

January - February 2023  
Volume 27, 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)



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503-220-8262	Portland VA Contact
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800-949-1004	503-273-5308
ext. 31665	

**RESOURCES**

<b>ID Cards</b> <a href="http://www.vets.gov">www.vets.gov</a>	<b>eBenefits</b> <a href="http://www.benefits.va.gov">www.benefits.va.gov</a>
<b>eVetRecords</b> <a href="http://www.archives.gov">www.archives.gov</a>	<b>Women Veterans Health Care</b> 1-855-VA-Woman
<b>Vocational Rehab &amp; Employment</b> <a href="http://www.gibill.gov">www.gibill.gov</a>	<b>US Disaster Hotline</b> (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**

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**Thank you to all our Sponsors!**

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Cover Photo:  
Courtesy of Adobe Stock Images

# President News



2022 Albany Veterans Day Parade



Larry Gardner – President

Happy New Year everyone! Well, we are finally slowing down for the winter months but still have plenty going on. I hope everyone was able to rest and enjoy the holidays.

I want to let everyone know that our yearly Members Banquet for 2023 has already been confirmed. It will be, once again, held at the Chinook Winds Casino in Lincoln City, on September 16th. They have new cooks this year so the food choices will be lots better than our last experience.



Anyone who wants an ADA accessible room needs to call the casino and reserve as soon as possible. We have a special pricing code number to use when you call, it is – **091623PVATRI**. Don't put it off

to long as there are limited accessible rooms available. This is also the weekend of the Celebration of Honor for the veterans at the casino so Chinook Winds will be very busy with lots of fun things to do at the beach. Please call the office if you want more information.

Now, we are in need of a Membership Director, so anyone who would like to try out this position to help the Chapter membership please call the office and ask for Larry or Tom and we would be happy to help with everything we can to get you started.

The Chapter has a new appointed Ambassador in Central Oregon area he is Bryan Schmidt of Lapine. He is very excited to work the area with Steve Bergseng as his assistant, so everyone in Central Oregon, who wants to volunteer at events or has any questions or ideas for fundraising please call Bryan at 541-536-3484. I'm sure he will be glad to hear from you.

That's all I have for now so everyone enjoy and take care. Let's get ready for a great year ahead!



**January 13, 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 Chapter**

**503-362-7998 • [www.TriStatePVA.org](http://www.TriStatePVA.org)**



**NRA**



# Executive Director Update



Tom Hurt – Executive Director



Happy New Year to all! I hope everyone got to spend time with their loved ones over the Holidays. Our last big event for the 2022 year was the Albany Veterans Day Parade. All I can say is: WOW!!! What a great turn out! We filled 2 trailers with members and friends. Larry Gardner pulled the lead trailer loaded with members and I pulled the second trailer. If you have not participated in this parade, you really need to plan on being on our float next year. This parade is the Largest Veterans Day Parade West of the Mississippi.



Welcome to 2023! We have the year packed with activities for you to participate in or just show up and enjoy. Let's start with, in just a few days we will be hosting our first Air Gun competition of the year, on Jan 13th at the Albany Rifle and Pistol Club. Please plan on coming out and

having some fun.

Also, this month we will be attending the Albany Winter Rod and Speed Car Show on the 20th and 21st. We can always use volunteers to be in our booth letting the public know about PVA Tri-State.

January 21-22 Albany Winter Rod & Speed Show



This winter your Board of Directors have been busy setting up events and activities for this year, such as the annual Deep Sea Fishing trips out of Depoe Bay. We will have three again this year and we are bringing back the Salmon Fishing trip. So, if you like to get out on the water and do some fishing, our first trip will be in May. We will **REQUIRE** you to **pre-register at least 10 days before the trip**. See Page 20 for Fishing Dates. If you just show up and are not on the list, the trip will not be covered by the Chapter and you will be responsible for paying for

your own fishing (if they still have room on the boat). (SO, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE CALLED IN TO REGISTER WITH THE CHAPTER OFFICE!)



We have been working on the schedule for your member meetings. As of now locations are looking like Bowman Pond down out of Winston, St Louis Ponds out of the Gervis Area and Hagg Lake out of the Forest Grove area. We are still looking for additional areas to have more member meetings. If you have an idea that you think would be a good place to gather and have a group of members get together, give Larry a call at the Chapter office.

Those of you who know me know that I do like to plan things in advance, that being said the Annual Show and Shine Car show will be June 10th at the Hagers Grove Home Depot this year. We are always looking for help with this event, from getting the word out to actually being at the show judging cars.

We have also set the date for the Annual Members Banquet. We have moved it back to Chinook Winds Resort for 2023. The banquet chef has been replaced so the food has been greatly improved. So save the date of September 16, 2023. Come for the banquet and stay for the weekend. This same weekend at Chinook Winds is their Celebration of Honor (this is a Great Patriotic Event). We have blocked out several rooms for the banquet, so when reserving a room here is the process.

Hotel Booking options:

<https://bookings.travelclick.com/99805#/guestsandrooms>

Add Code drop down > Group Attendee > **091623PVATRI** > hit add code

Room types will pop up with all blocked room types available with pricing included.

Or call / email myself [exec.dir@tristatepva.org](mailto:exec.dir@tristatepva.org) or call Sabrina or Barry 541-996-1062 to make reservations.

There is NO other way to describe the upcoming month of July but Cram Packed. We will start the month off as the Hosting Chapter for the National Veteran Wheelchair Games.

