

GATEWAY GAZETTE

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



28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games By Matt Luitjohan

This National Veterans Wheelchair games were held July 24-30th in Omaha, Nebraska. The St. Louis Gateway PVA team had another impressive showing this year, both on and off the court, probably because of our new team jersey! Eighteen veterans participated this year, and another 3 outpatients from the Nebraska Spoke came and cheered their support for the team and the games. The four coaches were joined by a duck that Denny Canoy had given to Amy in remembrance of the Alaska games. The duck attended every event and we felt that even though Denny couldn't be there in person, he was still cheering everyone on throughout the week. That little rubber duck really provided inspiration and inspired everyone on the team to push just a little harder, if not for themselves, then for Denny. Of the 18 athletes, 7 were first-timers; of the four coaches, Jean Ferguson, RT from the Polytrauma unit, was a first-timer. Every one of our 18 athletes received at least one medal and I would be willing to say most, if not all, received at least 2! WOW! Dennis Durrwachter has stated on a few occasions that he started just a little too late to be competitive with some of the younger guys in hand cycling. Well, this past year he trained very hard and what does he have to show for it? A GOLD medal, that's what! In fact, Dennis

posted the fourth fastest time overall in the entire field of women and men from the age of 18 and up. It was a great accomplishment and we should all be so proud of him for the dedication he has shown to his training, showing everyone the benefits of hard work and practice. Way to show those whippersnappers, Dennis! After a few years' hiatus, Bob Larkin came back with a vengeance, winning the gold medal in Quad Rugby and serving as the social butterfly of the team. I mean, I really think he talked to every one of the 563 athletes, all of their family members, and each of the volunteers. There are many stories of inspiration that came from each and every one of the other team members, but I apologize there is just not enough room to list them all in this article. There are lots of pictures and lots of hardware in the form of Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals that came back to St. Louis. Pictured above clockwise from the left are: Bob Larkin, LaRoy Smith, and Rose Ganz. We would love to have you all with us in Spokane, WA, next year so start practicing again and keep raising those funds.

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Insert—Official FY 2008-2009 BOD Election Ballot and much more...

Stan Brown

Mike Norris

Ruth Kult

"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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Hand-Cycling Clinic

By Matt Luitjohan

On Saturday, July 12th, 2008, the 2nd Annual Hand-Cycling Clinic was held at the Jefferson Barracks SCI Unit. The training began with a brief orientation in Physical Therapy on the following items: new prosthetics guidelines on recreational equipment, recommendations for training, considerations for shoulder protection, safety recommendations, and a brief overview of equipment options and applications. The clinic then moved to the track behind building 52 where veterans were able to try a variety of handcycles and see firsthand how the models compared. We had an excellent showing of 16 veterans this year, both inpatients and outpatients. Our experienced cyclers did a great job mentoring those just starting out.

The staff at the SCI/D unit is trying once again to beef up the sports program, but we need your help! Contact the Recreational Therapy staff if you have an interest in getting together with other vets to handcycle. We would like to coordinate Saturday morning rides, but other times may be available. We would also like to know about other leisure/sporting interests that you might have. The SCI staff is excited about setting up "mini" clinics on various sports throughout the year so that you, the veterans, can try out something new and have more options to increase your activity level. Some examples of mini clinics that we are looking into include wheelchair basketball, fishing, tennis, power soccer, golf, volleyball, archery and others. If you have any ideas or would like to be on a mailing list to be included for these clinics, please call (314) 652-4100 ext 66602 to speak with Matt or ext 64590 for Amy. If you have an e-mail address, please give that to us as well so that we can get the message out to the masses quickly. Our e-mail addresses are:

matthew.luitjohan@va.gov

- or -

amy.will@va.gov

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 Report—Fall 2008

By Stan Brown

As summer closes, we can look back on a very successful year for our Gateway chapter. We are now doing monthly luncheons for our spinal cord patients at Jefferson Barracks. We have expanded our transportation program and are offering rides on both Mondays and Fridays, and providing rides on Thursdays to Jefferson Barracks in-patients to area stores and facilities such as banks and barbershops. Our trapshoot program is getting more and more participants and we have "older" veterans coming from the VA long-term facility in north St. Louis County. Active Gateway participants have received \$2000 in sports funding this year to attend the midwinter sports clinic and recent wheelchair games. As we close our fiscal year books the end of September, it will be the third year in a row our revenue has succeeded our expenses, and we are now looking to buy a permanent chapter facility. Lastly, and in my opinion most importantly, through our advocacy we have stopped VA plans to close the 32-bed spinal cord unit at Jefferson Barracks and relocate it to new construction at the John Cochran site. All of this has been accomplished with your support, our board, and frankly, would not have been possible without the long hours and dedication of our Executive Director, Susan Lyle. This last fiscal year I have literally spent in total over three months in bed, rolling from side to side, trying to heal pressure sores on my tailbone. Thanks to Susan, the chapter successfully continued to function without missing a beat.



