

January - February 2024  
Volume 28, Issue 1

# Paralog



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

**Serving Oregon, Idaho and SW Washington**



**"Serving Those Who Served"**

**[www.TriStatePVA.org](http://www.TriStatePVA.org)**



**OFFICERS**

**Larry Gardner** President  
**Bill Gray** Vice President  
**Dennis Hooper** Secretary  
**Dan Service** Treasurer

**PROGRAM DIRECTORS**

**Mike Rosenbalm** Peer Mentoring  
**Dan Service** MS Contact  
Membership Director  
**Don Hedlind** Government Relations

**BOARD MEMBERS**

**Dennis Harbour**  
**Don Hedlind**  
**Joe Heidrick**

**AMBASSADORS**

**Don Wyatt** Idaho  
**Dennis Hooper** Southern OR  
Central OR

**NATIONAL DIRECTOR**

**Bill Gray**

**TRI-STATE OFFICE STAFF**

**Tom Hurt** Executive Director  
**Desiree Arellano** Development  
**Scarlett Guerra** Graphic Designer  
Office Admin

**PARALOG**

**Scarlett Guerra** Graphic Designer

**NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER**

**Matt Paige**

Email: matthewp@pva.org

Phone: 503-412-4762

**PORTLAND/Vancouver VA Primary**

**Care Contact Phone Numbers**  
360-696-4061  
503-220-8262  
ext. 31665 (Portland)  
800-949-1004  
ext. 31665

**After Hours Number**  
888-233-8305

**Portland VA Contact**  
Phone Number  
503-273-5308

**RESOURCES**

**ID Cards**  
[www.vets.gov](http://www.vets.gov)

**eVetRecords**  
[www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

**Vocational Rehab & Employment**  
[www.gibill.gov](http://www.gibill.gov)

**eBenefits**  
[www.benefits.va.gov](http://www.benefits.va.gov)

**Women Veterans Health Care**  
1-855-VA-Woman

**US Disaster Hotline**  
(800) 626 4959

**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**

# Paralog Contents

- 4** President News
- 6** Executive Director Update
- 10** MS Liasion Corner
- 11** Living with MS
- 14** Rec Fund Reimbursement
- 16** Vice President Update
- 18** Developement Coordinator Update
- 20** Government Relations Update
- 24** Sports Corner
- 26** Southern OR Ambassador Report
- 30** Calendar
- 32** Washington Update

***Thank you to all our Sponsors!***

## Event Flyers:

- Page 5 Deep Sea Salmon Fishing Trip
- Page 8 Show and Shine Car Show
- Page 9 Air Gun Competiton
- Page 23 Deep Sea Fishing Schedule
- Page 29 PVA Careers
- Page 36 NVWG 2024
- Page 37 PVA Careers

Cover Photo: Log Cabin in Idaho  
Page 3 Photo: Covered Bridge and Tumalo Creek, OR  
Photos Courtesy of Adobe Stock Images

# President News

*Happy New Year!!!*

2023  
2024



Larry Gardner – President

The Paralyzed Veterans of America Tri- State Chapter wants to say HAPPY NEW YEAR to everyone reading our Paralog magazine. As we go into 2024, the Chapter is working hard to make this year better than last year. We have great office staff, a fantastic Board of Directors, and the Chapter volunteers are growing!

we had both raffle vehicles leading our group. We filled two trailers with members and friends. I pulled the lead trailer loaded with members and Tom pulled the second trailer. Gary Alexander joined us in his tribute Mustang. We were quite the sight to be seen! You don't want to miss out on this year's parade. There's nothing like a parade to honor our heroes!



Our last big event for the 2023 year was the Albany Veterans Day Parade. This is the largest parade west of the Mississippi. In spite of the rain, we had a great turnout! Thankfully, the rain stopped by the time we started rolling. This year

Our monthly schedules are filling up fast with lots of events, sports programs, member meetings, and lots more being added every week. If interested, we keep a list of scheduled events in the office. They are posted in the Paralog magazine. Please see the calendar on page 31 for a list of upcoming events. If anyone wants a list of events, just call the office and we will send one out.

Here at the Chapter, we are looking into doing more events and programs in Central and Eastern Oregon. For this to happen, we need members and volunteers in these

areas to help set up and work the events as needed. Do you live outside the city of Salem? Would you consider helping the Chapter or even becoming an ambassador? If you answered "yes", please give our office a call, so we can talk.



Map Courtesy of Oregon State Univ

Also we are in need of a Sports Director and Coordinators for all areas of Oregon, Idaho, and SW Washington, along with a Membership Director for the Chapter. Please remember, we are here to help in any way we can.

The National Veteran Wheelchair Games this year will take place in New Orleans on July 25th – 30th, 2024. Registration for the games will open February 1st, 2024. This is a reminder

for everyone who plans on attending the games, you need to start, if you haven't already, practicing for your chosen games. You'll want to be ready to do your best and bring home some medals.



I know that a lot of our members like to know ahead of time to plan and schedule an event. One date to remember is the Chapter's annual Members Banquet, this event will be held at Spirit Mt Casino, in Grande Ronde, Oregon on September 21st. Save the date and mark your calendar. You don't want to miss it!

That's all I have for now. If anyone has any questions at all please call the office and we will be glad to help.

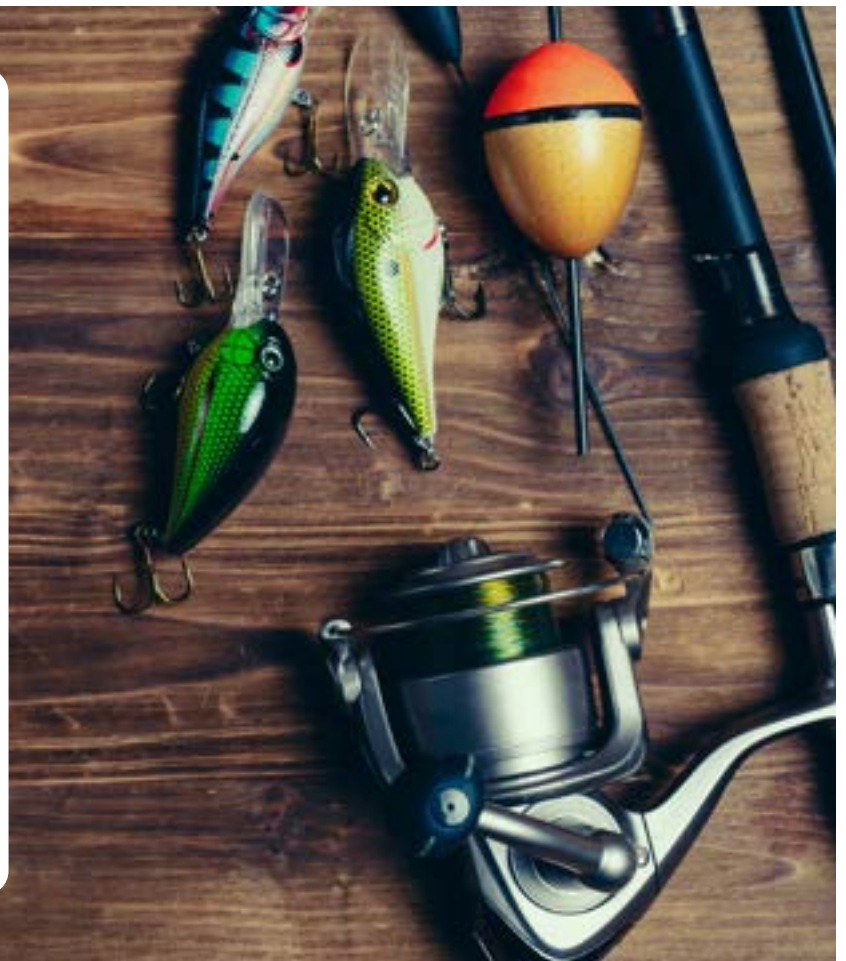
SAVE THE DATE:

Deep Sea  
*Salmon*  
Fishing Trip

\* Sept 9, 2024 \*

\* Check in at 6am\*

RSVP by Aug 30, 2024



# Executive Director Update



2023 National Veterans Wheelchair Games



Tom Hurt – Executive Director

Happy New Year all and welcome to 2024! This is shaping up to be a great year with the fairs and festivals we will be attending, as well as, our team events.

Last year, we started the Air Gun program, and we have had great participation! We will continue holding monthly competition shoots. A big **THANK YOU** to the Albany Pistol and Rifle Club for allowing the Chapter to use their range. We had been talking about getting this program started and all it took was one person to step in and make some calls. Next thing you know, we have an Air Gun program! Our next competition will be January 26th at 11am.



It is that simple. Is there something that you enjoy doing for recreation and you think others might as well? Please let us know and we will help get a new program going. It could be anything from photography, knitting, pottery, painting or any sporting activity. Just give me a call at the office and let's get some new programs going!

Things are moving forward with the new Chapter office out in Silverton, OR. This new facility is going to make it possible to have an assortment of activities for the members to participate in. As of now, I know that some Painting classes are ready to start with Harriet. Also, we may have guitar lessons for the members to take part in as soon as the construction is done. The community in Silverton has welcomed the Tri-State Chapter with open arms. We have given talks to several community groups in the area, the feed back has all been **POSITIVE!!!!** 2024 is going to be an **Awesome Year!!!**

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, this July, in New Orleans. Please get registered early so that we can get your sizes for team uniforms, (we want you looking sharp representing your chapter.) You can register starting February 1st at <https://wheelchairgames.org/athletes/registration/>.



**Dennis Hooper**

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. Remember, if you have not participated in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games and are considered a Novice, your

expenses, travel, and lodging are covered. If you are a returning athlete the Chapter covers 50% of travel and lodging.

Your Board of Directors would like to invite all voting Chapter Members to Zoom in on the monthly board meeting. Your Board meets the last Thursday of the month. Please see the link below for access into the meetings. We would love to have you join in to see your board at work. January's meeting will be on the 25th at 10am. See you then!! <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9908640202?pwd=T3F4bUF4U3RE-dE1sc2hyZDhXVWlOUT09>



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, Desiree will be calling and looking for volunteers.

***Notice to All Members:***

**Starting January 25, 2024  
Join us for our Monthly  
Board Meetings**

**Join us online from the comfort  
of your home  
Starting at 10 am**

**Join us online via Zoom  
or in person at the office. Please **RSVP**  
to join us in person**



**SHOW & SHINE**

# Car Show

**June 8 2024**



Register  
Online



Pre-Registater online \$20

[www.tristatepva.org](http://www.tristatepva.org)

Day of the event \$25

**Come for the Cars and Enjoy the Museums!!!**



**Location: Powerland Heritage Park**  
**3995 Brooklake Rd NE, Salem, OR 97303**  
**Registration: 7 am**  
**Show Time: 9 am - 2 pm • Awards at 2 pm**



**For more Information: Paralyzed Veterans of America Tri-State Chapter**  
**503-362-7998 • [www.TriStatePVA.org](http://www.TriStatePVA.org)**



**January 26, 2024  
11 am to 3 pm**



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



**Come and Take  
Your Best Shot:**

**Tri-State Chapter  
Air Gun  
Competiton!!!**



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



**For More Information:  
PVA Tri-State  
503-362-7998 • [www.TriStatePVA.org](http://www.TriStatePVA.org)**

# MS Liaison Corner



By: Dan Service – MS Liaison/ Treasurer

## “WHAT? I HAVE SMOLDERING MS?”

I was watching the CAN DO MS Webinar on Smoldering MS, and everything I heard were the symptoms I have. My MS does not show any signs of progressing, and neither have my MRI's, there is no visible changes. Yet, I still feel like I am slowly forgetting short term things my wife just asked me to do; I am mumbling my speech more frequently; I truly have to think about where I am driving; my wife says I am quiet more than I used to be, and this causes her to feel lonely.

Marie Moore, Nurse Practitioner, indicated that when they examine a patient in clinic, they do not have a way to prove a person has Smoldering MS. They have found that when a specialized doctor exams results of a high tech MRI closely, they have found minute swelling around the edges of the lesions on the brain, which they say may be the Smoldering MS. This is why it is so important to be honest with our Neurologist about our current symptoms when we visit with them. This is the only way they can determine where you are, Relapsing-remitting MS (RMS),

Secondary-progressive MS (SPMS), or Primary-progressive MS (PPMS). All this time I really couldn't figure out which one of these I had, yet the doctor said I was in a Secondary State of MS.

Dr. Gabriel Pardo, Neurologist, said that if a person is on a therapy treatment program, they should not stop it. He indicated that in the long run, a person who is experiencing Smoldering MS will still be gaining from the therapy they are on. Further discussion from the panel has brought up the fact that there is a therapy treatment (DTK Inhibitors) for Smoldering MS that helps reduce the inflammation in the brain, and they are excited about it, even though it is really not available to be dispersed.

.....Very interesting!



# Living with MS

By: Harriet Schmidt — MS Liaison Assistant

## Living with MS: Thoughts on Being a Part-Time Wheelchair User

My husband and I recently took a trip to California, and I opted to take my manual wheelchair along. We were going to spend time in our favorite theme park, and some museums. Did I really think I would need the wheelchair? Wouldn't it be a hassle getting through the airport? I can walk for at least 90 minutes at a time, when I'm at my best. So why can't I make it through a museum on foot? As much as I enjoy museums, they are very tiring for me, and we can enjoy a much longer visit when I'm in the wheelchair.

As a walking wheelchair user, does using it mean I'm doing worse with my MS now? Is it "weird" because strangers will see me both in a chair and then up, walking around? Am I faking something?

These questions have bothered me, and I think I still hesitate to use the chair when it might really be useful, out of fear that total strangers will suss me out as not "really needing it". The common perception of a wheelchair user is that they cannot walk, but there are many reasons why an ambulatory person might use one. Here is a short list:

- Being at risk of falling due to vision or balance problems
- Recovery from injuries or surgery
- Painful conditions like arthritis
- Heart disease

...and perhaps the biggest one for walking people with MS, fatigue.