Registration for the Games opens Feb 1st thru April 5th. If you are planning on participating in the Games keep the Chapter informed, the Chapter will be supporting all of the Tri-State Chapter Members that are competing.



That same weekend is the Marion County Fair. If you have been to this fair, then you know that we usually spearhead the Real Heroes section of this county Fair. We surround the Real Heroes section with over 50 US Flags. We will also draw the winner for the CF Moto ATV 7/9/23.

As soon as the Marion County Fair and the Wheelchair Games are over, we move right into setup of our largest one Day Fundraising Event and that is our Annual Gold Cup Golf Tournament out at McNary Golf Club in Keizer. This event has grown beyond my expectations. Last year not only did we have a FULL tournament with golfers supporting your Chapter but every Sponsorship opportunity had been spoken for! If you golf you are encouraged to participate. However, you don't have to golf to come on out and lend a hand making this years event even more successful than last year's.

Those are just some of the highlights of this new year. There are so many more activities we are participating in, so keep an eye on the Paralog as well as, additional flyers and post cards coming from the Chapter office. We want you to be involved and come out and play with us. If you have any questions or want additional information on any of these events or have an idea of something else you would like your Board to look at, give us a call at the chapter office. 503-362-7998 or you can email me directly at [exec.dir@tristatepva.org](mailto:exec.dir@tristatepva.org)

Get out there and have FUN and Stay SAFE !!!!

**June 10 2023**



Tri-State Chapter

**SHOW & SHINE**

# Car Show

**TITLE SPONSOR**

?????



Vehicle Registration \$15  
[www.oregonpva.org](http://www.oregonpva.org)



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  
503-362-7998 • [www.TriStatePVA.org](http://www.TriStatePVA.org)



# PARTNERS IN MOBILITY

FOUR LOCATIONS IN OREGON



 **ABILITY CENTER**  
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Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles & Equipment  
UNITEDACCESS.COM



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PORTLAND  
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- Rentals Available
- Financing Available
- Trade-Ins Welcome

### Other Solutions

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

ABILITY CENTER



UNITED ACCESS



# MS Liaison Corner



Dan Service—MS Liaison

Since I have become the MS Liaison for our PVA Tri-State Chapter, I have joined a couple of different Multiple Sclerosis organization that I did not know about. The first organization was [www.MyMSTeam.com](http://www.MyMSTeam.com). There are articles offered every couple of days, such as, “How to Fight Fatigue with MS”, “Best Foods for Multiple Sclerosis”, and “Managing MS Muscle Weakness”. The members are all trying to figure out their own situations dealing with their MS. This site gives us all an opportunity to share, to vent, and to receive feedback.



The other MS organization I joined was, [www.caretwillhealth](http://www.caretwillhealth.com) (Twil Care). This site also allows us an opportunity to share, to vent, and to receive feedback. This site also offers articles like, “Learn about mindfulness & self-reflection”, “Try an audio meditation”, and “Enjoy science-backed activities or games.” These are just a few I took off the website.

I contacted the Portland VA Multiple Sclerosis Social Worker, Lisa Strauss, and had a conversation about trying to put together a program for you, our members. I informed her about other web sites, and how they offer all kinds of advice, and articles, from Doctors, and Specialist, so I didn't feel I needed to do that. She informed

me that she is trying to put together something similar for all the Portland VA MS members. We have been given permission to pass on any information the VA's MS Centers of Excellence sends out.

There is a MS & VETS podcast series that is posted on the 2nd Monday of each month. The November Podcast was “Balance and Falls in Multiple Sclerosis,” and Octobers Podcast was, “Improving Sleep for People with MS.” The flyer, on the next page, “VA Multiple Sclerosis Centers of Excellence e-Newsletter for Veterans with Multiple Sclerosis” gives you the information about how to receive VA MS Information.

At this point I am needing you to tell me what you want us to include in a program you would be interested in participating in? There is the possibility of gathering in person, or virtually. We might be able to put together some sort of “Retreat” for our members, and their Caregivers. Our National PVA office also wants you to be involved in their different gatherings they have all across the United States. Please let me know what you would like to see. You can send me an email [dservice17@gmail.com](mailto:dservice17@gmail.com), or you can call me, (503) 364-9015, or call the office (503) 362-7998, We are here to help anyway we can.



# VA Multiple Sclerosis Centers of Excellence

## e-Newsletter for Veterans with Multiple Sclerosis

Sign up to receive important information from the VA's MS Centers of Excellence about a variety of topics important to Veterans living their best lives with MS, such as

- ☒ complementary and alternative therapies,
- ☒ disease modifying therapies,
- ☒ educational opportunities,
- ☒ healthy living and whole health,
- ☒ rehabilitation services,
- ☒ research in VA,
- ☒ symptom management,
- ☒ VA benefits and resources, and
- ☒ Veterans stories about living with MS.



To receive this important newsletter please follow the directions below.

1. G o to **[www.va.gov/MS](http://www.va.gov/MS)**.
2. In the navigation pane on the left side of the home page screen, click on the grey box where the text says “**Sign up to receive VA MS Information!**”.
3. O nce on the new webpage, click on the blue text bubble “**Click to sign up for VA MS information**” and follow the prompts for information.

Once you are signed up, our quarterly MS Veteran electronic newsletter will be delivered directly to your inbox, as well as announcements about virtual webinars developed by or in collaboration with VA.

Your e-mail address will not be shared with others. The newsletter e-mails will come from "veteranshealth@public.govdelivery.com". Questions should be sent to [MSCentersofExcellence@va.gov](mailto:MSCentersofExcellence@va.gov).

