



PVA

Paralyzed Veterans of America

3rd Quarter 2023

Volume 1 Issue 3

Nevada Chapter

Elections

- ♦ **GET INVOLVED**
- ♦ **HAVE A SAY IN WHERE
YOUR CHAPTER IS
HEADED**
- ♦ **RUN FOR OFFICE**

Details on page 8



Paralyzed Veterans of America, Nevada Chapter

www.nevadapva.org

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Mission Statement

The mission of Nevada PVA is to improve the quality of life of U.S. military veterans and others who have spinal cord dysfunction through the use of adaptive sports, recreation, wellness programs, outreach, education, research and support.

Disclaimer

The Nevada Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America is a non-profit organization. We do not ask for or receive any money from any federal or state agencies. All of our funds are received mainly from donations. All members of the Paralyzed Veterans of America have sustained a spinal cord injury or disease. This newsletter is a publication of the Nevada chapter and is meant to inform its readers of Chapter activities, legislation, and other matters of concern to veterans and/or members of the disabled community. The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of Nevada PVA, its officers, board members, the editor or production staff.

President's Report

by Bill Burns



I recently attended a roundtable held by Senator Cortez-Masto regarding the PACT Act. I learned that there has already been over \$1 billion paid out in claims.

I recently learned that unfortunately we do not have a cardiologist on staff at the VA or at Nellis nor do we have a urologist, however, a urologist will be interviewed in the near future. The VA is trying to become more competitive as far as salaries for physicians was concerned so that we do not experience such an overwhelming turn around in doctors who leave for better salaries.

The proposed Women's Clinic at the VA is now about three years out as plans have to be redrawn. Finally, our VA saw over 1 million patients last year. Southern Nevada has the fastest growing veteran's community in the country and our Veteran's Cemetery is the second busiest in the nation.

I attended the 2023 Volunteer Awards Luncheon sponsored by the VA Center for Development & Civic Engagement. I was proud to accept an award named in honor of our recently deceased President, Dan Kaminski. It is named the Dan Kaminski Meritorious Spirit Award. This award will be presented annually to the volunteer displaying the same service and dedication that Dan exemplified.

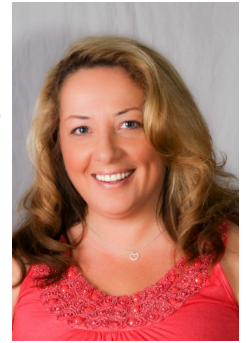
The extension granted by Congress to allow for filing travel pay claims submitted more than 30 days after the appointment date has expired as of June 9, 2023. Proof of attendance is required for all community care claims and claims could be denied if proof is not supplied. This can happen when non-VA care providers do not return medical records in a timely manner. Make sure you ask your provider to return records of your visit as soon as possible.

Lastly, we just learned that our VA has just hired a new Chief of Neurology and also completed the interview process for a urologist and he is now going through orientation. These are both welcome additions to our local facility.



Executive Directors Report

by Julie Johnson



The power of networking and community partners is amazing. Nevada PVA has a new member, Mr. Roland Teal who has Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and a few months ago he called our office looking for help. He was getting a new powerchair, but the issue was the walkway from the street up to his home, it is a long pathway of cement steps. This would mean he would have to leave his powerchair attached to his vehicle each night and continue to maneuver walking up this staircase which has gotten more difficult in time, hence the new powerchair.

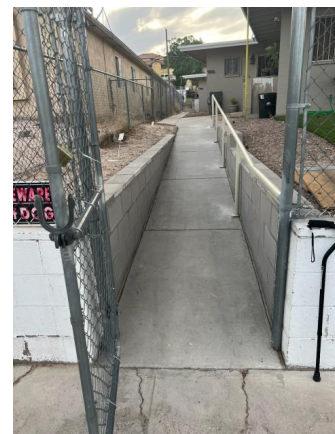
Mr. Teal wanted to know if we could help him or knew anyone who could. I told him to give me a few days to research and ask around. I reached out to a friend with the Nevada Veterans Foundation who reached out to a friend of his who said, "I know a guy", LOL. Well low and behold he knew a retired firefighter who has a small organization that helps locals with accessibility. Scott went and looked at the pathway and said yes, he could help. It was going to be a few weeks before he could get to it because his group of volunteers do this on their days off. As you can see from the pictures below this was no easy project and the result is beautiful.

Not long after the project was done Mr. Teal called and expressed to me how grateful he was, and this accessibility was like a newfound freedom. He also told me that he had a flare up with his MS and the ambulance came to get him and he is so very thankful for this ramp and how easy it was for them to come get him instead of having to be carried.

