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Greetings Chapter Members!

by Robert Arciola, Gov. Relations Director

Okay it's been a slow recess for Congress as they were all on the campaign trails, but there are two things the government is working on. The first one is to pass a National Defense Authorization Act to fund our military, and the Annual Budget to avoid a government shutdown. These are the two main issues as this 117th Congress ends for the holiday and the 118th Congress is sworn in January. PVA believes there are still two important key legislative bills we can get through before this Congress ends. HR 3304 Cars for Vets Act passed the House in late September. This

bill authorizes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide (or assist in providing) an eligible veteran or service member with an additional automobile or other conveyance under the VA automobile allowance and adaptive equipment program. Currently, a veteran or service member with a specified service-connected disability or impairment may not receive more than one automobile or other conveyance under the program. It was presented to the Senate on Oct 10. We believe Congress would try to pass it via a hotline process (requiring no debate). Please call our Senators and let them know how important the

bill is to you. The House also passed the Clothing Allowance bill. The bill requires the VA to continue the clothing allowance for such a veteran on an annual basis until they no longer need it without annual reviews. This bill will also likely be a hotline bill to hopefully get through. Please rush to call the Hill regarding these two key issues. They must hear about it from their con-



stituents, then they're more likely to endorse the bill.

Many champions are on our side wondering why there are so many challenges in air travel.

The HCBS bill (Elizabeth Dole Home- and Community-Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act of 2022) has not been passed by either chamber, but

there's a small chance the House could bring it up for a floor vote. An opinion editorial in the Hill newspaper by PVA President Charles Brown and Dole Foundation Executive Director urging Congress to pass the HCBS bill. The bill Increases payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for long-term care and support of veterans; encourages VA to expand access to a non-VA provider that would furnish all-inclusive care to elderly veterans living

continued on page 4



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 Dennis Scanlan, Secretary Gerald Brown, Treasurer

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Keith Cooper

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Keith Cooper

STAFF

Maria Hernandez, Executive Director

Service Officers

Winston Woodard, III
 Hines VA Hospital
 708-202-5623

Robert Statam
 Chicago Office
 312-980-4278

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2023 Bi-Monthly Membership Meetings

We continue not to access the Multi-Purpose Room at the Hines VA Hospital Spinal Cord Injury Building #128 for our bi-monthly in-person membership meetings. We will continue conducting the membership meetings via Zoom until further notice. Members who have an email address will continue to receive the link to join the meetings.

For those members that **do not** have email and do not have access to a computer, you can still join the meetings via call by calling this number 312-626-6799; with meeting ID: 553 748 9623 and Passcode: 733870.

Suppose Vaughan Chapter gets the approval to use the Hines VA Hospital, building #128, S.C.I. Multipurpose Room, to conduct in person Membership Meetings, **then we should resume the meetings as scheduled below and notify you soon as possible of the change.** All meetings will be in the Multipurpose Room at noon, with FREE lunch.

Wednesday, January 25, 2023

Zoom meeting

Meeting ID: 553 748 9623

Passcode: 733870

Wednesday, March 22

Wednesday, July 26

Wednesday, November 22

Wednesday, May 24

Wednesday, September 27

Executive Director's Report

by Maria Hernandez

Hello, Vaughan Chapter P.V.A. Members, Associates, and Volunteers

As we begin this new year 2023, first, I want to start by thanking all the donors, sponsors, and volunteers that contributed to Vaughan Chapter in 2022; we are grateful to everyone that made possible every effort we accomplished because of their contribution. Thanks again to CARING PATRIOTS group, which allowed Vaughan Chapter members to receive "groceries" for the holidays. Once again, Vaughan Chapter P.V.A. is grateful for remembering our Chapter members!

It was so good to see and share with Vaughan members at the Annual Christmas Luncheon this past December; after two years of not being able to celebrate together as a family, Vaughan was able to host it again in the Auditorium at the Hines VA Hospital filled with joy, a delicious meal, music and with Santa Claus having plenty of gifts. Thanks to UroPartners for the gift cards and Hallmark Media for the Bluetooth desk speaker given to Vaughan members attending the luncheon.

As we move forward to this new year, Vaughan has unique expectations by planning new and fresh outings and activities throughout the year just for you. We encourage you to participate in all the chapter sports, recreation, and events we have prepared for you this year. Vaughan is starting with a new and fresh website this month; you will find everything available in the events calendar here. I encourage you to visit the new website that Keith Cooper, sports director, and the University of Wisconsin-whitewater marketing department have been working hard to accomplish this project; we ask you to give us your input and let us know what you think.