# Playing Music is Good for MS!!!

By: Harriet Schmidt, MS Liaison Asst.

When I was diagnosed with MS in 2007, it had been years since I'd played any musical instruments.

Ten years later, a friend was trying to give away her piano. Having played piano as a child, I was very tempted, but I didn't feel that we had room for it in the house. I then got the idea to buy a digital piano. These have come a long way from the old synthesizers, and now they make a pretty good version of a piano that doesn't require tuning or four strong adults to move it.



With my new piano I played, and practiced, and took lessons from a teacher. I can now play better than when I left off as a teenager. I find music books of the kind of songs I enjoy, and I get very motivated to learn each piece just because I want to hear it. Adele's "Someone Like You" or even Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody". I play a lot of classical music too. My teacher would be horrified but I adapt certain classical pieces to be easier to play, by leaving out the most difficult notes. I'm not playing for a recital, or to make the next grade, but for at least an hour a day I play the piano purely because I like it. My cats usually come close while I play, too.

There are research studies showing many different physical and mental benefits for people with MS playing and listening to music. I feel that it goes beyond the obvious relaxation and stress reduction. For me, I believe it keeps my brain active. This is not scientific, but it seems to me that so many things are happening at

the same time while playing: reading the notes, translating the sheet music into actions with my hands, making different motions with my left hand and right hand. I'm memorizing parts, and there is a lot of repetition. There's rhythm and tone and volume. The harmony between the two parts feels exquisite, even on the simplest Christmas carol. I enjoy a good feeling of making progress when I learn new pieces.

Some of the improvements for people with MS from playing music include:

- Mood
- Verbal learning and short-term memory
- Speech pronunciation and timing (more so from singing therapy)
- Hand dexterity
- Coordination, concentration and endurance

[[www.va.gov/MS/veterans/medications/music\\_therapy\\_in\\_multiple\\_sclerosis.asp](http://www.va.gov/MS/veterans/medications/music_therapy_in_multiple_sclerosis.asp)]

If you have an old instrument at home that you haven't been using, your old high school trumpet or a child's xylophone or your mom's heirloom piano, perhaps you should consider dusting it off and making your own music with it.



# 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](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!



## \$250 Rec Fund Reimbursement

Dear PVA Tri-State,

I am a quad who needs help with ADL's. I have a wonderful girl from Mexico who helps me. She studied for her citizenship and I was able to go to the ceremony at the Moda Center. We were able to take her and her sister to dinner at the Roadhouse in Gresham.

Thank you so much!  
Steve G.



Dear PVA Tri-State Board and Membership Director:

Please note my attached documentation for my \$250 annual Recreation Fund. I purchased the following items in the past 30 days. I have attached the order/payment records.

For my 66th birthday, we did a road trip to Las Vegas. We stayed in Reno for a day and had lunch at Lake Tahoe. In Las Vegas, we stayed at Circus Circus, went to America's Got Talent, The Blue Man Group, and Rich Little shows at the MGM Luxor and the Tropicana, went down Fremont Street with its overhead zip lines and laser art on the street-long ceiling, and visited the West Rim of the Grand Canyon.



Thank you!

Sincerely,  
Jerry R.

Thank you PVA Tri-State Rec Fund!

We had a wonderful trip to the coast and celebrated our 52nd Wedding Anniversary. We stayed at a hotel and had a wonderful dinner.

Thank you,  
Albert B.





# NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES

## GET PUMPED FOR PORTLAND

July 4–9, 2023 • Portland, OR

Join 500+ Veterans  
competing in 22 sports!



WheelchairGames.org  
#WheelchairGames

Co-Presented by:



# National Service Officer



By Matt Paige - Regional Service Officer

Happy New Year!!!

I hope everyone enjoyed the Thanksgiving celebration. I am getting ready to enjoy the first anniversary with Paralyzed Veterans of America. Looking forward to improving on our success in obtaining the benefits due to our clients.

I would like to extend our assistance to our members who feel that they would like to pursue an increase of their VA disability rating. We do periodically review our members' VA records to see if an increase is appropriate. However, there is no need to wait for us to call you. So please, reach out to our office via phone or email (preferred method) and we will review your file and present options for filing a new claim.

I have also found several individuals who in the past have been incorrectly denied service connection for service connection of a disability. If you feel this has happened to you, please contact us. Even if you had been previously told that you did not have an option to appeal or otherwise seek a higher rating. We will evaluate the evidence in your file and let you know how we can move forward.

I know that several Tri State members have given their power of attorney to other service organizations. I would ask them to consider switching their POA to PVA. Margaret and I possess over thirty years of experience in providing claims assistance to veterans. This of course gives us a superior knowledge of the programs available to our clients. We also have a deep understanding of the laws and regulations that govern the VA claims process.

PVA's National Headquarters demands that its field offices keep abreast of the latest developments regarding current changes impacting VA benefits. The latest of course being H.R. 724 - PACT Act. This law increases the areas the VA concedes that veterans were exposed to Agent Orange. It also covers the new laws in regard to burn pit exposure in the Middle East and Afghanistan. We encourage everyone to read the VA's page addressing the changes the PACT Act has made in the award of benefits. Then contact our office so we can begin filing a claim if you meet the VA's criteria.

We feel our expertise, coupled with a passion for achieving the best possible results, allows us to ensure Tri State members receive outstanding representation. So please, if you currently are not represented by PVA consider switching power of attorney to us. We will do our best to have the benefits you've earned awarded to you.

