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Paralyzed Veterans
of America

Oregon Chapter

PARALOG

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America

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Oregon Chapter

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NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER

Ken Fink
800-795-3627
Fax: 503-412-4763

PORTLAND/Vancouver VA Primary

Care Contact Phone Numbers

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503-220-8262 ext.
31665 (Portland)
800-949-1004 ext.
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503-273-5308

RESOURCES

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Vocational Rehab & Employment

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www.benefits.va.gov

Women Veterans Health Care

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US Disaster Hotline

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OPVA Mission Statement

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America (OPVA), incorporated in 1976, is a chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America. OPVA serves the needs of its Members – U.S. military veterans with spinal cord injury or disease (SCI/D) – and helps them enjoy the highest possible quality of life.

OPVA, Members, Associate Members, Family Members, Volunteers, and allied organizations work to provide leadership and advocacy in

- Improving health care and SCI/D research and education
- Protecting veterans rights and benefits
- Improving awareness of disability rights
- Offering sports and health-promotion activities
- Increasing accessibility and removing architectural barriers in Oregon, Southwest Washington, and Idaho.

A 501(c)(3) charity, OPVA relies on grants and donations from members of the public.

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Thank you to all our Sponsors!

The views and opinions expressed in the Paralog are not necessarily a direct representation of the views or ideas of Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America who hereby disclaims any responsibility for opinions expressed by contributors and printed in the Paralog.

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America

3700 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305 • 503-362-7998 • www.oregonpva.org • oregonpva@oregonpva.org
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PRESIDENT NEWS



Larry Gardner – President

Hi everyone

I hope everyone has been hanging in there and is able to deal with all the challenges we are up against so far this year. OPVA members, if any of you feel like you are in need of emergency assistance of some kind please feel free to give us a call 503-362-7998 and maybe there is something we can help out with.

**We have events
still scheduled**

Don't forget if you haven't used your recreation fund that is also available for you till Sept 30th of this year. Here at the chapter the office still is currently closed except for business that needs to be done and is appointment only.

We are having our mandatory Board Meetings every month by phone conference and so far has been working fine hopefully things will open up and get better.

The chapter sports programs have been very slow this year, the trap team has been participating in a very limited schedule at the trap clubs, but enjoying what's available. We have events still scheduled, and are hoping they don't get canceled, they are the Show and Shine Car Show, the last deep sea fishing of the year, bowling, and more trap shoots.

Keep in touch and looking forward for everything to get better and it will, stay safe. Thank you all so much



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Out & about during Covid



Tom Hurt – Executive Director

We hope everyone is doing well, staying safe.

With everything changing almost daily as to the state of events throughout the country, it is an understatement that our fundraising efforts have been severely affected. With that being said I am pleased to announce that OPVA's 11th annual Golf Tournament did take place on July 18th, what a huge SUCCESS. We had record number of teams this year, to put this into perspective 18 teams would be a full Golf Tournament, well this year we had 28 teams!!!!!!



We would like to thank our Sponsors this year, *Price Financial Group, Price Financial Group Wealth Management, Avamere, Yard Love Mid-Willamette Valley, R J Mobility, Oregon Mobility, Bliss Sequoia Insurance* and last but not

least *McNary Golf Club*, the Club does an exceptional job working out the details for our tournament every year!

On July 12th we had the drawing for the 1970 Camaro, we drew the ticket on Facebook Live which was something new for us, and the Chapter Office is having to learn new technologies due to the COVID19 restrictions.



Please don't forget it is OPVA election time!! If you haven't sent in your ballot, don't wait now is the time. If you have not done so yet, please take the time to Vote for your next Board of Directors. We have some really Great Candidates on the ballot!

Since the governor's orders shut down indoor activities your Board of Directors has adapted to strictly Phone Conferences to hold the Board Meetings (which are open to the entire

membership to attend) if you would like to sit in on the Board Meetings just let the chapter office know and we will share the number and pass code to attend via the phone.

The next event we will be holding is the 5th annual OPVA Show and Shine Car Show. This will be on September 19th this year (as long as No new restrictions happen).

We will be at the Home Depot on Hagers Grove again this year. We are expecting another record turnout for the car show. There is still time if you would like to be a volunteer contact me at the chapter office 503-362-7998.



I am pleased to let you know that our Deep Sea Fishing Trips are happening again, Our last scheduled trip will be September 23rd if you like to fish, these are great trips out of Depoe Bay, Dockside Charters takes great care of us. Reserve your spot for the September 23rd trip now.

As a reminder: The chapter office has been on limited entry and hours and will continue as long as we are under the executive order for social distancing.

All meetings are taking place via Phone conference, your Board of Directors are making sure that business is getting taken care of. If you have a need to come to the chapter office we ask you to make an appointment by calling the office at 503-362-7998 to schedule your time.

Getting Paralyzed Veterans Walking Again with Indego®

New VA Program offers eligible veterans an Indego® Exoskeleton at no cost.



