

PARALOG

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America



JULY 17, 2021

Page 11



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Keizer, OR 97303

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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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Cover photo: McNary Golf Club

Thank you to all our Sponsors!

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Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America

3700 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305

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This Summer We Have Lots More Events Happening



Larry Gardner – President

Summer has finally arrived and the weather forecast announced that July and August will be the hottest two months of the year. This also will be the busiest two months for the OPVA Chapter with lots of events opening up this summer.

July 9th thru July 11th is the Marion County Fair at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem. July 10th we will draw the raffle winner for the \$500 Outdoor Adventure Gift Card. It is good for anything at any Sportsman's Warehouse store in Oregon. On July 11th we draw the winning ticket for the Can-AM Outlander 650 ATV. If you haven't purchased your ticket yet you still have time. Tickets are \$5.00 each for either of these raffles so hurry if interested.



July 17th one of our biggest events is the OPVA GOLD CUP GOLF TOURNAMENT held at the McNary Golf Club in Keizer.

July 27th we will set up at the annual DuneFest in Winchester Bay, on the coast, this event runs thru August 1st. One of our Deep Sea Fishing Trips is completed with two remaining July 16th and September 23rd, if interested call the office to get signed up while there is room available on the boat.



With everything that is opening up this summer we have lots more events happening and we are always needing volunteers. If you don't have and would like a list of our scheduled events please call the office and ask for Tom or Larry we would be more than happy to answer any questions you have and provide you with the list of the events.



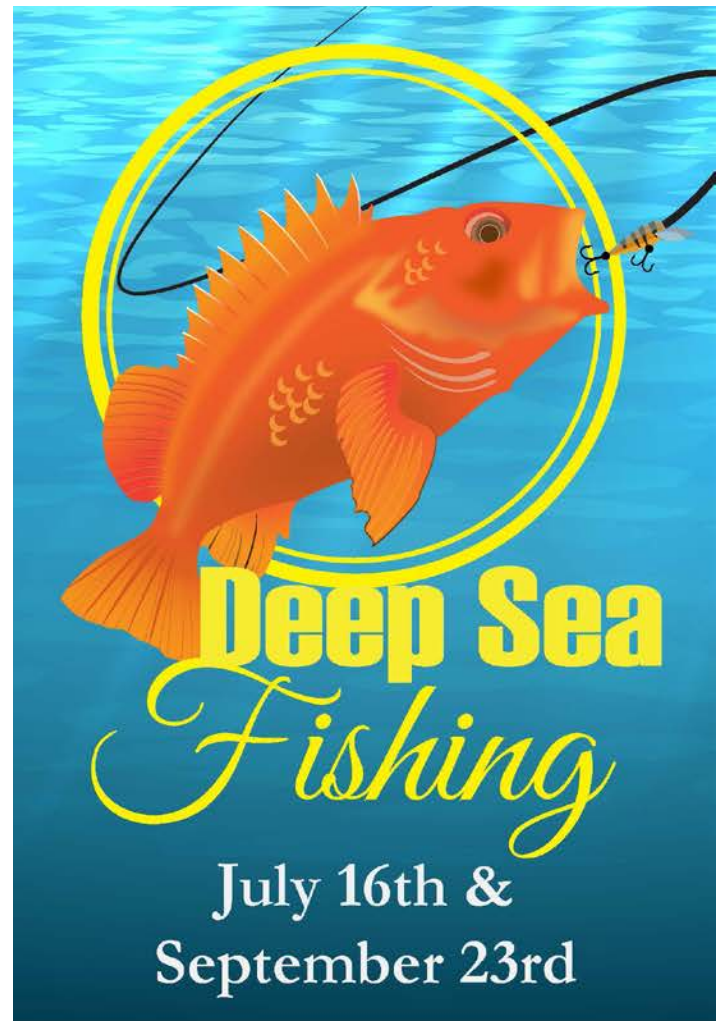
I would like to remind all members that September is the last month to use your Recreation Fund, If you haven't already, please do so because this is for you as members to get out and enjoy yourself. Remember to keep your receipts and send them in with a paragraph or two how your Rec Fund enhanced your life. Receipts and your paragraph must be sent AFTER your event, and must be received prior to September 30th in the office.



The Oregon Chapter is looking for a Central Oregon Ambassador to help the chapter in that area with events and business as needed. If you think you might be interested and have questions please call Tom or Larry at the office.

We are also in need of a Membership Director, you don't have to be a member to fill either of these positions, again please call the office if interested we would love to hear from you.

Also a reminder if you haven't returned the survey sent out to you please do, if you have misplaced it let us know so we can send out a new copy. The surveys help us keep our records up to date and makes it easier to work together with our members, thank you. I want to wish everyone a wonderful summer and hope to see many of you at our events, take care and be safe.



Voting Members FREE! All others \$65
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Join Us at Fairs and Festivals



July 9th - 11th



Tom Hurt – Executive Director

Greeting from your chapter office, hope everyone is doing well and staying as active as you can.

The chapter just held their first members meeting this year. If you didn't make this one you really need to try and make it to our future events. Everyone had a great time with the fishing derby and that was followed up with a BBQ and an actual meeting.



On June 26th we had our annual Trap Shoot Fundraiser out at the Albany Trap Club. My hat goes off to Larry Gardner your Chapter President and Trap Team Coordinator. He always does a great job at putting on a fun event.

Larry and Tom Boyd (Albany Trap Club Manager) Work really hard at making this event memorable.



As we enter the month of July, activities are unleashing, there should be something for everyone to do if you are so inclined. Starting off with the 4th of July Parade in Independence Oregon, your chapter is Sponsoring the parade this year and will also have a float in the parade. If you are not signed up to be on the float you should come out and enjoy the Patriotic Parade, I would like to personally Thank one of your fellow members Dawn Roden.

Dawn is on the City Council for the City of Independence, she was instrumental in making sure that the parade was going to happen this year, she reached out to the chapter office to see if we



Your Board of Directors have been very diligent at working and planning events for the membership to be able to participate in. Some of the new sports programs are moving forward under the leadership of your Sports Director Bob Mahler. Bob has done a great job at locating coordinators for some of the new sports programs and working with the coordinators of existing programs.

would be willing to be the sponsor of this years Parade, your leadership agreed whole heartedly to sponsor and have a float this year.

We do have a number of Fairs and Festivals that we plan to attend these summer months, starting with the Marion county Fair. July 9th thru 11th. We will be in the Real Heroes section again this year with a few added twists.