Oh, if you haven't seen this yet, please follow this link to KATU's Everyday Heroes stories. Our own Margaret Leach featured on Veteran's Day. A well-earned recognition that doesn't come close to telling the true story of what Margaret has meant to our Veteran's. Thank you, Margaret.

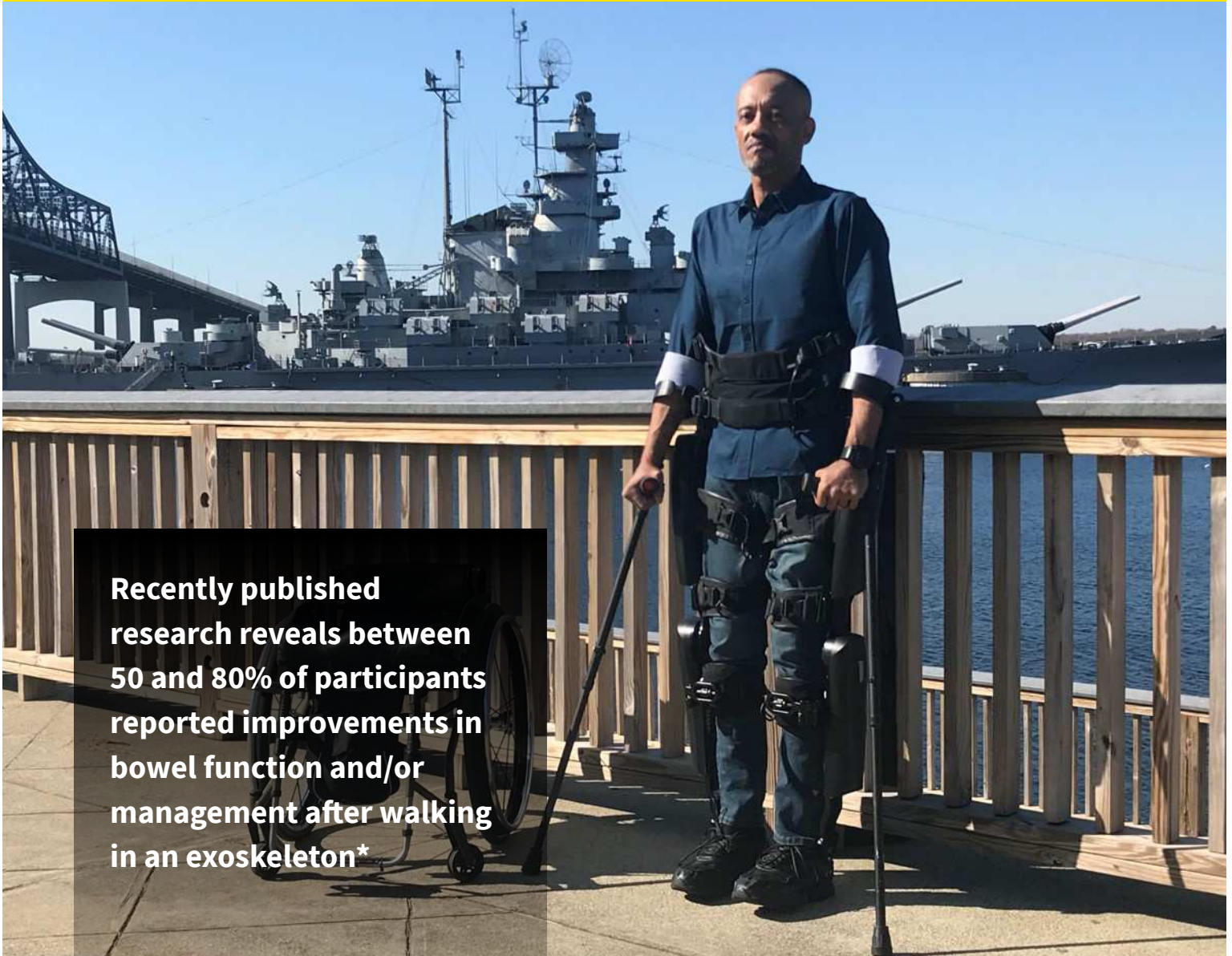
<https://katu.com/features/everyday-heroes/portland-woman-dedicates-career-to-local-veterans#>



Margaret Leach  
& Larry Gardner



## Want To Improve Your Bowel Function?



Recently published research reveals between 50 and 80% of participants reported improvements in bowel function and/or management after walking in an exoskeleton\*

**Did you know Paralyzed US Veterans May be Eligible for a ReWalk Personal Exoskeleton?**

**Contact ReWalk for more Information:  
[rewalk.com/contact](https://rewalk.com/contact) or  
508.251.1154 option 2**

# Membership Update



Don Hedlind

Hello and Happy New Year to all our members! I hope you had a busy and exciting year. We are busy working on this year's schedule to make sure events are held in your area for you to attend. We had a good 2022 and now we are working on bringing you an even more event-filled one this year. Many of the events that we had last year will be repeated this year.

We will be attending car shows, fairs, festivals, and conferences. We currently have our ATV Raffle going on which we will be giving away at the 2023 Marion County Fair in Salem this year. We are working on purchasing a new one that will replace our current one after it is given away at the fair.



