

May - June 2023
Volume 27, Issue 3

Paralog

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



"Serving Those Who Served"

www.TriStatePVA.org



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PARALOG

- Marcie Ceja** Editor in Chief
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NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER

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

PORTLAND/Vancouver VA Primary

Care Contact Phone Numbers	After Hours Number
360-696-4061	888-233-8305
503-220-8262	Portland VA Contact
ext. 31665 (Portland)	Phone Number
800-949-1004	503-273-5308
ext. 31665	

RESOURCES

ID Cards www.vets.gov	eBenefits www.benefits.va.gov
eVetRecords www.archives.gov	Women Veterans Health Care 1-855-VA-Woman
Vocational Rehab & Employment www.gibill.gov	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

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Cover Photo: Spokane River in Riverfront Park, WA
Page 3 Photo: SpokaneRiver Falls, WA
Courtesy of Adobe Stock Images

Thank you to all our Sponsors!

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President News



Annual Members Banquet



Larry Gardner – President

Our spring time is about half over and summer is coming up fast. The PVA Tri-State Chapter has been very busy with working the scheduled events, and preparing for a very busy summer ahead.

One of these events is the 42nd National Veterans Wheelchair Games, starting July 4th thru the 9th. This year it will take place in Portland, Oregon. For more information go to WheelchairGames.org. or contact the office to help volunteer at our booth.



Keep reading the Paralog for upcoming dates for Member Meetings/Picnics and other events that will be posted. Our first Members Meeting will be at St. Louis Ponds, in Gervais, June 3rd. See page 5 for more info.

Next, on June 30th, we will be mailing out the nomination letters to all voting members, everyone please take a minute to vote and if you need more information give us a call and we will help in any way we can.



This year, the annual Members Banquet will be Sept. 16th, at the Chinook Winds Casino in Lincoln City, Oregon. It is also the weekend of the Celebration of Honor for all veterans. This will be set up in the casino parking lot. If anyone plans on reserving a hotel room for the banquet, get it early and be sure to tell them you're with the PVA Tri-State Chapter. They have limited ADA rooms available, so don't wait too long to make your reservations. Don't forget about using the Rec Fund to help cover your expenses.



Don't miss out on upcoming
Members Meetings & Picnics!

6/3 St Louis Ponds 9am to 2pm
13100 Tesch Lane, Gervais

6/8 Boise ID, Meeting 9am to 2pm
Julius M. Kleiner Memorial Park, Meridian

6/17 Bend Meeting (Abby's Pizza) 11am
1115 NE 3rd St, Bend

7/29 Bowman Pond 10am to 4pm
1965 Olalla Rd, Winston

Join us for Food, Games and Prizes!

Bring the whole family & meet other members!

For more information & to RSVP:

503-362-7998

Email: tristatepva@tristatepva.org

Executive Director Update



Tom Hurt – Executive Director

Greeting from your Chapter office, This year has taken off at high speed, I can't believe it's already May! If you have not met Seth your new Development Coordinator, I recommend that you make it out to one of the many events we attend and get to know him. He is doing a great job for your Chapter. You may not be aware but we have restarted our donation program. If you or someone you know is in need of medical equipment such as wheelchairs, rollators, walkers or this type of equipment reach out to Seth at the chapter office to see what is available.

As far as events go, the schedule is quite full this year. We have added a new event to the calendar, the Azalea Festival down on the southern Oregon coast, in Brookings May 26th thru 28th. If you are in the area and or there enjoying the festival PLEASE stop by the booth and say Hi!! Earlier in the month we will be at the Woodburn Drags for the Nostalgia Nationals and also at the Willamette Speedway for Arms Armed Services Day.



The month of June continues the car themes with more events. First on June 2nd, we will attend the Gut Car Show, in Salem. This will be our first time we are attending this event. On June 10th, we are holding the PVA Tri-State Show and Shine Car Show. This will be the 7th Annual Show and Shine Car Show for the Chapter. With that being said if you would like to come out and hang out or help out with the event, please give Seth a call at the Chapter office. We are in need of all kinds of volunteers for the show.

Also in June, for our Idaho members, we are planning a fishing derby with some Disc Golf competition at the member meeting on June 8th I would love to sit down with our Idaho members at that meeting / BBQ.

On June 17th, we will be in Bend for a member meeting at Abby's Pizza. So come on out have some pizza and get caught up on what is happening with your Chapter. (See page 5 for more info on upcoming meetings/picnics).

I don't want to get too far ahead of myself but July is just packed to the max with activities. I won't cover them all but some of the high lights are as follows:

- July 4th thru 9th is the National Veteran Wheelchair Games happening in Portland OR. If you are an athlete

signed up, we look forward to cheering you on at the games. If you didn't sign up for events, you should plan to attend and support our member athletes, as well as, the VA is still looking for volunteers to help out in a number of areas.

•Also, on July 4th we will be attending the 4th of July celebration at the Oregon State Fair grounds. They have made your PVA Tri-State Chapter the beneficiary of the donations at that event. We will also have an awareness booth there. (See Page 28 for more info)



•One more thing happening on July 4th is Patriotic Day out at Volcanoes Stadium again this year for the 16th year. If you would like to attend, we will have a booth let us know and we can arrange for ticket for you and your family. Also, at that game our Chapter Treasurer, Carolyn Hamstreet Shores will be throwing out the first ball, so come on out to root her on.

•That same week is the kick off for the Marion County Fair, where we will be heading up the

Real Heroes section of the Fair. We will also be drawing the winning ticket for our ATV Raffle on July 9th.



I'm going to leave the events at this point. There is more information throughout this Paralog, so keep reading your Paralog and watch for email updates.

Just a quick reminder your Board Elections are right around the corner, if you would like to step up and help steer the organization, now is the time to throw your hat in the ring and get put on the election ballot. If you don't want to be on the board but would still like to help out, we have many opportunities to volunteer from helping at the Chapter office to working with some of your fellow members at events, spreading the word of what PVA does for our Veterans. On that note, please go forward and get out and do something you enjoy!!

Stay Safe and Stay Healthy.

A promotional graphic for a 'SHOW & SHINE Car Show'. It features a green classic Ford Mustang on a checkered floor. The text 'SHOW & SHINE Car Show' is in a stylized font. Logos for PVA (Paralyzed Veterans of America) Tri-State Chapter and Oregon Mobility are present. The date 'June 10, 2023' is written in large blue letters. At the bottom, there is a Home Depot logo, location information, registration and show times, and a QR code.

SHOW & SHINE
Car Show

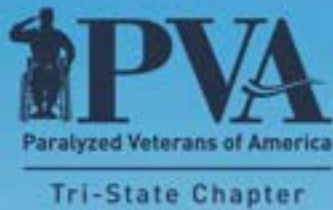
PVA
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Tri-State Chapter

ORIGAN MOBILITY
DRIVING YOUR INDEPENDENCE

June 10, 2023

THE HOME DEPOT

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



June 24, 2023



Funshoot Fundraiser



Location: Albany Gun Club
35305 Hwy 20 SE, Albany, OR 97322

Time: Registration begins at 9:00am
Trap Event 10:00am - 4:00pm

Cost: Each game costs \$4.00

• All proceeds support
Tri-State Sports Programs

• Raffle prizes

Sportsman's Warehouse

• Family Friendly

• Open to General Public

Thank you to our Sponsors!



NRA



Paralyzed Veterans of America Tri- State Chapter
503-362-7998 • www.tristatepva.org

**Saturday
July 15,
2023**

14th Annual PVA Tri-State Gold Cup Golf Tournament

**Title
Sponsor**



155 McNary Estates Dr N
Keizer, OR 97303

Prizes:

- \$10,000 Hole in 1
- Putting Contest Cash Prize
- Closest to the Pin
- Longest Putt
- Longest Drive
- Prizes on holes 4, 7, 8, 10, 15, 17 & 18

Cost:

- \$125 Individual
- \$400 Foursome

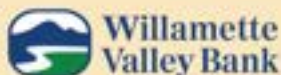
**10 am Registration & Team Photos
1 pm Shotgun**

**Awards:
Mens, Womens
& Mixed Teams**

Register Online

www.TriStatePVA.org
503-362-7998

Thank You to our Sponsors!!!



