



PVA

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Gateway Chapter

SEP/OCT 2023

VOL.47 NO.5



Gateway Chapter

www.gatewaypva.org
www.twitter.com/PVA_Gateway
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NEED TO UPDATE
YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION?

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DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE
YOUR NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL?

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Contact us at one of the following:

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

314.427.0393 or 800.426.4058
Fax 314.427.4183

info@gatewaypva.org

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

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

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Harry Brown, Vice President
Ken Johanning, Treasurer
Bram Lucieer, Secretary

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Chad Buder
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Derwin Hollis
Robert Huskey, PhD
Don Feldott
Ruth Kult
Matt Schneider

APPOINTMENTS

VAVS Representative JB - Doug Barnes
VAVS Deputy - Ken Johanning
Membership Officer - Chris Blanchard
Acting Government Relations Director - Amber Lee
National Director - Don Feldott
Hospital Committee - Harry Brown

GPVA Staff

Chris Blanchard, Executive Director
Amber Lee, Executive Assistant
John Vasel, Transportation
Martha Rampani, Transportation

Kansas City Service Office

4801 Linwood Blvd, Rm. M1-566
Kansas City, MO 64128
(816) 922-2882 or (800) 795-3612
Fax: (816) 922-3369

Brent Follas, Senior National Service Officer

St. Louis Service Office

9700 Page Blvd. Suite 101, Room 1-114
St. Louis, MO 63132
Office: (314)253-4480 or (800)795-3614
Fax: (314) 253-4170
Nathan Vail, National Service Officer

Jefferson Barracks VA Medical Center

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

PVA National Liaison VP

Josue Cordova

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEMBERSHIP GRANT CHANGES

There have been a few amendments to the Chapter member grant program that members need to be aware of. If you have any questions about these changes listed below, feel free to contact the office and speak with Executive Director Chris Blanchard or Executive Assistant Amber Lee.

The first amendment is that the Board has capped monthly expenses on membership grants (Home Accessibility and Hand Controls) to \$20,000. This decision was made to keep the Chapter fiscally responsible.

How this amendment effects Chapter members:

All bids that are received will be presented to the Board at the monthly meeting.

If all the approved bids total below \$20,000; all membership grants will be awarded that month

If all the approved bids total above \$20,000; the Board then discusses which grants will be awarded that month and the remainder grants will be awarded the following month.

The second amendment is that once a membership grant is approved, a member must use this grant within 12 months of the approval. This amendment applies to all membership grants; Home Accessibility, Hand Controls, Generator, and Accessible Vehicle.

As a reminder, the Home Accessibility and Hand Control grants are the only grants that are available all year long. The Generator and the Accessible Vehicle grants are only available once a year. Announcements of their openings will be on our social media, emailed, and in this newsletter (Generator grant opening seen in Executive Assistant article on page 4).

GOLF FUNDRAISER

October 3, 2023 @12:30pm
at Top Golf
16851 N Outer 40 Rd, Chesterfield, MO 63005

This year will be the 27th annual golf fundraiser! We have changed locations, but we still need help from our membership to make this a success!

How you can help:

- ▶ Ask your employer, friends and family to sign up for a sponsorship
- ▶ Register a team
- ▶ Attend the event
- ▶ Solicit (new) items for our auction
- ▶ Spread the word about the fundraiser

An event flyer for the golf fundraiser can be found on page 15 of this newsletter. If you would like material sent via email or USPS please contact the office.

5K RUN/WALK/ROLL FUNDRAISER

September 9, 2023 @ 9am
at Tower Grove Park - Sons of Rest Pavilion
4257 Northeast Dr, St. Louis, MO 63110
Our 5K can be completed virtually starting on August 26 through September 9 or in person on September 9 at Tower Grove Park. This will be our 5th annual 5K!

How you can help:

- ▶ Participate
- ▶ Ask friends and family to participate
- ▶ Attend the event to cheer participants on
- ▶ Spread the word about the fundraiser

We are able to do it again this year thanks to the addition of our Platinum Sponsor, Coforma. They are currently working with the Department of Veterans Affairs to improve the benefits and claims submission process for all veterans. You can read more about their full range of operations at coforma.io.

FROM THE DESK OF GATEWAY CHAPTER'S

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Amber Lee

GENERATOR GRANT

The Gateway Chapter membership Generator grant will be open from October 1 2023 to November 1, 2023 for the amount of \$5,500.