Chapter elections are coming up and I encourage everyone to vote, and in general get involved by coming to our events. Our board meetings are open to everyone and your presence would be welcomed. Congratulations to all the medal winners and participants for your efforts in the recent Omaha wheelchair games. Special congratulations to a fellow oldster with gray hair, Dennis Durrwachter, who took gold in the Master's Division for the hand cycling event. Dennis works full-time, serves as our treasurer, and in his spare time lost 20 pounds training for the event.

We have **Rams and Chiefs** football tickets to give away! Well, we have the Rams tickets and are trying to buy Chiefs tickets. We have a wheelchair spot and an able-bodied seat for the Rams games on September 28 against Buffalo at 3:05 and October 19 against Dallas at Noon. We are willing to buy Chiefs tickets, but have been unsuccessful so far. Let us know if you have an "inside" source. If you want the Rams tickets, please send us a letter and identify the game or games you would like and a phone number where you may be reached. If you're interested in Chiefs tickets, in case we get any, please also send us a letter.

We are going to schedule a Gateway chapter **membership meeting in Kansas City**. I'm assuming it would be at the VA unless someone has a better suggestion. If you have any idea on where it should be held, or a date that would draw more members, please let me know.



Shown above: Dennis Durrwachter on his hand cycle. Shown right: Coaches Amy Will and Victor Ganz give some pre-race pointers to their star athlete.

Just My Opinion

By Mike Norris

We all have our own ideas about how things work in this world of ours. Things like "Courage". As a Soldier of many years, I saw both physical and moral courage from the men I served with. As Combat Engineers, it was our goal to work and fight as a team.

Now, as a quadriplegic, I have seen courage in my new teammates from our Jefferson Barracks VA team and from members of the St. Louis Rugby Rams; guys like Patrick Rhine. I first saw Patrick when he rolled into the practice gym in his power chair. Our coaches put him into a rugby chair and he began pushing. His pushing was awkward at first, but he never quit. Week after week Patrick came back, never complaining, never whining, and never making excuses. Patrick knows he may never be the fastest or score the most points, but he won't quit the way many others have. He has the courage to push forward!

At the recent National Veterans Wheelchair Games, I watched Doug Barnes attack the slalom with the power and confidence of a hardcore Marine. He set the standard for the rest of us to meet. When the course was hard, he never quit. He had the courage to push forward, also! His slalom performance inspired all that were watching. Patrick and Doug both show courage. Patrick and Doug both have the respect of their teammates.

Courage is more than a word on a T-shirt. It is your actions, not your words, which show your real character, and real courage. Doug showed us what a Marine can do.

So, let us celebrate the real achievements of real athletes! Congrats and Good Luck to all the 2008 Honor Roll Team. And, Good Luck to the 08-09 Rugby Rams.

Thanks for reading!



Doug Barnes (pictured above and right) participated in the 28th Annual Veterans Wheelchair Games in Omaha, Nebraska, along with many of our Gateway Chapter members. As you can see above, the slalom is no easy event.

Attaboy

By Ruth Kult



Here and Gone...

Before I do my “Attaboy” I would like to say, first it was here, and then it was gone. I am referring to the 28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games and also the summer.

When you think of Nebraska, the thought of corn comes to mind. Wheelchair games aren’t placed in an area for sightseeing, but Nebraska was really nice and this was just a huge extra benefit. The wheelchair games are a product of what is awesome about being and performing to the best of your abilities as a wheelchair athlete. It’s really proof to yourself that you can still be involved in and enjoy sports. Being great doesn’t matter here. It’s just having enough gumption to get out there and try.

There is one thing I need to emphasize before I give my attaboy. It has taken me a long time to realize my inability to be as good as I used to be. I’ve had it said to me time and time again that things are different now, and I never really listened until just recently when I stunk in softball. Softball, once upon a time, was one of my favorite sports and I wasn’t too bad. Now really trying, which I didn’t, is all that’s expected. I’m sure not everyone is as hardheaded and as stubborn as me. Using myself as an example: Be more accepting of your disability. Please don’t be like me. You’ll be missing out on so much.