Vice President Update

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

Curtis Canyon, Wyoming



Bill Gray – Vice President & National Director

Last July while I was in Cody, Wyoming, I met a rancher who told me about an organization in Wyoming that helped disabled veterans get out and hunt big game, such as deer, and elk. I went on line and filled out an application and sent it in with a copy of my DD214. I requested a Bull Elk hunt if available. They told me that they would draw names in May and let me know if I was successful.



May arrived and it was the second week and I was dying to know if I was picked for the Bull Elk hunt, so I called and talked to Anita, who was involved with the Wyoming Disabled Hunters Organization. By the way she was the chief cook and boy did they feed us great food. I think I gained weight! So back to the Bull Elk hunt after we talked and some questions were answered Anita let me know that I was picked to hunt a Bull! Wow I could not believe it, so I told my wife about it and

she suggested that I ask someone to accompany me with long drive out. So, I approached the mighty Tom Hurt and asked if he would join me. He said sure, but not to tell his wife yet, after all we know who's the boss!

The day of departure had arrived, October 15th I left Roseburg to head north to pick up Tom and off to Missoula, then to Cody, then to Hyattsville, WY. In preparation I had been to the gun range twice and shot some hot hand loads using 175 Nosler Partition Boat Tail Bullets and was sighted in for 300 yards if I needed to take a long shot. I did not want to blow this hunt of a life time. I just wanted to shoot a good legal bull elk, a spike would be just fine. Tom and I headed east and Tom helped keep me entertained as we made our way. In Missoula, we ate at a Shari's Restaurant, and as Tom was paying the bill the waiter asks him if that was his dad was in the Navy! (I was wearing my Navy hat) She thought I was Toms dad! How could this be? From then on Tom proceeded to call me Pops! Whatever you say son! It was good for a laugh.

We arrived finally after a short detour, I thought it was this way and it was not that way, so after about an hour we arrived. We were

greeted by the host. We were staying at a ranch house that was on an 11,000-acre spread. What a beautiful place. Three other hunters were already there and they were on the back deck watching for elk crossing the hillside across from the house. And there they were! We spotted about 50 elk moving through and feeding. Wow! I think we are in the right spot; this was getting exciting and I was not even hunting yet. We all sat down to dinner and got acquainted. One hunter was from Cody, WY. One was from Illinois, and one was from Ohio.

Day Two we planned out who was hunting with whom, and what area's we would hunt in. There were several volunteers that helped with this effort and we sure were thankful. We got our rifles out and made sure they were still on target. I climbed into a track chair that had a rifle rest on it we got it adjusted to fit me and I took three shots and felt I was good to go.



Day Three we arose at about 5:00am, ate a bite of food, got our gear and head out to the blind that Larry my hunting guide and Tom were to hunt out of. We got to the blind and settled in about 6:30, and there we sat and watched and waited. It was about 7:30 and a couple cow elk came threw the draw to the east of us they headed down toward us and then back to east. Suddenly from the east came three bull elk moving the hillside about 240 yards from us. Wow! There was a nice one out in front. I had my gun already loaded and I sighted and took a shot. Boom! Nothing happened. I missed! I could not believe it, so Larry handed me another bullet and I loaded and took aim, as they were starting to move across the hillside. Boom! I think I hit him this time. Tom assured me that he was hit and hit hard. The bull took about 5

steps and laid down. I had just breathed a breath of relief it was over and I just shot my first bull successfully and it was a 240-yard shot! I was shaking a little, I could not believe it! It all seemed to have happened so fast!

Day Four took the elk head into the town Cody to the taxidermist, who was impressed with the size of horns. They scored them and it came out to be 335 points. Which from what others have told me is a kill that only ½ of a percent of all elk hunters ever successfully shoot. Needless to say, that's why I'm getting a full head mount. We got back to the ranch and packed up so we could head back home Friday morning.



Day Five we picked up the meat all cut and wrapped and frozen, stopped in Cody for some dry ice to keep the elk meat frozen and off we went. What a great adventure this was. I will not forget this hunt experience for the rest of my life. The three other hunters also got their bulls by Saturday.

So, if you are interested in a great hunting opportunity, go on line and see what the Wyoming Disabled Hunters Association are offering disabled veterans.

<http://wyomingdisabledhunters.org/>

MS Liaison Corner

By: Dan Service – MS Liaison



One Way to Deal With MS, SCI, and ALS is By Practicing the Art of “Mindfulness”

One of the greatest opportunities given to us is the right to make our own choices. Am I going to get out of bed now, or wait for a few minutes more? Do I want to believe the garbage I hear about on the news, or am I going to do some research to see what is true, and what is garbage?

Am I going to exercise today, or skip it? Each of these, and many more, all take some of our time away from other activities.

Lately I have heard quite a bit about “Mindfulness”, which is nothing more than being in the moment to moment present events, by slowing down, by taking your time, and by focusing on what is happening at the present moment in a non-judgmental way. It has been proven that when practicing “Mindfulness” we benefit by relieving stress, treating conditions like heart disease, lowering blood pressure, reducing chronic pain, improving sleep, improving mental health, increasing self-esteem, and overall improving our quality of life for yourself as well as those around you. “Mindfulness” has proven to help people dealing with Multiple Sclerosis (MS), Spinal Cord Injury (SCI), and Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

I listened to Ms. Ekaterina Davis on a podcast put out by the Multiple Sclerosis and Veterans (MS andVets), brought to us by the VA’s MS Center of Excellence. It was very informative, and I will share that information I learned and break it down according to how I use it, in hopes it might help others see how easy it is make the choice to utilize Mindfulness in your own lives.

Ms. Davis talked about utilizing 7 attitudes proposed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, in his book “Full Catastrophe Living” (1990)

1. “Non-Judging” – In our lives we judge all the time. A perfect example is: yesterday, I put my soup in the microwave, and when I took it out to take to the table, I judged that the soup was too hot to eat, so I let it cool down before I ate it. Sometimes we do not recognize the fact that we are being judgmental, like Ms. Davis mentioned. when we are driving down the freeway, going the speed limit, and a car passes us, and so we might judge that the person who is passing us is speeding, that the person driving the other vehicle is driving recklessly, he might get into a wreck, and we might develop anger towards this stranger we don’t even know, and it does not help us at all, plus it doesn't stop the other persons behavior. In this example, we should observe, but not always judge.

2. “Patience” – The ability to bear difficulties with calmness and self-control. Too often we tend to rush to our “To do” list, but we should take a few minutes, take a deep breath and redirect ourselves. Doing this has shown to improve our brain health, our general health, our relationships, as well as productivity. I have found this to be helpful and I find myself calmer as I deal with our dog who does not want to stop barking at a squirrel jumping from tree limb to tree limb or does not come when he is called.

3. “Beginners Mind” – This is being open to new experiences as they arise, in each moment as they come, without any preconceived notions or expectations. Remember

the first time you tasted an Orange, or better yet a Lemon, how sweet the Orange is, and how tart the Lemon is? A “Beginners Mind” is experiencing that moment for the first time, without having experienced it in the past. We purchased a new Van, and when I pulled into a gas station to get some gas, the attendant asked me to open the cover to the gas tank. I had no idea how to do this, but learned that by unlocking the doors to the van, it also unlocked the gas tank cover. With a “Beginners Mind” we enter a new situation without preconceived notions, and we tend to develop gratitude for any new outcome, rather than for a specific outcome that we are expecting already.