What is Indego? A robotic device that enables veterans to walk again.

Indego is an FDA-approved exoskeleton worn around the waist and legs that enables individuals paralyzed from spinal cord injuries to stand and walk, offering a new level of independence.

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Free Indego Webinars

During the first Thursday of every month you can join a free live webinar to learn more about the Indego and hear from a veteran who owns a device already.



Contact us today to find out if you are eligible to receive an Indego exoskeleton

Email: support.indego@parker.com

Phone: 844-846-3346





Larry J Ricklefs – Government Relations Director

"Improvise, Adapt, Overcome" is more than a motto, it is a statement of resolve during this time of pandemic uncertainty. It is boots on the ground as we go to work never abandoning our care and compassion for SDI/SCD veterans.

VA access is limited but their resolve, too, is keeping programs and services on track through innovation. The Specialty Housing bill was passed and signed into law. PVA was pivotal in nurturing this important legislation into law.



ODVA brought attention to the 25% lottery proceeds for veterans. It was noted not all proceeds go directly to ODVA because any agency that offers veteran benefits also get a piece of the pie.

Those veterans needing transportation in rural areas will continue receiving transportation funding. Top level discussions addressing homeless veterans in need of decent living accommodations continues. This is not going to be an over night fix.

Oregon legislature did not pass any veteran bills. There is a very tortuous journey from thought to paper to final inking legislation into law.

One item OPVA is watching in its infancy is a group licensing program (think fishing) to cover all participants under the umbrella of one license.

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RECREATION FUND SCOPE

OPVA

For one reason or another we don't always celebrate our anniversary on the exact date; this year was no exception due to our schedules and COVID-19 pandemic affecting everyone's plans. However, we recently booked a lovely room for the weekend at the beautiful Oregon Coast.

The peace and quiet was welcome and we had a grand time doing absolutely nothing but reading, resting and relaxing. Our room overlooked the ocean and a broad expanse of beach where we watched people and their dogs frolicking in the sand.

Our beach chairs were on a balcony high above the beach activity where we enjoyed the sun on our faces alternating with brief

rain showers as we sat and watched the world go by.

Thank you for the Recreation Fund which made it possible for a memorable 37th anniversary weekend!

Larry & Betty Ricklefs



Thank you OPVA for the Recreation Fund! This year I didn't go fishing, but when I learned I could use the recreational fund for anything that improves the quality of my life, I bought 100 pounds of clay and some pottery tools. I know it should be used to get me out of the house and doing something. Well doing pottery is something and it gets me out into my pottery studio.



Thank you again OPVA for the Recreation Fund I whole heartedly appreciate it. This time I bought some red clay and have thrown 2 pots with it just waiting for them to get through the drying process without cracking then I will really smile. You are Beautiful!

Kenneth Townsend

Recreation Fund

Oregon PVA voting members are eligible to receive \$250 each fiscal year through the Member Recreation Reimbursement Fund. It begins **October 1st** and runs through **September 30th** each year.

Include name, address, phone number, your legible receipts and a short description of what you did to have fun with your friends and family. We like pictures too (digital pictures are best), they may make it into the Paralog.

**♦ Eating Out ♦ Movies ♦ Games ♦ Hobby Supplies ♦ Motel ♦ Sports
♦ Event Tickets ♦ OPVA Events ♦ Guns ♦ Trips ♦ Vacation Expenses, etc.**

All receipts must be dated and used within this current fiscal year (10/1 - 9/30).

Mail or email to: Oregon PVA, 3700 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305 - oregonpva@oregonpva.org
Your request must be received in the office no later than **September 30th**. Earlier is better in case of any problems.

Please contact the office at 503-362-7998 if you have any questions or require additional information about the Recreation Fund

MS SUMMARY

Questions to Ask

Sue Holt – MS Liaison

This coming November I will have known that I've had Multiple Sclerosis for twelve years now. I was scared to death about my first office visit with the neurologist. I didn't know what questions to ask or what might be ahead of me.

Below I've compiled a list of questions to be used by first timers, old timers-maybe. If you don't know the answer ask at your next MS doctors visit

1. What exactly is MS?
2. What type do I have?
3. What are my treatment options?
4. What side effects can I expect from my treatments?
5. Are there any clinical trials available to me?
6. Where can I get emotional support after my MS diagnosis?
7. How will my life change?
8. What lifestyle changes will I need to make?

These are just a few questions - write them down before you go or better yet arrange for a spouse or friend to go with you, or ask the doctor if you can tape the session to listen to later. Hope this helps. If you have more questions please call the office with them or email me.



If you have any suggestions I am trying to compile a list of books and web sites to make our office library better. Please recommend away, email me at ms.liasion@oregonpva.org.