Here's how the trip went, from a walking wheelchair user point of view:

I was on foot in the theme park on the first day, and totally overdid it to the point of depletion. On the second day I went into the park by wheelchair. There was a place to park it by each ride, and then of course the whole world could

see me easily stepping out and scrambling into a roller coaster seat like a teenager. And guess what - I don't think anyone gave a toot! We also went to two different museums on our trip, and I rolled myself through both.



At my current stage I have the choice to use it or not, and sometimes I know I am lucky when I can easily switch to walking, like through airport TSA or down the aisle to my airplane seat. Running around the theme park on the first day felt great until I couldn't last any longer and switched to using the chair. The manual wheelchair gives me access to places and activities that I otherwise couldn't enjoy. Or more specifically, I can enjoy them for a far longer time. There is certainly some real, societal pressure that we feel, a judgement that I'm afraid of. A change in the way people look at me and talk to me when I'm at their waist level. The fear of someone noticing when I abandon the chair to walk into the restroom.

If a wheelchair is optional for you, remember that it is a tool and it's completely up to you how and when you want to use it. You don't have to be non-walking to use a wheelchair. You don't owe anyone an explanation, and strangers notice or care far less than we think. If you don't have a manual wheelchair but you'd like to use one for fatigue, please know that they can extend the range of things you can do and places to go. Ask your VA neurologist to request a lightweight one for you and you'll have it for when you need it. Then it's up to you to decide when you need it.

# PARTNERS IN MOBILITY

FOUR LOCATIONS IN OREGON



HILLSBORO  
PORTLAND  
WILSONVILLE  
SPRINGFIELD



## Your Mobility Specialists

### Accessible Vehicles

- Used and New
- Rentals Available
- Financing Available
- Trade-Ins Welcome

### Other Solutions

- Scooters & Lifts
- Driving Aids
- Assist Seats
- Service & Repairs

ABILITY CENTER



UNITED ACCESS



# Recreation Fund Reimbursement

(Voting Members Only)

PVA Tri-State Chapter voting members are eligible to **RECEIVE \$300** 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 Paralog. 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](mailto: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.



Especially now,  
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](http://www.pva.careasy.org)



**Get Paid to Have Fun!**



## **\$300 Rec Fund Reimbursement**

**Dear PVA Tri-State Board and Membership Director:**

**Please note my attached documentation for my \$300 annual Recreation Fund.**

**For my 67th birthday, my wife Marcy and I went to the Painted Hills, located in the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. We stayed in a small duplex at The Oregon Hotel in Mitchell, Oregon (Population: 138).**

**Thank you!**

**Sincerely,  
Jerry R**



**This year we used the Rec Fund to celebrate my 77th Birthday. We drove down the coast to Lincoln City and spent the day visiting the beach and having good sea food. We made reservations to spend the night at a hotel to relax and have more fun.**

**Part of the Rec Fund was used to update our old cell phones, it was time. We could not take pictures of our travels for our memories when we look back.**

**So this year, we had a fun trip and a new phone for my Birthday.**

**Albert B.**

I have pursued the hobby of Bonsai (growing trees in miniatures) for the past 40 years and have about 100 trees in my collection, ranging from fully developed and refined, to just developing. It is a great year-round hobby, as there is something that needs to be done in every season of the year. I have written articles about the fun and challenge of this hobby for past editions of the "Paralog" and "PN News". Due to health concerns, in person, hands on classes are no longer possible. Now, thanks to the Recreation Fund, I can still pursue my hobby and share my art with other Bonsai enthusiasts, all-be-it remotely over the Internet.

I want to thank the Board of Directors, of PVA Tri-State Chapter, for continuing to support the membership Recreation Fund.

Keith W.



To whom it may concern,

I decided to go to a real fun restaurant near Longview, Washington, called "Mrs. Beesley." It was established when I-5 was built back in the 40's or 50's. I think it was a stopover for travelers, truck drivers, and such. The menus are the same and the food was great! They even have Peanutbutter and Jelly sandwiches on the menu. It was a beautiful day on a great short vacation. I'll have to do it more often. I really wanted to try everything on the menu. I'll go again soon.

Thanks!

Bridget S.



## **Snowshoe: Mt Hood National Forest**

**Saturday Jan. 20, 2024**

**10am • Mt. Hood National Forest**

**visit: [www.awloutdoors.org](http://www.awloutdoors.org)**

**for more information**

***Don't forget about the Rec Fund to help with expenses!***

# Vice President Update

Attention Hunters:  
Check out Wyoming  
Disabled Hunters for a  
**GREAT** hunting trip!!!

Curtis Canyon, Elk Range, WY



Bill Gray—Vice President

## 2024 Hunting Opportunities in Wyoming by Wyoming Disabled Hunters Association

If you are interested in a fun experience you need to contact Wyoming Disabled Hunters Association, they are offering a great experience hunting for elk, deer and antelope. Now is the time to plan for a hunt. I've hunted for elk and deer and would like to hunt for a nice antelope, if I get the chance. They really take care of all your needs: lodging, meals, and processing your animal. The following information is what was shared by the President. Good Luck !



Our hunting application process is now online, as we are no longer doing paper applications. You can review the available disabled licenses for which you qualify - go to our website ([www.wyomingdisabledhunters.org](http://www.wyomingdisabledhunters.org)), click on the

“Hunts” link that is the 1st tab from the top left, click on “Applications” in the drop-down menu and review that page of information. You can actually review this info now, as I believe, it should answer many of your questions related to the Wyoming G&F licenses for disabled individuals beforehand. Link to our online hunting application is normally located at the bottom of that page but has been removed since our application period is closed. We'll be re-opening the online application (for our 2024 hunts) around Dec 1st this year, leaving it open until approx. Jan 25th, 2024.

As to the criteria to be allowed to hunt with us, we have a particular process that we follow. Our single MUST-HAVE qualification for in-state/out-of-state hunter applicants is they must qualify and receive a Disabled Hunter license issued by Wyoming Game & Fish. (FYI: A veteran with a 70% or higher disability rating would qualify for a disabled hunter license.) Those 100% VA rated veterans also qualify for the season extension permit. For those non-veteran individuals, they must have some physical disability that fits into one of five boxes and have their doctor sign off on their disabled hunter license applications



to Wyoming G&F. There are two other licenses (Shoot-from-vehicle and Season-Extension) that are available to disabled hunters. Links to these licenses are provided on our same website page described in the preceding paragraph.



Links for all three licenses are provided below, for your convenience. I trust you have your disabled veteran hunter permit but am unsure about other permits you may have. A veteran should use the first link for a disabled hunter license. All such license applications are simple 1-page paper forms, cost nothing and are lifetime licenses. You must submit to Wyoming G&F the original paper applications as they need your and the doctor's original signatures on the applications. Veterans need to attach their VA disability paperwork to their applications as well. A non-veteran needs to have a doctor sign off in the bottom section of the

applicable license applications for which you qualify. You then mail all your license applications to Wyoming Game & Fish at their Cheyenne, WY address located at the bottom of each form. Submitting these applications can be done any time during the year. Applying for, and receiving any additional permits should be completed in this interim period leading up to Dec 1st.

