

March - April 2023
Volume 27, Issue 2



Paralog

**Paralyzed Veterans of America
Tri-State Chapter**

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www.TriStatePVA.org



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Scarlett Guerra Graphic Designer

NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER

Matt Paige
Email: matthewp@pva.org
Phone: 503-412-4762

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PVA Tri-State Chapter Mission Statement

Paralyzed Veterans of America Tri-State Chapter, incorporated in 1976, is a chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America. We serve the needs of our Members – U.S. military veterans with spinal cord injury or disease (SCI/D) – and help them enjoy the highest possible quality of life.

Tri-State Chapter, 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, PVA Tri-state Chapter relies on grants and donations from members of the public.

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

PVA Tri-State Chapter - 3700 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305

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Cover Photo:
Courtesy of Adobe Stock Images

Thank you to all our Sponsors!

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President News

**Central Oregon
Ambassador
Needed**



2023 Sportsman Show, Eugene



Larry Gardner – President

The PVA Tri-State Chapter is doing a pretty good job so far going into 2023. We've already attended several fundraising events like car shows, swap meets, and sportsman shows to help with funding for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games along with lots of Chapter recognition.



I'd like to mention again that we are in need of a Central Oregon Ambassador to help us serve our members in that area. We also are in need of someone to step up as our Membership Director, to work with building the membership and making constant contact, so we can better serve the member's needs.

If anyone would like to help out with either of these positions, please call the office for more information. We are here to help.

The Board of Directors has a Property Committee looking for a new location for the Chapter office. This will give us more room, a better parking arrangement, and room for putting on events for the members. If you run across any possibilities, please give us a call. We've been looking for quite some time. Thanks!

There's also been a few changes made with the office staff here at the Chapter. You can read about them in Tom's Executive Report on page 6. Everything is moving along really well. We are busy getting ready for all the upcoming events. Make sure to keep reading the Paralog so you don't miss out! We are in the process of scheduling events membership meetings and picnics, Deep Sea Fishing trips, shooting events, car shows, and lots more! Well, that's all for now, everyone stay well and safe.

Thank you all so much!



Let's Go Fishing!



Paralyzed Veterans of America

Tri-State Chapter

2023 Deep Sea Fishing Schedule

⚓ Free for Voting Members! Bring a Guest for \$75!

⚓ Dates and Boarding Times:

May 22nd - 5:30am

June 13th - 5:30am

August 16th - 6:30am

5 Hour Trip - Lingcod
& Rockfish

* Fishing & Shell license required.
Available for purchase at
Dockside Charters.

* Complementary Coffee is provided

* Bring your own lunch, snack and
drinks

⚓ **New: RSVP TEN days prior to your date!** ⚓

Check in:
270 Coast Guard Dr, Depoe Bay
541-765-2545



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Executive Director Update



2022 PVA Tri-State NVWG Team

Tom Hurt – Executive Director



Happy March everyone! I would like to introduce our New Development Coordinator, Seth Dershewitz. Seth will be running our events such as Fairs, Festivals and Car Shows. Seth will also be coordinating our many volunteers to help spread our message here at PVA Tri-State Chapter. So when you get the chance please welcome Seth to the team.

representing your chapter). You can register at <https://wheelchairgames.org/athletes/registration/>.

Dennis Hooper is your Team Captain, if you need assistance, he can be reached at 541-531-6171. Dennis has a ton of experience with the Games, He is a returning Gold Medal Champion.



Your Board of Directors is working hard at putting together activities for you to participate in, such as Member BBQ's, Fishing Derbies and the BIG ONE: putting together Our Team to compete in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. It will be held in Portland, this July 4th thru 9th. Please get registered early, so that we can get your sizes for team uniforms, (we want you looking sharp



Remember first time competitors are reimbursed 100% for travel and accommodations to the games. Returning athletes are eligible for 50% reimbursement. Don't forget about using the Rec Fund to help offset expenses. Just save your receipts and email them to tristatepva@tristatepva.org, along with a photo and brief summary.

The Chapter office has just sent out an Ask letter to our donors. This is the first such letter to be sent out in about a year, even with that your Chapter is doing quite well being able to support the core programs within the Chapter.



One of the new programs that started last year that is doing fantastic, is the Air Gun program.! We have continually held competition shoots every other month. Our last shoot was January 13th with a great turn out! The next Air Gun Competition will be March 3. Please see page 18 for more details.

Our Trap Team is in growth mode again, with Larry Gardner leading the way. We are planning another Trapshoot Fundraiser in May. We hope to have a date finalized soon. Please stay tuned for more info to come. You can also read our Sports Corner on page 25 for information on shooting events in Hillsboro.

The Deep-Sea Fishing trips are also starting to fill up. We love to see our members being active and joining in with the variety of things going on. Please call the office and reserve your spot 10 days prior to your desired trip. And don't forget we will have a Deep Sea Salmon Fishing Trip September 11th (See page 17 for more info.)

Our Property Search Committee is hard at work looking for a NEW Home for the Chapter Office. The committee is looking for a safer environment with plenty of space to have events and sports activities right here at your Chapter Head Quarters. The desire is to stay fairly close to the Oregon State Capital to be able to have access to the legislature.



Like I mentioned, we are planning a ton of activities this year, so keep reading the Paralog to stay up to date. Also, your Board will be reaching out with phone calls as well as Seth will most likely be calling looking for volunteers.