We will end our summer activities with your annual members banquet in September. Believe me there are a bunch of things happening through out the summer, from Idaho down to southern Oregon over to Redmond and all around the Willamette Valley.



Dustin Simmons is your Air Gun Coordinator and has done a bang-up job getting this off the ground. Keep an eye out for our first open house air gun shoot.



iPad to Get Connected



- Stay up to date, get connected with virtual activities/events
- You must have Wi-Fi available
- Fill out *questionnaire on back* and return to Chapter office
- **Only a few left**

Donated by Oregon Spinal Cord Injury Connection (OSCIC) and Oregon Health Authority (OHA)
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That team (your Board of Directors) needs your help. If you would like to join this team of Patriotic, Dedicated, Individuals, don't wait !!!! You will receive a nomination ballot for the upcoming board election.

Vote

Table Tennis is another one of the new programs that the chapter is adding to the sports activities, Bob has taken that one on himself with over 25 years' experience in putting on tournaments and Table Tennis team activities. Look for the Save the Date flyer on page 20 in this Paralog for details on the Table Tennis open house.

Write your name in and get involved help Make a Difference in not just the Local Chapter but the lives of your Fellow Veterans.

I would like to leave you with this as I close. No one person makes your chapter run, it takes a team of your fellow members working together to keep this machine known as Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America moving in the right direction.



Limited Quantities - Complete the form below and return it to the Chapter to be eligible for consideration of one of the iPads.
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GOLF TOURNAMENT



Oregon Chapter

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Shotgun 1 pm

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- Longest Drive
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Social distancing will be observed

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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS NEWS



Larry J Ricklefs – Government Relations

For many Americans Memorial Day is a day off from work, family picnics, observing the pleasantries and greatness of our country in the spirit of freedom. For many other Americans it is a somber moment of reflection bringing to the forefront the full measure of sacrifices made by men and women in uniform at any given time, any given place whose shed blood will not be in vain, never forgotten yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

compensation, increase compensation to 55% of 100% veteran rated disability, reduce remarriage eligibility from age 57 to age 55, and a host of other benefit enhancements for survivors.

Vehicle allowances for SC and NonSC veterans to better meet the needs for competitive mobility in our highly mobile society is in the pipeline. PVA is closely following this priority legislation.

To these unselfish defenders of freedom America salutes you.

At the federal level both the House and Senate are crafting legislation overhauling VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) increasing all categories of

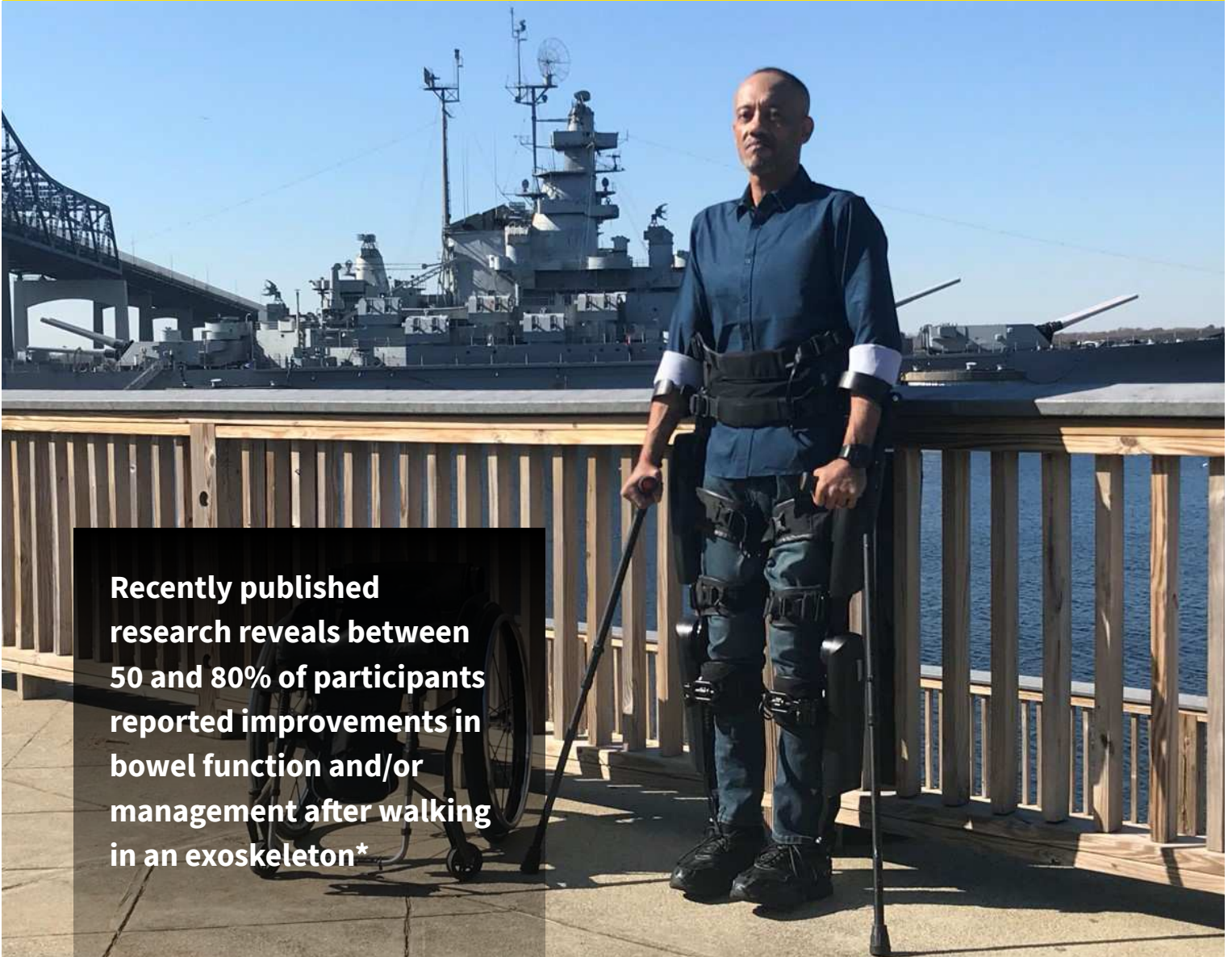


Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America

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RECREATION FUND SCOPE



Desert Center, California is a little oasis about an hour drive east of Palm Springs/Indio. It has about 100 residents, beautiful Lake Tamarisk, a golf course, swimming pool, palm trees and a community center.