[DISABLED-VETERAN-PERMIT.pdf \(wyo.gov\)](#)

[DISABLED\\_HUNTER\\_PERMIT.pdf \(wyo.gov\)](#)

[HUNTING-SEASON-EXTENSION-PERMIT.pdf \(wyo.gov\)](#)

[SHOOT-FROM-VEHICLE-PERMIT.pdf \(wyo.gov\)](#)

For more information on these hunts please use our Contact page on our website [www.wyoming-disabledhunters.org](http://www.wyoming-disabledhunters.org)

And direct any questions to our President, Terry Skinner or Vice President, Bryce Fauskee

Wyoming Disabled Hunters  
PO Box 2232  
Cody, WY 82414



*Save the Date*

**Members Banquet 2024**

\*\*\*

**September 21st, 2pm  
Spirit Mountain Casino**

# Development Coordinator Update



By: Desiree Arellano - Development Coordinator

Well, Thanksgiving and Christmas have passed by. I hope everyone was able to enjoy even a small part of it, in your own special way. I am feeling grateful for the end of year 2023 and beginning the year 2024. To start this new year, I will report on how PVA Tri-State Chapter finished year 2023 out. With the hopes that this year will be better than the last.

Since the last Paralog article, I was working on our Fall Festival Trunk or Treat, meet and greet. This event was in progress, and is a way to reach out to our new community, and provide information about our new location at 600 N. Water St. Silverton, OR 97381. On Halloween, for 3 hours, PVA. Tri-State Chapter had a great showing from the community. Local Silverton businesses were invited to participate in 3 ways. One was by way of donation, the other was participation or you could do both. We were able to secure 21 businesses, for which 13 physically participated and the rest donated to our event Costume Contest. To name just a few were Starbucks, Dutch Bros, Tillamook Jerky Factory, Silverton Silver Falls Car Wash, Liberty House,

Woodburn Dragstrip Concessions, Roth's IGA, Safeway, Crave Haven Mobile Food Truck, Silverton Fire and Police Dept, Military Vehicles Club, Painted Halo, Angel's Auto Werke, Willamette Valley Bank, Willamette Valley Drain and Sewage, Silver Spur RV Park, First Student Bus Barn, Travel Memory Maker, and Landis Custom Furniture.



The event was a huge success! It brought in 100 costume contest contestants in 3 categories: Under 12, Teen, and Adult. I was able to meet some more of our members in person, not just over the phone. Also, working with some of our new volunteers, who were very helpful and just jumped right in. Some of our Board members had the opportunity to give small tours of our new building to community

members. The donations from the businesses were divided up amongst the 9 prizes. You can find their pictures posted on our social media page. <https://www.facebook.com/PVA-TRISTATE/about>. We had happy winners along with the awesome costumes we got to see.

As soon as November began, it was time to prepare for the Veterans Day parade. This is my first year participating in a veteran's specific parade. We had many members and veterans participate with us this year. PVA Tri-State Chapter was able to drive our current raffle vehicles in the parade, with 2 trailers for our Veterans Members to sit and ride along. Gary Alexander joined us with his Mustang Tribute Car, to support PVA Tri-State Chapter. While the participation was great, the weather was not as cooperative. It rained pretty heavy from when we got there, until right before we started the parade. There were lots of ponchos, umbrellas, blankets, hot chocolate, and coffee going around to make sure everyone was as comfortable, as one could be in this situation.



The parade was still judged under the conditions and PVA Tri-State Chapter earned 3rd place in the non-profit category, so go us! Moving forward, we will just make adjustments to better prepare, making 2024 better than 2023. A big thank you to those who toughed it out!

This Chapter has been getting many phone calls from our future community to see what is going on and what the plans are for the new building. We were able to present this information with two groups already. The Silverton Cub Scouts

and Mt. Angel-Silverton Women's Connection both invited us to speak. At both presentations, we were able to give updated information on how we are moving along, answer questions and offer ways to support PVA Tri-State Chapter. With multiple Volunteer Applications requested, that means more help, Whoo Hoo!



This leaves us with the Air Gun competition and Show Biz Holiday Bazaar. Unfortunately, I did not get to go to the November competition because I went to the Show Biz Holiday Bazaar. While I might have liked to go to the Air Gun Competition more, fundraising at Show Biz was more eventful this year, than it has been in the past. A big thank you to, member Sue Holt, who was not scheduled to volunteer at Show Biz. She came as a spectator of the event. This was very helpful for those who asked questions about PVA Tri-State Chapter, regarding our members. Sue and her husband David ended up sitting with me for a few hours. I very much enjoyed the company.



Moving forward, any member or volunteer who would like to participate or just come hang out with me at an event, go ahead and give me a ring or send me an email at:

Devcoor@tristatepva.org or call (503) 951 - 3256



sacrifice will now get the help they need. I have met many family members that were concerned that their “deceased” Veteran family member/ friend’s ailment, cancer, COPD etc... may have been directly due to their service. Before the PACT Act passage (which PVA advocated for), the VA was not in the position to make the determination, now, they are. We do not know about the ones who have “passed on” but we can make sure that our Vets will get the screenings, benefits, and healthcare they need and have earned with their service and sacrifice.

At PVA, everything we accomplish translates down to our veteran community. Advocating on behalf of them, is an honor and privilege, one we do not take lightly. We are chartered by Congress to cover SCI/D (Spinal Cord Injured/Diseased) Veterans, and our needs are ever-changing. Government Relations involves a wide range of complexities through government agencies and offices. We must navigate them to get our benefits and healthcare needs passed.

This year we will be advocating and lobbying for care giving needs, CAREERS Act to fully staff and train for the future in our VA Hospitals and clinics, transportation, HISA increase and many other legislative and administrative policies.

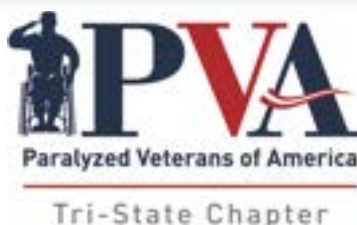


Across the Potomac River from DC is Arlington Cemetery. The place where our heroes and those who sacrificed for our country are honored. Where the McClellan Gate, a 30-foot tall arch has an inscription in gold, above lines from Theodore O'Hara's poem "Bivouac of the Dead" (1847): "On fame's eternal camping ground their silent tents are spread / And glory guards with solemn round, the bivouac of the dead." Other lines from the poem are on the west-facing arch: "Rest on embalmed and sainted dead, dear as the blood ye gave / No impious footsteps here shall tread on the herbage of your grave." We must remember “those who made the ultimate sacrifice” and push forward on their behalf.