**Medford's
70th Annual Pear Blossom Festival
begins April 7, 2023!!!**

**Pear Blossom Parade April 8th, at
11am in Downtown Medford**

**Visit www.pearblossomparade.org
for more information**

***Make sure to stop by and say
"Hello" at our PVA Tri-State booth!**

June 10 2023



SHOW & SHINE

Car Show

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Vehicle Registration \$15
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Location: Home Depot, 3795 Hagers Grove Rd SE, Salem, OR 97317
Registration: 8am
Show Time: 10 AM - 2pm

For more Information: Paralyzed Veterans of America Tri-State Chapter
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MS Liaison Corner



By: Dan Service—MS Liaison

An article I received asked to share some travel tips. There are so many answers I can give so I will share just a few of them.

The way we travel is like MS, it all depends on our capabilities physical and mental. When we had a large van, I was able to add a bed, refrigerator, TV, portable toilet, and still has storage space for clothes, and camping tools, etc. It took some time to put this all together, but I did it, and we were able to go to campgrounds and across most of the country. But I had a desire and the strength to do it.

When we have smaller vans, we do not have the room to take what the larger van was able to. We get frustrated. One reason is because we try not to eat out at restaurants based on the fact that we eat plant-based meals, and unless we can find a restaurant that serves the things we eat, we try to take food with us. Another problem is there just isn't enough room for our clothes, our dog, his food, my power chair, a small box of dishes, knives/spoons/forks/dishes/papertowels/salt etc., and a cooler.

If we end up going to a store in the city, we will stop and purchase some box foods like Zatarain's rice, some type of crumbles like Seitan, something along the line of Broccoli florets that can be steamed, and then microwave each one individually. We put them together and they provide a meal for the two of us. The van is packed, but we have most of what we need.

Last year, a pipe broke under our house, so from January 6th to 19th

of this year, we ended up staying in a motel at the coast, and eating as previously stated.

My wife and I have flown to Washington, D.C. 3 different years, to meet Congressional leaders and to advocate for all disabled people. We packed some medical supplies for my catheter changes, my charger for my power chair, and all our clothing. I informed TSA ahead of time when I would be arriving and what flights I would be taking. They were there and assisted us all the way to the gate; they took my power chair and gave me an airline chair to get me into the plane. Then they were at the gate when I arrived, and again when I took my return flight home. They were great to work with.



These are just a few things we do when we travel whether for the holidays, business, or fun. I am sure your experiences traveling foreign or domestic will be different and may help others. Please feel free to share your pros/cons by writing about them and sending you letters to PVA Tri-State, c/o Paralog Editor, 3700 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305. You can also email them to tristatepva@tristatepva.org



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Recreation Fund Reimbursement

(Members Only)

PVA Tri-State Chapter voting members are eligible to **RECEIVE \$250** each fiscal year through the Member Recreation Reimbursement Fund. It begins **October 1st** and runs through **September 25th** each year.


Include Name, Address, Phone Number, your Legible Receipts (legible photo copy is ok) 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 Parallog. Please note: drugs and alcohol will not be reimbursed.

◆ **Eating Out** ◆ **Movies** ◆ **Games** ◆ **Hobby Supplies** ◆ **Motel** ◆ **Sports**
◆ **Event Tickets** ◆ **Guns** ◆ **Trips** ◆ **Vacation Expenses (lodging food, gas etc)** ◆
PVA Tri-State Events etc

All receipts must be dated and used within this current fiscal year (10/1 - 9/30). Rec Funds **NOT** received in a timely matter will be denied.

Mail or email to: PVA Tri-State Chapter, 3700 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305 - tristatepva@tristatepva.org
Please be sure to include your address and phone number. Your request must be received in the office no later than **September 25th**. 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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and your gift is tax-deductible.

www.pva.careasy.org

Get Paid to Have Fun!



\$250 Rec Fund Reimbursement

**Rec Fund-
Model railroad.
Happy New Year staff and volunteers!**

Neal T.



Dear Tri-State PVA,
I am submitting for the yarn and circular knitting needles I recently bought at my LYS (local yarn shop). What with the cold weather (Brrr!) and my current ambulatory challenges (knee surgery, not MS!) I thought I'd resume one of my previous favorite hobbies- knitting! I'm going to make a cowl with some of the yarn. The rest of the yarn? Who knows-maybe some more cowls. Maybe I'll just pet it. It's all so pretty and soft. I couldn't resist. Thanks to the Rec Fund I didnt' have to!

Susan H.

In April 2022, a pipe broke under the house. I called our insurance company they called a plumbing company. They fixed the break, then tried to dry out the wet rafters that hold up the floor to the kitchen, and they felt they did.

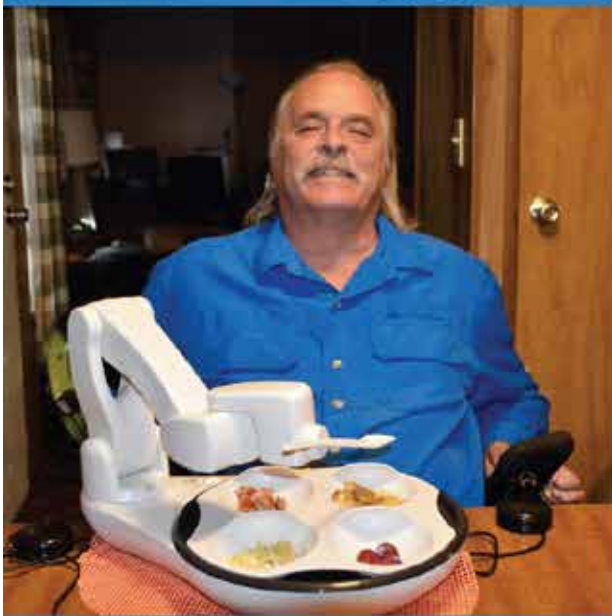
In August, we started noticing a little give in the floor in front of the washing machine. After many months dealing with delays from the mortgage company, we finally had a date for reconstruction!