Most of the residents only live there in the winter because the temperature is about 70 to 80 most of the time, but it is too hot for retired people in the summer. My wife (Jan)

and I were able to rent a nice double wide for the first three months of 2021, and it was totally furnished including a golf cart, bicycles, and Wi-Fi TV.

Thank you OPVA for helping us spend three months in the sun relaxing, swimming, meeting new friend, making memories and painting pictures. It was a wonderful experience. With love: Joe Heidrick

Dear OPVA,
Thank you so much for this fund. I was able to meet up with my daughter in Vegas and enjoy some meals together. It was especially important to us because we had not seen each other for 7 months! We stayed at the Venetian and their indoor Italy was AMAZING.

Again, very grateful! Thank You,

Julie Pollard



Dear OPVA

Last year we didn't use the Recreation Fund due the COVID. But this year we were back to ECOLA INN, Cannon Beach and the coast area there.

It was nice to be out again. Thank you for the fund.

John D. Phillips



I participated in the May 20th fishing trip out of Depoe Bay. The weather was questionable but turned out to be very nice. The ocean had large swells but otherwise fairly calm. The fish were not home or just didn't want to cooperate as very few were caught. But any day fishing is better than a day at work or home.

My caregiver enjoyed sightseeing and walking on the beach at the Oregon coast. We spent several hours walking along the boat marinas examining the various boats and dreaming about owning one (pipe dreaming).

Thank You,
J. Jabson

On April 2nd and 3rd , we were able to hold our first Department of Washington (State level) Marine Corps League Staff meeting since October 2019. Marines from across the state arrived in Yakima Washington to conduct business and enjoy being together.

Bill Hauser

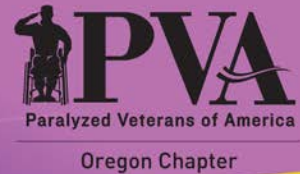


This year I decided to purchase a kayak. I felt it was time to stop blaming COVID-19 for not being more active. One cannot get infected by COVID-19 out on the water. I used my recreation fund provided by OPVA to help get this nifty kayak. I figure, why wait for the fish to come to you, when you can go to where the fish are!

Now that the weather is cooperating, I can't wait to go exploring. Thanks, OPVA for providing this valuable resource to me.

Dennis Hooper

SHOW & SHINE
Car Show
SEP 11 2021



Location: Home Depot 3795 Hagers Grove Rd. SE Salem, OR 97317
Show begins at 10 AM with New Raffle Vehicle

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

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

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It's happening...Things are starting to open up. What I've heard from my bowling friends from around the country is that the AWBA (American Wheelchair Bowling Association), a bowling organization that I am also associated with had their first tournament in about a year. I heard it was a great time. Since that has taken place, I am SO looking forward to seeing all who are interested in bowling in our OPVA Bowling League.



As you may or may not have known, I launched our bowling league over a year ago. I've had my struggles starting and then re-starting our program due to the COVID pandemic. I've had to suspend the league due to the many closures. Believe me, it wasn't something I wanted to do, but forced to for our members' health and safety concerns. I've been asked how is the bowling program going.

My answer was always the same "still suspended because the alleys are still closed because Coronavirus, which was, and still is, killing people". I didn't (and still don't) want to see any of our members fall into that category. I would love to see you all out there bowling at an alley of your choice. I believe that "we" can re-start our programs together.

The bowling alleys (or in my terms that I am used to, "houses") in Oregon are starting to open up to the idea of optional mask wearing. Personally, I'll do whatever it takes, to do what I want to do. I need to start exercising more. I used to have strong shoulders to roll a 12-pound bowling ball down the lane. But, now I just have a Big Belly from COVID (that's my story and sticking to it).



Anyway, I am very glad to see a light at the end of the tunnel. We are all healthy and alive, now let's get back to bowling.

I loved it when I came into the office this morning, I had 2 bowling registration forms sitting on my desk that were filled out for the next bowling season. To me it means that there is interest out there from our members. Our next season will be our summer season, that will be starting July 1st, 2021 and go through September 30, 2021. I look forward to receiving your bowling scores.

I love it when we all can get along and support each other in the different programs that the OPVA has to offer. As always, I'm just a call away for any

thoughts, questions and suggestions. Don't hesitate to shoot me an email at oregonpva@oregonpva.org or call the office at 503-362-7998.



I miss you all and so look forward to the Member Banquet in September 2021. This is a new beginning and it will be stronger than ever.



AIR RIFLE/AIR PISTOL

DUSTIN SIMMONS

Hello again shooters,
In this update I am happy to announce we are making major progress with getting this program finally up and running. I went with our President Larry Gardner and Executive Director Tom Hurt to the Albany Rifle & Pistol Club. This club is located at 29999 Saddle Butte Rd. Shedd, Oregon. While there we were able to speak with the Executive Director of the club Brian Boesch.

They have an indoor range for 22 and .177 caliber air rifles. This building is heated for winter months and while we're getting this program off the ground, it will be free for our practices.



That club has been doing extensive work making it wheelchair accessible.

They are willing to let us use the clubhouse attached to that indoor shooting range as a place we can eat lunch, relax, and chat. They are excited to work with us veterans and are willing to step in and help us wherever we may need the assistance.

By the time you are reading this article we will have received our spring stand tripods. Next, we will be developing the platforms needed to work in conjunction with the shooting lanes with inside the range.



I really hope this location will be suitable for all or most of our shooters. We were trying to find something centralized, an indoor range, accessible, and with it being free for our initial uses, you really can't get much better than that.

We are going to be working on getting a few of our members to be qualified in giving proper instruction in order to help

teach anybody interested the technicalities involved with air rifle shooting.

If possible, with the people interested we could even get a team together and developed. Then if our members/ team is interested, we could go into competition against other teams and possibly even other chapters.

For some this sport is a great way to continue their shooting without having to destroy their shoulders from the recoil of other rifles or shotguns. As mentioned in prior articles we are setting this up to conform with National Veterans Wheelchair Games standards so that it is an easy crossover. I believe that by doing this, those who are interested in excelling can also qualify for the Paralympic venue. I'm looking forward to seeing our first open house in the mid to late summer. Until then, stay safe.



**Salem Table Tennis Club invites
all OPVA members.
Family members, and children
are welcome!**

**Saturday, July 24, 2021
11:30 am - 3:30 pm**

1865 Bill Frey Dr. NE, Salem, OR 97301
(at the basketball gym)



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Golf Tournament
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12th Annual

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Members Meeting at Storey Park in Meridian, ID



By Donald Wyatt – Idaho Ambassador

I'm writing this during Memorial weekend and I find myself thinking of my older brother buried in the Houston, TX, National cemetery (USAF). I am also thinking of several uncles, nephews and cousins who served.