SOUTHERN OR AMBASSADOR REPORT



By Dennis Hooper – Southern Oregon Ambassador

Well we finally did it. We finally ventured out of town for something other than groceries or a doctor's appointment. We wanted to avoid the virus, of course, which generally means avoiding crowds. It has been awhile since we went camping, so I set out to make a reservation somewhere. The spots in Oregon were either booked or on a first come, first serve basis for our dates.

Due to COVID-19, one can only reserve two weeks or less out from the pertinent date. I wasn't about to drive 100-200 miles and hope to find a camp spot. So Oregon was out. So I searched the California camping reservation site looking for something sort of close, but far from crowded and any kind of outbreaks. Plus, we wanted someplace we had not visited before. We chose Castle Crags State Park.

This state park is about 6 miles south of quiet Dunsmuir, CA, and right off I-5. Our campsite was at about the

3500-3700 in feet elevation, so it was quite warm. Surprisingly, it was not at all crowded. After camp set up we proceeded to explore the area. The rangers give us a map of the trails and I commenced to look for the little wheelchair symbols. I knew from my scouting that there were only a few accessible options, but that's ok with us. We like a challenge!

We chose the Root Creek Trail first. It indicates about a mile of access. I have come to learn that one person's access



is another person excess. (Sound like a trademark?) Although, the trail is longer than a mile, one can always remain optimistic that they can

venture beyond the beaten path, literally. Now one of the features of this park is the adequate trail information signs posted at the trail head. These signs show the infamous wheelchair symbol and features other useful information. Here, one can see the average trail width; typical and maximum running slope; cross slope; and the surface type. This information is useful to a wheelchair or Track chair user. Personally, I like a bit of a surprise when I embark on a hike, but sometimes rounding a curve can present a positive or negative inspiration.

So yes, we went all the way as far as I could and we were rewarded with some small falls on Root

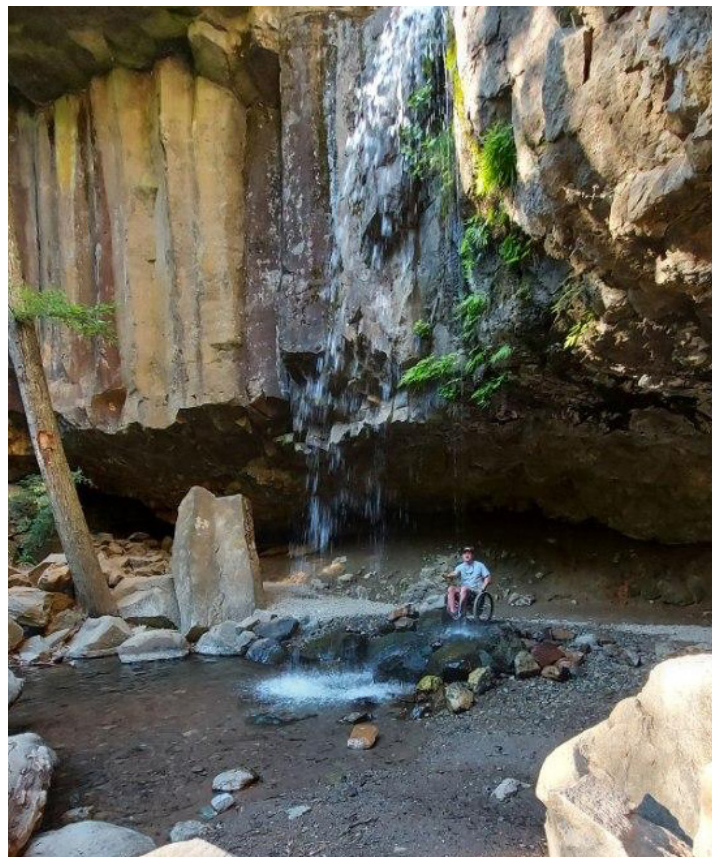


Creek. Our canteens low, we refilled with cool, clean mountain water! The kind that city folk freak out on. The trail map says we covered about 200 feet elevation. Not to severe when spread out over a mile. Of course, we took plenty of photos. This trailhead is just below the Vista Lookout parking lot. We head to the Vista Lookout Trail and this sign also has a wheelchair symbol. However, the trail length is only one quarter mile, but the elevation gain is 48 feet. This is the time to insert your math skills. A shorter trail is not always easier. Conversely, a trail with a higher elevation gain is not always more difficult.

The views were spectacular! Castle Dome rises over 6000 feet before us and Mt. Shasta clearly off to the northeast of us. There was even an accessible telescope available. The many clicks of our phones almost sounded like large pine beetles. We were not done yet. We went back to the campground and explored the local trails near our campsite. It was time to recoup for the next day's adventures. We decided to find a fishing spot. Our map showed an accessible trail to the Sacramento River...not!

Easy enough to cross under the interstate, we felt that the underpass for the railroad tracks would be the same. It was not the same. But, we managed the 20-25 foot rocky trail to get to the river's edge where we crossed the river on a narrow pedestrian bridge. Another great photo op then on to the accessible trail up to Soda Creek. A nice jaunt through a day use and campground area led us back to our campground trail. The high temperatures did not dissuade us at all.

