

# Gateway Gazette

November/December 2018 Volume 51 Number 6



Paralyzed Veterans  
of America

Gateway Chapter



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

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or (866) 328-2670  
Fax: (314) 894-6465  
Rodney Harris, Senior Benefits Advocate

## PVA National Liaison VP

Hack Albertson



**Paralyzed Veterans  
of America**

Gateway Chapter

## *Time to update your address or email?*

Please email us at [info@gatewaypva.org](mailto: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](mailto:amber@gatewaypva.org), or Executive Director Chris Blanchard at [chris@gatewaypva.org](mailto:chris@gatewaypva.org), if you would like to start receiving your newsletter electronically.



# President's Message

*by Stanley D. Brown*

• Jack Buck/Gateway PVA 23rd Annual Golf Tournament

■ 2012 Accessible Honda Odyssey Give Away

\* PVA PN October Issue

● On September 18th we held our biggest fundraiser of the year. Nineteen Gateway members attended in order to show our support of the golfers and of the event. We were hoping for 36 teams, but this year had 3 teams signed up that did not show up or pay. Next year please consider sponsoring a team of your relatives or friends. It was a long day and I especially thank Bob Huskey and Bob Weigand who stayed the whole day with me and attended the auction/dinner. This year we grossed \$84,460 and had net profits of \$66,696. Prior to the involvement of Bob Rives, Fred Waelter, Jack Martorelli, Bill Esterline, the Pattonville Fire Department, and many others over time, we were never netting over \$20,000 on this event.●

■ The Schaefer family in honoring their father's (Gary) wishes, has donated his accessible 2012 modified Odyssey minivan. We have a picture of the van on page 11 of this newsletter. The van has remote entry, remote start, and hand controls with an EZ lock in the middle of the van for transferring to the driver's seat. The van can be modified to drive from your wheelchair or ride as

a passenger. The van is in good shape, has 17,000 miles, and has been well maintained. We have the van at the office and we will transfer the title after selecting a member by our lottery method. If you are interested, please send us a letter or email explaining what difference this van would make in your life, and whether you have received any previous Gateway PVA vehicle grants. Your submission must be received by Friday, January 4, 2019, and we will qualify and draw a name at the Board of Directors meeting on January 8, 2019.■

\* While all issues of the PVA PN monthly magazines are worthwhile, the October issue is especially relevant to Gateway members. PVA President Zurfluh has an excellent message in his column. He stresses the importance of getting your annual exam at the SCI center. No matter how great you think your local "SPOKE" VA facility is, a complete exam can be only done at the St. Louis VA SCI/D Center. Your assigned social worker can arrange for overnight stays if needed because of your distance to St. Louis or your need for a colonoscopy. I also want to give my opinion on the importance of getting a flu shot. The St. Louis VA

has received this year's vaccination. Call our SCI Clinic (314-894-6677, ext. 3) or your local VA provider to check on availability and schedule an appointment. If you are on Medicare or Medicaid, you can also get that vaccination free of charge from numerous pharmacies in your area. My last "medical" advice is that I want to encourage all of you over 50 years of age, to get the latest and best shingles vaccination called Shingrix. It consists of two vaccinations at least 6 months apart. I got the first one and I am waiting for the VA to receive sufficient doses of the second vaccination. We need to do all we can to avoid what appears to be a horrible and painful outbreak of this shingles virus. Call the SCI Clinic to schedule your vaccinations. On a positive note, I encourage everyone to read the October PN coverage of the recent National Veteran Wheelchair Games in Orlando. There is a great story in recognition of our own superstar athlete and Gateway VP, Rose Ganz, including a picture of her on a hand cycle with a very determined look. This coverage didn't go unnoticed and Rose was awarded our coveted Joey Award at the October 9th Board of Director's meeting.\*



# National Director Report

by Stanley D. Brown

## ● PVA FY18

## ■ Budget Committee Summary

## \* 2018 Fall Board of Directors Meeting Summary

*The first week of October, I attended as a committee member two days of our PVA Audit Committee, one day of our Budget Committee, three days of our Fall BOD meeting representing Gateway, and one day presenting NSO training on the PVA Whistleblower Policy. It was a long nine day trip including travel. I will summarize the highlights of these three meetings:*