You can also advocate as well. PVA has made it easy to “be your own advocate.” Just go to [pva.org](http://pva.org) and click on PVActionForce to contact any Politician (Federal, State and County) on issues you feel need to be addressed. Do not hesitate to call the office, email us, or write a letter and let us know as well. Our VA system is complicated, however the politicians that oversee it are listening to PVA. In every issue of the Paralog, we insert the Washington Update to inform our readers of what is happening in DC. In our states or local community, we also have issues that must be addressed, stay tuned to the Paralog for more information on them, as well.

Have A Blessed, Prosperous and Healthy New Year!

Till then, Stay Frosty!



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



## NORTHWEST MOBILITY

Mobility for Everyone  
Vehicle Accessibility Experts

[Northwestmobility.com](http://Northwestmobility.com)

We have two locations to serve you:

4938 Crater Lake Ave  
Medford, OR 97504  
Local: (541) 930-6120

200 Hawthorne Ave SE Suite F650  
Salem, OR 97301  
Local: (503) 385-8693

# Experience **Freedom and Mobility** with an upgraded vehicle!

### Lease a Brand-new Toyota Sienna LE

BraunAbility Toyota Sienna power foldout conversion with rubber flooring

**\$699** per month\*



### Purchase a brand-new scooter starting at just **\$39** a month\*.



New & Pre-Owned Vehicles  
Wheelchair/Scotter Lifts for your vehicle  
Adaptive Driving Equipment  
Power Chairs, Scooters, and Manual Chairs  
Mobility Aids  
Finance & Leasing on all products & Services  
Rental Vans and Scooters

- 39-month lease, 5,000 miles per year, 20% down payment plus \$1295 bank fee, and all motor vehicle fees due at signing. See dealer for details.
- \$39 per month for 48 months at 9.9% on a Pride Go Go Elite Traveler scooter



# Let's Go Fishing !!!

## 2024 Deep Sea Fishing



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

🚢 Dates and Boarding Times:

- May 20th
- June 11th
- August 14th

- \* Fishing & Shell license required. Available for purchase at Dockside Charters.
- \* Complementary Coffee is provided
- \* Bring your own lunch, snack and drinks

\*\*\*Check in at 5:30am at Dockside Charters\*\*\*

🚢 You MUST RSVP 10 Days Prior to Your Departure Date 🚢

Address:  
270 Coast Guard DR, Depoe Bay  
541-765-2545



PVA Tri-State Chapter • Serving Oregon, Idaho and SW Washington  
503-362-7998 • [www.TriStatePVA.org](http://www.TriStatePVA.org)

# SPORTS

## Corner

Attention Shooters:  
May 22nd is our  
next Trapshoot  
Fundraiser!



By: Larry Gardner – President



The Chapter Air Rifle program has been very successful so far, our shoot is held once a month at the Albany Rifle and Pistol near Albany. ARPC has an indoor range that is a very nice facility for our members, family and friends. The Chapter provides a limited amount of air rifles, all the pellets, and safety glasses; along with, snacks and refreshments. Also, included is the competition and of course, lots of fun. Mark your calendars and come join us for the next air gun shoot January 26th. See flyer on page 9 for more information.

The Deep-Sea Fishing trips, out of Depoe Bay, are scheduled for this year. There will be three bottom fish trips: May 20th, June 11th, and August 14th. We will also have another Salmon fishing trip scheduled Sept. 9th. Please see page 23 for more information. Remember, you need to call the Chapter office and **reserve 10 days** ahead for your seat on the boat. These trips are a lot of fun and you don't want miss out! Don't

wait to call the office. These trips fill up fast.



Next, let's talk about Trap Shooting. We hope it will start picking up this year. We have been talking to the Pacific International Trap Shooting Assoc. (PITA) about their shooting schedule. They say it is going to start improving and the trap clubs are going to do more events during the year, as well. We will do our best to keep everyone posted on the upcoming events.

Another event to add to your calendar is our annual Fun Shoot Fundraiser. It will be held at the



Albany Trap Club, June 22nd. This event is open to the public. You don't have to be an experienced shooter to participate. Even first timers are welcome. Shooters will be placed in groups according to their experience. The Albany Trap Club always has friendly coaches on hand to help with any question and needs. We will also have raffles and a 50/50 drawing to help raise money for the Chapter. All proceeds from the Funshoot Fundraiser will stay with our local Chapter.

Again, the Chapter is in need of a Sports Director and Coordinators for the different sports programs of interest. For anyone who may have some interest in a certain sport, who would like to become a coordinator and make it

happen for our members, please give us a call. We are here to help support you in any way we can.

During January 19th and 20th, we will be setting up and attending the Winter Rod and Speed Show at the Linn County Fairgrounds in Albany, OR. There will be over 100 cars, trucks bikes and more from all over the PNW. The Chapter will have our awareness table there. We will be selling raffle tickets for our 66 Chevy Pickup truck and ATV. Friday the show starts at 6pm to 9pm, and Saturday from 9am to 6pm. There is a volunteer sign up sheet at the office. Please call the office to sign up and see some great cars. Thank you so much!



**NRA**

## PVA Tri-State Air Gun Competition

### November 17, 2023 Top Scores:

Larry Cartales	91 pts
Anthony Brandt	81 pts
Vincent Cartales	72 pts

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

Free Event!  
Win Prizes!!!  
Snack Provided!

**Congratulations to our winners!!!**

**Thank you to everyone who came out!**

**We look forward to seeing you at our next competition**

**January 26, 2024 at 11 am**

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

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

# Southern OR Ambassador Report



Albany Veterans Day Parade



By: Dennis Hooper – Southern Oregon Ambassador

The night time starts earlier this time of year. This is great for highlighting all the Christmas lights and decorations that abound in Southern Oregon. Every year, I like to share some of my favorite holiday festivities that I have visited in the past. There are so many of them, I thought I may have neglected some of them.

One would be hard pressed not to find a "Festival Of Trees", or "Festival Of Lights", somewhere in Southern Oregon. Whatever the name or label, some of my favorite memories are from visiting Shore Acres Park in Charleston. Besides the more tolerable winter weather, you can take your time on the grounds of Shore Acres. The extensive light displays are set up where you can immerse yourself in them. The paved walkways allow you to get so close, you can feel the heat from the bulbs. The decorated cottage in the middle of the grounds is full of Christmas crafts and offer free hot chocolate and warm chocolate chip cookies. Yum!

If you want to stay on the Coast, check out the lights and music Brookings. I enjoy the synchronized light show with the music. They are open every Friday and Saturday night throughout December. You can't beat the Mega Tree Light Show.



I also recommend the light display at River Forks Park, in the Roseburg area. This is a drive thru display with Christmas music broadcasted to your radio. I have never seen as many moving displays as I have seen here. This festival is home to the world's largest Nutcracker, a must see! Their gift shop offers lots of trinkets. They serve hot cider and

chocolate. Also, check out the lights at Greystone Court in Medford, from the 21st to the 24th.