For the last day, we broke down camp and checked out the day use area of the park. We chose Indian Creek Nature Trail; at .8 miles and 200 feet elevation gain, it too is listed as easy. It surely was doable, however the bridge access crossing Indian Creek was completely non-accessible. A quick dismount and back scoot got me on the bridge and we continued our journey. I thought maybe by mid-July that most of the water flow would be gone, but this was not the case. The other side of the creek was downhill back to the parking lot. I was happy. We then got into our rig and headed up Castle Creek Road. We followed Castle Creek about 15 or so miles and got to about 4700 feet elevation then found the backside of the Castle Crag. A literal view from the other side.



Back up the interstate we went until we stopped at Hedge Creek Falls. Now I've driven past this area many times and I have never seen this sign. A true gem right on the interstate!



Wheelchair users should allot no less than 3 or 4 hours for this trip. The linear length can't be more than 3/8 of a mile, but the trail is steep with a few switchbacks. The surface is mostly hard-packed and has basic width. The reward is a water feature a wheelchair can get right up on. It was a little more crowded, but people kept their distance.

I find that is the case in these situations when a crazy wheelchair is careening down a mountain. With an appetite on the horizon, we stopped at the new rain Rock Casino in Yreka. I was pleasantly surprised at the quality and value of my pot roast dinner.

All this was made feasible through the OPVA Recreation Fund.

I encourage all of our members to explore an area that is somewhat devoid of COVID-19. When you do venture out, take precautions and stay in your safe zone.

Its kinda nice because many folks are staying at home, so you may find a sweet spot to explore. Please use your rec fund and enjoy yourself!



Bowling League

By Grant Buehler

Hello Everyone! I hope you're all doing well during this time of uncertainty.

Back on March 16th, we suspended the OPVA Bowling League. Even though we are still suspended, we are still looking for anyone who wants to join. Many of the counties are in phase 2 which gives us hope that we will be bowling again soon. Hope you all are keeping safe and I'll keep you informed on any significant changes as they arise.

OPVA Bowling League starts back up October 1, 2020

Contact the chapter office to join the league 503-362-7998

Thank you!



Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America thanks you for your support for our paralyzed veterans



What to do while Covid-19 dominates our lives:

Fly-fishing



Bill Gray—National Director

I hope this finds you all keeping yourselves healthy and busy. I have never made a fly-fishing rod before and have decided to give it a try. I started this in February 2020 and I'm still not done as I keep trying to do other things.

It is very tedious to wrap the eyelets on the fiberglass rod. I was given a jig or fixture through the Healing Waters program. Since my hands are sometimes swelled up from the age-old friend arthritis, I find wrapping a little more challenging.



I got the lower section wrapped and will try to finish the second and third section's soon.



As you can see in the picture the thread is pretty fine and being the color of red it easily shows any flaws. I've tried wrapping the first big eyelet and it took me over half the day to get it wrapped even, with no gaps in the wrap.

This is when you might question yourself as to whether it might be easier to buy one already made!



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VA PUBLISHES CAREGIVER FINAL RULE

Article provided by VA

The final rule making reforms to VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) was published on August 1. It becomes effective on October 1, 2020. Here are some of the most significant changes it makes to the current program:

- "Inability to Perform an Activity of Daily Living": now means an activity of daily living (ADL) for which a veteran or servicemember requires personal care services each time he or she completes one or more of a specified list of ADLs; thereby, excluding veterans and servicemembers who need help completing an ADL only some of the time.
- "In Need of Personal Care Services": now means that an eligible veteran requires in-person personal care services from another person, and without such personal care services, other in-person caregiving arrangements (including respite care or the assistance of a different caregiver) would be required to support the eligible veteran's safety.
- "Monthly Stipend Rates": now based on the Office of Personnel Management General Schedule (GS) Annual Rate for grade 4, step 1 based on the locality pay area in which the eligible veteran resides, divided by 12.
- "Serious Injury": now defined to mean any service-connected disability that is rated at 70 percent or more by VA; or is combined with any other service-connected disability or disabilities, for a combined rating of 70 percent or more.
- "Unable to self-sustain in the community": now means that an eligible veteran requires personal care services each time he or she completes three or more of the seven ADLs listed in the definition of an "inability to perform an activity of daily living," and is fully dependent on a caregiver to complete such ADLs; or has a need for supervision, protection, or instruction on a continuous basis.
- "Overpayments": any payment made by VA under this program to an individual in excess

of the amount due, to which the individual was not eligible, or was made in error.

According to VA, once the Secretary has certified to Congress that VA's new caregiver information technology system is fully implemented, PCAFC will expand to eligible pre-9/11 veterans in two phases, beginning this October 2020. VA plans to provide an exact date for phase one in late August and will not begin accepting applications until October.

