



Paralyzed Veterans of America

Vaughan Chapter

the Wheel

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE VAUGHAN CHAPTER PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

May 2016

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Executive Director's Report to the Vaughan PVA Chapter

As we celebrate Paralyzed Veterans of America's 70 years of service, it was my honor to visit the birthplace of our organization, the Hines VA Medical Center, and speak with the members of the Vaughn Chapter. During the visit, I heard from a number of chapter members who expressed a desire to get more involved and help raise the chapter's profile in the community, which was music to the ears of those of us who want to see Vaughan thrive. The question is how we get members to follow through on that desire and stay committed. The answer: a campaign to educate the local medical community on the effects of Autonomic Dysreflexia during PVA Awareness Month. Details of the campaign are forthcoming.

My hope is that it will draw many of you into the effort, and its success will be a byproduct of the energy you generate to make it happen. Ultimately, it will set a standard for how the Vaughan Chapter will galvanizes its volunteers as part of the greater mission to make life better for paralyzed veterans. One of the last conversations I had with our dearly departed former executive director, Homer Townsend, centered on his belief that the Vaughan Chapter's full potential had yet to be realized but was certainly in reach if the members want it. I agree with that sentiment and will do whatever I can to help make it happen.

One of the last conversations I had with our dearly departed former executive director, Homer Townsend, centered on his belief that the Vaughan Chapter's full potential had yet to be realized but was certainly in reach if the members want it.



I will close by thanking the staff and loyal volunteers, led by Chapter Executive Director Maria Hernandez, who keep up the good fight in Illinois on behalf of paralyzed veterans.

Sherman Gillums Jr.
Acting Executive Director
Paralyzed Veterans of America



Paralyzed Veterans of America

Vaughan Chapter

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VPVA Executive Director's Letter

By Maria Hernandez
Executive Director

Vaughan PVA Members;

With the passing of Mr. Homer Townsend, Jr Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer for the Vaughan Chapter, we have Mr. Sherman Gillums Jr. Acting Executive Director taking over and working with us, and his goal is the same as Homer Townsend, to bring the Chapter to a fully functioning PVA chapter. But in order for this to happen, we need to show interest in the things we do and are about to do in the future. This is why I encourage you to motivate yourself and be part of our membership meetings; you might find it beneficial to you or to someone you know. If you are not able to attend in person you can always call in via conference by calling the toll-free number 877-393-1772 option 2, just state your name when you are joining the meeting, and you will be connected with the meeting. The following meetings are April 20th, May 27th, June 24th, July 29th, August 26th, September 23rd and

October 28th hope you can attend or connect with us, and you don't miss out anything and have the opportunity to raise your opinion, suggestion and some decision that will affect the chapter.

I continue to encourage you not to miss any of our upcoming outings and events throughout the year; we want you to be part of what we plan for months just for you to be part of it. On March 19th, we had our annual corned beef and cabbage dinner, and it was sad and disappointed to see very low attendance, as many of you already know this is a traditional dinner in memory of our Paul Kolb, who faithfully served the Vaughan Chapter as a Board member and President for two terms.

As I mentioned at the dinner, we are planning to change the menu for next year, maybe this slight change will bring more veterans and their
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2016 VAUGHAN PVA MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

We encourage you to attend our monthly membership meetings. **Don't miss out** on any of the benefits from the different service organizations that make presentations to us on various benefits they have available for you.



**Hines VA Hospital
Bldg #128 SCI Multipurpose Room
at 12:00 (noon) CST**

**If not able to attend in person
you may also join via conference call
at 877-393-1772 and use option 2
(state your name when joining the meeting)**

Sherman Gillums Jr., Acting Executive Director Paralyzed Veterans of America speaks at a recent membership meeting.

WEDNESDAYS

**May 25th, June 22nd, July 27th
August 24th, September 28th, October 26th**

Message from the Chief

By Michael S.A. Richardson MD FACP
Chief, Spinal Cord Injury/Disorders

Happy Springtime to all the Chapter members and their families.

It is with great sadness that I heard of the passing of the National PVA former Executive Director and national president Homer Townsend Jr. Mr. Townsend was a tireless champion for the VA SCI System of Care and a prominent partner to all the SCI Centers in fighting for ongoing visibility and funding in the halls of Congress and the suites of VHA leadership. He will be greatly missed and it falls to us to continue to advocate for the issues, funding and visibility in Veterans' care that he was dedicated to improving.