● Our PVA National total operating expenses in FY18 (ended June 30, 2018) was \$157,185,865; out of that amount, \$110,906,556 was for program services and \$46,279,309 was for fundraising and general/administrative support. These numbers make our programs/expense ratio 70.55%. The Better Business Bureau only requires 65%, but PVA had a 75.6% ratio last year. Our audit revealed we spent \$63,431,566 on our mail fundraising program including premium mailings (calendars, token gifts, etc.) and nonpremium mailings. According to generally accepted accounting principles guidance, we allocate those costs between “public education” (a good program cost) and “fundraising/general and administrative” expenses (a bad expense cost). The audit also noted that if we continue deficit spending by spending more than our revenue, we will be in serious trouble shortly. On a positive note, we heard from PVA’s new Chief Financial Officer who told us she had met with the Washington D.C. Wise Giving Guide (BBB) several times in working to obtain their Seal of Approval. The main problems have been how we do that joint allocation

of costs in the mail program. I believe we are finally making progress. Over the last several years I have stressed how important I think this approval is as evidenced by Gateway use of the seal on our mailings and fundraising efforts.●

■ In May of 2018, the National Board approved a budget for FY19 with a deficit of \$3,377,366. This was done by the Board after reducing the proposed budget another \$3,000,000 from what was proposed by the Executive Committee. The deficit budget took a 2/3 majority vote and I will not support, nor do I believe the board will approve a deficit budget for FY20. We entered FY19 with \$6.8 million in our operating account and a zero balance in our line of credit. To start with that positive balance and no use of our credit line, we sold \$20,000,000 out of our investment portfolio in FY18. Our Budget Committee and our Treasurer in particular are determined that we can’t continue to sell investment funds to operate PVA. Hopefully with our new CFO and Development Director, we will more accurately budget and perform in the future. ■

\* Out of the 33 (Zia Chapter’s Charter was revoked), 30 chapters attended the meeting with voting privileges. The Mountain States, Kentucky-Indiana and Colonial Chapters are currently on monitoring without voting rights. There were no elections or budgets approved

at the Fall BOD meeting. There was considerable discussion on PVA’s budget woes as I have described. There has also been an almost complete change of national leadership at PVA, with a new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Development Director, Communications Director, and a new Medical Services team that now reports to the head of the Veteran’s Benefits Department, who is fairly new himself. I have great hopes for this new leadership and feel our organization will be much more transparent to the board and members in the future.

There were 12 resolutions presented at the meeting, four of which came from Gateway. One of Gateway’s resolutions which passed, made Judicial Committee disciplinary actions, unless the Executive Committee determines disclosure to be harmful to the organization, be disclosed in either Executive Session or in closed meetings of the Board of Directors. Executive Session disclosure would be to only National Directors and Closed Sessions would be to board members, staff, and any PVA members at the meeting. Another interesting resolution submitted by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter said all PVA members and potential members, as well as fundraising, in North Carolina was the responsibility of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter. That resolution was referred to a committee that would include a representative from the Southeastern Chapter. \*



# Preparing Things for your Family

*by Rodney Harris, Senior Benefits Advocate*

I receive many questions regarding benefits after the death of a veteran. Many of these questions should be asked prior to death. What about burial benefits? Was there any life insurance through the VA? What paperwork do I need to complete the process? These are just a few of the questions received. Hopefully this article will get your attention and help you get prepared.

Have you been paying life insurance premiums for years? Is your husband or wife aware of these policies? Do you have documentation readily available with the policy number and a phone number to call the life insurance company? Are the beneficiaries up to date on your policy? Aside from regular commercial life insurance is there a VA policy you have been paying since you left the service? It's a good idea to have an up to date folder with all pertinent information.

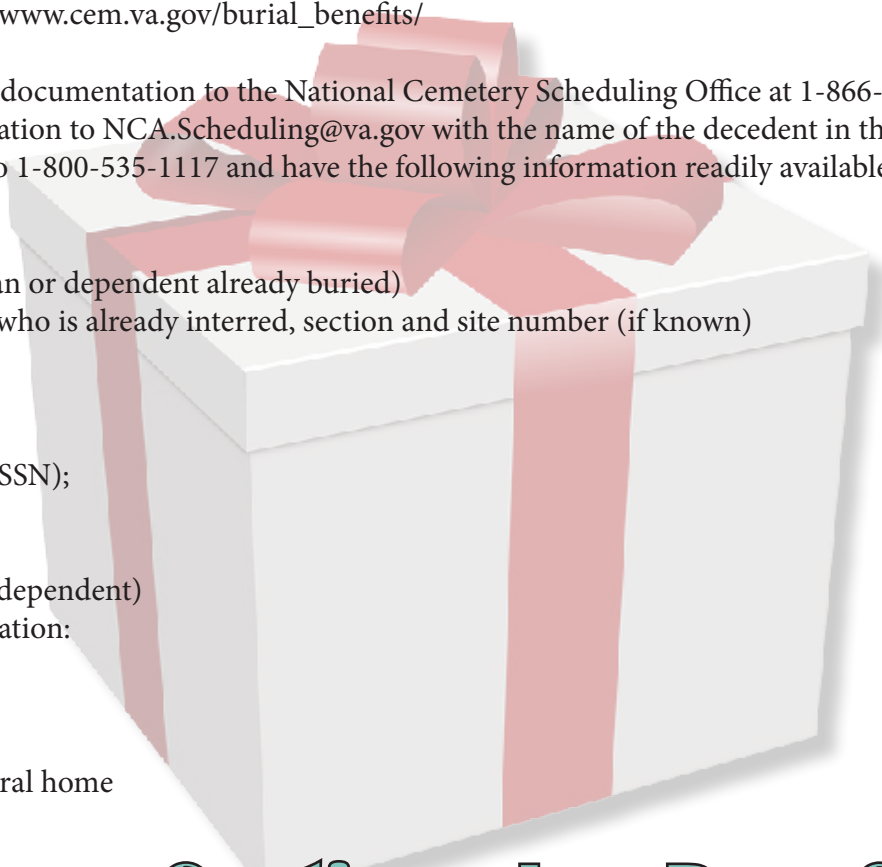
The folder should also have your discharge paperwork. In most cases this is your DD-214 form. This form is key to getting things started. The DD-214 is needed by the mortuary for proof of military service. The mortuary will then be able to interface with agencies to have a burial/cremation. It should be noted, burials with military funeral honors can be arranged by the mortuary not only at national cemeteries but also private or veterans' cemeteries. Check with your local veteran's organization (VFW American Legion) about military honors as they have groups that will assist with the arrangements.