4. “Trust” – Trust speaks to our relationship with ourselves, our feelings, and our experiences. We build confidence in ourselves, and the ability to face new challenges, because we are trusting our experiences, rather than listening to someone else telling us how we need to be feeling in a particular situation. Have you ever had someone tell you how great you are looking? I have, but they do not know that I had a headache at the time, or that I am having problems with my bladder, or that I am going through feelings of fatigue.

5. “Non-Striving” – This is the ability to let go of the constant doing, and focus solely on just being. Here we take a moment to pay attention to the way we are in the moment, and focusing on non-doing instead of doing. I used to constantly set goals and striving to accomplish them, and now I am more relaxed, less stressed, all because I take the moment to enjoy the journey of reaching the goal, and not on the outcome.

6. “Acceptance” – This is seeing things exactly as they are instead of as you think they should be, or you think that they are. That does not mean you agree with what is happening, but you acknowledge its presents. We do not need to agree with the circumstances of our experiences if we accept it. A great example in my life is the need for a power chair. I accept the fact that I can no longer walk the way I used to, and a power chair is what I need at this time.

7. “Letting Go” – Have you noticed how we cling to things? Do we like this, do we dislike this? “Letting Go” is the process of letting go of the past and embracing change, allowing us to fully engage in our journey and healing.

“Letting Go” can be very positive in nature, but it can also be very difficult as we are trying to make sense of new things that arise in our lives. By “Letting Go” we start expecting things as they are, instead of how we want them to be, we find that we suffer less from things like stress, emotional ties to the past which can bring up feelings of depression, or anxiety or what the future may hold. We may even find our relationship with others may improve because we are less frustrated with them, and the struggle with loss and grief ends, and by “Letting Go” we are setting ourselves free to exist in our experiences as they are.

“Mindfulness” is a great way to achieve a more calm and peaceful mind. We all face challenges, and our reaction to adverse events can have a substantial effect on our mental health and well-being, but a commitment to “Mindfulness” allows us to react calmly to these challenges, and adapt to them in a healthy manner.

We all need to accept the reality of our situation, or at least within ourselves, the way we perceive our situation. When we do we are better prepared to adapt instead of reacting to failed expectations, being depressed, or getting angry.

Here is a chance to make a choice. Let’s take the time to relax by taking a deep breath in (counting to four), hold that breath (counting to four), let that breath out (counting to four), and hold (counting to four). Do this several times and see if you feel any different. I find myself doing this often, when I am waiting for my wife, when I am at a signal waiting for the light to change, and even as I am watching television during the commercials. As you have a cup of chocolate in front of you, sip it instead of drinking it down. Take the time to enjoy the aroma of that delicious Cocoa.

Yes, these are choices of many we make throughout the day, but this is an opportunity to prove to ourselves that our stress is not as great as what it used to be, that our blood pressure is going down, and that we are dealing with our situations with more ease. Let us make a choice and spend some of our time on improving our wellbeing by practicing “Mindfulness.”

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

Other Solutions

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

ABILITY CENTER



UNITED ACCESS



Recreation Fund Reimbursement

(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
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



Get Paid to Have Fun!

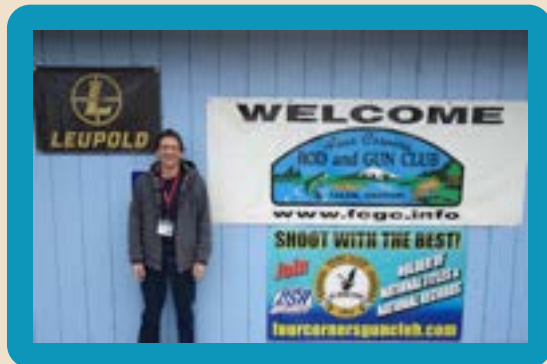


\$300 Rec Fund Reimbursement

I am really enjoying my membership at the gun club. I'm having a lot of fun at the range. It gives me a chance to shoot and enjoy myself. I have been able to take my grand kids with me and I enjoy spending time teaching them something I know. It is an to easy access facility and very friendly people. I really enjoy it. Thanks to the Recreation Fund for making this possible! Everyone should use it! It allows you to do things you may not be able to afford but can do with the help of the fund.

Thank You Tristate PVA, you made it possible!

Brian B.



Sirs:

These two receipts are submitted for the PVA Tri-State Recreation Fund reimbursement.

The receipt from Winston's Fish N Chips is a new food cart in Vancouver featuring authentic British style fish and chips. Food was excellent but, the wait time was almost an hour since it is so new and was recently promoted in the Vancouver newspaper as well as on KOIN TV.

The receipt from Hand & Stone is for massages. It was probably the best massage I've had since receiving massages in Japan in the 50s. I was completely relaxed and fully satisfied. I would recommend a massage to anyone who experiences muscle tenseness or muscle tension.

Ron C.

I want to thank Tri-State-Chapter for allowing me to use the funds for the purchase of a great Edge Air Rifle that is offered by AIRFORCE Airguns. I hope to better my score with my new rifle. I will also be able to use it in the National Veterans Wheelchair Game this July in Portland.

I encourage members to take advantage of using their Recreation Fund allowance, it costs you nothing! How can you not want to make use of it?!?! Use it or lose it!

Bill G.



Please see enclosed receipt for our hotel stay in Eugene, while visting friends. We appreciate your Reception Fund Reimbursement towards our stay.

Sincerly,
Ron L.



The first week of March, my wife and I traveled to Las Vegas for the NASCAR races. For several years, we've talked about going to Nascar but something always seemed to change our plans. Then one day, some friends called us and said they are going and happen to have some extra tickets, and would really like us to join them. We thought what a great opportunity! So, we packed our bags and met out friends in Vegas. We had a great time with three days of racing! Everything was so expensive in Vegas, but thanks for the PVA Tri-State Rec Fund our trip was a lot more affordable!



Thank you,

Larry and Terri G.

With all this snow around, we decided to take advantage of this wintry bliss by traveling to McCall, Idaho, for a weekend of skiing at Brundage Resort. We were not disappointed. McCall is a cool little town. There was plenty of snow around. The Recreation Fund really helped us out. We were able to take our time with our itinerary. I am very thankful to be associated with such a generous and attentive Chapter. I cant wait until our next adventure!

Dennis H.



To whom it may concern,

I'm writting to get my yearly Recreation Fund Reimbursement. I didn't really do much. I was able to go to the banquet in Wilsonville. I hadn't been to many places, but that trip was the best! I had a great time! I was also inspired to practice my pool game, maybe I'll play in the tournament with PVA. I'm in the process of making a Rec Room at my house so I can play at my leisure. I'll be buying a pool table and accessories this week to complete my dream.

Bridget S.



Development Coordinator Update



Portland Roadster Show



By: Seth Dershewitz - Development Coordinator

Spring has arrived! March and April kicked off what is shaping up to be a very exciting year for the Chapter. Your Chapter office has been hard at work planning to ensure a year filled with great events, activities, and fundraisers. Be sure to follow us on Facebook to receive the latest updates on where your PVA Tri-State team is going to be next, as well as information on how we are working hard to serve our members and community.

March began with the Salem Roadster Show at the Salem Fairgrounds. We would like to extend a special thanks to Greg and Steve for their support of PVA Tri-State Chapter as well as hosting this fun event for the community. We look forward to the continued tradition of participating in the Salem Roadster Show next year.



Next up in March, PVA Tri-State Chapter returned to the annual Portland Roadster Show. This is one

of the biggest car shows on the West Coast and did not disappoint. A special thank you goes out to the Duane and Virginia Caseday, and the Multnomah Hot Rod Council for hosting such an incredible event and their support of PVA. Our members and volunteers did an absolutely amazing job representing the chapter and had a great time doing it. Paralyzed Veterans of America Tri-State Chapter was honored on the final day of the show when our Chapter President, Larry Gardner, was presented with generous donations from Gary Alexander, Bob Lamphere, and other car show participants during the awards ceremony. Thank you to everyone who volunteered for this event to make it such a huge and memorable success for the Chapter!