My wife, Beverly and I decided we were not going to stay in the house while the reconstruction was being done. After

deliberation, we decided to go to The Whaler Moter, in Newport, OR for two weeks. It was good to be away from all the pounding that we would have been faced with. The weather was what one would expect for the coast in the winter, but it was great being there!

Dan S.





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Development Coordinator Update



By: Seth Dershewitz Development Coordinator

Hello members, volunteers, and friends! I am Seth Dershewitz, your new Tri-State PVA Development Coordinator. I grew up in Denver, Colorado, and have lived in Oregon for the past 11 years. I enjoy camping, fishing, and being dad to a 1-year old girl and a 2-year old boy. It is such an honor to be a part of this great organization and I look forward to working with our members and volunteers. 2023 is shaping up to be a very exciting and event-filled year at Tri-State PVA.

I had the pleasure of meeting some of you already at the Tri-State Chapter Air Gun Competition in Albany last January. I am very excited to announce that we have since acquired 3 new air rifles for this program. We look forward to seeing all of you at the next tournament on March 3, 2023 at the Albany Rifle and Pistol Club.

January was a very exciting month for us at Tri-State PVA. I want to thank all the members and volunteers who helped make the Winter Rod and Speed Show a huge success! We had a great time with our volunteers representing Tri-State PVA at this event. We hosted two raffle fundraisers at the car show this year,

one for the ATV, and the other for a beautiful wooden, chainsaw-carved Bald Eagle. If you've never been to this car show, I strongly recommend adding it to your calendar for next year.



In February, we joined our PVA National Organization at the 50th Annual KVAL 13 Boat and Sportsmen's Shows in Eugene and Roseburg. Both shows were great opportunities to promote awareness for PVA and the upcoming 2023 National Veterans Wheelchair Games being held in Portland in July. Thank you to all our volunteers and members who helped make this fundraiser a huge success for Tri-State PVA and the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

Registration is open now thru April 5, 2023 for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. You can register online at www.wheelchairgames.org. Join our team and compete with 400-

600 veterans in more than 20 events for fun, prizes, and glory as we represent our chapter in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games being hosted in Portland for the first time July 9, 2023



As we move into Spring and Summer, we have a number of events and activities planned. Our annual Show and Shine Car Show takes place on June 10, at the Hagers Grove Home Depot. Please contact me or our local office if you would like to participate in this car show. We are always looking for volunteers, vendors, and judges.

I am looking forward to May, the first of our three annual Deep Sea Fishing trips will be taking place on the 22nd out of Depoe Bay. Please remember to register at least 10 days prior to the trip to reserve your space. Members have already expressed a lot of interest in this fishing trip and space are filling up quickly.

That is all I have for now. Spring and Summer are shaping up to be a fun, busy, and exciting time for us at Tri-State PVA, so come join us at any of our events. We will update the calendar on our website and continue to put updates in the Paralog. I would love to hear feedback and suggestions from our members on more ways we can better serve you. My direct line is 503-951-3256 and my email is devcoor@tristatepva.org.



Save the Date:
Deep Sea
Salmon
Fishing Trip

- * Sept 11, 2023
- * Check in at 6am*

RSVP by Sept 1, 2023



270 Coast Guard Dr.
Depoe Bay, OR 97341
(541) 765-2545





**March 3, 2023
12 pm to 3 pm**

**Free Event!
Win Prizes!!!
Snack Provided!**



**All Members
Friends &
Family are
welcome to
participate!!!**



**Don't miss out
on the next:**

Tri-State Chapter Air Gun Competiton!!!

Location:

**Albany Rifle and Pistol Club
29999 Saddle Butte Rd, Shedd OR**

**For More Information:
PVA Tri-State**

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14th Annual PVA Tri-State Gold Cup Golf Tournament

**Saturday
July 15,
2023**

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Prizes:

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- ???????

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Co-Presented by:



Government Relations Update



By: Don Hedlind - Government Relations Director

Hello everyone: Government Relations is moving “full steam ahead” on all fronts. Our Chapter is a member of UVGO (United Veterans Groups of Oregon) a growing group of VSOs (Veteran Service Organizations) such as PVA, VFW, American Legion, DAV, and many others. If you know of a VSO that would like to join our group, call our office, or send an email and let us know. UVGO is currently recruiting, we currently are comprised of 14 VSO's, as a body we are supporting.

- HB 2147 Veterans Cremains bill. This bill when passed into law, will allow county service officers or their representatives the ability to investigate whether there are cremains of veterans that may be on shelves in mortuaries throughout their county. The goal of the bill is to find our vets and arrange their honor funerals, so they can receive the funerals they are entitled as part of their service and sacrifice.

- A bill to direct the ODVA to study Military veterans by directing to County Veteran Service Officers to report on the budgetary effects of a 100% property tax deduction for 100% service-connected veterans in their county.

- Increasing Federal Funding to Allow the Roseburg VA Healthcare System (RVAHS) Support to Once Again Provide the Medical and Mental Health Services that Our Veterans Need.