It is a measure of Homer's foresight that the Acting Executive Director Mr. Sherman Gillums Jr. is so ready and able to step into the position. I have had the good fortune to have worked alongside Mr. Gillums in the past year and I look forward to his continuing leadership and vision for the PVA National organization.

Here at Hines SCI/d the very exciting news is the development of the new

Wheelchair Lacrosse activity. The first weekend of wheelchair lacrosse in Chicago was held at Dominical University indoor auditorium gym and was a resounding success. Excellent participation from so many staff, volunteers, athletes, families, and led by Dr Kenneth Lee and his Milwaukee Lacrosse team members, the two day clinic brought a new level of excitement, participation and learning to both Veterans with SCI and non-Veteran with a passion for Lacrosse alike. Our intention is to create a Chicago Wheelchair Lacrosse team – already named the Chicago Cougars – and to continue to practice, compete, and travel to regional competitions throughout the nation. Already there is a meet planned for June 2016 to be held in Milwaukee, WI. Go Cougars!! I encourage anyone to check out this new activity. Tiffany Villamin RN is the team leader, but there is a Facebook page already.

I was also in attendance as a guest at the annual Paul Kolb Corn Beef & Cabbage Dinner. Thanks again to

the Chapter for inviting me and providing a fun evening of food and entertainment. The yearly dinner is a wonderful event in honor and celebration of the contribution that volunteers make to our SCI Center life.



*Staying active in mind
and body is a huge part
of staying well.*

This month will see also our annual site survey visit. It happens April 26th-28th and is usually accompanied by a Chapter meeting. I encourage all Chapter members to attend and participate; not only on that single event but throughout the year for more meetings, events, activities, and celebrations.

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Executive Director's Report

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families to attend this event. It is very important for you the member to show interest in the things we plan and prepare but most important for you to participate in order to continue moving forward as a functioning chapter.

This year 2016 the Vaughan Chapter will be having its 70 year birthday, which means seven decades of service, hard work and dedication. If we want to continue with the legacy of the sixteen disabled veterans who joined together to form this chapter we need to stay

united and strong. Sherman Gillum Jr., has great things in mind, bringing new fresh ideas and changes to benefit the chapter, but we need interest and participation. On the next issue of the newsletter, we will have memories of these 70 years of service. We will continue working together with whoever wants to be part of this strength. In the meantime, please follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Paralyzed-Veterans-of-America-Vaughan-Chapter-111291589273672/> and stay updated and connected with us.

Thank you

Advocacy and Legislation Report

by Robert A. Arciola

The Vaughan Chapter is proud to announce February 20th the Spinal Cord Injury Association of Illinois (SCIA) awarded the Vaughan Chapter their annual Kara Foundation Award for rendering outstanding service to people with spinal cord injuries. The award was made during their annual benefit to raise funds for the organization.

On February 27th the Vaughan Chapter participated in the Fellowship Luncheon, which was an effort to get veterans organizations to help provide information at their own booth providing the community vital information and critical resources to aid all veterans and family. There was a special guest speaker President, General James H. Mukoyama Jr., of Military Outreach USA who talked about its mission assisting veterans suffering from Moral Injury. The organizations effort has assisted in assisting numerous veterans across the country who cope with a variety of complications and needs and networking chiefly with churches, nonprofits, VAMC's and DOD to assist veterans who are suicidal, homeless or struggle from wartime experience. The luncheon was hosted by the Grace Bible Church in Elmhurst, IL and nicely organized and informational for all.

This February 28-March 4th the Paralyzed Veterans of America hosted another phenomenal Advocacy and Legislation Seminar in Alexandria,

VA. The Vaughan Chapter and each sister chapter participated in two days of seminar material and lectures and two days of Congressional visits on The Hill to meet with each of our prospective legislators and their staff. We brought forth nine priority topics that included the issues facing our members and our positions on each. Every member is highly encouraged to review each paper and contact your own legislator for input to support us in making a difference. Each issue paper is available for your review. Please feel free to call or email us and let us know you're interested and we'll be glad to help get them to you.