April started off in southern Oregon at the Medford Pear Blossom Festival. Thank you to all our volunteers who contributed to the success of this event. We enjoyed parades, great food, and good music while generating awareness and raising funds for the Chapter. Thank you to the Medford Chamber of Commerce for hosting this event and their support of PVA. We look forward to participating in the Pear Blossom Festival next year.

April also marks the start of the Woodburn Dragstrip 2023 season. PVA will be present for a number of events at

the Woodburn Dragstrip throughout the 2023 season. Our first scheduled event was on April 29th for the Nostalgia Nationals. Thank you to our members and volunteers for participating in this event. Check the PVA events calendar or follow us on Facebook for a list of all the dates we will be at the Woodburn Dragstrip. If you would like to volunteer and help at our booth at the Woodburn Dragstrip, please contact me at the office for availability.

We have a lot of great activities and events planned for May, including our 3rd Air-Gun Competition of the year on May 12. Our first Deep Sea Fishing trip of the year is on May 22nd, and the Azalea Festival in Brookings, OR. Please contact our office if you have any questions about these events or if you are interested in participating.

Did you register for the National Veterans Wheel Chair Games? Registration for the games closed on April 5th, but there is still time to volunteer and be a part of this historic event. Join PVA Tri-State Chapter to support the more than 400 Veteran athletes who will be participating in more than 20 events for fun, prizes, and glory. The games take place in Portland, OR from July 4-9, 2023.



We need volunteers! The Tri-State territory is vast and it is important to us to serve our members in every corner of our territory. In order to do this, we need volunteers to assist us with member meetings, events, fundraisers, and general awareness. Are you interested in assisting your local PVA Chapter when we are in your area? Would you like to know how you can help grow PVA Tri-State Chapter? Is there an event, a fair, a trade show, or other venue that you think would be a good place to raise awareness for PVA? Do you have any friends and family 18 years or older who would like to support our organization? Contact Seth at the PVA Tri-State office to discuss how you can become a volunteer and support your local PVA Chapter if you answered yes to any of these questions.

Our donation program is up and running. We have walkers, rollators, wheel chairs, power chairs and more! The PVA Tri-State Chapter donation program is open to all in need. If you or anyone you know is looking for any of this equipment, please contact our office and we will be happy to help you.

That is all I have for now. Spring and Summer are shaping up to be a fun, busy, and exciting time for us at PVA Tri-State! Come join us at any of our events. We will update the calendar on our website and continue to put updates in the Paralog. We look forward to seeing you this year at any of our fundraisers and awareness events. For questions and feedback, my direct line is 503-951-3256 and my email is devcoor@tristatepva.org



Save the Date

Members Banquet 2023

September 16th
Chinookwinds - Lincoln City
"It's better at the beach!"



Tri-State Chapter

Let's Go Fishing!

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:
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541-765-2545



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**May 12, 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

503-362-7998 • www.TriStatePVA.org



NRA



Traveling with Erik Berg



By: Erik Berg — Board Member

This story has a satisfactory ending, but it is a cautionary tale for disabled veteran's who want to travel. On a recent trip to Palm Springs, my wife and I had a pretty negative travel experience. We traveled on Alaska Airlines who wound up making good on the mistakes that the ground crew made, but it was still traumatic. I have MS and partial paralysis on my left side and degenerative arthritis on my right hip which makes using a travel scooter a must. The scooter that I use is made by TravelScoot and is a superior device which is FAA approved.



In preparing to travel this time we called Alaska Airlines to make sure we had the most current information about disabilities and air travel. The ticketing agent told us to just be sure we arrived in plenty of time to meet with the gate agent about appropriate seat assignments. He told us that we would likely be reassigned once we checked in. There were no

travel advisories and we thought that traveling would be relatively simple.

My wife and I were scheduled on flight #3314 PDX to PSP on vacation to visit friends. I can only walk short distances with dual carbon fiber canes. The TravelScoot weighs 30 lbs without the battery and collapses down to 36.3" L x 25" W x 20" T.

When we reached the gate after a frustrating experience with TSA, we were told by the gate attendant that there was an embargo on travel scooters and power chairs for the type of aircraft with AA partner Skywest we were flying. But she couldn't find the reference after 20 minutes searching so she called the ground crew supervisor who spent another 20 minutes with us confirming that they could not accommodate my equipment on the flight. At this point our son had driven 1 hour and 20 minutes to drop us at the airport and had returned home. The ground crew supervisor, was great and finally was able to rebook us for a flight leaving PDX two days later on a 737, but that meant we sacrificed 2 days of our planned vacation and cycled our friends. My son drove another hour and 20 minutes to pick us up and we arrived home well after midnight.

Two days later we headed to the airport for our new flight and it was a disaster. We started by checking in with the Alaska Airlines before heading to the gate. We were assured by the AA representative that we were booked on an appropriate flight, but that we would need to

check in with the gate agent for seat assignments. We headed to the gate and were able to get seat assignments, they checked in our travel scooter and we headed down the causeway for boarding. We left the travel scooter in the hands of the ground crew and boarded the plane. The flight crew and attendants were very helpful and attentive. The problems began when we debarked in Palm Springs. It seems that ground crew had dropped the TravelScoot from enough height to total it. The handle bar controls on the left side, which indicate if the scooter is in forward, neutral, or reverse were completely sheared off and missing. The control on the right handlebar was hanging by two wires and there was a deep gouge in the aluminum on top. We later found out that the frame was also bent. The third-party administrator for Alaska Airlines has declared the scooter a total loss and it is being replaced.

So we are just outside the plane on the causeway and my wife is struggling with two bags, a broken scooter, dual canes, and a husband who cannot walk. We received wheel chair assistance to baggage claim where we spent another two hours filing a claim and trying to get a rental car. What is most frustrating, is that we lost two days of our vacation due to being rebooked. Additionally, we had the exact same result that Alaska Airlines warned about, if we had taken the flight we were originally booked on that could not accommodate my travel scooter.

The lessons learned in this story of travel woe is to double check the type of aircraft you are flying on to make sure they can accommodate mobility scooters. We also plan to take plenty of pictures of our scooter before we travel next time to make sure we have documented its condition. I can't speak highly enough about the TravelScoot product and customer service I have received from them. The support received from Alaska Airlines in getting a temporary scooter was excellent and their support of repair or replacement was also stellar. Their third party administrator has been very slow in getting the new TravelScoot to me. Although the technician who evaluated the damaged one was very thorough. Don't let this stop you from traveling just be aware that there could be an issue with your mobility device on certain types of aircraft. Having a plan and documenting the condition of your mobility device is key!



September 11, 2023
FREE for Members!

Mark Your Calendars

SALMON FISHING TRIP

** Check in at 7am**

RSVP by Sept 1, 2023

- * Fishing license can be purchased at Dockside Charters
- * Complementary coffee is provided
- * Bring your own lunch, snacks and drinks
- * Don't forget about the Rec Fund to help cover expenses
- *Bring a guest for \$75!**

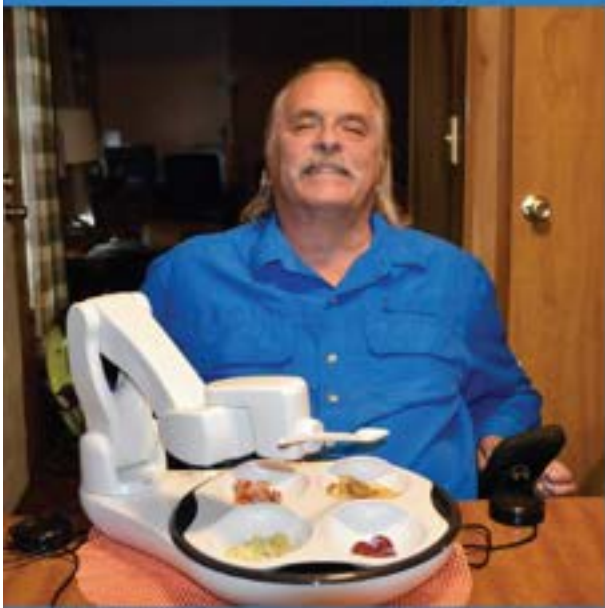
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Co-Presented by:



Government Relations Update



Jefferson Memorial during the Cherry Blossom Festival Washington D.C.