I have good news: The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) will increase the maximum loan limit for the Oregon Veteran Home Loan for 2023, conforming to loan limits for mortgages set by the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA). ODVA will now accept loans up to the new maximum loan amount of \$726,200, an increase of \$79,000 from \$647,200 in 2022, for funding on or after January 1, 2023. Check out <https://oregondva.com/2022/12/21/oregon-veteran-home-loan-max-loan-limit-increases-in-2023/> for information on this new benefit.

PVA Tri-State is also in SW Washington and Idaho, so we are keeping track of what is happening in these states. In Idaho, there is a HB0057 Transportation Bill that will amend existing law to provide for the issuance of special placards together with disabled plates. In Washington there are many veteran bills including HB 1482 AN ACT Relating to protecting senior

citizens' and disabled veterans' property tax exemption eligibility. The bill will exempt all or a part of the property taxes for seniors and disabled vets. Our Chapter is a member of CMAC (Community Military Appreciation Committee) in SW Washington, through this group, we will be advocating for the passage of this bill.

Each state has Veteran bills for employment, health care and caregiver support. As we move through these legislative sessions some will survive, and others will be removed or voted up/down in committee.

Check out each state's website for information.

Oregon: https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/listbills/CurrentSessionBills.html

Washington: <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/>

Idaho: <https://legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/>

The Vietnam War Memorial Fund (VWMF) is working hard on placing a Vietnam War Memorial at the State Capitol Grounds in Salem. They are raising funds for this important and needed memorial to honor our "brothers in arms" who served in Vietnam and gave the "ultimate sacrifice." They are looking for volunteers to be "county chairs" fundraisers, advocates and providers. Their website is www.ocvwm.com Please check it out when you get a chance.

On the National front I will be going to PVA Seminar in Washington DC in late Feb to meet with and talk with Representatives in both the House and Senate for all 3 states. Our motto is ***Pushing Access Forward*** building on the success of The PACT and Raise Act which allows the VA to have the funding they need to retain nurses and doctors, while hiring more case officers for the Toxic Exposures that our vets may have been exposed to while in service to our country.

Our women vets can now benefit from the MAMMO (Making Advances in Mammography and Medical Options for Veterans) Act. It established a new standard within the VA for all nursing mothers to have private nursing units to nurse their babies while at the VA. Many other options for women's medical and reproductive care are also included.

We are advocating for changes to the Air Carrier Access Act, Tax Benefits for businesses that make changes to their businesses to accommodate ADA access to bathrooms and ramps for disabled access. We also need passage of the Elizabeth Dole Home and Community Based Services for Veteran's Caregivers Act; this vital legislation will give veterans more options with their caregivers.

VA must work with Congress on making sure Veterans and Survivor Benefits are updated to increase VA Special Monthly Compensation/Aid and Attendance benefits for catastrophically disabled veterans to offset increased costs for home care and other needed supports. Changes to the threshold eligibility for HISA (Home Improvements and Structural Alterations) grant to allow eligible veterans to access needed housing modifications due to their disabilities, due to increased costs for contractors, must be addressed and remedied.

Congress needs to increase the rate of Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) for surviving dependents and lower the eligibility threshold and ensure survivors of ALS veterans have access to enhanced DIC benefits. They must also pass legislation that authorizes vets who have non-service-connected disabilities to receive adaptive equipment from VA to drive their vehicles. VA's Infrastructure processes need to be reformed and staffing increased to allow the department to effectively use needed funding. They must also develop a nationwide infrastructure plan to better address the SCI/D system's unique care delivery model. PVA advocates for proper funding for the SCI/D system care through the Independent Budget, and finally Congress must pass legislation ending forfeiture of military retirement pay to receive VA disability compensation.

As you can see Government Relations is ramping up in state and federal legislative bodies. Stay tuned as Spring rolls in, new bills and changes to other ones will be moving through the process. I will be heading to Washington DC in late Feb to advocate on behalf of our members and their families and will report back in our next Paralog. Wish me Luck! Cheers!



***Adventure is Calling
Join Now!!!***



PVA Tri-State Air Gun

Jan 13th, Scores:



Thanks everyone who came!!!

Larry Gardner	82 pts
Ed Anderson	73 pts
Seth Dershewitz	62 pts
David Summers	59 pts
Greg Pierce	37 pts

**Our next Air Gun Competition
is March 3, 2023!**

Mark your calendars and don't miss out on all the fun!

Please call the office at 503-362-7998 for more info.



SPORTS

Corner



DOCKSIDE CHARTERS

**Register for
our FIRST Deep
Sea Fishing Trip
May 22, 2023!!!**

By: Larry Gardner

Our Sports programs for the Tri-State Chapter are coming back slowly, after COVID and all the shut downs that took place.

However, the PVA Tri-State will be hosting the **National Veterans Wheel Chair Games**, in **Portland, Oregon on July 4th – 9th 2023**. The registration opened on February 1st. If anyone wants to attend the games, you can register on their web site. (See page 21) If you have trouble with this or have questions please call the office so we can help get you in the games. This year, our team captain is Dennis Hooper a returning gold medal athlete from Sutherlin, Oregon.

Trap Shooting this year has been slow but still active The teams next shoot will be the **ST. Patrick's Shoot on March 11th – 12th** at the **Hillsboro Trap Club**, then another shoot in Hillsboro **April 1st - 2nd**. If interested please give me a call at 503-930-9589 so I can get everyone squaddled together.

The Chapter will be hosting another Fun Shoot Fundraiser this year at

the Albany Trap Club. We will post the date just as soon as we get it scheduled. So stay tuned!

The Air Rifle team has been doing real good shooting at the indoor range at the **Albany Rifle and Pistol Club**. We hold this event every other month and the next event will be **March 3rd** from **10:30 am to 3 pm**. Come on out and join in with the team. We provide the air rifles, the ammo, and targets with food and refreshments. All you have to do is show up and have fun. We would love to have you join us!