As always, we encourage our members to call our office and ensure your contact information is accurate to receive all the Vaughan chapter's benefits and valuable information we provide. You will miss what Vaughan has for you.

Please let us know your correct contact information as soon as possible.

Vaughan's Bi-monthly Membership meetings will continue via Zoom because we are still not allowed to use the Multipurpose Room in Spinal Cord Injury Building #128. We are waiting for the Hospital Infection Control Service for permission to resume meeting in person. The link and passcode for the meeting will be sent to you by email ahead of time for you to join us via Zoom.

The first membership meeting will be on Wednesday, January 25, 2023; if you cannot log in, you may also join us by calling 312-626-6799 and entering your credentials to join the meeting. ID: 553 748 9623 Passcode: 733870.

Suppose Vaughan Chapter gets the approval to use the Hines VA Hospital, building #128, S.C.I. Multipurpose Room, to conduct in-person Membership Meetings, **then we should resume the meetings as scheduled below and notify you soon as possible of the change.**

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Wednesday, March 22 | Wednesday, May 24 |
| Wednesday, July 26 | Wednesday, September 27 |
| Wednesday, November 22 | |

Thank you,

Maria Hernandez



Government Relations Director Report

by Robert Arciola

cover story

continued from page 1

in the community; requires VA to update IT capabilities to assist veterans and caregivers using long-term health care and support services; requires VA to carry out a pilot program that would provide homemaker and health aide services to veterans; requires several reports and studies on departmental programs that provide medical and health services to elderly veterans at home and in the community.

The Justice for ALS Veterans Act and HISA bills discussions have been ongoing, but they are unlikely to advance any further and will need to be reintroduced in the next congress. The VA still hasn't commented on the reforms they're considering regarding caregiver programs. Spouses who are caregivers who cannot work, don't earn credits for SS retirement. This will be addressed again in the 118th. The Administration for Community Living published a national strategy in September and there was a 60-day comment period. The intent was to identify actions federal agencies could commit to doing to support the needs of family caregivers. On November 17th the Subcommittee on Aviation had a hearing on accessible air travel. You can watch the whole hearing on the House Transportation Infrastructure Committee website where you can hear

about experiences flying. Many champions are on our side wondering why there are so many challenges in air travel. A webinar on Electric Vehicles was held on November 17th as well. You can watch that webinar on pva.org and share it with your chapter members. There are a lot of webinars available on PVA's website and share them.

The Access Board has taken comments regarding self-service transaction machines and self-service kiosks, including check-in machines, fare machines, ticketing machines, etc. PVA submitted comments for each to be as accessible as possible and preferred the authority be under their board. Additional work is ongoing regarding DOT who has received over 4,000 comments regarding air travelers with disabilities and ticketing.

A team is forming to address several issues once again this winter in Washington D.C. We are trained two days, then have two days to we meet with legislative offices. This work MUST be followed up by your calls, letters and emails for our efforts to be effective.



Left, Robert Arciola and Vaughan members attending the Christmas Luncheon.

President's Report

By Anthony Powell, Vaughan Chapter President

Hello, my fellow veterans,

I would wish you all a happy new year.

We had a great year in 2022; as we move forward toward the new year, things are getting better and brighter, with many opportunities to make our chapter even better.

We have achieved potential new board members coming soon, more activities for our members, and better transportation. A new fresh website is coming up in 2023, and a few other things. However, we are always looking for ideas for our future, so you can feel free to submit your ideas to the chapter office or me; your thoughts are essential to us.

Coming up in March, we will be going to Washington for the annual PVA Advocacy/Legislation Seminar to visit and meet with members of Congress to address all veterans' issues as caregiving, and air and ground transportation, to name a few. At the chapter level, we are working on many more activities for you for 2023.

Remember that we need your help and ideas, and continue moving forward in every direction.

HAPPY NEW YEAR, 2023.

Thank you

Anthony Powell, President VPVA.



Notice to Vaughan Chapter members.

Vaughan Chapter members must please call our office at 708-947-9790 or send us an email message to vpva@vaughanpva.org with your current mailing address and phone numbers and email address to receive all the Vaughan chapter's benefits and valuable information we provide.

If we contact you and your phone is disconnected, and you do not have an email address where you can receive the communications, you will miss what Vaughan has to offer for you. Please let us know your accurate contact information as soon as possible.



Past President, Josue Cordova, receiving an award for his 5-year service as Vaughan Chapter President.

OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON WAS FILLED WITH HOLIDAY CHEER!