I am also thinking of family members, son Daniel, now retired (Army and Marines), daughter, Denelle, now retired (Army and USAF) and a granddaughter now serving. Thank you for serving.

This Sunday morning, I watched No Time For Sergeants. It reminded me of my own induction into the USAF in January of 1965. I will leave it at that.



If anyone knows of someone in need of a ramp I have a 20-25 foot aluminum EZ Access ramp to donate. The person in need does not have to be a veteran. The ramp was given to me so I am passing it on.

The membership meeting for Idaho is set for July 24th at Storey Park in Meridian. The shelter that is reserved is between the ball diamonds. I hope everyone will make an effort to attend.

**USE YOUR
REC FUND**

The Rec Fund can be used for expenses for this get together. If you can make it please RSVP so we know how much food to buy. Oh, did I forget to mention that it is a hamburger and hot dogs picnic in the park. Should be fun.

I hope all is well.



Member Meetings

Picnic in the Parks



FOOD • FUN • INFORMATION

Dates & Locations

- July 24th @ 11:15 AM - 4:30 PM Storey Park, Meridian, ID
- August 7th @ 11:15 AM - 4:30 PM Baker Park, Redmond, OR

RSVP Members and Family

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America 503.362.7998 • oregonpva@oregonpva.org



In Flanders Fields
In Flanders Fields, the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

Memorial Day Tribute



Bill Gray—National Director

"In Flanders Fields" is a war poem in the form of a rondeau, written during the First World War by Canadian physician Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae. He was inspired to write it on May 3, 1915, after presiding over the funeral of friend and fellow soldier Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, who died in the Second Battle of Ypres. According to legend, fellow soldiers retrieved the poem after McCrae, initially dissatisfied with his work, discarded it. "In Flanders Fields" was first published on December 8 of that year in the London magazine Punch. Flanders Fields is a common English name of the World War I battlefields in Belgium and France. It is one of the most quoted poems from the war.

As a result of its immediate popularity, parts of the poem were used in efforts and appeals to recruit soldiers and raise money selling war bonds.

I attended the Memorial Day Tribute at the Roseburg National Cemetery on Memorial Day, there was a great turn out of many individual and family members as they came to pay their respect to the many fallen heroes that have paid the ultimate price keeping this country free. We posted colors and had a flag line and a three round rifle salute. I just want us all to remember how special it is to live in this great country and the price that's been paid.



Curtis Ketchum	7/2	Stephen Bergseng	8/3
Olivia Helms	7/2	Gregory Schouweiler	8/5
Roger Watson	7/3	Richard Staley	8/6
Michael Gardner	7/3	David Vincent	8/4
Kirk Parkhurst	7/4	Marc Stump	8/11
Kenneth Woodward	7/4	Lisa Travis	8/11
Daniel Gifford	7/5	Dinah Wells	8/13
Jeremy Turner	7/5	Lawrence Rathbun	8/14
Charles Younglove	7/6	John Brasch	8/15
Douglas Powell	7/6	Bob Mahler	8/16
Craig Colerick	7/12	Richard Rayas	8/16
Dale Neely	7/14	Gerald Caldwell	8/17
Matthew Lexow	7/17	Katheren Picaso	8/17
Daniel Umbriaco	7/17	Elmer Childress	8/18
Randall Neil	7/17	Renee Langston	8/18
Kay Workman	7/18	Leo Espinoza	8/19
Thomas Morgan	7/19	Gloria Johnson	8/20
Vern Spaur	7/20	Richard Weaver	8/21
Donald Darland	7/21	Keith Miller	8/21
Charles Wheeler	7/23	Michael Hebert	8/22
William R.C. Hobbs	7/24	Daniel Fairchild	8/23
Samuel Hennon	7/26	Diane Grady	8/25
Randle Reddett	7/27	Craig Ackerson	8/27
Scott Catlin	7/28	Casey Jones	8/28
Neal Tooze	7/29	Joseph Heidrick	8/29
Robert La Favor	7/29	Hosie Stadamire	8/30
Gary O'Donnell	7/29	Timothy Vixay	8/30
William Shields	8/1	Timothy Walusiak	8/31
Bruce Dunbar	8/1	Addam Green	8/31
Douglas Carr	8/2		

National Director 75th Annual Convention



Photo courtesy OPV



Bill Gray—National Director

For 75 years, Paralyzed Veterans of America has been the only Veterans service organization dedicated solely to helping Veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D), and diseases like MS and ALS. Our team of legislative advocates, architects, medical professionals, lawyers, and other highly trained professionals strive to ensure that every Veteran regains the freedom, independence, and quality of life they fought for.

PVA is a major support system for our nation's paralyzed heroes, their families, and caregivers, through ensuring quality health care; securing earned benefits; fighting for disability civil rights; making America more accessible; helping Veterans find meaningful careers; empowering them through sports,

recreation, and wellness programs; and funding both research and education in search for a cure and improved care and autonomy for individuals with paralysis. Operating more than 70 offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, PVA helps paralyzed Veterans and all people with disabilities live fuller, more productive lives.

Day One

The agenda was approved and we commenced the meeting on Monday May 18th. President Dave Zurfluh opened with a welcome to the 75th annual BOD conference. The Board was certified and agenda was adopted. Next the Executive committee did their report and there was nothing earth shaking or out of

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America *Serving those who Served!*

sorts mentioned. Next the Awards Presentation the various awards were done. Sorry we didn't win any, but I think we should put in for the Bob Webb Excellence in Newsletter award next year as ours looks great compared to a lot of others published.

We then watched a 75th Anniversary Video and kicked off its yearlong 75th anniversary celebration with the launch of its Honor the Spot campaign. Inspired by its founders, the initiative encourages all Americans to do their part to keep handicapped parking spaces open for people who need them.



We stayed at the Golden Nugget Hotel, one of the older established businesses in Las Vegas. I did not like PVA's choice as it was very challenging to get around, and the noise at night because of the Fremont Street market was terrible.

Day Two

We went through the committee reports in the morning and then the proposed new resolutions. In the afternoon we made our Research & Education Foundation awards. After which we recessed for the day.

Day Three

We listened to a Strategic Planning presentation by Mary Wissemann, it seemed a little undefined as to how their program will work to help define the direction of the PVA for the coming decade. Lots of questions were asked and many did not have a concrete answer. Next, we had a report done by our Sports Director Fabio Villarroel.