Deep Sea Fishing trips have been scheduled for this year. You can find the dates on page 5. You **MUST** pre-register with the office, **10 Days Prior** to your desired trip. It is **FREE** for members and you can bring a guest for \$75. Dockside Charters wants the Chapter to let them know in advance how many will be attending. Please call and get registered. You don't want to miss out on all the fun!



**Sports Director
&
Coordinators Needed**

Southern OR Ambassador Report

Dennis fishing on the Umpqua River



By Dennis Hooper – Southern Oregon Ambassador



Yes, my friends, 2023 has started. Did you notice? The time just seems to increase velocity these days. I try to keep up with events and activities in our region, but sometimes the information is just not timely. I hope these tardy announcements have not dissuaded any of our members from participating in any activities.



I was fortunate enough to attend another Heroes In Sisters ski event at Mt. Bachelor on January 20-22. This annual event, put on by Oregon Adaptive Sports, is always a great experience for skiers. The motel in Bend was a great host and provided an extensive taco bar. There was nothing missing! My gullet was quite pleased when I topped it off with the provided churros topped

with ice cream. I was pleased to see some of our other members enjoying themselves. The lunches at the ski lodge have improved over the years. If you haven't experienced this completely free event, mark your calendar now! I will tell you how the rest of the ski season goes, in the next Paralog.

One of our region's other great pastimes is fishing. There are several events coming up this spring that will satisfy your angling urges. One group that comes to mind first is **Warrior Impact**. So far, they have two rafting/camping trips scheduled on the lower Rogue. **April 12-16** and **May 3-7**, respectively. These adventures have plenty of opportunities to fish, both from a raft or on shore. You can't beat the scenery, either! Check out their Facebook page.



If the Rogue is too wild for your taste, maybe some fishing on the Umpqua River. **Sourceoneserenity** has several guided fishing trips coming up. The next two are scheduled for **June 2** and **June 16**, respectively. This trips will put you on smallmouth bass and shad. It is lots of fun! Check out their website sourceoneserenity.org.



You say you don't like moving water? Then you should attend the annual **Take A Soldier Fishing** event held at **Henry Hagg Lake**. This year it is scheduled for **June 17**. This event is well worth the drive up to Forest Grove. The park there is well laid out. The last time we were there, there was a small herd of elk near the base of the dam. Fortunately, none of them were fishing! The boat captains really know their stuff and can get any wheelchair to a fish.

Now I speak highly of these events because I know first hand how much they benefited me. No matter what ails you, PTSD, TBI, SCI, MS

or whatever alphabet you can name, these activities will help relieve stress.

Speaking of stress, the VA is hosting a Stress Solutions Workshop on March 14. You can sign up at the va.gov website under outreach and events. See if it will help.

It was great attending the Sportsman's Show in Eugene, Roseburg and Medford all through February. Your Tri-State Chapter had an awareness/information booth that was well laid out. I also enjoyed the numerous exhibits that showed how much adaptive technology is available for fishing, boating, off-roading, hunting and just about anything you can do outdoors. I learned a lot a made several connections.

I am also super psyched about our booth at the **Pear Blossom Festival** this **April 7-8**, in downtown Medford. I love seeing our members coming out to check out our ATV raffle. We had such a wonderful time last year meeting people. This will be a great opportunity to meet our newest staff member, Seth. It will be a festive atmosphere for sure!

Well that is all I can fit in for now. I wish I could share all the happenings that are going on in the nearby future. Remember, you can always contact myself or our office if you have any needs or questions. We are here to assist in any way we can. Thank you for letting me be your Southern Oregon Ambassador.



When: Saturday, June 17, 2023

Where: Henry Hagg Lake, Scoggins Park, Near Forest Grove, OR

Who: Volunteers with boats and fishing equipment will take Veterans and their immediate family members for a day of fishing.

For more information: Contact Leroy Bentley 503-502-1051 or email bentley16@frontier.com

Idaho Ambassador Report



**Train Depot and City Park,
Boise, Idaho**



By Donald Wyatt – Idaho Ambassador

I hope everyone is having a good start to this new year. Mine could have been better. I don't have much except for going to ER and doctor appointments. However, I did find some information for anyone who is sports minded.

Boise has a wheelchair basketball team, the The Gem State Falcons. Their "mission is to build awareness, character, and community through sports and recreation." Currently, they have 10 active players with an age range of 16 to 69. They need team members and fans. You can find out more information online at www.gemstatefalcons.com



Courtesy of Gem State Falcons

Also, Caldwell has a sled hockey team, The Idaho Sled Hockey Association. It was founded in 2022. Their mission is "To educate and encourage the general public about disability sports and Idaho Sled Hockey in particular." Anyone with a physical disability may be able to join. For more information visit idahosledhockeyassociation.org



Courtesy of KBOI Idaho News

They are both on Facebook and can be found on Google. Lots of good information there. Both teams would welcome new players and fans so get out, take in some games, participate and have fun!

Be Safe
Don Wyatt

208-484-3537
dwyatt37@aol.com

Happy Birthday !!!