And, Now for the Attaboy...

This year, we were fortunate enough to have an additional coach. Amy, Matt, and Victor already know, or at least they should know by now, how good they are and that everything they do is so much appreciated. I would like to add Jean Ferguson to that list. She is a dynamo!

I’d love to tell you all about Jean, but I don’t know her very well. I think if you’ve ever seen or been around Jean, her significant trait to make a person feel good about their abilities would stand out. Now, that is something I can brag about on her behalf. She’s got it.

Wow, and I do mean “W O W” — while we were in Nebraska, Jean was just too much! She had so much enthusiasm in her, it was great. She also has another wonderful quality about her. She was really interested in everyone’s events and in pretty much everything. She’s a very special person and extremely enthusiastic. I think as a whole it was great to have her as an additional coach with our team.

Jean Ferguson has been a recreational therapist for a long period of time. She has been in the RT career field for a whopping 27 years. No wonder she’s very good at what she does. It will be 13 years this September for her in the VA system. She’s experienced at her job. She’s a welcomed addition to our team, and does great at her duty as a Polytrauma Recreation Therapist. She likes to encourage others to live a healthy and active lifestyle. I think that should be embedded in people’s minds at a young age.

Thanks for reading.

IMPORTANT: This newsletter contains an insert for the FY 2008-2009 BOD election. Please take the time to complete the ballot and mail it back to our chapter office no later than September 17 as instructed on the form. If you prefer to hand-deliver the ballot, you may bring it to our September 18 quarterly membership meeting being held at Jefferson Barracks in the day room immediately following our membership luncheon. If you failed to submit a nomination form to our office by the July 31 deadline and you wish to run for a board member position, you may “write in” your name at the bottom of the ballot. The secret ballots will be counted during our meeting and the new board members will be announced at the close of the meeting. Remember, all ballots must have the member’s address on the outside of the form or envelope in order to be cross-referenced against our membership roster and therefore be counted. Thank You!



Pictured Above: 28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games Coaches, Victor Ganz, Jean Ferguson, Matt Luitjohan, and Amy Will. Thank you to all our coaches for their hard work and dedication to our veterans not just during the wheelchair games, but always!



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A Few Thoughts

By Susan Lyle

The dates are drawing near for two important golf events. First, our 13th Annual Jack Buck Golf Tournament, which will be held on Tuesday, September 9, 2008. We are still looking for donated auction items, so if you can help, please call the chapter office. Our tournament will once again be held at The Landings at Spirit Golf Course in Chesterfield, Missouri. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m. with a shotgun start at Noon. We need a couple more members to volunteer their time or just make an appearance and thank our loyal supporters, so contact me for the details and possible transportation arrangements.

Second, the Canoy Hack-a-thon has been renamed, but will still be held at the Deer Chase Golf Club in Lynn Creek this year. We will be running the chapter van if at all possible, but I do not yet have a driver confirmed. The event, which will be held on Saturday, September 13 near the Lake of the Ozarks, begins at 8:00 a.m. As most of you know, our beloved board member, Denis Canoy, passed away on May 12, 2008. His nephew, Jim Canoy, has put together this year's golf outing as a memorial tournament to honor his uncle. I hope some of you will consider attending Jim's event. Please call me if you need more information.

On another note, I've been employed with the Gateway Chapter for 3 years now! I really must say that this has been the best 3 years of my career. I am honored to work beside the best board members, officers, staff, and volunteers that anyone could ever hope to know! Someone asked me the other day what makes me happy and the first thing that came to mind was music. However, after giving it some thought, I realized that what truly makes me happy day in and day out is coming to work. I enjoy the people at PVA and Jefferson Barracks more than anywhere I have ever worked before. Our members are tops! Thank you for making me feel so comfortable and allowing me to be a part of your lives.

I would also like to thank Terri Fuda, Dennis Durrwachter, Matt Luitjohan, Mike Norris, and Lonnie Crider for sending me so many pictures of the recent wheelchair games. They really captured some awesome moments and made my job of putting this newsletter together a whole lot easier. There were just too many pictures for me to choose from, though!

Lastly, I would like to mention that our Annual Lone Elk Park Picnic is fast approaching. It will be held Friday, October 3, at the White Tail Shelter. Lone Elk Park is located on the north outer road of Hwy 44 in Valley Park, Missouri. Please RSVP so that I can plan our barbeque—314-427-0393. I hope to see many of our members there this year!