By: Don Hedlind – Government Relations Director

Hello, hope your Spring is bright and sunny and you've been able to get outside and soak up some sunshine. As our Chapter's Government Relations Director, I recently traveled to Washington DC for the annual seminar/meeting with Congress and Senate Members. I arrived at that Westin Hotel in Arlington, VA to find a very nice contingent of PVA GRD's (Government Relations Directors) present. We greeted each other and discussed what we had to do while we were there; many wanted to talk about the NVWG (National Veteran Wheelchair Games) coming to Portland in July.



The week started off with the first two days of education on the issues. We learned quite a bit about what is happening with the VA and why it is important that we advocate for our SCI/D system of care. The last two days were spent navigating the

many buildings of the House and Senate. It's quite a push across the Capital streets to get to Congress from the Senate or vice-versa. We were blessed with good weather, so we didn't have to navigate this in the rain or snow. At the end of the first day, my shoulders were so sore, all I wanted to do was relax in the hotel pool.

The first day started off with my listening to our PVA National President Charles Brown address Veteran Healthcare needs and Travel concerns with Senator Tester and the Joint Senate/House Veteran Affairs Committee. It was a busy meeting; many VSOs were present making for a packed house. Charlie gave a passionate statement and Senator Tester publicly thanked him for his representation of PVA over the years.

The reception from each office was great, many were staffed by young Political Science graduates who were very attentive to our needs. I was able to have a conversation with many of them like you would over a cold glass of beer.

Unfortunately, it was work time, so water or soda had to do. Each office was appointed with memorabilia from home and each University was represented. I made sure to put one of our Honor Our Heroes bracelets on the wrists of everyone in the office, they were happy and honored to wear them; you can be rest assured that veterans are well-represented from these offices.



The Capital has a cool underground that is for staff only, however when Connor Lynch of Senator Risch (ID) found out I had to go back over to the House of Representatives building, he was able to get permission from his boss to give me a personal escort over there. It was like something out of the show Get Smart or a spy show like that, we took the elevator down to the lower basement and emerged in a series of hallways that we had to traverse to get to the security checkpoints. It was pretty cool, I wanted to take a picture, but it was not allowed.

Since, I am in a wheelchair and unable to stand up and get on the train, we decided to just walk or in my case, roll over there. There is a sidewalk alongside the train for those who chose to walk instead of ride. Even underground, it is a long ways, but much shorter than being above ground. This young man from Rexburg, ID was great, we talked the whole way over there. He

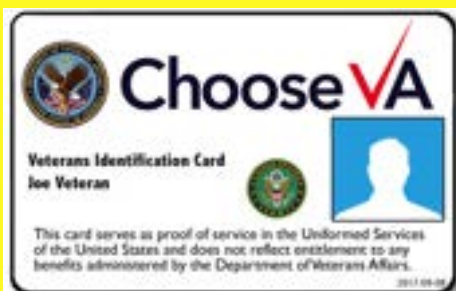
had been in the Senator's office for four months and was just starting to enjoy DC.

After visiting with the staff at Senator Wyden(OR) office, I was sitting in the hallway of the Senate Building looking at my phone trying to figure out how to get to Senator Merkley (OR) office, when Senator Rick Scott (FL) retired Navy Commander, Governor of FL and now a US Senator, walked up and started talking to me. What a nice guy, we sat there and chatted for a little bit, then he directed one of his staffers to go back to the office. I thought he was going to go on his way, but he decided to just sit there and talk with me.

I talked to him about veteran issues and told him why I was there. I pulled out the PVA Priorities Booklet for him to look through and keep in his possession; I told him this is for you. He took it and started looking through it. Never miss an opportunity to talk with an elected Representative; they make decisions that affect many veterans' lives.

His staffer came back and gave him something. He took my hand and said, 'Don here is my challenge coin, I challenge you to do the best you can for us vets.' He gave me the coin, shook my hand, took some pictures and then told me to have a good day. I just sat there in the hallway looking at the coin, it's a pretty cool one; I keep it in my wallet/bag with my other "challenge coins."

What made this trip great, is everyone was so nice and cordial. I look forward to going back next year. We must keep up the lobbying effort with our Representatives, and it is important we chat with them about vets issues every chance we get. The budgets are always so tight; there are so many different issues that are involved with our system of care. You can be rest assured that we are representing you and always will. Untill next time.



Your VA ID Card is the proof you need for FREE event tickets and entry into national parks; as well as, discounts at restaurants, hotels, stores, and many more places!

**For more information visit the VA website at:
https://news.va.gov/117828/va-id-card-proof-discounts/?utm_source=feature&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=VetResources&utm_id=19APR2023**



PVA Tri-State Air Gun

March 3, Scores:

Thanks everyone who came!!!

Bill Gray	87 pts
Ken Cornelius	60 pts
Scott Larsen	28 pts

**Our next Air Gun Competition
is May 12, 2023!**

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

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



**Kick off summer at the Oregon State Fairgrounds
4th of July Spectacular!**

**Come enjoy a family fun event, carnival, food, a
concert by **Alabama** and a 20 minute fireworks show!**

**Guests can donate to Paralyzed Veterans of America Tri-
State Chapter**

**For more information visit:
www.oregonstatefair.org/spectacular**

SPORTS

Corner



Don't Miss Out
on our Upcoming
Trapshoot
Fundraiser,
June 24th!!!



By: Larry Gardner – President

The PVA Tri-State Chapter Air Rifle team has been doing really well and having lots of fun events. Recently we purchased 3 more air rifles for the Chapter members to use at the shoots, along with the ones we had, gives us 4. Some members are buying their own, and our safety guy always brings in 3 of his, so we have plenty of air rifles at this time. The next shoot will be May 12th at the Albany Rifle and Pistol Club indoor range, so mark your calendars and come on out and join us.

The Trap team has been pretty slow since COVID but is starting to pick back up. The 1st Sunday of the month PITA has the multiplex shoots at many different ranges, and are slowly scheduling more weekend shoots. For upcoming shoots visit the PITA website's schedule at www.shootpita.com.

Also, don't miss out on this year's Funshoot Fundraiser, at the Albany Gun Club! Please mark your calendars for June 24th and join us. Registration starts at 9am and we will begin at 10am. See page 8

for more info. We hope to have lots of shooters there. It's open to all ages and abilities. So come and join us for a great time!

The Chapter looking for a Sports Director and Coordinators for our different sports teams. If any one reading this would like to be our trap shooting coordinator to help organize and squad the team for shoots, please give me a call I could use some help 503-930-9589. We also need coordinators for bowling, table tennis, bocchia ball, and any other sports that our members have interest in.

The first Deep Sea Fishing trip is coming up on May 22nd so remember to get signed up 2 weeks in advance so you don't miss the boat with Dock Side Charters out of Depoe Bay, the 2nd trip will be June 13th. That's all I have for now, keep up with our events posted on the Paralog calendar or feel free to give me a call.

Thank you all!

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

Southern OR Ambassador Report



**Dennis Hooper Skiing
Brundage Mtn, Idaho**



By: Dennis Hooper – Southern Oregon Ambassador

What a spring, so far! If my umbrella usage could earn me air miles, I would have enough to fly to Antarctica! The rain has not dampened the opportunities for our members. It has provided plenty of snow for skiing. We were fortunate enough to be invited to Brundage Resort, near McCall, Idaho. The folks at AweSoMe provided a wonderful weekend for veterans with disabilities. They transported us from Boise to the resort and provided food and accommodations. We got the opportunity to meet with one of our members from the area. It is always great to engage our members on the road. You should look for this event every February.