This is the power of community, this is Human kindness, this is networking, this is accessibility & freedom. This is one of the many reasons why I love what I do and why I love my community.

Save the Date - September 30th is our Awards Banquet at the Aliante Casino

P.S. Its Summertime – Stay Hydrated



National Directors Report

by Jason Kelley



I am honored to represent Nevada and Southern Utah as the PVA Chapter's National Director. I just returned from my very first go-round at the National Convention and there was a ton of Information thrown at you for four days! One of the items that was mentioned was the Weavers Woman's Retreat at the end of September. This a retreat that is paid for and sponsored by PVA National. If any of our chapter's female veterans are interested in learning more about this great Opportunity, please reach out to Julie Johnson our Executive Director or you can go the pva.org and get more Information.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS NEWS!

Hello to all my fellow brother and sisters living with Multiple Sclerosis. My name is Jason Kelley (USMC) and I have been living with Primary Progressive MS for the past 15 years. I now have the honor to be the local PVA liaison for Multiple Sclerosis. National PVA has put a large focus on its members with MS and have even sent out t-shirts for us to wear (pictures below). Please contact me so we can get you a shirt. Most importantly, I would like to know how the PVA can help you. Every one of us is different with our issues and symptoms so it is important to hear from everyone! I also would like to know if anyone would like to star any physical activities as I also sit as the Sports Director for Nevada PVA. Please contact me by phone at 702/375-6089 or email me at j4kelleys@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you and what we can do to help.



Service Officer's Report

by Jason McDonald, NSO



First off, I am happy to announce that I have finally moved down to Las Vegas from Reno. I have an office at the Southern Nevada VA, Room 1C248. I am available to review claims and/or file a new one. Please make an appointment by calling 702/791-9000 Ext. 14458. I look forward to working with PVA Vegas veterans.

Verification of Dependents

You may receive in the mail from the VA a form called "Mandatory Verification of Dependents" (VA form # 21-0538), also referred to as "Status of Dependents Questionnaire". The VA mails this form out periodically to veterans giving the veteran 60 days to complete the form. If you receive this form in the mail from the VA, you should immediately complete the form and email or mail it to the PVA service office for submittal to the VA.

The form is simple: In Section I, you need to print (in black ink, NOT blue ink) your name, social security number, date of birth, address, phone number and email address. If your dependents have not changed, you only need to check "no" in Section II of the form, where the form asks if you have any changes to your dependents. If you have changes, simply list the new ones or the ones who may no longer be a dependent -- Section III re spousal change and in Section IV re change for children.

Many veterans seem to ignore this form, and they do not complete and send it in to the VA. Unfortunately, if you do not complete and send in this form to the PVA for submittal, the VA will then start the process of taking your dependents off your award. As always with the VA, they give the veteran ample opportunities to comply. If you do not send in the form initially, the VA will again send you another letter asking you to complete the form, giving you another 60 days to complete the task.

If the VA does not hear back from you within the 60 days of that second letter, the VA will then take your dependents off your award. Please keep in mind that if you do not answer the questionnaire; and then when the VA does finally take your dependent(s) off your award, you will incur an overpayment which will go back to the original date that the dependent or dependents were added to your award in the first place.

Of course, you can eventually have your dependents added back to your award, but you in order to do that, you will need to complete a new VA Form 21-686c and send it to the PVA for submittal to the VA. However, to avoid the inconvenience of this situation, you can simply complete the questionnaire when you first receive it.

Please note: you can also send the form directly to the VA; HOWEVER, we strongly urge you to send the form to PVA for submittal to the VA. That way we, as your representative before the VA, can make sure the form is submitted.....You can also call the VA's Call Center at 800-827-1000, when you receive the questionnaire, to verify your dependent(s).

Sports Report

by Jason Kelley

Interested in adaptive cycling?

The City of Las Vegas runs a cycling program Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at Wayne Bunker family park. Currently with the heat they are running from 8 am to 10 am on those days. Come out and you can give it a try. Stephanie and Meghan are wonderful and will help you find a bike that is comfortable to your fit. You will also find me there riding as I have been enjoying this program for the past year. There are a lot of veterans that use this service and they even have outings you can sign up for. Come out, get some fresh air and make some new friends.

Las Vegas is going to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games! We have team of four athletes going. The games start July 4th. Wish the LAS VEGAS ROADRUNNERS good luck as they have started practicing their various games to get ready for the event.