Speaking of fairs, I would like to tell you a cool story about a boy who was in awe of something shiny and big. What was in awe of you ask? He was in awe of a 1977 Yellow Corvette with the cool chrome side pipes that was our latest raffle car. It was Labor Day morning at the State Fair in Salem, the sun was shining; however, it was still cool and comfortable. Tom Hurt and I were working the booth, when this boy about 10 years old came up to me and said, "Wow cool car!" I replied, "yeah it's really Awesome, isn't it?" This is a scenario that was repeated many times during festivals, car shows and fairs since we first started selling tickets for the Corvette.

After oohing and awing over the car, I told him to get his daddy to buy him a \$10 ticket and maybe he would win it. I told him "someone is going to win this car, we are giving it away this afternoon, maybe it will be you." Now as you know, \$10 is a lot of money to a boy. He looked around for awhile and then went over to his dad and brought him over to the car. After really looking the car over, he proceeded to convince him to buy a ticket

with his money he had for the fair. Dad ended up purchasing 2 golden tickets. I told the boy to come back later, maybe he had the lucky ticket. We proceeded to work as hard as we could to sell as many tickets as we could before noon. Once noon hit, we could no longer sell tickets, it was the cutoff time. The car would be given away at 2PM.

After inventory and accounting was complete, Tom took the over 3,400 tickets sold from all events throughout the year, put them in a big plastic jar and started shaking them up. He walked around for about 15 minutes shaking the jar, a crowd was forming, the time was quickly approaching for the giveaway. We even had Senator Candidate Jo Rae Perkins who had been buying tickets from us during different events standing there ready to see who was going to win; she kept telling me at every event "Don I'm going to win that car!"



It was time to give our Yellow Corvette away, our photographer Scarlett was in the crowd. Tom got someone from the crowd to draw the ticket, it was handed to him, he could not read the name, so he proceeded to call the phone number. A phone in the crowd started ringing, I looked out into the crowd and what did I see? I saw the father of the boy answer the phone and talk to Tom. Scarlett swung her camera around just in time to snap a picture of the father answering the call.

As a volunteer who had been to events when we give the car or ATV away, I could not believe what had just happened, the crowd erupted with applause and the father and son quickly made their way to the front, the look on that young

man's face was priceless. Other times when we give our cars or ATV's away the phone call is to someone who was not present, this time was much more exciting and different.



Events like this make it rewarding to be a part of PVA Tri-State and the many events we are at. That old saying "you had to be there" plays perfectly here. It really was neat, and this could be you, when you participate in our events or come to our booths at the fairs and festivals. When we interact with the public, we find that there are many patriotic folks who want to contribute, others who want to talk and many who purchase our goods and tickets. Make it a point to be there this year. If you would like to see the video of the real-time event, it is posted on our Facebook page.



It's a New Year, and your Chapter is here for you, whatever your need may be, we have Ambassadors in every area; they are listed in this Paralog and are willing and if able to, will help you with whatever you need may be or get you in touch with the appropriate person for the request. Give them a call. Till then...



Let's Go Fishing!



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



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

# SPORTS

*Corner*



2022 Trapshoot Fundraiser



By: Larry Gardner

Here we are going into a New Year, January 13, 2023 will be our next Air Gun shoot at the Albany Rifle and Pistol Club. We have air rifles and pellets available, so all you have to do is come on out and have a good time. The event will start at 12pm and goes until about 3pm. If you have never tried Air Gun shooting, I think you would enjoy the competition with other members.

Our trap shooting events this time of year have entered the slow off season, although the clubs still have regular hours each week open for shooting. Albany Trap Club has a multiplex shoot on January 8th starting at 11 am, and February 12th at 11 am.

The Chapter has scheduled four Deep Sea Fishing trips for 2023, three bottom fish trips, and one salmon trip. Bottom fish trips are May 22nd, June 13th, and August 16th, with a salmon trip September 11th. To get a place on the boat you **MUST** be registered thru the PVA Tri-State office **10 Days Prior** to t

he fishing date you are going to attend, that gives Dockside Charters time to fill any vacancies on the boat.



The Chapter is in need of a Sports Director and Coordinators for our sports programs like Bowling, Air Guns, Trap Shooting, Archery, Fishing, and any other sports our members would like to participate in. Please call me at 503-362-7998 or 503-930-9589 if you have any interest in helping our members get involved in more sports activities. As a team let's work hard to make this year much better than last.

Thank you all so much!

**Sports Director  
&  
Coordinators Needed**

# Southern OR Ambassador Report



Dennis on the Rogue River



By Dennis Hooper – Southern Oregon Ambassador

I hope none of you have slowed down yet. There is still lots to do around our area. I first want to thank all of our members that rode on our parade floats at the Veteran's Day Parade. I hope everyone had a great time waving to the crowd.

I must share a wonderful experience we found for veterans in Southern Oregon. Warrior Impact takes veterans and their friend on a 5 day/4 night camping and rafting trip on the lower Rogue River. They do several trips each year. We were fortunate to take the last one on November 10-15. I'm not going to lie, this trip is barely wheelchair accessible. But, it is possible. The guides take real good care of you and the meals were out of this world!

You start at Almeda Campground and pull out at Foster Bar, about 100 miles downstream. These folks provide the tents, cots, fishing gear...all at no cost. They will give you as much assistance as you ask for. They always helped with our tent and gear. Now that time of year is a bit cold, but we were the only ones on the river and the fish were very hungry! The guides knew a lot of good spots.



Each campsite had a great view and enough privacy to make it romantic, if need be. There were opportunities to hike and get some great stories and some awesome scenery! We went past Rum Creek Falls, Paradise

Falls, Whiskey Falls and Paradise Lodge. I got to go inside the last mining cabin, still standing. If you want some adventure that is fairly close to home, give Kevin a call on the Warrior Impact Facebook page. You won't be disappointed.