This grant can be applied to a portable generator (which should cost less than the \$5500) or go toward an automatic permanent home generator (which will cost more than that grant amount). In either case, portable or permanent home generator, members are required to obtain two bids for the same product or scope of work. If the cost of work exceeds \$5500, the member is responsible for the remaining amount. Photos of work before and after must be submitted to the Chapter by either the member or the vendor. Lien waivers must also be submitted to the Chapter. Once the grant has been approved, the approved grant amount must be completed within twelve (12) months.

MEMBERSHIP PICNIC

September 28, 2023 @ 12pm
at Simpson Park - Blue Heron Pavilion
1234 Marshall Rd
Valley Park, MO 63088

Gateway members and their families are welcome to join us at our annual membership picnic. Just bring yourself! We will provide the food and drinks, you provide the fun!

TRAPSHOOT

October 13, 2023 @ 10am
at Gateway Gun Club
13547 Missouri Bottom Rd
Hazelwood, MO 63044

Gateway members are encouraged to come join a friendly trapshoot at Gateway Gun Club. Members are also welcome to attend just to watch as well. Food and drinks will also be provided.

WHY THE EMAILS?

I know there are some days members may feel like I am filling their inbox with a lot. Yet what we are sending you could be of service to you. If you are unsure if I have your email, please send me an email at amber@gatewaypva.org.

Below is a list of things you may get an email for:

- *Last minute sport tickets
- *Veteran resources
- *Veteran centered events
- *Donated event tickets
- *Reminder for giveaways
- *VA information
- *GRD information
- *Chapter event info

REPORT OF NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER Nathan Vail

INTRODUCTION



Hello, my name is Nathan Vail. I am happily married to my wife, Kaitlyn Vail. We have two wonderful children and their names are Liam and Maren. Liam will turn three years old this year in November, and Maren will turn one year old in December.

I graduated from Eastern Illinois University in 2019, with a Bachelors Degree in General Studies. In my spare time, my favorite thing to do is spend time with my family. My other hobbies include golfing, hunting, fishing, and watching sports. I enjoy watching college football, baseball, and hockey.

I enlisted into the United States Army in October of 2017, and was discharged in September of 2022. In the Army I served as a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Specialist. I was stationed first in Fort Irwin, CA, then I went to Fort Gordon, GA, and then finally I was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. It was an honor to be able to serve this wonderful country, and I am excited to be able to continue to serve and help my fellow veterans.

We proudly support Gateway PVA



If you have a **service-connected disability**, you may qualify for VA funding assistance for wheelchair accessible vehicles or driving modifications. If your current mobility vehicle is more than two years old, you may even qualify for a brand new conversion. Veterans discounts available. Check out our daily rental rates!

St. Louis North

9389 Natural Bridge Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63134
Local: (314) 989-1010
Toll-Free: 877.501.8267

St. Louis South

980 S. Highway Drive
Fenton, MO 63026
Local: (314) 292-5150
Toll-Free: 877.501.8267



We're here to help!

Call us today or stop by and take a test drive.



Proud Supporters of the



CHARLES HAMPTON

LIFE TO THE FULLEST by Rusty Ezzell



For this issue of the Gateway Gazette I want to bring Charles Hampton into the spotlight. Charles is a Navy Man serving from 1983-1996. Charles was stationed at Norfolk, Virginia and was on the U.S.S. Iowa in communications as a Signal Man. Charles says his time in the military was rather uneventful but he enjoyed it nonetheless. Charles says the camaraderie amongst the sailors was one of the greatest things about his time in the Navy. Being on a ship can bring everyone together because you really don't have a place to escape.

Charles became injured in 2005 when he was attacked by unknown individuals in Cahokia. Although that may have stopped some people, Charles decided to take on life and make it the best of the situation. He currently lives in Madison, Illinois independently, and is doing great. When he is not home you will find him at the VA training for the next Golden Age Games with Matt Luitjohan, or Charley Wright, honing his Boccia game, his pool skills or any of the multiple sports he likes to play. He loves to snorkel, scuba dive, water ski, and just generally tries to live life to the fullest.

When he takes time out of his training routine, Charles likes to spend time with his family, go do some fishing, or maybe even grab a kayak and relax and skim around on the water. I can tell you one thing, Charles is not sitting at home doing nothing or feeling down for himself, no sir. He is out living life, making memories, and having fun. We should all take a little page out of Charles' book and grab life full force and do all we can with what we have. If you see Charles in the halls at the VA, give him a high five and a smile, I'm sure you will get one back!





