential to return to work. When total independence is not achievable, the objective is to reduce to a **minimum** the level of dependence on services from others.

Who's Eligible?

Unfortunately, eligibility for independent living services is limited to:

- Service-connected veterans who are eligible for VA VR & E based on a minimum of 20% service-connection
- Active-duty personnel who are hospitalized pending discharge or release from active duty with a disability that will likely be compensable at a rate of 20% or more

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR & E) services are normally limited to the 12-year period following discharge from military service. However, this timeframe may be extended indefinitely in two situations:

The first is for veterans who have a serious employment handicap (SEH), defined as “a significant impairment of a veteran’s ability to prepare for, obtain, or retain employment consistent with such veteran’s abilities, aptitudes, and interests.” The significant impairment may include restrictions caused by the physical disability itself, deficiencies in education and training, or negative attitudes toward people with disabilities. A veteran determined to have an employment handicap will automatically be considered to have a serious employment handicap under several conditions, including having any individual service-connected disability rated at 50% or greater, or having a neuropsychiatric service-connected disability rated at 30% or greater.

The second situation allowing an extension of services beyond the 12-year period is when an individual’s medical condition is so severe that achievement of a vocational goal is not currently feasible, or the extension is necessary to ensure he or she will achieve maximum independence in daily living. One or both of these criteria are met by a number of Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) members based on paralysis or the progression of spinal-cord disease, with or without the effects of additional disabilities. The service-connected disability need not be the sole or primary cause of the employment handicap or dependence on the services of others in daily living, but it must materially contribute to it. The service-connected disability’s impact must be identifiable, measurable, and/or observable.

Obtaining Services

Consideration for independent living services begins by submitting a VA Form 28-1900, Application for Vocational Rehabilitation. A Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) meets with the applicant to conduct a comprehensive evaluation to determine entitlement to services. If an individual is entitled, but employment goals are not currently feasible, an evaluation of his or her independent living needs takes place.

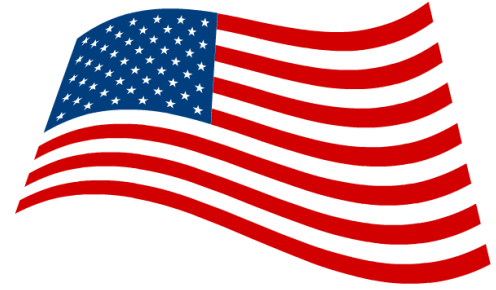
The VRC and veteran create an Individualized Independent Living Plan (IILP). They work together to identify the veteran’s needs and determine what services are available to address them.

Continued on next page...

Continued from previous page

Veterans may also be referred to a VA-contracted specialized rehabilitation facility or rehabilitation professionals for assistance in designing or implementing an IILP. Input may also be requested from the applicant's family members or medical care team. Services provided in an IILP may include, but are not limited to:

- Counseling
- Diagnostic
- Specialized medical, health, and rehabilitation
- Psychological
- Personal and family adjustment issues
- Independent living skills training
- Attendant care training
- Assistive technology (AT) equipment and training
- Identification of appropriate housing accommodations
- Connection with community-based support services
- Coordination with available federal, state, and local government services
- A monthly allowance when authorized by law
- Assistance in maintaining the newly achieved level of independence



Independent living services may be available for up to 24 months. An extension of up to 6 months may be given when a counseling psychologist and the Vocational Rehabilitation Officer agree this would enable the individual to substantially increase his/her level of independence in daily living.

If you have questions about independent living services, please contact your local PVA service office. The information for your particular area can be found on page 2.

Ozark Region Member Activities

By Board Member Steve Birkemeier

First off, I would like to introduce myself for those of you who don't know me. I'm Steve Birkemeier, your newest board member here at the Gateway Chapter PVA. I have taken on an ambitious challenge to better serve the chapter members who do not live in the St. Louis area. I will be covering the Southern Missouri and Arkansas regions. I plan to have member luncheons in Springfield, Rolla, Poplar Bluff and West Plains to allow members a chance to enjoy a meal and socialize with other PVA members. I will also be your representative at our monthly board meetings. My goal is to get more of you involved in some of the great opportunities that the Gateway PVA and the Recreation Therapists at Jefferson Barracks have to offer, as well as get some events started in your area. I have begun contacting some of you in these areas. Unfortunately, some of the contact information I have is outdated. If you live in these areas and have not heard from me yet, please call the Gateway PVA office at (314) 427-0393 and update your contact information so you can join in on the fun and food. I look forward to working with you in the future.



SCI specialty physician and his wife with paraplegia are selling their ADA and VA-compliant home located in Independence, MO— complete with roll-in shower, entry ramps and gas fireplace. They purchased the house from the widow of a wheelchair veteran, for whom the house was built.