Gravesites can't be reserved in advance. This is done post death and again is organized by the mortuary. Also some gravesites only take cremations. The VA also provides headstones for the deceased veteran. The following is information is needed by the mortuary or if you choose to schedule the burial/cremation yourself:

The following information is from: [http://www.cem.va.gov/burial\\_benefits/](http://www.cem.va.gov/burial_benefits/)

To schedule a burial, first fax all discharge documentation to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 1-866-900-6417 or scan and email the documentation to [NCA.Scheduling@va.gov](mailto:NCA.Scheduling@va.gov) with the name of the decedent in the subject line. Follow-up with a phone call to 1-800-535-1117 and have the following information readily available when you call:

- Cemetery of choice
- First or subsequent burial (Veteran or dependent already buried)
  - If subsequent interment, who is already interred, section and site number (if known)
- Decedent's:
  - Full name;
  - Gender;
  - Social Security Number (SSN);
  - Date of death;
  - Date of birth; and
  - Relationship (Veteran or dependent)
- Funeral director's contact information:
  - Funeral director's name;
  - Funeral home's name;
  - Address; and
  - Email address of the funeral home



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## Continued from Page 5

- Next of kin information:
  - o Name;
  - o Relationship to deceased;
  - o SSN;
  - o Telephone number; and
  - o Address
- Type of religious emblem for headstone (if known)
- Did the decedent reside within 75 miles of requested cemetery?
- ZIP code of decedent at time of death
- County of decedent at time of death
- Type of burial:
  - o Casket;
    - Casket size/liner size
  - o Cremation
    - Urn size/urn vault size
- Marital status of deceased (if Veteran is buried in a private cemetery, must provide documentation of marital status of spouse at time of death)
- Is surviving spouse a Veteran?
- Any disabled children for future interment (must provide name and date of birth). If requesting immediate interment (must provide marital status, doctor's statement stating type of illness, date of onset of illness and capability of self-support).
- Military Honors requested

As you can see this can be a complicated process. Why not have this information readily available? Also you could be eligible for a VA burial allowance. Generally, the veteran had to be in receipt of VA compensation or VA pension to qualify. If they died at a VA or VA sponsored facility they would also qualify. The amount is determined on whether the death was service connected or not. In other words, if the veteran was in receipt of VA compensation and the death certificate lists a service connected disability as cause of death you would then receive the higher amount. If the veteran died on or after September 11, 2001, the maximum service connected burial allowance is \$2,000. If the death is non-service connected VA will pay a \$600 burial allowance and \$747 for a plot.

If the death occurred while the Veteran was properly hospitalized by VA, or under VA contracted nursing home care, some or all of the costs for transporting the Veteran's remains may be reimbursed. If the Veteran dies while traveling at VA expense for the purpose of examination, treatment, or care, VA will pay burial and plot allowances and transportation expenses.

Remember to contact your local PVA service officer upon the passing of a veteran or dependent so they can assist with needed paperwork for benefits that a family member maybe entitled to.

St. Louis area Gateway members can call myself at 314-894-6467 or NSO Jeremy Lile at 314-253-4480. Kansas City area Gateway member can call NSO Brent Follas at 816-922-2882.