We went over his plan to move the Sports program to a little different direction. Eventually it will incorporate a regional direction but that will take a while before we are there. Stay tuned for more. Next, we had a AED/Program Directors reports and question's time.

Day Four

We went over the 2022 budget process. Seemed the BOD felt that the budget was in order and after some discussion the budget was approved by acclamation. We then went over new proposed Resolutions. They failed as it was ruled out of order. We then touched on chapter issues and seems that the chapter that had issues are working in a positive direction. No other problems at the chapter level we address. We then moved into the election of officers. It went pretty fast. Charles Brown was elected President, Robert Thomas Senior Vice, Tom Wheaton Treasurer, Marcus Murray Secretary, Hack Albertson Tammy Jones, Josie Cordova, Michael Negrete as Vice Presidents on our EC Board.



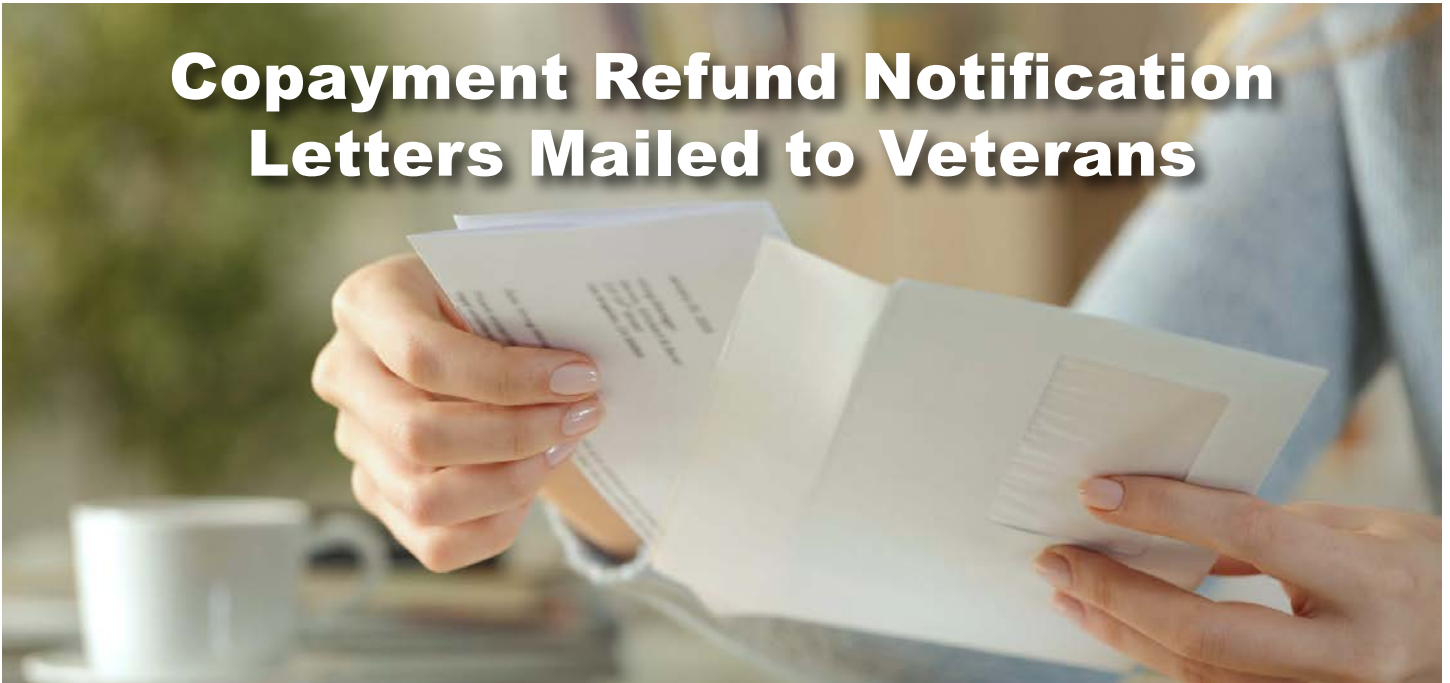
Day Five

PVA Closing Awards Brunch

Day 6

Headed back home, we made our first flight fine but it ran late and we missed our second connecting flight and were delayed about 3 hours, which gave us time to get something to eat.

Copayment Refund Notification Letters Mailed to Veterans



More than 1.28 million Veterans will receive notification of refunds in the coming days



Mike Rosenbalm – Hospital Liaison Director
Source VA.gov

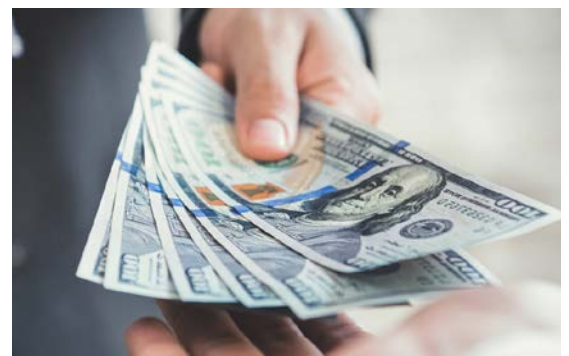
Are you a Veteran wondering if you will receive a refund for copayments made for medical care and pharmacy services you've paid since April 6, 2020?

The American Rescue Plan (ARP), passed in March 2021, included a provision that canceled VA copayments for medical care and pharmacy services received between April 6, 2020, and Sept. 30, 2021. Refunds will be sent to Veterans who paid copayments for health care and pharmacy services received during this period.

On May 12th, VA began mailing letters to each Veteran with information on refunds, timing of when informational patient statements will resume, and when VA will begin normal collection of copayments.

“We want to make sure Veterans who made payments on their account are aware their refund is on its way,” said Susan Reed, executive director of Revenue Operations, VHA’s Office of Community Care.

“This will provide clarity on what you can expect, and a few other reminders in terms of when you will begin to see monthly statements.”



Veterans will not be charged copayments for medical care and pharmacy services received between April 6, 2020, and Sept. 30, 2021.

Monthly statements will resume in July 2021, but the July, August and September statements will be informational only. They will include an insert reminding you that if you have a balance for services received prior to April 6, 2020, you can voluntarily make payments now.