On March 12th the Vaughan Chapter participated in the Veterans' Advisory Council meeting for the LaSalle Veterans' Home – one of four state operated facilities. The meeting began after a brief continental breakfast at 10 AM. Staff was introduced and provided a brief summary of facility status in all areas of interest involving patient care and services, as well as employee and facility needs. The Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs director and deputy director were also on hand and provided brief additional remarks. The state representative was present and discussed an impasse reaching a resolution to the burden of debt and passing a balanced budget required by the state constitution. The impasse has not affected nor neglected serving its veterans in the homes. Staff appears to have a handle on all matters and it

functions well. We plan to visit other homes in upcoming months. The next meeting is scheduled in September.

The elections were just held and anyone facing any difficulty with polling place access or voting, need to let us know to help you. The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) has made strides in ensuring states and local entities are equipped with devices to assist voters with disabilities – the disabled also are allowed to have help in the voters' booth.

April 26-28th the PVA site Team will be at Hines to help monitor SCI care. If you have any issue that needs addressing, please be sure to talk to the chapter or NSO in advance.

THANK YOU



Melvin and I were impressed with how many people with authority advocate for the PVA when we attended the Advocacy/Legislation Seminar. We learned how the process of advocating on Capitol Hill works and how important it is to be the person talking with legislators explaining how personal Bills are to us. Attending the seminar gave us an insight to how Bills are created and put into Law. Vaughan Chapter, Thank you for giving us the opportunity to attend.

Melvin Austin and Dawn Mattson
PVA Members

Sports & Recreation

by Robert Arciola

The Hines VAH local Wheelchair Games are a mandatory event to participate in for members being funded through the VA Team for a national event. Please be sure to attend even if you're not planning on attending any national sports event because it's always a nice time. Vaughan Chapter helped sponsor the event again this year.

The Vaughan Chapter is host of the **PVA Trapshoot** at the Edwardsville Gun Club in Edwardsville, IL (near St. Louis) on April 23-25th. Registration forms are now available and we hope to have two teams from Vaughan Chapter formed to compete. We are contemplating a rifle and pistol event as well. It's going to be a great weekend, so please consider coming out and sharing the event with able-bodied as we compete against and with them too! Limited food, all shotgun shells and clay targets are included in the entry fee. Limited firearms will be made available as well as adaptive equipment for use.

In May 13-15th the Vaughan Chapter is also hosting the **Land of Lincoln Bass Tournament** at Rend Lake near Mt. Vernon, IL. The event features a bank division and a separate open boat division. This is the 19th year the event is hosted in Illinois. Get your form now and get it sent in before the deadline.



On February 4th the Vaughan Chapter began work-establishing networks with an initial teleconference call to organize an **adaptive lacrosse clinic**. The clinic was rushed into being, but it was held March 19-20th and was a huge success! We had the Eagles team from Milwaukee, people from Rehab Institute of Chicago, Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association, Dare2Tri, Hines VAH, Concordia University and several members from Vaughan Chapter participate and volunteer. We established a team name – Chicago Cougars and plan to officially adopt the team for as many as 10 individuals (6 are PVA) have expressed that they're all-in on a team formation.

The Concordia University in River Forest, IL has committed to be the site for practices and has furnished us their lacrosse coach to coach the team. This PVA Sports initiative was made possible to establish lacrosse clinics and form teams across the country.

Since our event was a success, ten sets of equipment to practice and compete were given to us. Our immediate goals were already met and we are now on our way to establishing practices

and hope to make the June 9-11th Wheelchair Lacrosse Regional event being held in Milwaukee, then if all goes well, compete in the National event in Ocean City, MD later in August. The Vaughan Chapter will help manage the team with SCI RN, Tiffany Villamin and business affairs along with providing administrative support as necessary. If you haven't heard and wish to be involved we have room for you, just let us know!

Sports and Recreation Team meetings are one hour before every Membership Meeting. We also provide for teleconferencing each time, just call for the information to join in.

Wheelchair Basketball
Any veteran that is interested and would like to be part of a wheelchair basketball team, please call Gary Gribble at 708-244-9603 or Joe Gerardi at 630-815-5737 for more detail information.





United Access is sponsoring the "United Access BIG BASS Award" \$513 for 5.13lb big bass at the Vaughan Chapter Land of Lincoln B.A.S.S. Tournament in May 13-15, 2016.