Hopefully, none of us will over indulge in all that hot chocolate and cider and be ready for the snow to hit our mountains. Every year, Oregon Adaptive Sports hosts the Heroes Veterans Ski Weekend, at Mt. Bachelor. Mark your calendar for January 19-21, 2024. This is a great opportunity to get on the slopes with some experienced guides. They take care of your equipment, food and lodging. The scenery is the icing on the snow cake!



Here is a list of upcoming events:

- **Higher Ground Ski Weeks - Sun Valley, ID.** <https://www.highergroundusa.org/veterans-first-responders>

Jan. 7-12. Veterans couples or significant others/supporters.

Jan. 12-17 Veterans and their support, who are involved in the Boise VA recreational program

- **Heroes Ski Weekend-Bend, OR.** <https://oregonadaptivesports.org/events/>

Jan. 19-21 **Veterans with a disability. (physical)** Lakes, CA

<https://disabledsportseasternsierra.org/military-sports/>

Jan. 21-26. Veterans with a disability and supporters

- **National Veteran Summer Sports Clinic in San Diego.**

August 25-30. Registration is open until March 1st

I have some good news to share. The Roseburg VA has opened The Meadows, a new long term/hospice care center. This facility will be able to house 17 patients. That campus is always building a new structure of some sort. I am pleased to see investment into our local VA facilities.

I hope some of this information is helpful. If there is something you all feel should be added or stated in our Paralog, please let myself or your Chapter office know. We have had a very busy year. We are slowly but surely getting our new office location ready to occupy. I want to thank all our members that support us and help out when they can. I have been blessed by meeting so many of you through our Chapter events.

As a reminder, any of our members can Zoom in to our monthly board meetings. You can weigh in on anything from our Air Rifle shoots to our annual Members Banquet decisions. We love hearing from our members!

I hope to see you all in 2024!



# Happy Birthday!!!

Robert Batson	1/3	Kevin Airington	2/5
Tracy Carrol	1/3	Gaetano Amico	2/5
Jeffrey Hayden	1/4	Susan Holt	2/5
Robert Forson	1/4	Gaetano Amico	2/5
Larry Ricklefts	1/7	Susan Holt	2/5
Karen Abramowitz	1/8	Kenneth Thompson	2/5
Thomas Shimon	1/8	Patricia Godwin	2/7
Michael Breshears	1/10	Michael Brewer	2/9
Michael Hays	1/10	Richard Elliott	2/9
Karen Harbour	1/10	Jeremy Van Tress	2/9
John Haber	1/11	Floyd Freemyer	2/10
Gary Wright	1/12	Cathy Roff	2/10
Larry Kotan	1/14	Gerald Schroeder	2/10
Janice Crews	1/15	Nathan Paine	2/11
Ali Jahanfard	1/15	Steven Lakin	2/13
Terrill Lykins	1/15	Charles Wilcox	2/14
George McCart	1/15	Christopher Hulse	2/15
Michael Lugo	1/17	Larry Thompson	2/15
John Buss	1/21	Robin Barney	2/16
Don Wyatt	1/21	Kevin O'Reilly	2/18
Jake Guerra	1/23	Tommy Stratemeyer	2/18
John Phillips	1/25	Brenton Malcom	2/19
Charles (Bill) Gallup	1/25	Lee Presley	2/23
Merle Cutler	1/26	Adam Simon	2/23
Kenneth Cornelius	1/28	Margaret Walker	2/26
Steven Fairin	1/28	David Magee	2/27
Kenneth Feldhaus	1/30	Ronald Weisenberger	2/27

# PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

October 2023

## WORKING TOGETHER TO FIND MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT



Elsia is a Navy veteran who transitioned out of the military in 2022; and went on to finish her Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration in May of 2023. Just prior to graduating, Elsie reached out to VCP's Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), Danielle Hetu, for

career assistance. Together, they revamped her resume & cover letter, conducted job searches and practiced interview skills; however, Elsie was not getting the type of job offers she desired. She had some work trials in the private sector, but really desired a job that had structure, rules, and boundaries. They determined that federal employment would be ideal; and while she was open to all federal jobs, she was drawn to working at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). They created a federal resume and Elsie applied to a few positions but had not heard back on any of them.

So, Danielle brought Elsie's case to the VCP team of counselors, and worked with VRC James Arndt (our federal employment guru) to connect directly with the VA recruiter in PA.

Not only was Elsie interviewed, but was offered and accepted a job as a Veteran Service Representative for the VA. She has started working, and while she knows that there is much to learn, she is thrilled to be working for the VA. Congratulations, Elsie!

## MONTHLY IMPACT

### 19 Client Placements

- 15 Paid Employment
- 2 Education/Training
- 2 Volunteer
  - 19 Veterans
  - 1 Caregiver
  - 4 PVA Members
- The average salary for the 11 clients in full time employment is \$68,740; and the average income for the 4 clients in part time employment is \$29,029.



## Welcome Aboard: David Martinez



We are very excited to introduce the newest member of the Veterans Career Program team, David Martinez – our Employment Analyst on the West Coast. David will be assisting members of the military community

(transitioning service members, veterans, family members and caregivers) with finding meaningful careers by helping with job searches, resume writing and tailoring, certifications, interviewing skills, and much more. He's a Marine Corps veteran; and has a background in recruiting with a large focus on assisting transitioning service members through the DoD SkillBridge program.

*In my free time, you'll find me in the mountains of the Pacific Northwest (Puyallup, WA) looking for the next fishing spot or looking for bigfoot. Serving the veteran community has always been a strong passion of mine and I'm looking forward to working with you all!*

Welcome aboard, David!



[PVA.org/VeteransCareerProgram](https://PVA.org/VeteransCareerProgram)

POWERED BY:



# January

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

 **Office Closed**



# February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	Happy Valentine's Day 14	15	Caregiver Day 16	17
18	19 Presidents Day	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 BOD Meeting		

## Save the Date

Jan 19-20 Winter Rod and Speed Show  
Albany

Jan 26 Air Gun Competition at 11am,  
Albany Rifle & Pistol Club

Feb 19 Mild to Wild Swap Meet  
Oregon State Fairgrounds

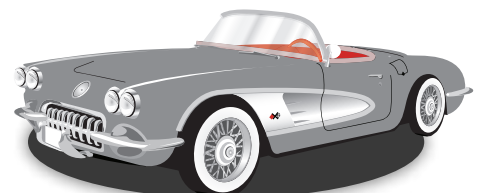
Mar 2-3 Salem Roadster Show  
Oregon State Fairgrounds

Mar 15-17 Portland Roadster Show

Jun 8 Show & Shine Car Show  
Powerland Heritage Park, Brooks

Jun 22 Funshoot Fundraiser, Albany

July 20 Gold Cup Golf Tournament  
McNary Golf Club, Keizer



# Washington Update



Recent news regarding legislation and regulatory actions affecting veterans and people with disabilities.  
Written and produced by the Paralyzed Veterans of America - Government Relations Department

November 30, 2023

Volume 31, Number 21

Check out the PVAction Force page to view alerts and a list of key legislation.