VA will resume normal billing and collections Oct. 1, 2021.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Why is my copayment balance being canceled?** With the passage of the ARP in March 2021, all Veteran copayments for medical care and pharmacy services provided April 6, 2020, through Sept. 30, 2021, are canceled.
- **I've been paying on my balance over the last few months. Will I get a refund?** When will I receive that refund? Due to the passage of the ARP, Veterans who paid copayments for medical care and pharmacy services provided April 6, 2020, to the present will receive a refund from VA. Payments received after April 30, 2021, will be refunded on a case-by-case basis. Initial refunds will be paid by July 2021. In May, Veterans who are due a refund will receive a letter from VA with the amount of their initial refund. Refunds will be paid in electronic funds transfer or by check, depending on information in the Veteran's profile.
- **When will I begin to receive statements again?** We will resume mailing patient statements in July 2021. These statements are for information only and Veterans are not required to make payments when they receive these statements. Normal billing will remain suspended until Oct. 1, 2021.
- **I think I'm due a refund. Should I call VA to confirm?** We kindly ask that you not call to inquire about the quantity or timing of

your refund at this time. VA staff are working hard to mail notification letters and to ensure refunds are paid. Initial refunds are expected to be paid by July 2021.

- **Can I view an old patient statement online?** Visit AccessVA at <https://eauth.va.gov/accessva/> to view patient statements online.
- **I had collection actions taken prior to when statements stopped in April 2020. Will those go away?** All collection actions have been suspended since April 6, 2020, and will resume Oct. 1, 2021. You will be notified before collection actions resume.



- **Can I make payments to the balance I incurred prior to April 6, 2020?** Please wait until July 2021 to make payments on balances, so we can ensure copayment cancellations and refunds have been accurately processed. At that time, if you have a copayment balance for care received prior to April 6, 2020, you can voluntarily make payments.
- **How do I voluntarily submit payment?** Submit your payment by mail. Please include the payment coupon from your patient statement.
 - ◇ Department of Veterans Affairs
P.O. Box 3978
Portland OR 97208-3978
 - ◇ Visit pay.gov. You will need your patient account number.
 - ◇ Call 888-827-4817. You will need your patient account number.

◇ To locate your account number, check your patient statement, call 866-400-1238, or visit <https://eauth.va.gov/accessva/?cspSelectFor=vbs>.

- **I had a balance on my account prior to April 6, 2020. What if I can't pay that balance due to financial matters?** VA has expansive debt relief options available:

- ◇ Suspension of debt: You are not required to pay on your debt until October 2021.
- ◇ Monthly repayment plan: You can request an agreement to make smaller payments each month to pay your debt over time.
- ◇ Waiver, write-off, or compromise: If you cannot make monthly payments, you can request a waiver, write-off, or compromise.
- ◇ Financial hardship determination: If you are struggling because of life circumstances, you can request financial hardship assistance to manage VA debt or an exemption from future copayments.



Contact the VA Health Resource Center to discuss your options for medical copayment debt. Call 866-400-1238, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET., Monday through Friday, or visit https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/revenue_ops/Financial_Hardship.asp.

Source: (<https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/89277/copayment-refund-notification-letters-mailed-veterans>)

PVA
Paralyzed Veterans of America

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we need your support.**

Donate a car, truck or other vehicle.
The process is easy, the pick-up is free,
and your gift is tax-deductible.

www.pva.careasy.org

We proudly support Oregon 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 vehicle is more than two years old, you may even qualify for a brand new conversion. If you are a non-service connected Veteran, you also may be eligible for benefits towards mobility solutions.

Portland East

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Local: 503-564-7155

Portland West

4347 NW Yeon Ave
Local: 503-243-2940



We're here to help!
Call today to schedule a test drive, either at your home or at our facility...we can come to you!



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Paralyzed Veterans of America

Oregon Chapter



One of the many perks of being a member of OPVA is access to our Chapter's track wheelchair!



By Dennis Hooper – Southern Oregon Ambassador

I always look forward to the Memorial Day Weekend. There are so many activities to do and events to visit, one can get overwhelmed deciding where to go. I thought I might have to take a break this year due to my very recent double wrist surgery to relieve some Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. Then, I remembered that one of the many perks of being a member of the Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America is access to our chapter's track wheelchair, known as the (ActionTrackChair). Our members are allowed to borrow this chair for up to 30 days at a time. I made the call and picked up the chair at our office in Salem.

I was not disappointed! The trailer is easy to maneuver and the gate makes it convenient to load and unload the chair. Now that I have it in my garage, where to go with it?

We decided to check out the Azalea Festival in Brookings, Oregon. This was our first time at this event and we were not sure how the crowds would be after a year plus of crowd avoidance. We were not disappointed. The parade was fantastic. The music was delightful at Azalea Park as was the food. The weather Saturday was a true blessing!



On a whim, we thought about camping at nearby Harris Beach State Park. Obviously, the park states that they are completely full, but maybe there was a no-show.



Sunday found us back at the Azalea Festival to explore the numerous crafts and vendors. The track chair received much attention. It garnered a lot of interest from folks. We then stopped for a nice meal and headed back inland. We decided to do some fishing at Illinois Forks State Park. It was on our way and right on Hwy.199.

We explored a couple trails throughout the park, then found our way to the East Fork of the Illinois River. There were no fish to be found, but still had a great time using the track chair. My wrists are thanking me daily!

So with a leap of faith, we drive to the park entrance. Lo and behold, the ranger says they have one spot left! With our state park pass in hand, we land a camping spot with no fees! We find our spot so we dismount the track chair from the trailer and head to the beach! I was excited to put the chair through it's paces.

I will bring the track chair to the member's picnic we have at St Louis Ponds on June 5. I hope all our members will check it out and consider using it themselves in the future.

I haven't been to the beach in a couple years and the track chair did not disappointed. It had no problem going down the South Beach Trail. It was great way to finish the day frolicking in the sand.

It is **one** of many **benefits** our chapter provides to our members. One can use your recreation fund to travel with the chair to off road destinations. Do not let mobility issues determine your fun level. We have the toys to make the noise!