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 shown on page 2. Thanks!

Anderson, Roamin	Austin, Jason	Bunch, Jack	Calhoun, Michael	Israel, Abinadab
Jones, Ralph	Kiesling, Elmer (Bill)	Kilcoyne, Tim	McPherson, Odell	Monahan, James
Olmsted, Donald	Pfeifer, James	Roden, James	Washpun, Odell	White, Eric D

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....



Harold Brakefield
Leo Hildebrand
Kevin Orr
Neil Terhune

Florissant, MO	12/20/2007
St. Louis, MO	07/09/2008
Carterville, IL	11/22/2007
Rawlins, WY	02/01/2008



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1:30-2:30 p.m.

Building 52, Second Floor Conference Room

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If you have any questions or would like more information, please call our Social Worker, Bob Sontag, LCSW at 314-652-4100, x6-4819

4th Annual PVA /SCI Camp Penuel Camping Weekend and Fishing Tournament

Join us for a wonderful weekend of camping, fishing, and boating at Camp Penuel in Ironton, MO.

The Festivities begin Friday evening, September 5th and wrap up Sunday morning, September 7th.

Please call Amy or Matt at 314.652.4100 ext. 64590 for more information or to get registered. This fishing tournament/camping weekend is free of charge for all veterans and their families.

Meals and activities are sponsored by the national office of the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). This event will be cancelled in case of inclement weather.

Gateway Chapter PVA Wishes to Welcome the Following New Members:

John Dickson—St. Ann, MO

Helen Horn—Belleville, IL

Harry Knoblauch—Belton, MO

Ronald Schuchardt—St. Charles, MO

Homer Stuart—Willow Springs, MO

Maurice Tompkins—Vandalia, IL

Forrest Flynn—Springfield, MO

Kenneth Koester—St. Louis, MO

Robert Saner—Wichita, KS

Harold Smith—Clinton, MO

Russell Taylor—Maryville, MO

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**Sunday, September 14, 2008
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JB Wheelchair Veterans Sports Team**

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Military Vehicles

<i>September 2008</i>						
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
	1 Labor Day Office Closed	2	3	4	5 4th Annual PVA/SCI Camp Penuel Fishing Tournament in Ironton, MO (9/5-9/7)	6
7 Camp Penuel	8	9 13th Jack Buck Golf Tournament	10	11 Patient Support Group @ JB 1:30 - 2:30	12	13 Denis Canoy Memorial Golf Event
14 6th Vets Apprec. Day @ High Ridge Elks-12	15	16 BOD Meeting Overland 11:30 AM	17 Election Ballots Due Today	18 -Elections- Membership Lunch 12:00 & Meeting 1:00 JB	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 - Final - 'Shoot for the Gold' 10 AM @ Olin Trap & Skeet	27
28	29	30	31			

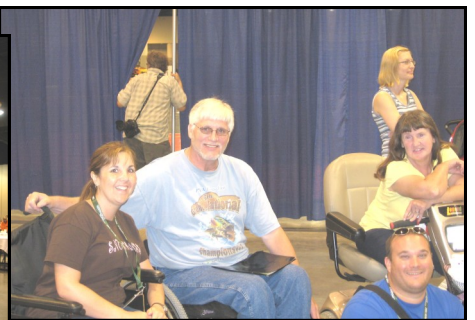
<i>October 2008</i>						
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
			1	2	3 Annual Lone Elk Park Picnic in Valley Park 10:30—2:30 White Tail Shelter	4
5	6	7	8	9 Patient Support Group at JB 1:30 - 2:30	10	11
12	13 Office Closed	14 BOD Meeting Overland 4 PM	15	16 Membership Luncheon at JB—Noon	17 Member Newsletter Articles Due	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 Happy Halloween from Gateway	

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St. Louis, MO 63114



Bob Kiger above; Ed Caldwell right.

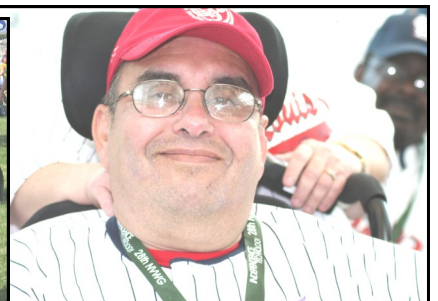


Ruth Kult left; PVA President, Randy Pleva, visits our team above.

Some Photos from the 28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Omaha, Nebraska



Bill Skiles above; Charlie Dean right.



Floyd Porter left; Larry Emerick above.

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