## **JUSTICE FOR ALS VETERANS ACT MARKED UP**

On November 29, the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs marked up several pieces of legislation, including the Justice for ALS Veterans Act (H.R. 3790). This legislation would provide eligible survivors of veterans who died of service-connected ALS the additional monthly Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) benefit typically known as the DIC kicker. The next step is for the full committee to consider the legislation. To ask your member of Congress to support this legislation, please click [here](#).

## **HVAC CHAIRMAN HONORED WITH MANSFIELD AWARD**

On November 15, PVA National President Robert Thomas and Chief Executive Officer Carl Blake awarded the 2023 Gordon H. Mansfield Congressional Leadership Award to House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Mike Bost (R-IL). PVA established this award to recognize strong leadership and support of our legislative priorities in the areas of veterans' health care, benefits, and disability civil rights. Chairman Bost's support was instrumental in the passage of several pieces of legislation important to PVA members, like the Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022, which provides additional automobile

allowances to eligible veterans. He also played a key role in ending the requirement for disabled veterans to unnecessarily reapply for VA clothing allowances year over year, thereby demonstrating his commitment to ensuring veterans get the benefits they earned.

## **HISA BILL INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE**

Senators Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) and John Boozman (R-AR) recently introduced legislation in the Senate that would help disabled veterans and their families make accessibility and safety improvements to their homes. S. 3290, the Autonomy for Disabled Veterans Act, seeks to establish a single grant rate of \$9,000 for VA's Home Improvements and Structural Alterations (HISA) grant program, and then tie that rate to the same index the department's other home modification programs use to calculate annual inflation-related increases. The new rate would be provided to future grant applicants, and be payable regardless of the disability status (service connected or not).

Currently, the lifetime HISA grant benefit is worth up to \$6,800 for veterans who need a housing modification due to a service-connected condition. Veterans who rate 50 percent service-connected may receive the same amount even if a modification is needed due to a non-service-connected disability. Veterans who are not service-connected but are enrolled in the VA health care system can receive up to \$2,000. These rates have not changed since Congress



last adjusted them in 2010, even though the cost of home modifications has risen nearly 50 percent since that time. Years of inattention have diminished the effectiveness of this program, and it is long past time to update grant rates to realistic levels. We appreciate the efforts of Senators Cortez Masto and Boozman to correct that by increasing grant rates and tying them to a formula, so they remain current for years to come.

## **VA RELEASES 2023 NATIONAL VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION ANNUAL REPORT**

The 2023 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report has been released by the VA. The report provides suicide data among veterans and non-veteran U.S. adults. This year, the report includes the first full year of data that was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, 6,392 veterans died by suicide, which is an increase of 114 veterans above 2020. However, the report does highlight several areas of improvement. Suicide rates for men over the age of 75 fell by 8.1 percent and rates among men aged 18-34 fell by 1.9 percent. As with previous annual reports, veterans with recent engagement with the Veterans Health Administration and the Veterans Benefits Administration saw lower numbers of suicide.

There were several impacted groups in 2021 that the report calls out including women veterans, American Indian and Alaska Native veterans, homeless veterans and justice involved veterans. These populations all saw an increase of suicide rates in 2021.

The report also points out the need for a “whole-of-nation public health approach to veteran suicide prevention.” During 2021, suicide increased among the civilian population as well, likely due to the stress of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In response to the report, House Veterans’ Affairs Committee Chairman Mike Bost (R-IL) put out a press release where he said, “As a veteran myself, along with my fellow veterans on our Committee, I know that it is a top priority of ours to continue breaking down the stigma that surrounds mental health, and expand access to assistance that works for every single veteran.

We need our veteran community to know that help is out there, and under my leadership we will continue to explore new methods and initiatives to end this crisis and make a difference in the sad statistics we continue to see year after year. Whether you’re dealing with financial hardship, substance abuse, PTSD, or anything else, the resources are there to get back on track and there is absolutely no shame in asking for a helping hand to get there.

## **LEGISLATION INTRODUCED TO PROMOTE ACCESS TO MODERN ASSISTIVE DEVICES**

Advancements in technology can provide life-changing options for veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D) and a small group of Representatives want to make sure VA properly evaluates those who are clinically eligible for modern assistive devices that promote independence and mobility. H.R. 6373, the Veterans Spinal Trauma Access to New Devices Act (Veterans STAND Act), which was introduced by Representative Jack Bergman (R-MI) and three other members, codifies the requirement that VA offer SCI/D veterans an annual assessment focused on their spinal health. It then takes steps to improve this program by requiring the department to actively conduct outreach to SCI/D veterans on the benefits of having such an annual evaluation and ensuring that consideration of assistive technologies, like personal exoskeleton devices, are part of these assessments. The Veterans STAND Act also directs VA to consult with assistance device experts when developing or changing relevant guidance, and requires biennial reports to Congress on the extent to which veterans are being prescribed and are using personal exoskeletons issued by the VA. The bill does not alter the Veterans Health Administration’s current guidelines on how veterans are assessed for assistive devices, but it helps ensure SCI/D veterans are given the opportunity to be legitimately evaluated for these life-changing technologies.

## **HVAC SUBCOMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON APPEALS**

On November 29, the House Veterans’ Affairs (HVAC), Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs held a hearing titled, “Appeals: Ensuring High Quality Decision-

Making for Veterans' Claims on Appeal." This oversight hearing focused on the appeals process at the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA), with attention on areas such as quality assurance, improved metrics and outcomes, as well as decreasing the time an appeal takes to be appropriately adjudicated.

Many of the witnesses stressed the need to recognize the distinction between the legacy program and appeals under the Appeals Modernization Act (AMA). The AMA was passed in 2017, effectively changing the appeals process and debate exists if it has been implemented as Congress intended. Several concerns raised by Congress and the witnesses were issues that PVA has previously addressed with HVAC, such as unnecessary exams being ordered, too many remands, and a lack of transparency for veterans awaiting the appeals process.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) testified and reiterated several recommendations to improve the appeals process within the BVA. GAO stressed the BVA should establish policies and procedures to gauge its accuracy rate, monitor how veteran law judges incorporate feedback received in the review process, develop and implement evidence-based decision-making processes that address the underlying causes for the most common errors found, and that the Chairman of the BVA should study how to evaluate veteran law judges' consistency in adjudicating decisions.

## **HVAC HOLDS HEARING ON VA'S EHRM**

On November 15, the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Technology Modernization Oversight held a hearing titled, "Electronic Health Record Modernization [EHRM] Deep Dive: System Uptime." The hearing was a "deep dive" into ongoing challenges for users of VA's new electronic health record (EHR) and how they are being addressed. Subcommittee Chairman Matt Rosendale (R-MT) expressed

disappointment in VA's EHR performance, including outages and usability. Ranking Member Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick (D-FL) said she was disappointed Oracle Health did not have a representative at the hearing, after the witness scheduled to appear had to cancel.