Gerald Lamb	03/01/1944	Clinton Black	04/10/1950
Ronald Clement	03/02/1938	Michael Clark	04/10/1952
Steven Tweton	03/02/1962	Justin Hurt	04/10/1997
Bridgette Selby	03/03/1958	Kelly Tadlock	04/10/1958
Joseph Welsh	03/03/1942	William Crandell	04/12/1949
C. Greg Danielson	03/05/1946	Raymond Roberts	04/12/1954
Brian Beninger	03/06/1962	Dana Strasheim	04/15/1956
John McClaran	03/07/1957	Timothy Hagberg	04/16/1948
Mark Turpin	03/08/1954	Frank Schindler	04/16/1949
Leslie Woods	03/09/1948	Angela Tunnissen	04/16/1960
Robert Kloehn	03/12/1948	Michael Williamson	04/16/1966
Mark McClellan	03/13/1969	Richard Montiel	04/17/1941
Ronald Beriault	03/14/1952	Christopher Weatherby	04/17/1970
Mitchell Wood	03/14/1951	Melvin Johnson	04/18/1959
Victor Marquardt	03/21/1931	Dustin Simmons	04/18/1976
Daniel Service	03/23/1952	Kirk Loftus	04/21/1971
Larry Gardner	03/24/1950	John Olson	04/22/1945
Maynard Epling	03/27/1940	Bruce Henion	04/23/1959
Steven Grogan	03/28/1965	Paul Geck	04/24/1964
Bruce Freeberg	03/29/1958	Robert Phillips	04/26/1951
Larry Cartales	04/01/1950	Harriet Schmidt	04/26/1971
Brenda Marsters	04/01/1942	Rick Williams	04/27/1959
Edward Suhr	04/01/1963	Markus White	04/29/1981
Darrel Ackerman	04/03/1947		
Richard Heimbaugh	04/04/1950		
Jeffery Johnson	04/04/1955		
George Nordling	04/04/1949		
Daniel Watts	04/05/1989		
Steven Willard	04/07/1954		
Calvin Casey	04/08/1972		

March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 <i>Daylight Savings Time</i>	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30 BOD Meeting	31	

 **Office Closed**

Save the Date

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Mar 3 Air Gun Competition</p> <p>Mar 17 - 19 Portland Roadster Show</p> <p>Apr 7 - 8 Pear Blossom Festival</p> <p>May 22 Deep Sea Fishing trip
Departs at 5:30am, Depoe Bay</p> <p>Jun 10 Show & Shine Car Show</p> <p>June 13 Deep Sea Fishing Trip
Departs at 5:30am, Depoe Bay</p> | <p>July 4-9 National Veterans Wheelchair Games</p> <p>July 7-9 Marion County Fair</p> <p>July 15 Gold Cup Golf Tournament</p> <p>Aug 16 Deep Sea Fishing Trip
Departs at 5:30am, Depoe Bay</p> <p>Sept 11 Salmon Fishing Trip
Departs at 6am, Depoe Bay</p> <p>Sept 16 Annual Members Banquet,
Chinook Winds Casino</p> |
|--|--|

April

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	27 BOD Meeting	28	29
30						





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

February 13, 2023

Volume 31, Number 3

Check out the PVAAction Force page to view our latest alerts and a list of key legislation and its status.

INDEPENDENT BUDGET VETERANS AGENDA RELEASED FOR 118TH CONGRESS

PVA, DAV, and VFW—the Independent Budget (IB) veterans service organizations—released the veterans agenda for the 118th Congress on February 13. The veterans agenda includes VA budget recommendations for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 advance appropriations. The IB recommends approximately \$139.9 billion in total medical care funding for fiscal year 2024 and roughly \$157.2 billion for fiscal year 2025 advance appropriations.

The veterans agenda also includes five critical issues spanning health care, benefits, and economic opportunity. The health care critical issues are ensuring VA remains the primary provider of care and increasing and expanding extended care services and supports. The benefits critical issues are monitoring implementation of the PACT Act and reforming survivor benefits. The employment and education critical issue is ensuring the long-term success of the military-to-civilian transition.

The IB was released at a congressional briefing that included congressional staff, veterans service organizations, and other stakeholders. The full report is available [here](#).

The Administration intends to release its fiscal year 2024 budget proposal to Congress on March 9. Often seen as the start of the process to fund the government, the President's annual proposal is to be submitted by the first Monday

in February. However, this deadline has rarely been adhered to in recent years.

PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE UNION REMARKS

In his recent State of the Union address, the President urged Congress to do more to fulfill the nation's sacred obligation to service members who are sent into harm's way and take better care of them and their families when they come home. Although he did not offer any specific proposals, he expressed support for job training and job placement for veterans and their spouses when they return to civilian life, and greater efforts to prevent veteran homelessness and suicide.

The President was particularly pointed on one subject, protecting Social Security and Medicare. Recently, some members of Congress suggested cuts to both programs may be necessary to help reduce the federal deficit. The President noted these programs are a lifeline for millions of seniors and that he would not be supporting reductions in either program. The President also offered his full support for increased access to home care services for people with disabilities, including the workforce needed to serve them. The full text of his remarks can be found [here](#).

HOTEL OWNER REQUESTS SUPREME COURT REVIEW IN ADA TESTER CASE

Acheson Hotels, LLC, filed a request for review to the U.S. Supreme Court in the case Acheson Hotels, LLC v. Laufer. Deborah Laufer, a mobility assistive device user, is a self-deemed ADA "tester," meaning she regularly visits hotel websites checking whether they have

accessibility information. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) reservation rule, hotels must identify and describe the accessibility features of the hotel and guest rooms in enough detail for a guest to decide if the hotel will meet their needs. When Laufer went on the website for one of the Acheson Hotels, the website had no information regarding accessibility. Laufer sued Acheson Hotels for violating the ADA.