GATEWAY G.I.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Roger Armer
James Athnos
Richard Barohn
Robert Bradford
William Brunner
Donald Buttron
Timothy Cox
Marilynn Dunn
Erlinda Goodman

Joseph Kamphaus
Shawn Kemp
Timothy Lecroy
Gerald Massie
Stephen Ortiz
Pamela Porter
Chris Sanna
William Steinmeier
Steven Wheeler

MISSING IN ACTION

Have you seen or know the whereabouts of these members? They are in danger of being dropped from the PVA roster. Please contact the Gateway office with current contact information for the following members:

Michael Acton
Ronnie Anderson
Sandra Campbell
Ronald Edwards
Dennis Hanks
Curtis Herrington
Jarriid Hill
Kevin Jackson
Davett Jones
Larry Rice
Laurice Sappington
Curt Sidmore
Randy Streckfuss
Jeramie Talley
Donnell Thames
Wayne Webster

IN MEMORY OF

Alpar Juhasz of St. Louis, MO	08/12/2021
Darrel Schrader of Granite City, IL	12/15/2022
Conrad Madding of Mt. Erie, IL	01/31/2023
Christopher Dawson of Bluffton, SC	03/01/2023
Ann Coleman of Independence, MO	04/16/2023
Elmer Dyer of Kansas City, MO	04/25/2023
Bradley Schmidt of Kansas City, MO	05/14/2023
Robert Witt of Larned, KS	06/07/2023
Rebecca Gentry of Jackson, MO	06/15/2023
Lewis Young of Junction City, KS	06/17/2023
Roger Armer of Oak Grove, MO	06/26/2023
Mickey Bradshaw of Lawrence, KS	07/15/2023

GENERAL INFORMATION



SEPTEMBER

- SEPTEMBER 9 @ 9am
5th Annual 5K/1 Mile Run/Walk/Roll
@ Tower Grove Park, Sons of Rest Pavilion
20 points for members
- SEPTEMBER 12 at 11:30am
Board of Directors meeting
Via Zoom (contact office for link) and
in person w/proof of COVID vaccination
and signed waiver
15 points for nonBOD members
- SEPTEMBER 21 at 1:30pm
Quarterly Membership Meeting
Via Zoom (contact office for link)
15 points for members
- SEPTEMBER 28 @ 12pm
Annual Membership Picnic
@ Simpson Park, Blue Heron Pavilion
5 points for members



OCTOBER

- OCTOBER 3 @ 12:30pm
27th Annual GPVA Golf Fundraiser
@ Top Golf, Chesterfield MO
20 points for members
- OCTOBER 10 at 11:30am
Board of Directors meeting
Via Zoom (contact office for link) and
in person w/proof of COVID vaccination
and signed waiver
15 points for nonBOD members
- OCTOBER 13 @ 10am
Annual GPVA Trapshoot
@ Gateway Gun Club
5 points for members



Sales, Service, Rentals, Leasing, & Financing



PROUD SUPPORTER OF



Products Offered:

- New & used, rear & side entry wheelchair accessible vans
- BraunAbility, VMI, & ATC Mobility conversions
- Wheelchair / scooter lifts
- BraunAbility Turny EVO seating
- Hand controls & more

Services Offered:

- Mobility equipment installation & service
- VA funding options for qualified conversions and equipmen.
- Preventative maintenance & mechanical repairs
- Tire, brake, & battery replacement
- Warranty service & more

SCAN TO
VIEW OUR
WEBSITE
FOR MORE
INFORMATION



Contact your Southern Bus and Mobility sales rep today!

Breese, IL	12950 Koch Lane, Breese, IL	+618-526-4131
Valley Park, MO	80 S Highway Dr., Valley Park, MO	+636-825-0700

ReWalk is Working to Put Veterans First



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

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

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

Put Veterans First | Think ReWalk First



Contact ReWalk for more information

rewalk.com/refer-a-veteran • 508.251.1154

HOW CAN I HELP THE CHAPTER?

1. Attending Gateway Chapter fundraisers, and/or fundraisers held by other companies or organizations that donate their proceeds to our Chapter.

By attending these events, members are 'putting a face' to our mission. Donors and potential donors want to see where their money is going and who it is going to.