Lawmakers turned to Kurt DelBene, Assistant VA Secretary for Information and Technology, and Laura Prietula, the VA's Deputy Chief Information Officer overseeing the EHRM integration office, for answers. DelBene said the VA is working to hold Oracle Health more accountable for system reliability. The VA increased financial consequences under contract re-negotiations in May 2023 related to technical performance and the end-user experience. DelBene said the VA has seen improvements as a result but noted that there are still areas of significant concern: incident-free time, not hitting standards, and end user responsiveness. With the activities and improvements that are now underway, VA leaders are optimistic about the eventual success of the current program reset, the deployment at the Lovell Federal Health Care Center in March 2024, and the future full implementation of the EHR throughout VA. You can watch the hearing [here](#).

## **PVA MEETS WITH DOJ TO DISCUSS ADA ISSUES**

PVA, along with other disability advocates, recently met with the Department of Justice (DOJ), Civil Rights Division to discuss pressing issues for the disability community. The Civil Rights Division investigates, enforces, and issues regulations for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Numerous topics were addressed during the meeting. PVA urged DOJ to issue standards for medical equipment and moveable furniture, including hotel beds. PVA also highlighted the need for transparency and recommended DOJ release public reports with the number of ADA complaints filed, the



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

number of complaints DOJ investigated, and how the complaints were resolved.

## NEWS OF NOTE

### FTA Requests Public Input on Research Goals

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is gathering public input for research goals and innovation for the next five years through the Exploring the Future of Public Transportation Research: A National Online Dialogue. The virtual conversation aims to focus policies and practices to make public transit safer, cleaner, and greener and more resilient, inclusive, and equitable, including for people with disabilities. Members of the public can submit ideas, comment, and vote on ideas submitted by others. Online input will be accepted through January 5, 2024.

### NIH Recognizes People with Disabilities as a Health Disparity Population

On September 26, the National Institutes of Health designated people with disabilities as a health disparity population. A health disparity designation will help encourage research specific to the health issues and unmet health needs of people with disabilities.

### DOJ Sues Colorado for ADA Violations in Nursing Facilities

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) recently sued the state of Colorado for unnecessarily segregating adults with physical disabilities in nursing facilities. A DOJ March

2022 letter of findings outlined violations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and recommended reasonable modifications to the state's long-term care system. The complaint alleges Colorado violates the ADA by discriminating against people with physical disabilities through unnecessary segregation and failing to provide services in the most integrated setting.

## WEBINARS & HEARINGS

### PVA Hosting Webinar on Adaptive Housing Resources

On December 14 at 3 p.m. ET, PVA Government Relations is hosting a webinar on adaptive housing. Joining the Government Relations team will be the Architecture Department, with special guests from the VA and Habitat for Humanity.

VA will provide an overview of their various housing grant programs and eligibility criteria. Habitat for Humanity will share information on their veteran's program and how they're able to help veterans secure stable and appropriate housing. In order to join the webinar, you will need to register.

The webinar will be recorded for those unable to attend.

### Upcoming Veterans' Committee Activities

Please visit the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee webpages for information on upcoming hearings and markups.

## ARE YOU MOVING???

Don't forget to notify the office of your new address, email, and phone number.

If you are a PVA Tri-State member, we will let National PVA know where you are moving to, so you won't miss a single issue.

Please call 503-362-7998

or email [tristatepva@tristatepva.org](mailto:tristatepva@tristatepva.org)





NATIONAL VETERANS  
**WHEELCHAIR  
GAMES**  
43<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL



**JULY 25-30, 2024 • NEW ORLEANS, LA**



Co-Presented by:



#WheelchairGames

# PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

November 2023

## VETERANS HELPING VETERANS



*My name is Mathew Parkes, I am 40 years old. I have been married to the love of my life for 17 years. I joined the United States Army in 2010 as a Horizontal Construction Engineer (12N). I was stationed at Fort Belvoir, Virginia and shortly after was sent for crane school. My unit was the 911th Technical*

*Rescue Engineer Company within the 12th Aviation Battalion. We specialized in collapsed structures and search and rescue. I only tell you this as I feel great pride with my service to this great nation. I finished my service in Fort Carson located in Colorado Springs, Colorado with the 249th Engineers, 4th Infantry Battalion in 2015.*

*In 2016 I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). This completely changed and stole my life. I was unemployed for the next six years, as such, I carried a huge amount of guilt and personal stress as I was nothing like the person I used to be just a short time before. I felt as if I was less of a man as I could no longer provide for my family. I have been a member of the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) since my diagnosis and the PVA has assisted me with almost everything so I am familiar with the organization's values, purpose and respect those that sacrificed so much so others could have fuller, more purpose filled lives. Let me say that after 6 years of struggling to find my place in life and over all purpose. I knew there was something I could do, I just did not know what that was. I went to see my National Service Officer, for a letter I had received from the Veterans Administration. I left with the prospect of applying for a position within the PVA organization. I will forever be grateful and appreciative of such an honor to serve those who have ultimately given so much more than I in the service of the nation. I look forward to the future with this great opportunity.*

*Continued*

## MONTHLY IMPACT

### 22 Client Placements

- 19 Paid Employment
- 3 Education/Training
- 0 Volunteer

- 21 Veterans
- 1 Active Duty
- 2 Caregiver
- 4 PVA Members

- The average salary for the 15 clients in full time employment is \$61,281; and the average income for the 4 clients in part time employment is \$26,570.



*I have worked for the PVA for 1 year as of this week and assisted many veterans with various injuries. I still come to the office earlier than expected and have this overwhelming sense of gratitude for the opportunity that I literally walked into. I still ask myself daily "How am I here, in my PVA office, with coworkers and a business card!" I do consider it to be a personal miracle. Thank you PVA for giving me my hope and dreams back. I will forever be grateful for this opportunity and ultimate honor to serve and help those who have given so much more than I.*

Matthew has been assisted by our Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Alex Spangler, on the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Program (<https://choosework.ssa.gov/>).



*Happy Holidays from the Veterans Career Program Staff!*



[PVA.org/VeteransCareerProgram](https://PVA.org/VeteransCareerProgram)

POWERED BY:





## 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
- Tetraplegia
- 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



**Paralyzed Veterans of America**  
**Tri-State Chapter**  
 3700 Silverton Rd. NE  
 Salem, OR 97305

*Serving Oregon • Idaho • SW Washington*

**Address Service Requested**

Non Profit Org  
 U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
 Salem, OR  
 Permit #779

January/February 2024



**oregon  
 mobility**  
 solutions

**DRIVING YOUR INDEPENDENCE**



**Authorized Dealer**

[www.OregonMobility.com](http://www.OregonMobility.com)

- New and used wheelchair vans
- Veteran discounts and benefits available
- We also install hand controls and lifts
- WE COME TO YOU! We specialize in mobile servicing and sales
- Family-owned and operated
- We also service wheelchairs and scooters

**Call Us Today! 503-991-4100**

**Tigard**

12154 SW Garden Pl  
 Tigard, Oregon 97223

**Salem**

4280 25th Ave NE  
 Salem, Oregon 97301

**We have factory trained and certified technicians with over 40 years combined experience ready to serve you.**