**Quest & Discovery
Network
at Marion Co Fair**



Go On a Quest



Oregon Chapter

**Start at Oregon Paralyzed
Veterans of America
(OPVA) booth**



Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

					1	2	3
 4 Independence Day Parade	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	ZOOM BOD 10:00 a.m.	30	31

 **Office Closed**

4th of July Parade City of Independence

**Join in the FUN and RIDE
the OPVA Float!**

RSVP 503.362.7998



August

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 ZOOM BOD 10:00 a.m.	27	28
29	30					

Save the Date

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---------------------|--|
| Jul 9-11 | Marion County Fair | Jul 24 | Table Tennis Open House |
| Jul 10 | Outdoor Adventure Raffle (Marion County Fair @ 2 PM) | Jul 24 | (Kroc Center) |
| Jul 11 | ATV Raffle (Marion County Fair @ 3 PM) | Jul 17-Aug 1 | Idaho Members Picnic |
| Jul 16 | Deep Sea Fishing Trip | Aug 4-7 | DuneFest - Winchester Bay |
| Jul 17 | 12th Annual OPVA Gold Cup Golf Tournament | Aug 4-7 | Douglas County Fair |
| | | Aug 7 | Gem County Fair |
| | | Aug 7 | Central OR Members Picnic (Redmond) |
| | | Aug 11-15 | Josephine County Fair |



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

June 16, 2021

Volume 27, Number 11

Want to Follow the Status of Priority Issues Between Updates?
Visit [PVA's VoterVoice Portal](#) to view our latest alerts and a list of key legislation and its status.

PVA Testifying in Congressional Hearing Today!

On June 16, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee will hold a hearing at 3:00 pm ET entitled, "Review of the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget and 2023 Advance Appropriations Requests for the Department of Veterans Affairs." Roscoe Butler, Associate Legislative Director, will testify as part of the Independent Budget. To watch the hearing, please [click here](#).

VA Secretary Denis McDonough, the Senators pushed VA to reconsider both the ADL and the 70 percent rule—requirements currently inhibiting caregivers' ability to receive the benefits they deserve.

The Senators also laid out questions regarding denials and appeals for the Caregivers Program, and resources needed by VA to appropriately implement Phase 2 of the program's expansion to provide critical benefits and services to deserving veterans and their caregivers.

[Full News Release Available Here.](#) [Letter to VA Available Here.](#)

TESTER, MURRAY RAISE CONCERNS OVER VA CAREGIVERS PROGRAM

On May 18, Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Jon Tester (D-MT) and Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) expressed concerns over VA's tightened eligibility and delayed roll-out of its Caregivers Program.

Congress expanded the Caregivers Program to veterans of all eras under the VA MISSION Act of 2018. Since the law's implementation, VA has reported more than 70,000 applications for the Caregivers Program, 27,000 of which were denied. Data shows that the highest percentage of denials were due to the activity of daily living (ADL) requirement and the 70 percent service-connection requirement. In a letter to

THE ADMINISTRATION'S FY2022 BUDGET PROPOSAL: VA

VA spending could increase by 10 percent over current year levels if the amounts in the President's recent fiscal year (FY) 2022 budget proposal to Congress are adopted. The Administration requested \$269.9 billion for VA in FY 2022 in addition to the \$18 billion proposed by the President's American Jobs Plan (AJP) for VA construction projects. When combined with appropriated funding from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) and available funding from VA's Transformational Fund, the proposal would fully fund veterans' programs, benefits, and services for the first time in a generation.

\$117.2 billion of the baseline budget proposal would be classified as discretionary spending used to support VA's health care, benefits, and national cemetery programs. Roughly 86 percent of that amount would go toward the delivery of health care alone. The remaining \$152.7 billion is mandatory spending used to support VA's benefit programs like compensation and pension, readjustment, housing, and insurance programs.

Besides allowing the Department to continue its fight against COVID-19, these amounts would support VA's ability to provide care to seven million veteran patients, continue its electronic health record modernization project, improve facility infrastructure, and make the operation and maintenance of more than 7,300 facilities that VA owns or leases easier. It also enables VA to continue its work to reduce veterans homelessness and suicide and provides more than \$115 billion in advance appropriations for FY 2023 to ensure continuity of health care services into the new fiscal year.

Areas of the President's budget which are of likely interest to PVA members include the continued expansion of VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC). The proposal raises spending for PCAFC by \$350 million in FY2022 for a total \$1.4 billion. The higher amount supports the inclusion of Phase 1 veterans who are now eligible to participate in the program but will not help PVA's efforts to accelerate the start date of Phase II.

Another area of interest is infrastructure. The budget proposal notes that the average age of U.S. private sector hospitals is 11 years; however, the median age of hospitals in VA's portfolio is 58 years, with 69 percent of VA hospitals over the age of 50. In addition to the \$18 billion from the AJP requested to enhance VA infrastructure, ongoing SCI projects at San Diego, Dallas, and St. Louis have FY 2022 funding requests associated with them which are necessary to keep the larger effort at these sites moving forward.

Finally, the Administration is proposing \$882 million for VA research in FY 2022. This represents a \$67 million or 8.2 percent increase

over current spending in this area. The proposal also indicates that another \$9 million from the ARP would be designated to support COVID-19 efforts in the Medical and Prosthetic Research Plan.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S FY2022 BUDGET PROPOSAL: OTHER AGENCIES

The President's budget highlighted several programs and initiatives important to people with disabilities. These included:

Within the Department of Education:

- 3.7 billion for state vocational rehabilitation agencies, client assistance programs, and protection and advocacy programs.

Within the Department of Health and Human Services:

- \$148.2 million for the Independent Living Program within the Administration for Community Living.

Within the Department of Housing and Urban Development:

- \$4 million for the Veterans Housing Rehabilitation and Modification Pilot Program to rehabilitate and modify the homes of disabled and low-income veterans.
- \$30.4 billion for the Housing Choice Voucher Program to accommodate 200,000 new vouchers.
- \$85 million for Fair Housing programs, and increased HUD staff capacity to redress discriminatory housing practices.

Within the Department of Justice:

- \$307.2 million would be devoted to civil rights efforts, an increase of \$177.2 million over FY 2021 and includes \$10,000,000 for a grant program for state and local law enforcement to provide officer training on responding to individuals with mental illness or disabilities

and \$17,500,000 for education and training to end violence against and abuse of women with disabilities.

Within the Department of Labor:

- \$2 billion over six years to transition people with disabilities from subminimum wage jobs.
- \$42.7 million for the Office of Disability Employment Policy including \$9.8 million for research and development on effective ways to promote greater labor force participation by people with disabilities.
- \$180 million for the Veterans' Employment and Training Service for Jobs for Veterans State Grants, \$31 million for transition assistance programs, and \$57 million for homeless and at-risk veterans programs.