Mike & Astrid Mangulabnan (donors)
Alternative Home Health Care



UroPartners Employees volunteering at the Christmas Luncheon



JOIN US FOR THE FOLLOWING EVENTS

Bowling:

Romeoville Bowlero May 5th -7th, 2023

The chapter had a very successful tournament in 2022 with 35 wheelchair bowlers. This year we are moving our bowling clinic to Saturday morning and adding a Saturday night social with a live band. I might even grab my Bass for a set, don't miss it! We will be starting practices in March; stay tuned for more information.

Trap Shooting:

St. Charles Sportsmen Club May 26th -28th, 2023

The St. Charles Sportsmen Club is excited to have us back and looks forward to growing the field of participants. The club has even added a sidewalk allowing a third house by wheelchair. The accessible access allows Vaughan participants to access three trap houses for a very efficiently run event.

Bass Fishing:

Rend Lake Oct 7th – 9th, 2023

The Sesser, IL, community is excited to have us back in their welcoming community. The VFW, Mayor's office, and local volunteer organizations were highly visible and engaged in the Vaughan Bass Tournament. We look forward to more participants getting out in the bass boats this year and reeling in that BIG BASS!



Sports and Recreation

Keith Cooper, VPVA Sports Director

Let's Curl!

PVA Vaughan chapter is partnering with Windy City Curling Club to have bi-weekly curling practices. We have had a strong attendance of 4-6 curlers at each practice. Join the fun. <https://windycity.curling.club/paralyzed-veterans-of-america-learn-to-curl/>

The VA Adaptive Sports Grant supports the PVA Vaughan Chapter Windy City Curling program.

Vaughan looks forward to providing more transportation options in 2023. PVA Vaughan Chapter secured a 100k grant from the Nielsen Foundation to purchase a new 8-person wheelchair-accessible bus. More great news, be on the lookout for a new website design after the new year.

Curling Dates

Practices: Register Here

Jan 4th, Jan 11th, Jan 25th Feb 1st, 15th March 1st

Tournaments: Must attend two practices

January 21st, travel to Wauwatosa for Bonspiel 11 AM - 7 PM

March 25th, 26th Windy City Bonspiel

If you have any Sports and Recreation questions, comments or concerns, don't hesitate to contact me. KeithC@VaughanPVA.org.

Vaughan Sports and Recreation is taking our wheelchair curlers to WI's Tosa curling club on January 21st. The team has been practicing every other week and has room to grow at the Windy City Curling Club. So come check out wheelchair curling; it's a blast.



Save the Dates

Registrations Coming Soon

Bowling:

Romeoville Bowlero May 5th -7th, 2023

Trap:

St. Charles Sportsmen Club

May 26th -28th, 2023

Bass:

Rend Lake Oct 7th – 9th, 2023

If you have any Sports and Recreation questions, comments or concerns, don't hesitate to contact me. KeithC@VaughanPVA.org.



Service Officer's Report

By: Robert Statam, Sr. NSO

Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALIFE)

There are changes that benefit the veteran, and there are changes that benefit the veteran's loved ones. I would like to bring to your attention some news we can all use, such as; starting January 1, 2023, Public Law 116-315 has authorized the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to start a new life insurance program exclusively for disabled veterans – Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife). The Veterans Affairs Life Insurance (VALife) has something that a lot of us wished we had enrolled in long ago. Now after missing out on the Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance (S-DVI), we have an opportunity to get it right. I don't know how many times I've heard veterans talk about how they wished they had taken advantage of this insurance.

If you need to ask what is (VALife)? It would probably be answered as, a guaranteed acceptance of whole life insurance coverage that requires no proof of health. The next important question is who is eligible? You are eligible if you are;

- Are aged 80 or under and have a VA disability rating, or
- Applied for VA disability rating before age 81 and received an initial rating after turning 81.

Next, you're probably wondering is there a time limit to apply?

- Age 80 or under, there is no time limit to apply.
- Age 81 or Over: Must apply within two years of receiving a rating for a new service-connected condition applied before the age of 81.

How much coverage can I get? Up to \$40,000 (in increments of \$10,000). Today, it seems as if we are living longer, and Funeral Expenses are getting higher. We all would want our loved ones to be taken care of, at the time of our passing on. You asked when does my coverage take effect? The Full (VALife) coverage takes effect two years after enrollment. Now for those who have been enrolled in the S-DVI, the Impact on Service-Disabled Veterans

Insurance (S-DVI), is like this. You may ask what happens to (S-DVI), when (VALife) starts? The service –disabled veterans insurance (S-DVI) programs will close to new enrollment (no new applications will be accepted) after December 31, 2022. Remember that you can apply for (VALife) if you already have (S-DVI)? Also, if you have (S-DV)I, you can apply for (VALife). If you apply before December 31, 2025, you can keep S-DVI during the initial two-year enrollment period for VALife. Do I have to switch to VALife? No, you may remain in the S-DVI program if you chose to.