Have you met the new Recreational Therapist at the North Las Vegas VA? His name is Everett Lowrey. He transferred from the Seattle VA and is very excited to help get Las Vegas more active. If you are interested in learning more about getting active and any adaptive equipment to do so, please make an appointment with him.

We were honored to sponsor the Army's Birthday and Flag Day celebration at the Northern Nevada Veterans Home.



Some of our members attended the Barrett-Jackson car auction at the Las Vegas Convention Center and had a great time.



Elections



It's once again time to start thinking about elections. We are approaching the time for electing a new President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and five (5) members of the Board of Directors for our chapter.

Nevada residency is **NOT** a requirement as you can Zoom into our board meetings. The only requirement is that you be a member in good standing. Have a say in what goes on with your chapter. You **can** make a difference.

Please get involved and run for office. If you would like to run, please submit your biography to our office, along with a letter of intent advising us of which position you are interested in running for. We will be publishing biographies of all members interested in running for office in our 4th quarter newsletter. Bio's will be due no later than August 15, 2023. Ballots will be sent out in December and due back to our office no later than January 15th, 2024.

PLEASE GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR CHAPTER



Washington Update

ELIGIBLE VETERANS IN THE VDC PROGRAM CAN RECEIVE AUTHORIZATION TO PAY THEIR CAREGIVERS WHEN HOSPITALIZED

After two years of advocacy, VA's Geriatric and Extended Care Program will now allow eligible veterans enrolled in the Veteran Directed Care (VDC) program to pay their caregivers when they are hospitalized.

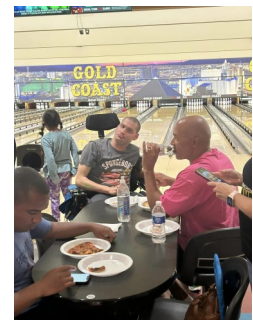
When veterans with spinal cord injuries or disorders are hospitalized, their caregivers often accompany them to the hospital and provide essential nonmedical services during their hospitalization. Until now, veterans had to discontinue paying their caregivers under the VDC program when their status changed from home care to inpatient care.

Now, veterans who are approved for Case Mix "V" or who have a score of "K" may be able to continue paying their caregivers when hospitalized, if clinically indicated and supportive of their care needs. Because this is a new policy, VA will be keeping a close eye on the change, and will monitor it closely until staff is comfortable administering it. With sufficient information, VA often approves requests, as needed, on the same day.

VA GUIDANCE ON ADDITIONAL AUTO GRANT RELEASED

On May 3, VA released interim guidance on implementation of the additional auto allowance grant authorized by the PVA-led Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022 (P.L. 117-333). The law allows authorized eligible veterans to receive a second auto allowance if 30 or more years have elapsed since their initial one. The interim guidance gives VA claims processors instruction on how to process requests for the additional grant, as well as non-articulating trailers, which were authorized as part of VA's adaptive equipment program. Ten years after enactment of the bill (January 5, 2033), eligible veterans will be entitled to an additional automobile allowance once every ten years. Please contact your PVA National Service Officer with questions about this new benefit.

We were excited to co-sponsor a bowling pizza party with Elks Lodge #1468, for the Paralympic Kids at the Gold Coast. We always have a great time with these kids and their families.





July

Lillian Bowes	Linville Hinch	Mariza Shaffa
Mary Cunningham-Irwin	Jeanenne Hubbard-Dunbar	Bill Sharkey
L.E. Curtis	Kenneth Johnson	Richard Squires
Isabel Darensbourg	Katherine Jones	William Taylor
Merle Delong	Yokiko Knowlton	Celisa Willette
Kim Hilton	Patricia Lechuga	BettyWilliams
	James Leinberger	

August

Yusuf Ali	David Fivecoats	John Lowther
Guy Andrews	Fletcher (Rick) Hantke	Tim Manchego
Lionila Angelias	James Hoban	Marci Piccirilli
Susumu Arishita	Brandon Jones	Lyndon Ruddell
Rickey Bossert	Paige Livingston	Lester Wood
Robert Butterfield	Edward Loesch	Joe Ybanez

September

Cedrick Arinwine	Dominic Cirino	David Matthews
Robert Artz	Judy Cobb	Chris McMahon
Mary Lou Buck	Norman Cruz	Tom McQuade
Darnell Calahan	Joseph Hawk	Tad Stuart
Ronald Cantagallo	Christina Kelley	James Wakefield
		Gregory Weeks

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Thank You!