Our Chapter set up our information table at the last two Sportsman Outdoor Shows in Roseburg and Medford. It was great to get out to those communities. There were several folks that entered to win our free power chair. I hope we were successful in spreading our mission and education for people that may

be curious about the PVA. Folks were friendly.

Looking ahead, there are several opportunities for our members to explore their travel urges. One great outing is the Military Summer Camp in the Mammoth Lakes area of California. This outdoor adventure, hosted by Eastern Sierra Disabled Sports, gives veterans with disabilities a chance to camp, fish, kayak, rock climb and much more. This year it is June 5-9. This is right after the ice thaws on Crowley Lake and Convict Lake allowing the fish to finally gorge themselves. I can attest it is great fishing. The crisp mountain air is so clean and refreshing, I hope to go back again soon. Go to the Eastern Sierra Disabled Sports website to register.



**DISABLED
SPORTS
EASTERN
S-I-E-R-R-A**

Closer to home, Warrior Impact has announced the next two rafting/camping trips on the Rogue, These multi day adventures are coming on April 12-16 and May 3-7. You may have seen me write about this in November. It is completely free and the staff will assist you as much or as little as you desire. You can bring anyone you want with you. The scenery speaks for itself and the guides explain the history of that area. Their registration is on their Facebook page. You can raft the North Umpqua river also with Sourceoneserenity.org, starting in June. Stop making excuses and go get wet!



As usual, our Chapter will have tickets to the Reno Air Races available. The news is that this will be the last year it is held in Reno. Not sure

why, but if you ever wanted to experience this event, I would not delay.

I read some good news the other day. The Roseburg VA has got a permanent director now. He is Patrick Hull and he comes from the VA Western Colorado in Grand Junction. I hope he brings stability and continued professionalism to the Roseburg campus. That place has certainly grown over the years. It seems they add a new building every year. Let us not forget the Memorial Day ceremonies they hold annually, at the Roseburg and Eagle Point cemeteries. I find them touching and honorable.

If you enjoy art and want to support veterans, the Wounded Warrior Art Gallery is on display at the Supply Depot in Bend. You don't have to be there in person to ogle the works of art. You can go to thesupplydepot.com, to view and purchase. I wish I had the talent of some of these veterans.

I could go on and on spewing little factoids about all there is to do for our members. If you cannot find something you are interested in, call our office or check out our website. Someone may have the calendar available to refer to. Not even I can keep up with everything! Hopefully, I will see one of you on a boat, bike or TracChair somewhere soon.



When: Saturday, June 17, 2023

Time: 7:00am to 4:00pm, Lunch between 11:30am and 12:30pm.

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

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

For more information: Contact Leroy Bentley 503-502-1051 or email bentley16@frontier.com to register as a participant or volunteer visit www.takeasoldierfishing.org

Happy Birthday !!!

D. Alexandra Wolfe	5/03	Judith Turk	5/31
Alexander Smith	5/06	NelsHadden	6/01
Anne Wyatt	5/07	CarlJensen	6/01
Donald Linwood	5/09	Justin Larson	6/01
Clifford Svoboda	5/10	RexStevens	6/03
Terri Gardner	5/15	Gene Stuart	6/03
Robin Provost	5/15	KellyJordan	6/06
Richard Wohlers	5/15	Russell Goffin	6/09
Edward Curtis	5/18	Larry Whitmire	6/10
James Kimsey	5/19	Tammy Hedlind	6/11
Gloribel Casalduc	5/20	Miguel Vera	6/12
Steven Huft	5/20	Daniel Chytka	6/13
Robert Still	5/21	Kevin Parker	6/13
Lonnie Morgan	5/22	Borden ("Butch") Hessel	6/14
Donald Lambert	5/24	GeraldSandlin	6/15
Toby Newton	5/24	Kenneth Swiderski	6/16
Thomas Hartzell	5/25	Terry Ogan	6/17
Michael O'Connor	5/25	William Gray	6/19
Erik Berg	5/26	Michael Lavelle	6/22
Steve Hubley	5/26	Michelle Morris	6/25
Michael Miner	5/26	Robert Moore	6/27
Barbara Bingham	5/27	Joel Satoris	6/27
Karla Wenning	5/27	Catherine Ballard	6/28
Matthew Allmaras	5/28	Harold Johnson	6/29
Susan Hruza	5/28		



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- \$39 per month for 48 months at 9.9% on a Pride Go Go Elite Traveler scooter

May

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 BOD Meeting	26	27
28	29 Memorial Day	30	31			

Office Closed

Save the Date

May 12	Air Gun Competition	June 10	Show & Shine Car Show
May 22	Deep Sea Fishing trip Check in at 5:30am, Depoe Ba	June 13	Deep Sea Fishing Trip Check in at 5:30am, Depoe Bay
May 26	Azalea Festival, Brookings	June 17	Take a Soldier Fishing
May 28	Woodburn Drag 12th Annual Import Face Off	June 17	Member Meeting Abby's Pizza, Bend
June 3	Member Meeting St. Louis Ponds, Gervais	June 24	Funshoot Fundraiser, Albany
June 8	Boise Member Meeting Meridian, ID	July 4	Volcanoes Patriotic Day Keizer, Carolyn throwing 1st Pitch
		July 4	4th of July Spectacular Oregon State Fairgrounds

June

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

					1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19 <i>Juneteenth</i>	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29 BOD Meeting	30		



Office Closed

Save the Date

- | | | | |
|----------|---|--------------------|--|
| July 4-9 | NWVG, Portland | Aug 9-13 | Keizerfest |
| July 7-9 | Marion County Fair | Aug 12 | Keizer Parade |
| July 9 | ATV CF Moto Drawing
Marion County Fair | Aug 16 | Deep Sea Fishing
Check in at 5:30am |
| July 15 | Gold Cup Golf Tournament | Aug 25 -
Sept 4 | Oregon State Fair |
| July 15 | Eagle Raffle Drawing | Sept 11 | Salmon Fishing
Check in at 7am, Depoe Bay |
| July 29 | Member Meeting
Bowman Pond, Winston | Sept 16 | Annual Members Banquet
Chinook Winds |
| Aug 9-12 | Douglas County Fair | | |



Washington Update

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

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

April 14, 2023

Volume 31, Number 7

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

PVA HOSTS EXPEDIA LISTENING SESSION

On March 22, PVA hosted a meeting with the disability community and Expedia Group. Founded in 1996, Expedia Group, Inc. is headquartered in Seattle and is the largest online booking site for travel, hotels, flights, vacation homes (VRBO), and cruises. The focus of the meeting was for representatives of Expedia to understand the disability market and listen to the meeting participants, who represent an underserved segment of the population. Expedia serves people with disabilities in all areas but not as the primary target for their services.

Disability community members spoke individually about the barriers in the travel industry that they encounter as people with disabilities. Senior Associate Advocacy Director Lee Page focused his remarks on the issues wheelchair users generally have even with accessible hotel rooms – bed heights that are too tall, reach range requirements that are not met for essential items in the room, and devices that continue to have power switches that are not accessible. Other points of failure are shuttle services from the airport to the hotel that are not wheelchair lift equipped and roll-in showers that sometimes do not adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessible Guidelines.

Moving forward, Expedia will do two more listening sessions for people with disabilities. One of the sessions will take place in London, England, and the other in Tokyo, Japan.

REINTRODUCTION OF IMPORTANT MST LEGISLATION

Last week, Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chair Jon Tester (D-MT), Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), and Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME) reintroduced the Servicemember and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2023 (H.R. 2441/S. 1028). PVA was proud to support this legislation in the last session of congress and will continue to do so in the 118th Congress.