Within the Department of Transportation:

- \$75,000,000 to bring Amtrak-served facilities and stations into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

HOUSE T&I COMMITTEE MARK UP TRANSPORTATION BILL

The INVEST in America Act, which passed the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee by a vote of 38-26, is a five-year, \$547 billion surface transportation reauthorization bill that directs federal investments in roads, bridges, transit, and rail. Among other provisions, it creates new programs to address several pressing transit challenges—improving compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and addressing transit deserts by providing expanded transit service to unserved and underserved communities. It also triples funding for Amtrak to \$32 billion, allowing for enhanced service, ADA upgrades, and investments to renew and support service on the Northeast Corridor and long-distance and state-supported routes. Additionally, it creates a pilot to improve flexibility in paratransit trips, allowing for brief stops such as childcare pick-ups and drop-offs, and short trips to the grocery store, pharmacy, or bank. The legislation will now be considered on the House floor.

CMS REMINDS VETERANS AND CAREGIVERS ABOUT AFFORDABLE MARKETPLACE HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is highlighting provisions of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) that offer people an opportunity to enroll in Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace health insurance plans. The ARP, which passed earlier this year, contains a special enrollment period for health plans under the ACA. While most PVA members have access to the VA health care system, many other veterans, as well as caregivers, struggle to find affordable health insurance coverage.

Under the law:

- More people will qualify for tax credits that lower the cost of health coverage, even those who were not eligible in the past.
- Most people currently enrolled in a Marketplace plan will qualify for more tax credits.
- Health insurance premiums after these new savings will go down.
- Four out of five customers can find a plan for \$10 or less per month.

People interested in finding out more about the Special Enrollment Period or in applying for coverage can go to [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) (or [CuidadoDeSalud.gov](https://www.cuidadodesalud.gov) for Spanish speakers) by August 15, 2021. Individuals who submit applications will have 30 days to enroll in a plan. Coverage starts the first day of the month after enrollment. For example, if someone enrolls any time in May, coverage starts June 1. More information is available [here](#).

NEWS ITEMS OF NOTE

- PVA Raises ADA Issues to Department of Justice's, Disability Rights Section

Through our work with the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Rights Task Force, PVA recently had the opportunity to meet with staff for the Disability Rights Section

of the Department of Justice regarding a variety of issues of interest to the disability community. During the meeting, PVA staff specifically expressed the need for renewed enforcement of disability civil rights laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and for regulations governing standards for equipment and furniture under the ADA. In 2017, the Department withdrew pending regulatory action on web access, next generation 911, and accessibility of equipment and furniture, including medical equipment and hotel beds. DOJ officials noted that the Department had recently filed a Statement of Interest in a case pending against Aimbridge Hospitality regarding bed height. The Statement of Interest clarified that where an alleged barrier—the height of a hotel bed—is not addressed by the ADA Standards, the ADA’s general nondiscrimination provisions still apply, including making reasonable modifications where necessary to provide goods and services to people with disabilities. To read DOJ’s Statement of Interest, [click here](#).

- Disability Employment Incentive Act, H.R. 3765, Introduced in House

On June 8, Rep. Josh Harder (D-CA) and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) introduced H.R. 3765, the Disability Employment Incentive Act. This is the House companion to S. 630 sponsored by Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA). The measure expands the populations covered by the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to include persons receiving Social Security Disability Insurance and makes long overdue increases in the Accessibility Tax Credit and Architectural Barrier Removal Tax Deduction that can help businesses with pre-1990 buildings upgrade their facilities. PVA has endorsed both bills. To take action on these bills, please [click here](#).

- Senate Bill on Paratransit Introduced

On June 10, Sen. Bob Menendez (D-NJ), introduced legislation to increase accessible transportation for people with disabilities

(S.2038). This is the companion piece to H.R. 1697 introduced by Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI). The bill establishes a pilot program for one-stop para-transit services. This would provide transport for eligible recipients to child care and education facilities, banks or ATM stations, pharmacies and or grocery stores.

- New Episode of VA Benefits News Available

In the latest episode of VA Benefits News, VA Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits, Michael Frueh, discusses the impact of the American Rescue Plan on the accessibility of veteran benefits, some of the Veterans Benefit Administration’s outreach initiatives and partnerships, and ways VA and veterans service organizations work together to improve benefits delivery.

- COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Available from FEMA

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is providing financial assistance for COVID-related funeral costs incurred after January 20, 2020. If you or someone you know have had COVID-19 burial expenses, [click on the link](#) to learn how to apply.

HEARINGS/WEBINARS

- Social Security Subcommittee Hearing on Equity in Social Security: In Their Own Words

House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee Chairman John Larson (D-CT) held a hearing on “Equity in Social Security: In Their Own Words,” on Tuesday, June 15. To view the hearing, please [click here](#).

- House Select Subcommittee Hearing on Access for People with Disabilities

On May 27, the House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress held a hearing entitled, “Making the House More

Accessible to the Disability Community.” Heather Ansley, Associate Executive Director of Government Relations, testified on behalf of PVA. Ms. Ansley’s testimony noted that although there have been improvements in physical access to House office buildings in recent years, barriers persist. Some of those barriers include inaccessible bathrooms, lack of signage to guide people with disabilities, and heavy and narrow doors. To watch the hearing, please click here.

- Recent Veterans’ Affairs Committee Hearings
 - On June 8, the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee held a hearing entitled, "U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2022." Roscoe Butler, Associate Legislative Director, testified as part of the Independent Budget (IB). To watch the hearing, please click here.
 - On June 9, the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee held a hearing entitled, “A System to Better Serve America's Veterans: Investing in VA's Infrastructure.” Patrick Murray, VFW, testified on behalf of the IB. To watch the hearing, please click here.
- Upcoming PVA Webinars

On June 17 from 2:00-3:00 pm ET, PVA Government Relations will host a webinar on Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

SSDI is an important benefit for which most veterans with catastrophic disabilities will qualify. However, many veterans and their families have misconceptions about this Social Security Administration (SSA) program and may be unfamiliar with SSA's efforts to serve veterans with disabilities. ML Jordan, Jr., Supervisory Social Insurance Specialist with SSA's Division of Strategic Communications, will join PVA Advocacy staff to offer an overview of the SSDI program and its benefits, discuss some common myths surrounding receipt of VA and Social Security benefits, outline SSA's Wounded Warrior/VA Permanent and Total claims process, and share ways that SSA is reaching out to the veteran community. To register, please click here.

On June 29, from 2:00-3:00 pm ET, PVA Government Relations will host a webinar to provide a basic overview of VA's home and community-based services and caregiver programs. Leah Christensen, LCSW, National Clinical Program Coordinator, Caregiver Support Program, and Cheryl Schmitz, National Director, Home and Community Based and Purchased Care, will present on each of these programs on behalf of VA. To register, please click here.



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*
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12th Annual

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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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July/August 2021



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