The first phase will expand the PCAFC to eligible veterans who incurred or aggravated a "serious injury" in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service on or before May 7, 1975. The final phase of expansion will occur two years after the first expansion and will expand the PCAFC to include eligible veterans from all eras regardless of when an eligible veteran's serious injury was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service.

Under the final rule, the term "serious injury" has been expanded to include illnesses such as ALS and MS, which is a win for PVA members. However, the implementation of a requirement to be rated at 70 percent or higher means that veterans receiving the lowest levels of caregiver benefits, as well as some of those receiving higher levels, will no longer be eligible for the program.

In response to the proposed rule, PVA submitted thirteen comments. You can view them here: <https://beta.regulations.gov/document/VA-2011-VHA-0012-0015>.

PVA's Government Relations staff will closely monitor VA's implementation of the caregiver expansion and will be ready to address any concerns should they arise.

Final Rule: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-07-31/pdf/2020-15931.pdf>



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SHOW & SHINE

Car Show

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Show begins at 10 AM with New Raffle Vehicle

Information: 3700 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305 Tel: 503.362.7998 • www.oregonpva.org



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George Weathers	9/2	Charles Montague	9/28
Charles Abernathy	9/2	John Siemssen	9/28
Steven Williams	9/2	Kristy McNulty	9/29
Gregory Pearce	9/3	Naomia Gardner	9/29
Michael Angerinos	9/3	Charles Demoss	10/4
Joseph Carter	9/4	Julie Pollard	10/4
Evan Burroughs	9/4	David Holt	10/5
Samuel Learn	9/5	Tom Weare	10/9
Darrel Von	9/5	Travis Nelson	10/9
William Smith	9/5	Michael Johnson	10/10
Donald Boss	9/6	Jeffery Fortner	10/10
Adam Wilson	9/7	Bradley Barton	10/11
James Bender	9/10	Albert Wagoner	10/15
Gary Cooper	9/11	Matthew Denny	10/18
Michelle Beech	9/11	Jerry Ryan	10/19
Colin Dye	9/13	Barbra Townsend	10/19
Grant Buehler	9/13	Gilbert Arendt	10/20
Brad Gardner	9/14	Shawn Kellar	10/20
William Kincaid	9/15	Albert Bocanegra	10/21
Rita Baugh	9/17	Linda Adams	10/24
Carlton Herron	9/18	Kathy Palominos	10/25
Cara Overstreet	9/20	Jerome Brewer	10/26
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Jennifer Binder	9/22	Stephanie Hartzell	10/28
Lisa Hurt	9/24	Wayne Howell	10/28
Kenneth Townsend	9/25	Larry VonSchell	10/29
Andrea Harris	9/25	Steven Murphy	10/29
Larry Rilling	9/26	John Jabson	10/30
Jeffry Watkins	9/26	Mike Rosenbalm	10/30

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Yard Love Story

Like so many great stories, Yard Love's beginning was unassuming and unexpected. Yard Love was

born at the collision of seasons when an entrepreneurial mother was seeking a new professional outlet and her daughter was having a birthday. On September 15, 2017, the first Yard Love greeting was staked in our founders front yard and the joy began to spread through the neighborhoods of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Soon, other women and men with an entrepreneurial spirit inquired about sharing the love in their own communities. Why not? In short time, eleven affiliates joined our team and more are joining by the day. Thanks to our dedicated team and loyal customers, the Yard Love family and brand will soon spread coast to coast.

Carrie Briley, Founder and CEO



Hi everyone! My name is Jeremy. I'm really excited to bring Yard Love to the Mid-Willamette Valley! My wife Rebecca and I moved to the area in 2014 and love it here. I look forward to helping you celebrate your next event.

Call today! Book now!

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Disabled Hunters' Rabbit Hunt



By Jerry C. Ray

In 1991, the members of Mary's Peak Hound Club (MPHC) with cooperation from the staff of the E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area organized and conducted the first "Disabled hunters' rabbit hunt."

What is unique about this venue for hunters in wheelchairs is this wildlife area, of 1683 acres is an old-world II retired military base. All the paved roads are still intact allowing wheelchair access to the whole area.

That first hunt had four disabled hunters supported by several MPHC houndsmen, a crew of guys barbecuing for the afternoon lunch, as well as a multitude of folks in attendance to help support the rabbit hunters. As a matter of fact, the first few years we had up to 125 people each year involved in helping our honored guests harvest rabbits.

Well, we quickly realized this was a problem. We were involved in shooting guns and while under control, there was a real element of danger. So, we had to restrict participant in the event to hunters, their personal assistants, houndsmen, and cooks.

Our event has been held the first Saturday of every February, including the coming 2021 season, for thirty years. Over the years we have had as many as 17 hunters and as few as 2. We have had a variety of Oregon weather, driving wind, pelting rain, snow, 17-degree temperature, and sometimes even sunshine.