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## General Information



### NOV 2018

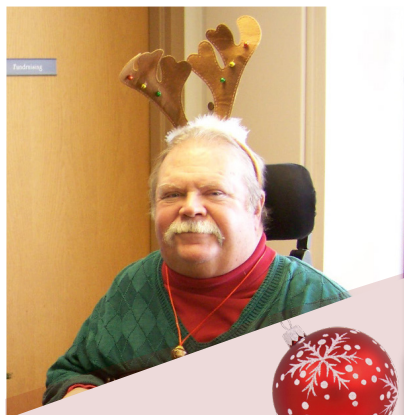
**Nov 3 to Nov 4 -**  
Scuba Dive  
@Atlanta, Georgia

**Nov 10 -**  
Veterans Day Parade  
10 pts for members

**Nov 13 -**  
BOD Meeting  
11:30am @ GPVA Office  
15 pts for non-BOD mbrs

**Nov 15 -**  
JB Luncheon  
12pm @ JB, Building 52  
5 pts for members

**Nov 22 - OFFICE CLOSED**  
**Nov 23 - OFFICE CLOSED**



### Dec 2018

**Dec 11 -**  
Open House/Holiday Party  
11:30am @ Gateway Office  
5 pts for members

**Dec 15 to Dec 21 -**  
USA Boccia  
@ Dubai

**Dec 20 -**  
JB Luncheon  
12pm @ JB, Building 52  
5 pts for members

**Dec 20 -**  
Qtrly Membership Mtg  
Following Luncheon  
@JB, Building 52  
15 pts for members

**Dec 24 - OFFICE CLOSED**  
**Dec 25 - OFFICE CLOSED**  
**Dec 31 - OFFICE CLOSED**



**"Shoot for the Gold"**







## Welcome to Our New Members

Robert Aldridge • Paul Bagley • Stanley Powell

## 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.

Thomas Dooley • Nicholas Hendrickson

## In Memory Of

Allen Kelley of Essex, MO

09/03/16

David Atwood of St. Louis, MO

09/08/18

## ALS Association

The St. Louis Regional Chapter of the ALS Association is offering free assistance to any Gateway PVA members that are diagnosed with ALS. Assistance includes but is not limited to reading books, raking leaves, or assisting with phone calls. If you are a Gateway PVA member diagnosed with ALS and interested in receiving this free assistance from the ALS Association, please contact Michelle Gray, Volunteer and Community Outreach Coordinator, by phone at 314-432-7257 ext. 224, or by email at [mgray@alsstl.org](mailto:mgray@alsstl.org).

## 2nd Annual PVA Boccia Open Tournament

*by Chris Blanchard, Executive Director*

The Chapter hosted, for the second year in a row, the PVA National Boccia Open Tournament here in St. Louis. Thirty athletes from ten states showed up hoping for a win, and four took home first place in their respective classifications. There were so many participants in the Para/Open classification that we had to split them into two separate cohorts. Overall, I would say that this event was a resounding success. I would like to thank all of the volunteers, the officials who came from all parts of the United States and England, the Gateway Chapter staff, the coaches and of course the athletes who played without mercy regardless of their opponent. The 1st-3rd place winners are pictured on the back page of the Gazette and are as follows:

*Para/Open: 1st Don Moore – Florida, 2nd John Berret – Mississippi, 3rd Joe Del Vecchio – Florida*

*BC3: 1st Joey Avellone – Missouri, 2nd Chrissy Elick – Pennsylvania*

*BC4: 1st Henry Sawyer – Florida, 2nd Scott Stokes – Georgia, 3rd Bobby Jackson – Missouri*

*BC5: 1st Doug Barnes – Missouri, 2nd Mike Norris – Missouri, 3rd Becca Payne – Missouri*

# We proudly support Gateway PVA



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Local: (314) 989-1010  
Toll-Free: 877.501.8267

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# Meet the New Telehealth Coordinator

*by Jacob Herzog*

You've served us, now let us serve you! My name is Jacob Herzog, and I am the newest face in the SCI Telehealth team, as the new Telehealth Coordinator. I am conveniently located in Building 52 at Jefferson Barracks, in office 1S02A and also make a trip up to 7-B at John Cochran once a week as well. I am a US Army Veteran, and have served in the VA for over 8 years now, both in New York City and now St. Louis. Some of you may know me from when I worked inpatient Spinal Cord at 7-B, or maybe you've met me over a telehealth encounter. My favorite part of my new endeavor is meeting you and hearing your unique story and trying to help make your care easier and more efficient. We are seeing some pretty amazing accomplishments in SCI telehealth, and are getting new equipment out as of now! Stop by my office so we can chat, or give me a call at 314.652.4100 extension 64811. We have so many options in telehealth to help see your providers without even leaving home and I'd love to answer any questions you have. I am also a MyHealtheVet administrator, and can help you get signed up for this amazing service too. Please feel free to contact me, and also let me know if you are coming into Jefferson Barracks or John Cochran and I will make time to come to you. Thank you for your service and I look forward to meeting you.





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