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Donations can be made in any amount. They will accumulate from January 1—December 31. Donors will be printed in our monthly newsletter unless otherwise requested. To make a donation go online to www.nevadapva.org or call 702-646-0040.

Las Vegas VA Medical Center Locations

Mailing Address: VA Southern Nevada Healthcare System, 6900 North Pecos Road, North Las Vegas, NV 89086

Main Number: 702-791-9000 **Toll-Free Phone:** 1-888-633-7554 **VA Pharmacy:** 702-791-9076

Toll-Free Nurse Advice Line: 1-877-252-4866

	Northeast Primary Care Clinic 4461 East Charleston Boulevard Las Vegas, NV 89104	702-791-9050
	Northwest Primary Care Clinic 3968 North Rancho Drive North Las Vegas, NV 89130	702-791-9020
	Pahrump Community Based Outpatient Clinic 2100 East Calvada Boulevard Pahrump, NV 89048	775-727-7535
	Southeast Primary Care Clinic 1020 South Boulder Highway Henderson, NV 89015	702-791-9030
	Southwest Primary Care Clinic 7235 South Buffalo Drive Las Vegas, NV 89113	702-791-9040
	Community Resource and Referral Center 926 West Owens Avenue Las Vegas, NV 89106	702-791-9077
	Mike O'Callaghan Federal Medical Center 4700 North Las Vegas Boulevard Las Vegas, NV 89115	702-653-2227 EMERGENCY CARE ONLY
	Psychosocial Rehab Recovery Center 3525 W. Cheyenne Avenue North Las Vegas, NV 89032	702-791-9060
	Vet Center - Las Vegas 1919 South Jones Boulevard, Suite A Las Vegas, NV 89146	702-251-7873
	Vet Center - Henderson 400 North Stephanie Street, Suite 180 Henderson, NV 89014	702-791-9100
	Women's Health Center Temporarily at Northeast PCC 4461 East Charleston Boulevard Las Vegas, NV 89104	702-791-9050



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Jared Davis

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PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

April 2023

Partner For Life



Mr. Floyd Graves III is a 51-year-old Veteran. He served as an Aircraft Maintenance Specialist in the Air Force; and as a Tree Trimmer and Water Meter Worker for the City of Oceanside. Floyd has been a client of the Veterans Career Program since 2019.

In 2022, shortly after learning that his position as a Water Maintenance Worker would be ending, he contacted our Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Darah Gerou, for assistance. He was looking for a new position, preferably permanent. Like many individuals, Floyd had accepted part-time or contract work to fill the gaps between permanent positions.

Floyd's main motivation for finding a position was rooted in his desire to continue helping to support his family. Before starting the job search process, Darah helped him apply for unemployment and navigate other helpful local resources. She then assisted Floyd with updating, revising and tailoring his resume. They also updated his LinkedIn profile, practiced his interview skills, and discussed the best to "sell" himself to potential employers.

Floyd went on several second-round interviews with different companies – not an uncommon situation for many job seekers. In mid-April 2023, Floyd received and accepted a job offer with Caltrans as a Tree Maintenance Worker. He began his new job the first week of May.

Congratulations Floyd!

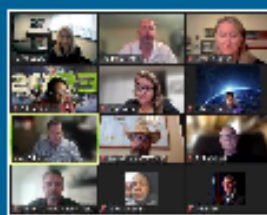
IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

20 Client Placements

- 15 Paid Employment
- 5 Education/Training
 - 17 Veterans
 - 3 Family Members
 - 5 PVA Members
- The average salary for the 12 clients placed in full-time employment was \$93,923 (a record high monthly average); and the average income for the 3 clients placed in part-time work was \$11,304.



Exploring Self-Employment



According to the National Disability Institute, 74% of people with disabilities do not participate in the labor force, but continue to turn to self-employment and small business development as a viable alternative.

On April 19th, graduates of Paralyzed Veterans of America's 8-week Disabled Veterans Self-Employment Pilot Program had the opportunity to pitch their business ideas to a distinguished panel of small business experts including Aaron Sharp Miranda (Wells Fargo), Tracy Cassidy (Penske Automotive Group), Laura Wages (U.S. Small Business Administration) and Meghan Ogilvie (Dog Tag Inc).

Thanks to a generous donation from the Wells Fargo Foundation, we were able to award two \$2,500 grants to help PVA Members test and launch their businesses. Congratulations to Howard Cleland (PVA Wisconsin Chapter Member) and Tiffaney Davison (PVA Buckeye Chapter Member); and congratulations to all the participants in our pilot program.

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