On one occasion we had the threat of protesters who intended to disrupt and stop the hunt if possible. Word leaked out that protesters were going to be on the grounds that year.



In the past we have had sponsors such as Hanson Tire of Corvallis, Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Minter Saw Service, Oberto Jerky and other individuals provide hats, door prizes and food for the Saturday event.

Our club is planning to hold this event again this coming February, unless the Covid-19 issue gets in our way and prevents us from conducting the event. But, we welcome anyone with a disabled hunters license, who would like to be involved in a fun and wholesome activity in the great outdoors of Oregon.

Two TV stations were to report on the event and at least one newspaper reporter was there to report on the story. Knowing there could be trouble, we had State Police Game officers, undercover State Police officers, and Benton County Sheriff officers on site. Let me tell you, if you want to deter protesters and the media, just hold your event on a day when the temperature reaches a high of 17 with a brisk breeze. The chances of protesters and the media showing up are slim to none, as it was on that day. However, that day twelve hardy, hunting outdoorsmen in wheelchairs went afield to harvest the wily cottontail rabbit at E.E. Wilson.

An advertisement for the Paralyzed Veterans of America Vehicle Donation Program. The background is a blue sky with a white tow truck carrying a silver car. The text is white and red. The logo for Paralyzed Veterans of America is on the right. The website address is in a red box at the bottom left.

 Paralyzed Veterans of America | VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM

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September

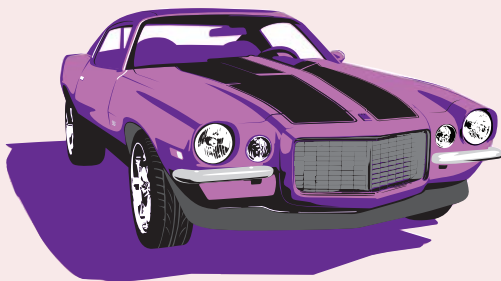
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Labor Day	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 Show & Shine Car Show
20	21	22	23 Deep Sea Fishing	24 BOD 10:00 a.m.	25	26
27	28	29	30			



Office Closed



Rec Fund Fiscal Year ENDS 9/30
Get your request in by Sept 30th



SHOW & SHINE
Car Show
SEPTEMBER 19TH



October

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Columbus Day	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 BOD 10:00 a.m.	30	31

 Office Closed

**Rec Fund Fiscal Year BEGINS
Oct 1st to Sept 30th**





Paralyzed Veterans
of America

WASHINGTON UPDATE

Recent news regarding legislation and regulatory actions affecting veterans and people with disabilities.

Written and produced by Paralyzed Veterans of America - Government Relations Department

July 31, 2020

Volume 26, Number 14

SPECIALLY ADAPTED HOUSING BILL MOVES TO PRESIDENT'S DESK

On July 23rd, the House unanimously approved H.R. 3504, the Ryan Kules and Paul Benne Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019. The bill is now with the President. We have every indication that he will sign the bill into law.

Beginning October 1st, this legislation increases the overall value of the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant to \$98,492 and provides qualifying veterans with twice as many opportunities to access their grant. As of October 1, 2030, eligible veterans who have exhausted their benefit will be able to apply for a supplemental grant if VA determines their residence still needs modifications.

Much to our consternation, the House had been holding the bill for nearly three months. But thanks to those who participated in our recent VoterVoice grassroots advocacy campaign on this bill, coupled with the efforts of PVA National, we were able to convince the House to act. Now, our focus will shift from advocacy to monitoring its implementation.

During our June 23rd webinar on VA's adaptive housing programs, Mr. Jason Latona, Chief, Specially Adapted Housing, let PVA members know that VA has been preparing for passage of this legislation and is ready to begin implementing the program once it is authorized. Incidentally, one of the most important components of the initial legislation would have prioritized SAH claims for veterans diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Due to PVA's advocacy, VA recognized the need for this change and adjusted its processes to accommodate these veterans as the

bill was working its way through the legislative process. Since VA had already acted on behalf of ALS veterans, that provision was not included in the final bill.

PVA TESTIFIES ON IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SOCIAL SECURITY AND ITS BENEFICIARIES

On July 17th, Deputy Executive Director Shaun Castle testified on behalf of PVA before the House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee concerning the effects of the coronavirus on Social Security disability (SSDI) beneficiaries and the Social Security system. Mr. Castle reflected on the experiences of several PVA members who have been struggling with the isolation brought on by the pandemic and worries over exposure of themselves and their caregivers to the virus. He also reported on problems faced by clients of PVA's vocational rehabilitation program in reaching Social Security Administration field offices which have gone almost completely online.

Mr. Castle reiterated PVA's strong support for the Social Security 2100 Act, H.R. 860, and its many benefit improvements and well-balanced measures to strengthen the Social Security system for the long term and applauded the efforts to provide temporary relief during the pandemic to Social Security beneficiaries through H.R. 6356, the Emergency Social Security Benefits Improvement Act. He also expressed PVA's continued support for additional steps to protect beneficiaries with disabilities through H.R. 4386, the Stop the Wait Act. That legislation would eliminate the five-month waiting period for SSDI as well as the 24-month waiting period for Medicare.