Although the temperature drops, I still enjoy the numerous Christmas parades in our area. The Snowflake Festival in Klamath Falls never disappoints and as luck would have it, the parades are on different days. This means a person could have visited the Timber Truckers Light Parade in Myrtle Creek on December 10 and then the nice parade in Sutherlin on December 17.

Remember, if parades are too cold for you, the Festival of Light displays in Medford, Roseburg and Shore Acres, are open into the new year.

Ah, the New Year. Your Chapter has many things on the agenda for 2023. All of our members can make suggestions for growing and refining our membership. We have an Air Gun shoot in January and our annual Show and Shine Car Show will be a big event in June. Keep up with our event calendar or contact myself or the Chapter office for the latest times, dates and news. We love to hear from our members. It makes us tick!



**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

# Idaho Ambassador Report



Sun Valley, Idaho

Photo courtesy :  
We Know Boise Real Estate



By Donald Wyatt – Idaho Ambassador

The year 2022 is history and good riddance I say. I look forward for better times in 2023. I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and I hope the New Year will be a happy, healthy and prosperous one for all of you.

I was having difficulty finding something to write about for this issue because, lets face it, I haven't done much. So, I thought I would just give an update.

About a year ago I got an email from Tom about the University of Alabama, Birmingham that was doing a study on SCI/D and stress. They were looking for volunteers. I volunteered. After answering a bunch of survey questions, I was part of the group that would meet via Zoom once a week. It was called "Write to Heal" and we finished in June. The encouragement I got from that interaction convinced me to check on getting a publisher for one of my short stories. While in the Boise VA hospital I did find a publisher and the book, all be it a short one, should be out late winter or early spring. The process

has taken longer than I expected but I guess they have other authors to contend with.

The University of Alabama, Birmingham (UAB) is continuing the "Write to Heal" this winter and I am part of that as well. They plan to take some of the participant's writings and turn them into interpretative dance. I have been asked if I would be able to come to Birmingham in October of 2023 for two weeks to be a part of the dance group. I've said no. I can't see myself rolling around in some kind of expressive dance. It would be interesting though, especially if I brought my John Deere green and yellow wheelchair.

In the original study they were looking for recently injured SCI/D participants. I have 35 years in a chair and I think they made me part of the group as an outlier because I don't fit in anywhere.

Be safe and healthy everyone!





# *Happy Birthday !!!*

Janice Crews	1/15	Floyd Freemyer	2/10
Terrill Lykins	1/15	Cathy Roff	2/10
George McCart	1/15	Gerald Schroeder	2/10
Michael Lugo	1/17	Nathan Paine	2/11
John Buss	1/21	Steven Lakin	2/13
Donald Wyatt	1/21	Charles Wilcox	2/14
Jake Guerra	1/23	Christopher Hulse	2/15
John Phillips	1/25	Kevin O'Reilly	2/18
Merle Cutler	1/26	Tommy Stratemeyer	2/18
Kenneth Cornelius	1/28	Charlene Cash	2/22
Steven Fairin	1/28	Lee Presley	2/23
Kenneth Feldhaus	1/30	Adam Simon	2/23
Kevin Airington	2/5	Margaret Walker	2/26
Gaetano Amico	2/5	David Magee	2/27
Susan Holt	2/5	Ronald Weisenberger	2/27
Kenneth Thompson	2/5	Niccole Geck	2/28
Patricia Godwin	2/7		
Richard Elliott	2/9		

# January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
New Year's Day 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	<i>MLK Day</i>	23	24	25	26	27
		Belly Laugh Day		BOD Meeting		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	14 <i>Happy Valentine's Day</i>	15	16	17	18
19	20 <i>President's Day</i>	21	22	23 BOD Meeting	24	25
26	27	28				

 Office Closed

## Save the Date

- |             |   |         |   |
|-------------|---|---------|---|
| Jan. 13     | Air Gun Competition                                   | June 13 | Deep Sea Fishing Trip<br>Departs at 5:30am, Depoe Bay |
| Jan 20 - 21 | Winter Rod & Speed Show,<br>Albany                    | July 15 | Gold Cup Golf Tournament                              |
| Mar 17 - 19 | Portland Roadster Show                                | Aug 16  | Deep Sea Fishing Trip<br>Departs at 5:30am, Depoe Bay |
| Apr 7 - 8   | Pear Blossom Festival                                 | Sept 11 | Salmon Fishing Trip<br>Departs at 6am, Depoe Bay      |
| May 22      | Deep Sea Fishing trip<br>Departs at 5:30am, Depoe Bay | Sept 16 | Annual Members Banquet,<br>Chinook Winds Casino       |
| Jun 10      | Show & Shine Car Show                                 |         |   |



# 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

November 30, 2022

Volume 30, Number 20

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

## HOUSE TAKES ACTION ON CLOTHING ALLOWANCE LEGISLATION

The House is preparing to vote on H.R. 4772, the Mark O'Brien VA Clothing Allowance Improvement Act. This important legislation would make clothing allowance payments automatic until the VA determines the veteran is no longer eligible to receive the benefit. If the legislation passes the House, it will then go to the Senate for further consideration. The Senate companion bill to this legislation is S. 2513, the Brian Neuman VA Clothing Allowance Improvement Act. Please contact your senators about this legislation by clicking [here](#).