Courts have reached different conclusions on whether an ADA tester of hotel websites can sue. To bring a lawsuit, a plaintiff must have “standing.” To prove they have standing the plaintiff must show there was an injury, meaning the person was harmed in some way; a connection between the injury and the defendant’s action, or lack of action; and that a court decision can remedy the injury. Several courts have held that a tester, who cannot prove they intend to stay at the hotel, does not have standing, because there was no injury or harm.

The Maine district court found Laufer did not have standing because she did not plan on visiting the hotel in the near future. The court dismissed the case. On appeal, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit found Laufer did suffer harm from the lack of accessibility information. The First Circuit Court decided Laufer’s injury was her feelings of frustration, humiliation, and being treated as a second-class citizen. Acheson Hotels has filed a request to the U.S. Supreme Court to review the case. The hotel requests the Supreme Court decide whether an ADA tester has standing to sue a hotel for failing to provide accessibility information on their website, even if the plaintiff has no intention of visiting the hotel in the near future. The request is still pending.

BETTER CARE BETTER JOBS ACT INTRODUCED

On January 26, Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) and Representative Debbie Dingell (D-MI) introduced the Better Care Better Jobs Act (S. 100/H.R. 547) to enhance Medicaid funding for home care and strengthen the caregiving workforce through better payment rates and training opportunities. The legislation also supports the Centers for Medicare and

Medicaid Services’ oversight efforts to aid direct care workers and care recipients. Approximately 18 percent of home care workers live in poverty, many receive few or no benefits, and earn a median wage of \$13 an hour. Such circumstances have caused many home care workers to leave the field, creating a severe shortage of this valuable labor force. Supporters of the measure hope that improved working conditions for direct care workers will help to address that labor shortage and alleviate some of the burden on family caregivers. A description of the legislation can be found [here](#).

SOCIAL SECURITY ENHANCEMENT AND PROTECTION ACT INTRODUCED

On January 31, Representative Gwen Moore (D-WI) introduced her Social Security Enhancement and Protection Act (H.R. 671). PVA has endorsed this legislation which would reinstate benefits for students up to age 26 who are children of retired, deceased, or disabled workers, increase benefits for long-time beneficiaries once they reach 20 years after retirement, increase the special minimum benefit, and eliminate the cap on Social Security payroll contributions to generate additional revenue for the Social Security system while at the same time enhancing benefits for those most in need. An analysis of Rep. Moore’s bill by Social Security actuaries estimates that its provisions would extend the life of the Social Security trust funds by 24 years to 2059.

HOUSE BILLS ON VA’S EHRM PROJECT

House Republicans recently introduced a pair of bills addressing VA’s problematic Electronic Health Record Modernization (EHRM) project. The first bill, introduced by House Veterans’ Affairs Committee (HVAC) Chairman Mike Bost (R-IL), would bar VA from rolling out the new system at additional VA Medical Centers until it demonstrates “significant improvement” and it requires the VA Secretary to certify the systems functionality prior to doing so. It also directs the senior leadership at prospective facilities to certify they are prepared to launch the new program at their site and that it won’t have “significant, sustained adverse effects” on

patient safety, care quality, or wait times. The second bill, from Representative Matt Rosendale (R-MT), Chairman of the HVAC's Subcommittee on Technology Modernization, provides a pathway to scrap the EHRM project altogether if its performance does not improve.

In October 2022, VA announced it was delaying upcoming EHR implementations of its Oracle Cerner system until June 2023 to address system challenges. Lawmakers on both sides of the Hill have made it clear they do not want the project to move forward until it can do so safely and effectively. We expect Congress to hold hearings on its status in the near future.

NEWS OF NOTE

Caregivers Will Receive an Increase in Their Caregiver Stipend Payment

On February 3, the VA Caregiver Program office announced that caregivers enrolled in the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers will receive a 4.1 percent increase in their end of February stipend payment. This is the same increase federal employees received on January 1.

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee for the 118th Congress Announced

The members of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee for the 118th Congress were recently announced and they include returning Chairman Jon Tester (D-MT) and Ranking Member Jerry Moran (R-KS). Other Senators serving on the Committee are Patty Murray (D-WA); Bernie Sanders (I-VT); Sherrod Brown (D-OH); Richard Blumenthal (D-CT); Mazie Hirono (D-HI); Joe Manchin (D-WV); Krysten Sinema (I-AZ); Maggie Hassan (D-NH); Angus King (I-ME); John Boozman (R-AR); Bill Cassidy (R-LA); Mike Rounds (R-SD); Thom Tillis (R-NC); Dan Sullivan (R-AK), Marsha Blackburn (R-TN); Kevin Cramer (R-ND); and Tommy Tuberville (R-AL).

More Committee Leadership Lineups for the 118th Congress

Several committees that oversee legislation important to people with disabilities acquired new leadership with the seating of the 118th Congress.

The House Education and Workforce Committee (previously Education and Labor) saw Representative Virginia Foxx (R-NC) switch roles with Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA). She will now lead this Committee which has jurisdiction over numerous workforce and education programs. Rep. Scott becomes Ranking Member. The Senate Health Education and Labor (HELP) Committee is headed by Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) who replaces retired Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) as Ranking Member.

The House Judiciary Committee will now be headed by Representative Jim Jordan (R-OH) with Representative Jerry Nadler (D-NY) serving as Ranking Member. On the Senate side, Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) chairs the Judiciary Committee with Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) taking the role of Ranking Member.