2. Networking - you know someone, or you know someone that knows someone.

The Gateway Chapter solely depends on donations. We do not receive any government funding. What do we mean by 'someone?' This person could be a manager or owner of a company or store that you are friends with. A family member that works in a corporate type office. A club that you are a member of. The list has endless possibilities. We are always more than happy to have a meeting with a potential donor and talk about our mission. Anyone come to mind? Ask that person if they would be willing to meet with us for future fundraising or donations, and if they say they are interested, have them call or email the office. We have business cards to hand out, simply let us know that you would like some to give out.

3. Social media! Facebook, Instagram, Twitter(X)...

Adding onto networking, we continue to try and grow our social media presence. Word of mouth is one of the best ways to share our mission. Maybe we posted on Facebook about a fundraiser, simply re-post it to spread the information. Did we post about a local veteran resource? Re-post! The more presence we have on social media, the easier it is to spread information from or about the Chapter.

4. Education on what it is to be an SCI/D veteran

Executive Assistant Amber Lee wants your stories! Only our SCI/D veteran members can truly speak to what it is to live their lives. How was your journey from service to diagnosis/injury to today? How has a Chapter grant effected your life? How has comradery among other Chapter members developed? The more stories that can be shared (social media, to donors, in the newsletter, etc.), can help another veteran; and also further display how the Gateway Chapter mission helps its veteran membership. Email Ms. Lee with any interest at amber@gatewaypva.org.

Jacqueline Black, PT, ATP

I apologize that I missed an update for the last newsletter, but we are back with SCI Therapy updates!

Matt Luitjohan, CTRS, has added group cycling rides to the Rec Therapy calendar this summer. These rides have occurred at various trails throughout the St. Louis Metro area to make it easier for vets to participate from various locations. The goal of these group rides is to simply get out, get some mileage on those cycles, ride as a group, and have some fun while exercising. It is proven that your compliance with exercise will be better with an exercise buddy! If you are interested in getting a handcycle or recumbent for the first time-

please reach out to SCI Recreation Therapy to schedule an initial, individualized assessment. If you are from out of the area, you can also reach out to Recreation Therapy to coordinate a virtual or phone visit for consultation. Our SCI therapy team will do what we can to assist you in finding the right bike trials for you, and finding local options for group rides. We also have a goal to resume spoke outreach visits, and that may include a traveling bike clinic. Stay tuned!

We have a good number of SCI therapists attending SCI-specialty conferences in August/ September. Our team is committed to supporting the continued education needs of therapy team, so we can continue to advance our programming and stay focused on our mission of providing you with exceptional, SCI-specialty care.

If you have questions, concerns, or kudos about SCI Therapy/ SCI Programming, or if there is something you'd like us to highlight in the newsletter- please contact me at Jacqueline.black@va.gov or 314-652-4100, ext 64691.



PVA

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Gateway Chapter



55

th Annual Gateway Chapter PVA
K Walk/Run/Roll

Tower Grove Park - Sons of Rest Shelter

SEPTEMBER 9, 2023 at 9am

virtually from August 26, 2023 to September 9, 2023

27th ANNUAL GOLF FUNDRAISER



Gateway Chapter

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2023

TOP GOLF

16851 N Outer 40 Road
Chesterfield, MO 63005

PHONE: 314.427.0393
FAX: 314.427.4183
www.gatewaypva.org
EMAIL: amber@gatewaypva.org

NOT A GOLFER? NOT A PROBLEM!

Come enjoy food, drinks, friends, swing a club and win some prizes!

PER PLAYER - \$200

One bay holds six players total

GOLD SPONSOR - \$10,000

Two bays (12 total players), 12 mulligans, 2 bay sponsorship signage, main bay screens and banquet hall screen time

SILVER SPONSOR - \$5,000

Two bays (12 total players), 8 mulligans, 1 bay sponsorship signage, main bay screens and banquet hall screen time

BRONZE SPONSOR - \$2,500

One bay (6 total players), 6 mulligans, 1 bay sponsorship signage, banquet hall screen time

LONGEST DRIVE SPONSOR - \$1,000 **BAR SPONSOR - \$500** **BAY SPONSOR - \$200**

12:45PM Registration

1:30PM - 4PM Two Rounds of Competition

food and drinks served during 3 hours of event

4PM to 5PM Awards and Silent Auction - Open Bar





Gateway Chapter
1311 Lindbergh Plaza Center
Saint Louis, MO 63132



Generosity can be found anywhere.
Even the back of your closet.

Donating clothes and other household goods
can help improve the lives of injured veterans.



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

**WHEELS HELPING
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