The Servicemember and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act of 2023 is a bipartisan bill that seeks to improve the claims process and increase access to benefits for military sexual trauma (MST) survivors. This important legislation would expand the evidentiary standard for survivors filing claims with the VA and allow non-Department of Defense (DOD) evidence to be submitted to support the claims. The bill also expands access to mental health support for former Guard and Reserve members and allows them to receive support at the VA.

The DOD annual sexual assault report illustrated that sexual assault and harassment are persistent among the uniformed service and the VA needs to be prepared to receive survivors when they separate from service.

ANNUAL FEDERAL BUDGET PROCESS

The annual federal budget process is moving forward slowly. In late March, the House Appropriations Committee held a hearing to examine the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 VA budget proposal which was submitted on March 9. As previously reported, the Administration asked for \$137.9 billion in discretionary funding and \$20.3 billion in mandatory spending for the Toxic Exposure

Fund (TEF), which was created by the PACT Act. They also requested \$112.6 billion in advance FY 2025 discretionary spending, and \$21.5 billion for FY 2025 for the TEF.

Committee members expressed skepticism with how the TEF would be used, and questioned the Administration's plan to move some construction spending into the mandatory category. Historically, all of the VA's construction funding has been considered to be discretionary. VA's chief witness, Secretary Denis McDonough, mentioned that VA has hired more people at the Veterans Health Administration in the first quarter of this fiscal year than in any previous year. He said they are well on their way to meeting the Department's goal of 52,000 new hires this year and stressed the importance of increasing the number of nurses they train to boost the workforce.

The Secretary also stressed the need for greater investment in VA infrastructure by pointing out that the VA has only built four hospitals in the past 10 years. In addition to plus ups for major construction projects, more money needs to be allocated for minor construction and leases, which allows the VA to build new clinics around the country, and non-recurring maintenance, which allows VA to make existing facilities workable. He fielded many questions on the current status and viability of VA's Electronic Health Record Modernization project, PACT Act implementation, and the impact of reverting VA funding to FY 2022 levels. That latter issue has been largely discounted by House appropriators who have signaled that veterans health care funding will be protected.

The House Appropriations Committee is expected to begin drafting its version of the annual funding bills soon without the traditional guidance on topline or a confirmed budget resolution. The Senate is much further behind and is not likely to hold hearings to examine the Administration's proposal until May.

HVAC HOLDS LEGISLATION HEARINGS

Congress has been busy these past few weeks and the House Veterans' Affairs Committee (HVAC) has held several pending legislation hearings to discuss new and reintroduced legislation. In addition to the previously reported Health Subcommittee hearing, the Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs (DAMA) and

Economic Opportunity (EO) Subcommittees also recently held legislation hearings.

On March 24, the DAMA Subcommittee's pending legislation hearing focused on burial eligibility, survivor benefits, the Board of Veterans' Appeals backlog, a grant program for county and tribal veteran service officers, a cost of living adjustment bill (COLA), as well as legislation to reinstate penalties for people who charge veterans unauthorized fees for assistance with filing a VA claim.

Testifying from the VA was Mr. Kevin J. Friel, Deputy Director of the Pension and Fiduciary Service, Ms. Cheryl Rawls, Executive Director of the VA, and Ms. Christa A. Shriber, Deputy Chief Counsel for the Benefits Law Group who oversee the Accreditation, Discipline, and Fees Program at VA.

On March 30, the EO Subcommittee held a pending legislation hearing that focused on legislation related to homelessness, employment, benefits restoration, and several education-related bills.

Testifying on behalf of VA was Mr. Joseph Garcia, Executive Director of Education Services for VA, Dr. Keith Harris, Senior Executive Homelessness Agent, and Mr. Nick Pamperin, Executive Director of Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E).

The Health, DAMA, and EO Subcommittees are planning to hold markups later this month to move some or all of the considered bills forward.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE TRUSTEES REPORT ON THE PROGRAMS' FINANCIAL STATUS

On April 4, the Social Security Board of Trustees released its annual report on the status of the Social Security Trust Funds. A separate report on the financial condition of the Medicare Trust Funds was issued by the Trustees for that program on March 31. Under the Social Security Act, the Boards, among other duties, are required to report annually to Congress on the actuarial status and financial operations of the OASI (Old Age and Survivors Insurance) and DI (Disability Insurance) Trust Funds, as well as the Hospital Insurance [(HI) Medicare Part A] and Supplementary Medical Insurance (Medicare Parts B, C and D) Trust Funds.

The Social Security Trustees project that the OASI Trust Fund will become depleted in 2033, one year sooner than last year's estimate. However, when combined with the DI Trust Fund reserves, the depletion date remains at 2034, at which time the system will have enough revenue coming in to pay 80 percent of benefits.

The Medicare HI trust fund will be depleted in 2031, which is three years later than the date projected in last year's Trustee's report. The report attributes this to several factors, including fewer expected beneficiaries as a result of COVID-19 deaths, and long-term prescription drug savings from the Inflation Reduction Act. Still, without any changes to the law, Medicare benefits for inpatient hospital services will have to be cut in 2031 by 11 percent to match revenue, with the cuts growing to 19 percent by 2047.

In addition to their financial projections, the Trustees' reports contain a number of statistics about benefits and enrollment in Social Security and Medicare. For example, Social Security paid benefits of \$1.232 trillion in calendar year 2022 to approximately 66 million beneficiaries. During 2022, an estimated 181 million people had earnings covered by Social Security and paid payroll taxes. (See SSA Press Release March 31, 2023). In 2022, Medicare covered 65 million people, of which 57.1 million were aged 65 and older, and 7.9 million were people with disabilities. Close to half, 46 percent, of these beneficiaries were enrolled in Part C private health plans (Medicare Advantage). (See 2023 Annual Report of the Boards of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance and Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Funds)

NEW FORMS IN DEVELOPMENT FOR VA'S BOWEL AND BLADDER PROGRAM

On December 15, 2022, the VA published a notice in the Federal Register requesting comments on two new forms: 10-314a, Bowel and Bladder Services Preauthorization, and 10-314b, Request for Payment of Bowel and Bladder Services. VA

Form 10-314a will be used by physicians to request preauthorization of bowel and bladder services and certify that caregivers have been properly trained and meet all requirements for safely rendering care to veterans. VA Form 10-314b will be used by caregivers to request reimbursement for bowel and bladder care services. On March 1, VA published a second notice in the Federal Register seeking additional comments.

PVA submitted comments in response to both requests. In response to the first request, we provided comments concerning the need for a standardized form for payment of bowel and bladder services, as well as the need for caregivers to be able to fill it out and submit it online. Based on the second request for comments, which provided the opportunity to review the actual forms, we requested changes to the type of information required and some of the terminology to make it easier for caregivers to use.

UPDATE ON VA'S EHR PROJECT

VA has extended its pause on future deployments of its new multi-billion-dollar Oracle Cerner electronic health record (EHR) system. The Department planned to restart its rollout of the Oracle Cerner system in June at the VA Saginaw Health Care System in Michigan, but opted to postpone the launch after determining that the new EHR is not yet ready. Lawmakers have become increasingly critical of the troubled project in recent months. As a result of that criticism, the VA leadership promised they would not deploy the new EHR system at any facility until they are confident it is ready to deliver for veterans and VA providers.

NEWS OF NOTE

REAADI For Disasters Act Reintroduced in 118th Congress

The REAADI (Real Emergency Access for Aging and Disability Inclusion) for Disasters Act was



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

introduced on March 29 by Sen. Robert Casey (D-PA) and nine other original cosponsors (S. 1049) and in the House by Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-MI) and six other original cosponsors (H.R. 2371). Among its provisions, the READI for Disasters Act would:

- Create a national network of centers focused on training and technical assistance, as well as research, to assist states and localities to better involve and support people with disabilities and older adults during and after disasters;
- Direct the Department of Justice to review the spending of disaster funds by federal agencies and states to ensure funds have been spent in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; and
- Create a competitive grant program to pilot strategies for greater inclusion of people with disabilities and older adults in disaster preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation.