In addition, PVA offered its support for H.R. 7499, the Social Security COVID Correction and Equity Act which was introduced to address an unforeseen consequence of the economic downturn that could have dramatic and long-lasting adverse effects on millions of Social Security beneficiaries. Because Social Security benefits are based on a complex formula using average wages, the massive unemployment caused by the COVID-19 recession could cause a severe drop in benefits for those born in 1960. H.R. 7499 would prevent that from happening.

CELEBRATING ADA30

Numerous organizations marked the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act in the new virtual environment during the week leading up to the anniversary on July 26th and continuing through the summer. A sampling of some of those events includes:

- **NOD, Bush Foundation Highlight**

ADA History – The National Organization on Disability and the George and Barbara Bush Foundation sponsored The ADA at 30: Let the Shameful Wall of Exclusion Come Down, a virtual celebration moderated by PBS anchor Judy Woodruff. The program featured remarks by former Sen. Robert Dole (R-KS), former Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA), former Rep. Tony Coelho (D-CA), Chairman of the National Organization on Disability Tom Ridge, and former officials from the President George H.W. Bush administration on their roles in gaining passage of the law.

- **FEMA Celebrates ADA 30** – In observance of the 30th anniversary of the ADA, FEMA has published a blog entitled, “30 Ways FEMA Supports Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery for People with Disabilities.”

- **The ADA at 30: A Vision for a Future with Full Inclusion and Equity** –

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities sponsored a panel discussion of subject matter experts on key issues that remain of significant concern for the disability community 30 years after the ADA's passage. Offering their thoughts on what the future holds for ADA enforcement and implementation were Vanita Gupta, President and CEO, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; Germán Parodi, Co-Executive Director, Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies; Maria Town, CEO, American Association of People with Disabilities; and Monique Dixon, Deputy Director of Policy and Director of State Advocacy, NAACP Legal Defense Fund.

- **PVA Marks ADA30** –

PVA hosted a webinar on July 23rd on its role in the passage of the ADA with reflections by three PVA members about the impact of the law on their lives. The webinar and other ADA 30 related materials can be found on PVA's dedicated web page.

- **ADA 30 Lead On: A Celebration of Disability Arts, Culture, Education and Pride**

- chronicles the disability rights movement and five titles of the Americans with Disabilities Act as told through comedy, dance, and art.

NEWS ITEMS OF NOTE

- **House Passes VA Funding Bill**

On July 24th, the House passed, 224-189, a funding bill that provides \$104.8 billion for VA, with \$12.5 billion in emergency funding to help with rising health care costs for



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**
Oregon Chapter

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America

Please consider adding OPVA to your will or trust

veterans. This appropriation provides a 13 percent increase over FY 2020. It also includes a one-year extension of VA's authority to provide advanced reproductive technologies like IVF, a top priority for PVA. VA's bill is linked to the military construction funding bill, which includes politically-charged provisions related to wall funding along the border with Mexico and renaming of military bases. It is likely that VA will start FY2021 under a continuing resolution as the House and Senate finalize their differences. A fact sheet is available [here](#).

- **Senate Veterans' Committee Hosts VSO Roundtable**

PVA recently participated in a closed Senate Roundtable hosted by U.S. Senator Jerry Moran, chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, to address veteran equality and ways VA can better serve minorities. Senators, VSOs, and individual veterans came together to discuss multiple topics including barriers to care, unique issues for specific populations of veterans, and needed improvements.

- **House Veterans' Committee Hearing on Sexual Harassment at VA**

On July 22nd, the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations and the Women Veterans Task Force met in an open session to conduct an oversight hearing entitled, "Safety for All: Ending Sexual Harassment in the Department of Veterans Affairs." VA representatives at the hearing included Ms. Pamela Powers, Acting Deputy Secretary; Mr. Dan Sitterly, Assistant Secretary, Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security, and Preparedness; Dr. Patricia Hayes, Chief Consultant, Women's Health Services, Office of Patient Care Services, Veterans Health Administration; and Ms. Lelia Jackson, Senior Strategist for the Office of the Chief of Staff, Veterans Health Administration.

The hearing covered topics including the safety of VA employees following a GAO report that one in four women working at VA reported sexual harassment. Other topics included harassment of patients at VA and lack of clear reporting channels, procedures when a report occurs, and follow-up. PVA submitted a statement for the record which, among other things, highlighted the need to protect veterans who are vulnerable to physical harm. The hearing can be viewed [here](#).