**Please contact Mila Blurton at
816-916-3763 ReeceNichols Realtors**

MIA

**Richard Banton
Shawn Kemp
Jonathan Lewis
Joe Sabo**

Rick Taylor

**Otis Fowler
Chad Kocina
Raymond Radecki
Dale Salyer**



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.



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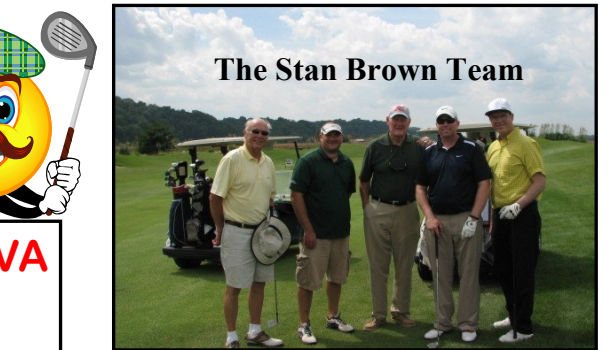
Above: Mr. John Reider, who donated the Bubble Bus time at the tournament, is shown here shaking the hand of one of our members and thanking him for his service.



Our 19th Annual Jack Buck/Gateway PVA Golf Tournament was Held on September 9, 2014



Above: Board member Ruth Kult on the left, with new Gateway PVA bus driver, Martha Rampani—both posing for the camera with Mr. Jackie Smith.



Above: Pro Football Hall-of-Famer, Jackie Smith, shown above with Bob & Bea Huskey. Jackie was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1994. He very graciously sang at our golf event. What a voice!

GATEWAY CHAPTER PVA WISHES TO WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

Christopher AlexanderBourbon, MO
Robert BrownNiangua, MO
Terrance FollasBlue Springs, MO
Steven HanewinkelFestus, MO
Patrick Johnston.....Rolla, MO
Reuben Morrison.....Kansas City, MO

Dale Anderson Sedalia, MO
Robert Davis Topeka, KS
Thedoris Hampton East St. Louis, IL
Lawrence Hill Hazelwood, MO
Charles Middlemas Kansas City, MO
Matthew Morton Florissant, MO

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for PVA
members!

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November



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					Oct. 31st JB SCI Unit Halloween Party	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 Veterans Day Parade See pg. 2
9	10	11 Veterans Day Office Closed	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 BOD Mtg. @ GPVA 11:30 am 15 pts. non-BOD Mbr.	19	20 Mbr/Patient Luncheon at JB @ Noon 5 pts.	21	22
23/30	24	25	26	27 Happy Thanksgiving	28 Office Closed 11/27-11/28	29



December



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Newsletter Articles Due 15 pts. published	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 GPVA Holiday Party Open House 11 am - 4 pm	10 	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 	18 Mbr/Patient Luncheon/Qtr. Mbr Mtg. at JB @ Noon 5 pts./15 pts.	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Merry Christmas!	26 Office Closed 12/25-12/26	27
28	29	30	31 Happy New Year's Eve!	 Don't Forget—The Annual SCI Chili Cook-Off will be held on January 15, 2015, at Jefferson Barracks!		



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

Gateway Chapter

**1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center
St. Louis, MO 63132**

Address Service Requested

34th National Veterans Wheelchair Games

By Coach Charley “Tuna” Wright

This year's 34th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Philadelphia, PA, was a huge success. The medal count for this year included: 20 Gold, 8 Silver and 6 Bronze. Team St. Louis was represented by 11 outstanding athletes who competed in many events during the week's competition. Some of those events included, Track and Field, Swimming, Table Tennis, Air Pistol, Billiards, Bowling, Slalom, Motorized Slalom and Weightlifting. Plus, some of our athletes competed in team competitions like, Softball, Basketball and Power Soccer. We also represented very well in Boccia, a new sport we introduced to our SCI Veterans in the past year by hosting the 1st National Veterans Boccia Tournament, which lead up to helping our great success in this year's Wheelchair Games. Joey Avellone, after winning the Gold Medal in the Boccia Ramp Division, was asked by the USA National Boccia representatives to attend the USA Developmental Camp for additional training to have a chance to compete on an international level.

Also, during the Closing Ceremonies, Doug Barnes was awarded “BEWSA Endeavor Award” by the British Ex-Services Wheelchair Sports Association. The British team's award recognizes an athlete who embodies effort and determination. Way to go Doug!!!

Next year's NVWG will be held in Dallas, Texas, June 21-26th. Remember game applications will be available online and mailed by January 2015 to athletes who had attended this year's games.

Congrats to all our Athletes and a BIG THANK YOU for all the support from our family members and caretakers who attended this year's games.



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