Tracking Your PACT Act Claim Status Online

The PACT Act expanded benefits eligibility for veterans exposed to toxic substances such as Agent Orange, radiation, or burn pits during their military service. If you have a pending PACT Act claim, click [here](#) to learn how to check its status online.

Copayment Exemption for American Indian and Alaska Native Veterans

A recently implemented provision of the Isakson and Roe Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 exempts eligible American Indian and Alaska Native veterans from copayments for health care services and urgent care visits. VA will review all copayments received for covered services on or after January 5, 2022.

Caregivers FIRST

Friends and families who help provide care for veterans can learn to navigate the VA health care system, discover new strategies for caregiving, and connect with other caregivers all through the four-session group training program, Caregivers FIRST. Here's what the program offers:

- Flexible in-person or virtual group training sessions.

- A gateway to learning about resources available through VA and community organizations.
- Workbooks and supplemental materials to support anger-management, medication management, sleep challenges, and more.
- Connection with fellow veterans' caregivers.
- Guidance on decision-making strategies, coping skills, helping your veteran remain independent, the value of self-care, preparing for the future, and more.

To learn more about Caregivers FIRST, check out this one pager or contact your local Caregiver Support Program team.

Invite Your Caregiver to Your Next Video Visit

Many veterans feel comfortable when their family member or caregiver is present at their VA appointment. They may offer support in a time of need or provide helpful insight for your VA provider. Now, you can have the same assistance at your video telehealth appointments by inviting up to five family members or caregivers to join you. Just ask about the "Caregiver Connect" option when scheduling your video visit. Click [here](#) for more information.

ADVOCACY TIPS AND ACTIVE ALERTS

Advocacy Tips

When reaching out to your elected officials, make it personal, when possible. Remember, a meeting is better than a phone call, a phone call is better than an e-mail, and an e-mail is better than not reaching out at all. You are a real, tangible person and you bring the human aspect to an issue. Including your voice in policy that affects you goes a long way in how legislators decide to approach it.

Current Action Alerts

We have quite a few PVAction Force alerts we can use your advocacy on ranging from updating VA facilities, to long-term home care, to improving access to air travel.

Here are a few that we would like to highlight:

- The Air Carrier Access Amendments Act would improve access to air travel for passengers with disabilities. The Air Carrier Access

Act (ACAA) prohibits disability-based discrimination in air travel. Four years after its passage, Congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). While the ADA requires disability access in airports, shuttles, and other forms of mass transportation, it explicitly does not apply to commercial air travel. The Air Carrier Access Amendments Act would require airlines to operate airplanes that meet basic access standards for passengers with disabilities, including wheelchair users, and increase enforcement of the ACAA.

- The Caring for Survivors Act would increase Dependency and Indemnity Compensation for qualified survivors of service members and veterans.

- The VA Clinician Appreciation, Recruitment, Education, Expansion, and Retention Support (CAREERS) Act would help VA attract and retain top health care talent by increasing pay caps to compete with other health care sectors.

- The Build, Utilize, Invest, Learn, and Deliver (BUILD) for Veterans Act would streamline the process VA uses to design and build medical facilities and other infrastructure projects, bolster the Department's workforce, and expedite the disposal or repurposing of unused and vacant buildings owned by the VA.

- The Stop the Wait Act would phase out the five-month waiting period to receive Social Security Disability Insurance benefits and allow those who are uninsured or unable to afford health insurance to immediately receive coverage under Medicare.

- The Veterans Infertility Treatment Act would greatly expand and improve access to assisted reproductive technology to a veteran and/or a partner who needs infertility care to achieve a pregnancy.

- The Elizabeth Dole Home and Community Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act would make urgently needed improvements to the VA's home and community-based services. It would address many of the shortfalls of the program, including raising the cap on how much the VA can pay for the cost of home care from 65 percent up to 100 percent.



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



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.



**OREGON DEPARTMENT
of VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

42nd Annual Wheelchair Games to be Held in Portland July 4-9, 2023!!!

The 42nd National Veterans Wheelchair Games is coming to the Pacific Northwest this summer! This year's edition of the Games will be held in Portland, Ore. from July 4-9, 2023. The National Veterans Wheelchair Games is open to the public this year.

VA staff interested in volunteering during regular tour-of-duty must reach out to supervisor for guidance and approval. Volunteer registration has opened to the general public online at <https://42wheelchairgames.my-trs.com/>.

Regular exercise – including training for and participating in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games – can help veterans with disabilities:

- Maintain body weight
- Combat chronic health conditions such as obesity, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes
- Gain energy
- Sleep better
- Improve mood and self-esteem
- Reduce anxiety and depression
- Enjoy new experiences and new friendships
- Counter the stigma of disability
- Increase their likelihood of employment, with less absenteeism and more productivity

The goal of the event is for veterans with disabilities to feel empowered to apply what they learn at the Wheelchair Games to their daily lives. The experience can also help them meet therapist goals such as managing self-care while traveling, navigating new environments, and improving self-confidence.

The National Veterans Wheelchair Games is co-presented each year by the Department of Veterans Affairs and Paralyzed Veterans of America. Both organizations offer programs that help veterans with disabilities increase their independence, health, and quality of life through wheelchair sports and recreation. Veterans are often first exposed to adaptive sports through their local VA Medical Center or PVA Chapter.



PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

February 2023

Taking Advantage of Educational Opportunities



Davis Clemence-Schreiner, an Air Force veteran, was referred to our Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Joel Hoots, by Marco Rossi, PVA's Associate Director of Field Services, after learning that Davis was considering going back to school and using his benefits. Joel explained how the G.I. Bill benefit works; and how to use

it effectively towards reaching his goal of attaining a degree from University of Boulder Colorado. They looked into some career fields that were different from what Davis had done in the military (a Munitions Systems Specialist). Additionally, Davis and Joel did some career exploration to identify fields that would have jobs in the next 3-4 years; and determined that Davis' interest in linguistics and language would provide him a route to a Bachelor's degree in Linguistics.

It turned out that Davis was not able to get into his specific degree program his first semester, but was eligible for their ACCESS Program which allows non-declared students to attend classes working towards degree until they can show a GPA high enough to apply to a degree program in Linguistics. Joel explained to Davis that he can use his G.I. Bill as an undeclared major or student at-large for two semesters under the current Chapter 33 G.I. Bill. This allowed Davis to attend school and not lose time while still being able to use his G.I. Bill towards his degree.

Davis is currently attending his first semester of school at the University of Colorado Boulder; and plans to do well enough to apply to his degree program in the coming semester.

Congratulations Davis!

IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

17 Client Placements

- 14 Paid Employment
- 3 Education/Training
 - 16 Veterans
 - 1 Active Duty
 - 2 PVA Members
- The average salary for the 13 clients placed in full-time employment was \$64,548; and the average income for the 1 client placed in part-time work was \$31,200.



Certified Community Work Incentive Counselor



The National Training and Data Center (NTDC) at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) has trained and certified Danielle Hetu, PVA VCP Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, to provide individualized work incentives

counseling services to Social Security disability beneficiaries seeking to pursue their career goals and increase their financial independence.

As a Certified Community Work Incentive Counselor, Danielle can provide individualized work incentives planning and assistance services that support Social Security disability beneficiaries to succeed in their return-to-work efforts. To actively promote employment outcomes, Community Partner Work Incentives Counselors (CPWICs) must have a solid understanding of Social Security's Ticket to Work program and various other work incentives, as well as the full array of vocational services available to individuals with disabilities. Danielle can assist beneficiaries to make employment and financial decisions. These services are available to PVA Members and veterans working with the PVA Veterans Career Program who are on Social Security and would like to determine how returning to work would impact their current benefits.



PVA.org/find-support/veterans-career-program

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Membership Application

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

Chapter Name: 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: ____/____/____



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