- **PVA Submits a Statement for House Veterans' Committee Legislative Hearing**

On July 23rd, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee met to review more than a dozen bills focusing on burial benefits, life insurance programs, and reinstatement of the 48-hour review for claims processing. VA representatives at the hearing included Dr. Maria Llorente, Assistant Deputy Undersecretary for Health for Patient Care Services, Veterans Health Administration (VHA); Dr. Amanda Johnson, Director of Reproductive Health, VHA; Mr. Yuri Walker, RN, JD, MPH, Director of Risk Management Program at Office of Integrity, VHA; Ms. Beth Murphy, Executive Director of Compensation Service, Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA); Ms. Charmain Bogue, Executive Director of Education Service, VBA; and Mr. Glenn Powers, Deputy Under Secretary for Field Programs and Cemetery Operations, National Cemetery Administration. The hearing can be viewed [here](#).

- **House Appropriations Bill Funds DOL VETS Programs**

The House Appropriations Committee issued its report in mid-July for funding of the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education. Included in the massive funding bill was \$312 million for fiscal year 2021 for the Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service,

of which \$29.3 million is directed to the Transition Assistance Program, \$57.5 million to the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, and continuation of funding for the Disabled Veterans Program that was created in the 2020 appropriation.

- **Census Reminder**

The U.S. Census Bureau is sending reminder postcards to an estimated 34.3 million households. This will be the final mailing before census takers begin visiting nonresponding households across the nation in mid-August. Responding now minimizes the need for census takers to visit homes to collect responses in person.

- **Effort to Expand VA's list of Medical Conditions Associated with Agent Orange Advances**

The Senate approved language in its version of the FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that would expand VA's list of medical conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange to include bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and parkinsonism. PVA endorsed the effort which was led by Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member Jon Tester (D-MT). Unfortunately, the House did not include similar language in its version of the bill; so, this will be one of many differences that must be negotiated in a joint House-Senate conference this fall.

- **Hearing on Getting Veterans To Work After COVID-19**

On July 21st, the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a virtual oversight hearing entitled, "Getting Veterans to Work After COVID-19." PVA submitted a statement for the record. According to PVA, employment rates for veterans with significant disabilities, including many PVA members, have consistently lagged behind those of their counterparts without disabilities. According to Department of Labor statistics, veterans with service-connected disabilities are less likely to participate in the labor force than veterans without disabilities.

WEBINAR

- Want to learn more about what the ADA has to say about face covering requirements? The ADA Centers held a webinar on July 28 entitled, "Face Coverings and the ADA-Application under Title III."



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Paralyzed Veterans of America
Oregon Chapter



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Membership Application

An individual is eligible for membership by meeting the following criteria: (1) is a citizen of the United States; (2) was regularly enlisted, inducted or commissioned for active duty service in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard of the United States, or our allies as evidenced by other-than-dishonorable character of service documented by a verifiable DD-214 or DD-215 (entry-level separation not acceptable); (3A) was separated from the service in the Armed Forces under conditions other than dishonorable; or (3B) is on active duty or must continue to serve after the cessation of hostilities; and (4) has suffered a spinal cord injury or disease (such as MS, ALS), whether or not service connected in origin. Membership is free. **Complete and return application to the chapter of choice or by mail/email to:** Paralyzed Veterans of America Membership Department, 801 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006; (E) members@pva.org. Providing the requested information is entirely voluntary but required for membership with Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Chapter Name: Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America, 3700 Silverton Rd NE, Salem, OR 97305

First Name: _____ **Middle Initial:** _____ **Last Name:** _____

Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____ **Social Security Number:** _____ Male Female

Race/Ethnicity:

- Asian/Pacific Islander African American/Descent Hispanic/Latino
- Native American/Alaskan Native Caucasian

Address: _____ **City:** _____

State: _____ **Zip:** _____ **Email:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

VETERAN STATUS INFORMATION

Please submit the following with application:

- DD214 showing character of discharge.
- Medical evidence of spinal cord injury or involvement (medical records or physician’s statement).

Proof of active duty status must be verified prior to membership approval.

Have you been discharged under conditions that are less than honorable? Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

Are you a United States citizen? Yes No

Do you have a spinal cord injury or disease? Yes No If disease, specify: _____

Is your spinal cord injury or spinal cord disease service connected? Yes No

If Paralyzed Veterans of America is your accredited representative, do you permit PVA Service Officers to provide information to PVA National Membership Department relative to your membership eligibility? Yes No

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, that I have read and meet the qualifications and I understand that my membership could be denied or revoked if any information provided is inaccurate.

Applicant Signature: _____ **Date:** ____/____/____

Witness Signature: _____ **Date:** ____/____/____



Membership Application

Physician's Statement Form

_____ is a veteran who has a spinal cord injury or disease.

His/her diagnosis is:

- Paraplegia
- Quadriplegia
- Brown Sequard Syndrome
- Cauda Equina Syndrome
- ALS
- Multiple Sclerosis (involving the spinal cord)
- Transverse Myelitis
- Other (please specify) _____

Physician's Signature

Physician's Name

Physician's Title

Physician's Phone/Email

Date Signed



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