The House Transportation Committee, which oversees most of the nation's travel systems from roads, to rails, to airlines, saw a similar role switch with Representative Sam Graves (R-MO) rising to chair the Committee and Representative Rick Larsen (D-WA) becoming Ranking Member. The Senate counterpart, the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee will be chaired by Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) with Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) serving as Ranking Member.

The Ways and Means Committee, which has jurisdiction over tax matters as well as Social Security, received a new chair with the elevation of Representative Jason Smith (R-MO) to that position. Chairman Smith, who is



Paralyzed Veterans of America
Tri-State Chapter
Serving those who Served!

new to Ways and Means and moving over from House Budget, beat out two other candidates for the role. Chairman Smith recently announced subcommittee chairs, picking Representative Drew Ferguson (R-GA) to head the Social Security Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over Social Security retirement, survivor, and disability programs. Representative Richard Neal (D-MA) and Representative John Larson (D-CT) retain seats on the Committee as Ranking Members for the full committee and the Social Security Subcommittee respectively. On the Senate side, the Finance Committee, which handles tax and Social Security matters, saw Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) retain his chairmanship while Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID) remained as Ranking Member.

Free Class on Airborne Hazards and Burn Pits

Veterans are invited to sign up for VA's free, virtual class Airborne Hazards and Burn Pits: What You Need to Know. It is being held on February 23 from 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ET, and you can participate online through your personal computer, smart phone, or tablet. To learn more about the class and to register, [click here](#).

Welcome Home Vietnam War Commemoration

The 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 110-181) directed the Department of Defense to spearhead the nation's commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. In May, Vietnam veterans, their families and many others will be gathering in

Washington D.C. to observe this important milestone with formal events and many other activities. Visit vietnamwar50th.com for details.

Veterans Health Library

As a reminder, the Veterans Health Library has over 1,600 health sheets and 175 videos in both English and Spanish. It gives veterans access to health information to help them make informed decisions on their care. The medical content in the library aligns with the latest Department of Defense and VA clinical guidelines, and is regularly updated to include information on VA programs and resources that align with different health topics.

HEARINGS AND COMMITTEE ACTION

Upcoming Veterans' Affairs Committee Action

PVA's National President Charles Brown will testify before a joint session of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees on March 1. The hearing will start at 10:00 am ET and President Brown will testify on the second panel. Please visit the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee webpages for information on other upcoming hearings and markups.



***Please consider adding
PVA Tri-State Chapter
to your will or trust***



OREGON DEPARTMENT
of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

2023 OREGON WOMEN VETERANS CONFERENCE

Stronger Together: Voices of Service

SAVE THE DATE
MAY 20-21, 2023
Salem Convention Center

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs is excited to announce the return of the Oregon Women Veterans Conference which will be held in-person, welcoming women veterans from all eras of military service and from every corner of the state.

The two-day conference will take place at the Salem Convention Center on May 20-21, 2023. Since 1998, this free biennial event has celebrated the contributions, diversity and strength of Oregon's women veteran community, and is the largest gathering of women-identifying veterans in the state.

More information coming soon at
www.wvc.oregondva.com



Sign up to receive 2023 Women Veteran Conference email updates from Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs

Subscribe

PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

January 2023

Grit and Determination



Meet Nicole Lane, a former commissioned officer in the U.S. Air Force. Nicole attended a Veterans Career Live session in December 2021, and began working with our Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), Danielle Hetu, shortly thereafter.

Nichole had planned to spend her entire career in the military; however, after she had a serious complication from surgery that led to a stroke and long-term disability, she medically retired in 2011. She worked very hard to regain as much of her physical health as possible. Post stroke, Nichole has struggled to find her fit although she had all of the skills and experiences that an employer would want. Given the severity of her long-term illness and recovery, she lacked the confidence to truly pursue her next career. This is not an uncommon experience, and is something our counselors work with their clients to overcome.

Nichole had it all from the beginning - she just needed a sounding board and was able to have that while working with Danielle.

In January 2023, Nicole accepted a job as Associate Director for Proposals & Compliance at Caladwich Consulting, LLC – a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) in Fairfax, VA. Getting the job and starting a career she wanted was 100% the result of Nichole's grit and determination.

Congratulations Nicole!

IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

15 Client Placements

- 11 Paid Employment
- 4 Education/Training
 - 13 Veterans
 - 2 Active Duty
 - 3 PVA Members
- The average salary for the 8 clients placed in full-time employment was \$65,256; and the average income for the 3 clients placed in part-time work was \$14,466.



VCP Launches Disabled Veterans Self-Employment Pilot Program

WELLS FARGO

According to the National Disability Institute, 74% of people with disabilities do not participate in the labor force. For multiple reasons – including lack of accommodations and discrimination in

the workplace - individuals with disabilities continue to turn to self-employment/small business development as a viable alternative that provides greater control, choice and flexibility in terms of work schedule, environment and economic advancement.

While entrepreneurship is an important employment option for people with disabilities, they are often hindered by scarcity of supports, services, programs, and affordable start-up capital tailored to their unique needs and challenges. Thanks to a generous grant donation by the Wells Fargo Foundation, VCP will be launching a pilot program beginning in February 2023 to provide training, counseling and access to capital to veterans with spinal-cord injury or disease (SCI/D) who are considering self-employment. We received an overwhelming 72 applications for 15 "seats" in the inaugural (virtual) class; and we look forward to providing updates on this class and its amazing participants.



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: PVA Tri-State Chapter, 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:

- DD Form 214 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: ____/____/____



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
- Transverse Myelitis
- Other (please specify) _____

Physician's Signature

Physician's Name

Physician's Title

Physician's Phone/Email

Date Signed



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