## CRUNCH TIME FOR CONGRESS

Lawmakers have a limited number of legislative days remaining in the 117th Congress to tackle top priorities like funding the government beyond December 16 and passing the annual defense policy bill. Having to consider so many competing priorities in a constrained timeframe means the risk of having one of our top goals being overlooked has never been higher.

Over the Thanksgiving break, PVA and 20 other organizations urged the Senate to quickly pass H.R. 3304, the AUTO for Veterans Act, which provides eligible veterans with an additional automobile allowance and provides statutory protections for certain services offered through VA's Automobile Adaptive Equipment program. This is now a time sensitive issue so call your senators and urge quick passage of this bill.

## PVA Testifies at House Hearing on Improving Access to Air Travel

On November 17, the House Transportation and Infrastructure, Aviation Subcommittee held a hearing titled, "Accessible Air Travel: Addressing Challenges for Passengers with Disabilities." The hearing featured testimony from Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI) who is retiring this year and is the sponsor for the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act (H.R. 1696). Rep. Langevin spoke of the difficulties he has encountered as a wheelchair user in air travel and the need for reform.

Heather Ansley, Associate Executive Director of Government Relations, testified on behalf of PVA. Ms. Ansley noted that the major problem with commercial air travel is that aircraft are required to have very few accessible features. She urged Congress to make systemic improvements in air travel in the next FAA Reauthorization by including the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act. She also called on Congress to include language directing appropriate agencies and administrations to take the next steps as outlined in a September 2021 report on in cabin wheelchair restraint systems.

Other witnesses included Brian Ryks, Executive Director and CEO Metropolitan Airports Commission (Minneapolis/St. Paul) on behalf of Airports Council International—North America; Matt Scott, Paralympian, Team USA; Heather Krause, Director, Physical Infrastructure, Government Accountability Office; and Graham Keithley, Vice President and Associate General Counsel, Airlines for America. To watch the hearing, please [click here](#).

To read the testimony from all of the witnesses, please click [here](#).

## **SENATE VETERANS' COMMITTEE EXAMINES PACT ACT IMPLEMENTATION**

The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act (P.L. 117-168), which expands VA health care and benefits for veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances, was signed into law in August. On November 16, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee held a hearing to learn from top VA officials about the implementation of this important legislation. Dr. Shereef Elnahal, VA Under Secretary for Health, led the panel of VA witnesses who fielded a number of questions from Committee members about the law.

Dr. Elnahal told the Committee that VA is working quickly to implement many of the provisions of the PACT Act. He outlined three key priorities: reaching every veteran who may qualify for the new care and benefits; building capacity to meet the needs of every veteran seeking VA care; and initiating internal changes to help VA deal with these issues in the future. He said VA is putting out information about the bill through every means possible and that the Department is using all of the authorities granted by Congress to hire more people, and to bring them on board quickly. He also discussed the new toxic exposure screening for veterans, which VA recently initiated.

Another witness, Mr. Joshua Jacobs, Senior Advisor for Policy Performing the Delegable Duties of the Under Secretary for Benefits, spoke of the Department's advanced preparation for the Act's passage and ongoing efforts to hire and train more claims processors. He also detailed additional steps that the VA will be using to process claims which are being filed in record numbers.

Many of the questions that followed centered on the Department's ability to provide care for increasing numbers of veterans seeking care for their toxic exposures. Dr. Elnahal and other VA witnesses stressed that VA has aggressively implemented and is using many of the new

hiring authorities granted by Congress. For example, since the bill was passed, they have hired 700 more housekeeping aides.

Committee members were especially concerned with VA's efforts to get the word out about the law and veterans' potential eligibility for new benefits or services. Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) asked about VA's efforts to inform younger women veterans of the necessity to be screened for breast cancer and Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-NH) inquired how VA is coordinating with the Defense Department to ensure that service members are aware of the PACT Act as they leave the military. Dr. Elnahal noted breast cancer is a type of "reproductive cancer" potentially covered by the Act. Also, VA is using multiple media platforms to reach women veterans and active duty servicemembers alike in addition to the Transition Assistance Program for the latter group. Some lawmakers also expressed concern with various organizations taking advantage of the Camp Lejeune Act which was a provision of the larger PACT Act.

## **PVA SUBMITS COMMENTS ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SSTMS AND SELF-SERVICE KIOSKS**

The U.S. Access Board, the agency charged with setting standards for disability accessibility guidelines, issued an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) for accessibility requirements of self-service transaction machines (SSTMs) and self-service kiosks. The requirements would cover built-in SSTMs and kiosks at grocery stores, drug stores, restaurants, health care provider offices, and other establishments that provide public services. The ANPRM comment period ended on November 21.

PVA submitted comments urging the Board to expand the definition of the devices covered under the standards; ensure that people with disabilities can access the devices with the same independence and privacy as those without disabilities; and require government agencies only use fully accessible devices. PVA's comments also recommended that SSTMs and self-service kiosks accept contactless payment methods and described how inaccessible devices impact individuals with disabilities. Af-

ter the Board reviews all comments submitted, the agency may choose to issue an NPRM and proceed with the rulemaking process. If an NPRM is issued, interested parties will have the opportunity to submit comments. If promulgated, the Board's final rule will set minimum accessibility standards for SSTMs and self-service kiosks, but such standards must be adopted by the U.S. Department of Justice to be enforceable for state and local governments and public accommodations.