Remember, that this full coverage amount pays to a receiving beneficiary if the disabled veteran dies within two years of enrollment. Also, it is important to know that these premiums in most cases are much lower than those that are in the community. The VALife premium chart can be viewed at VA.gov/life-Insurance. The premiums rates are based on your age and the coverage amount. Once locked in, premium rates do not increase over the life of the policy. I hope that this information was a benefit to you, as it was for me.

If you should have any questions concerning this topic, please feel free to contact Robert Statam, Sr. NSO, at the Chicago Regional Office, PVA @ (312) 980-4278,

Mr. Winston Woodard III, SBA, at the Hines VAMC, @ (708) 202-5623.



VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OF COOK COUNTY

Cook County Veterans

Subject: Clothing/Shoes Benefit

Effective November 1, 2022. The Veterans Assistance Commission of Cook County will re-establish the “Interview Clothing and Shoes” benefit for Cook County Veterans.

The benefit will apply to eligible Veterans:

- Seeking new clothing for scheduled/confirmed interview for employment.
- Veterans enrolled in the UMAP (Utility Military Assistance Program)

The point of contact regarding any inquiries for this memorandum is the VACCC Superintendent at (312) 433-6012. Elizabeth D. Soto.

LIFE ENJOYMENT FUND

Voting MEMBERS!

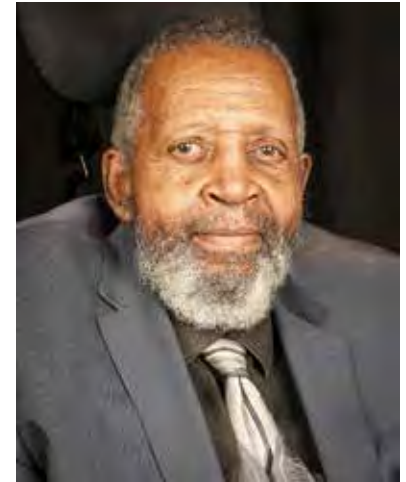
Attend a sport or recreational event such as a ball game, dinner, theatre and send in the receipt with an expense report then tell us how accessible the facility was such as parking and entrance or bathroom and counters, and if you recommend the place pointing out any problems, you'd like us to address, if needed, and get fully reimbursed up to \$150.00 per year!

Yes, that's correct refunded up to \$150.00 per year!



You can use the funds to cover the travel, lodging and food (NO alcohol) or event ticket/s. if you use a partial amount of the \$150.00; the remainder is available until the fiscal year ends! Call us now for ANY question/s! We're serious, so try us! Can you believe only a few members use this fund every year? Neither can I, so let's let the cat out of the bag and go do something with our precious summertime and great weather while it lasts! (Fiscal year 10/1/2021 to 9/30/2022).

Happy New Year to the Vaughan chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America from your treasurer Gerald Fitzgerald Lowell Brown Jr. Let me say that again Happy New Year to V.P.V.A



We are looking for this new year, F.Y. 2023, to be outstanding and working to have new members volunteer and participate. This year's budget equals \$530,436. We currently employ two members, a sports director and a government relations director, and we have plans to increase membership employment.

All members or entitled to participate in all activities as the chapter will fund their participation at a level equal to \$3,000 annually. In addition, all members are allowed an annual lifetime enjoyment stipend of \$150 to go to dinner, take the wife out to a movie, purchase a bowling ball, attend a baseball game, or do anything else they've been reluctant to do, but bills come first.

High-level quads need caregivers to accompany them; we also provide a stipend to pay their caregiver. We have a bus purchase in the plans for F.Y. 2023 and will be developing strategies to transport members to and from events this year. However, our success and ability to increase benefits to the membership depend on your participation. We need members who have never participated in our sports or annual events and membership meetings to be active.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerald L Brown, Treasurer VPVA

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Scan with your mobile phone to receive more information or schedule a demonstration.



Contact us today to find out if you are eligible to receive an Indego exoskeleton at no cost.