## **WOMEN VETERANS TASK FORCE MEETS TO DISCUSS OVERSIGHT OF DEBORAH SAMPSON ACT PROVISIONS**

On November 17, the House Women Veterans Task Force met to discuss implementation of several provisions within the Deborah Sampson Act. These sections were passed in early 2021 as part of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans' Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (P.L. 116-315). They address inequities experienced by women veterans in accessing VA health care and benefits.

Much of the conversation centered on portions of the law that established pilot programs to gauge the feasibility of providing childcare and assist survivors of intimate partner violence. Another section that was discussed would help eliminate harassment and assault throughout the VA.

Rep. Julia Brownley (D-CA), Chair of the House Veterans' Affairs, Health Subcommittee, led the roundtable. She was joined by Rep. Lois Frankel (D-FL) and Rep. Nancy Mace (R-SC). Staff from the VA and many other congressional offices participated as well.

While providing childcare for veterans at VA facilities is still in its early stages of implementation, the offices for Assault and Harassment Prevention and the Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program are making great strides to increase outreach and engagement throughout the VA.

## **NEWS OF NOTE**

### **PVA Comments on NIDILRR Long-Range Plan**

On November 21, PVA submitted comments on the 2024 to 2028 long-range research plan for the National Institute for Disability,

Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). NIDILRR had sought input from interested stakeholders prior to development of the new plan. PVA encouraged NIDILRR to continue its work from the 2018 to 2023 period that focused on health care; employment and financial well-being; and community living and participation among people with disabilities. However, PVA urged the agency to amplify its research by examining labor force participation of veterans with significant disabilities and to explore the engagement of veterans with disabilities among a range of federal benefit programs.

## **House Ways and Means Committee Facing New Leadership**

With control of the House shifting to the Republicans in 2023, numerous changes are underway among Committees that handle issues of significance to people with disabilities. Of particular interest is the House Ways and Means Committee which oversees Social Security retirement and disability programs and policies. Rep. Kevin Brady (R-TX), the Ranking Member on the Committee, is retiring at the end of 2022 and three people have expressed interest in taking the Chair. One is Rep. Adrian Smith (R-NE) who sits on the Committee and is particularly focused on trade issues affecting rural communities. With regard to Social Security and its financing challenges, Smith has pointed to a proposal offered by Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK) for a bipartisan, bicameral commission that would offer up a slate of changes to shore up the system. Rep. Vern Buchanan (R-FL) is seen as the leading candidate for chairman in that he has the most seniority on the Committee and has served on five of its six subcommittees. Buchanan too favors setting up a special commission to devise solutions to Medicare's and Social Security's long-term financing challenges. Rep. Jason Smith (R-MO), the third candidate for chairman currently sits on the Budget Committee. He has not offered any specifics about his plans for Social Security.

## **HEARINGS & COMMITTEE ACTION**

### **Upcoming Veterans' Affairs Committee Action**

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



OREGON DEPARTMENT  
of VETERANS' AFFAIRS

# 2023 OREGON WOMEN VETERANS CONFERENCE

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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.

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

**Subscribe**

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- Call at least 24 hours in advance to ensure a ride is available before your appointment
- Be ready 30 minutes before your pick up time and 60 minutes before your appointment time

NOTE: In an effort to make this service as efficient as possible, some rides may be shared with other customers (possibly non-veterans).

\* The term "veteran" follows the ORS 408.225(1)(f) definition.



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more information and to schedule your ride!



# PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

October 2022

## Partner For Life



Meet Adi Thampi – a Sergeant of Marines and combat veteran. Adi first connected with PVA's Veterans Career Program in 2020 after completing law degree. He worked with our Employment Specialist, Taylor Scott, on his job search, resume writing and interview skills; and eventually relocated to the DC area to work for a Veteran Service Organization (VSO).

In early 2022, our Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Danielle Hetu, reached out to Adi to let him know about staff turnover and how to reach out if he needed assistance. He was working for another VSO, and while he found the work very rewarding he also wanted to look at advancement. They updated his resume, drafted new cover letters, reviewed LinkedIn content, and had meetings to discuss applications, interviews, frustrations, etc.

Adi had worked tirelessly on the PACT ACT and was part of the big push to get it passed. Soon after, he was offered the position of Legislative Counselor and Senior Associate at Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) and will be starting in December 2022.

Having a month off in between jobs would have likely been a nice break; however, Adi wanted to do something physical that would be "good for his heart". He has been in Florida the past few weeks with Team Rubicon cleaning up and rebuilding after the hurricanes.



## IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

### 19 Client Placements

- 12 Paid Employment
- 6 Education/Training
- 1 Volunteer
  - 17 Veterans
  - 2 Family Members
  - 3 PVA Members
  - 2 PVA Member-Eligible
- The average salary for the 8 clients placed in full-time employment was \$57,744; and the average income for the 4 clients in part-time employment was \$15,063.



## Veterans Career Program Joins Unite Us Network



The Veterans Career Program announced a new partnership with Unite Us, the nation's leading technology company connecting health and social care services, to address the unmet needs of individuals and their families through a secure coordinated care network. This network of services benefits transitioning military members, veterans, military spouses, and military caregivers who are also seeking career assistance.

The Unite Us network of health and social care services, together with VCP's dedicated Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Employment Specialists, will provide a whole-person approach to quality-of-life care and help the veteran community achieve their career goals.

PVA Chapters, Nonprofits, community-based organizations, and other providers seeking to connect their clients to the Unite Us network of resources should click this link and complete the form: <https://uniteus.com/contact/>



## 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



**Paralyzed Veterans of America  
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