Phone: 844-846-3346

Email: support.indego@parker.com



Vaughan Chapter 2023 Calendar of Events

More outings and events to be added throughout the year.

| | |
|---|--|
| Chapter email address: vpva@vaughanpva.org Sports Director keithc@vaughanpva.org Maria Hernandez mhernandez@vaughanpva.org | (800) 727-2234 |
| Vaughan 4th Midwestern Invitational Bowling Tournament Bowlero 735 Center Blvd, Romeoville IL www.awba.org for registration | May 5th –7th 2023 |
| Vaughan Shooting Sports Tournament | May 26th— 28th 2023 |
| VPVA Busse Woods one day Fishing Derby Busse Woods Forest Preserve, Elk Grove Village IL FREE Lunch 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. | June 10th 2023 |
| Abilities Expo, Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center <i>Admission is FREE</i> Friday & Saturday 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. | June 23rd --- 25th 2023 |
| Vaughan Boccia Tournament | TBD |
| 41st National Veterans Wheelchair Games Portland, OR | July 4th –9th, 2023 |
| VPVA Annual Picnic – RSVP to the Chapter office Invitation to follow | September 9th, 2023 |
| Land of Lincoln B.A.S.S Tournament | October 7th --9th, 2023 |
| Veterans Day Dinner Via Bella Banquet 3 – 7 p.m. invitation to follow | November 11th, 2023 |
| VPVA Annual Christmas Luncheon – RSVP to the Chapter office Invitation to follow | December 16th, 2023 |

PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

November 2022

Promoting Your Abilities



Hamilton (Steele) Oliver is a Marine Corps Veteran with a spinal cord injury and 80% service-connected disability rating. He first reached out to the Veterans Career Program (VCP) in October of 2022 with a desire to work in the firearms training industry.

Steele shared his background in firearms training and passion for firearms; but has been faced with self-reported discrimination due to being wheelchair bound. While he attended over 20 interviews over the past year, employers would ultimately “go with someone else”. Seeking advice and assistance from VCP, our Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Alex Spangler, assisted Steele with different ways to address his disability with employers, and helped the client prepare for interviews in a more creative manner.

Many PVA members regularly participate in competitive shooting tournaments; so, our counselor encouraged Steele to promote his ability to attract new customers (including disabled Veterans) who may otherwise have shied away from this activity.

In less than 2 months, after implementing the assistance provided, the Steele received a job offer from a Richmond, VA gun shop and has since accepted the position. Alex and Steele are now working together to ensure the client’s success.

IMPACT + OPPORTUNITIES

22 Client Placements

- 19 Paid Employment
- 3 Education/Training
- 0 Volunteer
 - 21 Veterans
 - 1 Active Duty
 - 6 PVA Members
 - 2 PVA Member-Eligible
- The average salary for the 13 clients placed in full-time employment was \$70,940; and the average income for the 6 clients in part-time employment was \$21,333.



Help Heal Veterans



Arts and crafts are a time-tested healing tool for PTSD, depression, anxiety and other conditions. They can help relieve pain, and improve mobility and fine motor skills. And in some cases can help launch small businesses. Help Heal Veterans (founded in 1971) offers a variety of therapeutic craft kits free of charge to our veterans,

both in-home and at treatment centers across the country. The kits use recycled and sustainable materials, promote healing and show our veterans that we remember and care about them.

Treatment centers and patients pay nothing for this service, made possible by thousands of caring contributors wanting to express their love and appreciation to America’s veterans. These kits are produced from the ground up by veterans and family members at their production facility in Winchester, CA. To find out how to receive Help Heal Veterans therapeutic craft kits, please visit their website www.healvets.org.



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

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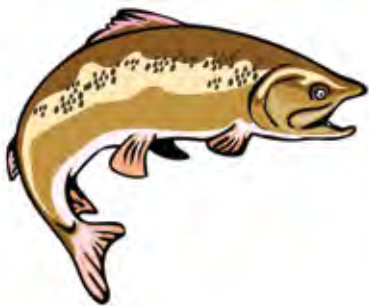
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Vaughan PVA
2235 Enterprise Drive, Suite 3501
Westchester, IL 60154



Vaughan Chapter

800-727-2234



Join Us

FOR THE FOLLOWING EVENTS

May 5 - 7

Vaughan 4th Midwestern Invitational Bowling Tournament
Bowlero 735 Center Blvd, Romeoville IL

May 26 -28,

Vaughan Shooting Sports Tournament



June 10

VPVA Busse Woods one day Fishing Derby Busse Woods Forest
Preserve, Elk Grove Village IL FREE Lunch 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

July 4 to 9

41st National Veterans Wheelchair Games Portland, OR