United Access served Americans with disabilities long before the ADA. What started as a Saint Louis equipment rental business in 1971 quickly moved into providing more durable equipment, like wheelchairs and lifts. However, it was soon evident that the need for wheelchair accessibility within a vehicle was as important as owning the vehicle and the wheelchair. United Access saw this opportunity to provide the full lifecycle of service: buying a wheelchair or lift for use at home and in public and then fitting that wheelchair into your vehicle for independent travel. For this reason, our business evolved in conjunction with the disability rights movement. We specialized in vehicle adaptability and grew quickly due to our customer service driven staff.

For more information please contact us at 877-501-8267 or at 405-650-4162 Mike Bradshaw or visit us at www.unitedaccess.com

THANK YOU

On behalf of the SCI Service at Hines VA, Concordia University of Chicago, and The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, I would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to Vaughan Chapter PVA for supporting the Chicago Cougars Wheelchair Lacrosse Team. As the team manager, I appreciate all the support you have provided to make the clinic a success - over 80 people attended the event. Adaptive sports is an important component for SCI Veterans to reintegrate into the community. Our team is excited to move forward with practice, games, and tournament competitions. Once again, thank you for your commitment and support!

Tiffany Villamin RN, BSN, CRRN
Clinical Nurse Manager, SCI-North
Team Manager, Chicago Cougars Wheelchair Lacrosse



Chapter & Board Members,

We would like to thank Vaughan Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America for the r generous gift that will allowed the group to continue leading an active and independent life. We enjoyed participation In the Boccia event In Louisville,KY held by the Indiana Kentucky PVA Chapter.

Spinal cord injury puts all sorts of limitations and challenges in people's lives, and we are very grateful that with your help we were able to overcome one of these challenges. The attendance and experience has brought self-sufficiency back into our lives and makes our participation in the community possible, despite our personal disabilities.



We enjoyed the comradery of the veterans at the venue. We offer our thanks for the driver, accommodations, and transportation. The Introduction of the event to the National level creates opportunities for people with disabilities. We hope this endeavor will allow the Vaughan Chapter to start a regular Boccia supported team through the Vaughan Chapter. We would be willing to represent the Chapter as a team body.

Thank you from the Veterans mentioned below:

Ricky Facen
Roy Alexander (Captain)
Daniel Keefe
Anthony Powell (Captain)
Arthur Forest
Dennis Scanlan

We look forward to providing any support, contributions, and volunteerism towards Vaughan PVA functions/programming In the future events.



Paralyzed Veterans of America

2016 Policy Priorities 114th Congress—2nd Session

70 Years of Service • 1946–2016

Legislative Program Priorities (Veterans Issues)

1. *Veterans Health Care Reform*

- A joint effort of *The Independent Budget*—PVA, DAV, and VFW.
- Grounded in the principles that veterans health care should be high-quality, accessible, comprehensive, and veterans centric.
- Reform plan is built on four pillars: restructure, realign, redesign, and reform.

2. *Expand Eligibility for the VA Comprehensive Caregiver Program*

- Expand access to the Comprehensive Family Caregiver Program administered by VA to veterans of all eras (not just those injured after September 11, 2001).
- Should also include veterans with catastrophic illness, such as ALS or MS.
- **PVA urges passage of H.R.2894, the “CARE for All Veterans Act,” and S. 1085, the “Military and Veterans Caregiver Services Improvement Act.”**

3. *Procreative Services for Catastrophically Disabled Veterans*

- Legislation would allow VA to provide for procreative services, to include in vitro fertilization (IVF), to veterans with catastrophic injuries that preclude them from having children.
- **PVA urges passage of H.R. 2257 and S. 469, the “Women Veterans and Families Health Services Act.”**

4. *Protection of Specialized Services, to Include Reinstatement of Annual Capacity Report*

- VA is the best health care provider for veterans.
- VA’s specialized services, to include spinal cord injury care, most often cannot be duplicated in the private sector.
- VA has not maintained its capacity to provide for the unique health care needs of severely disabled veterans.
- **PVA urges Congress to pass legislation that will reinstate the annual capacity reporting requirement originally established by P.L. 104-262, the “Veterans’ Health Care Eligibility Reform Act of 1996.”**

5. *Problems with Denial of Clothing Allowance for Catastrophically Disabled Veterans*

- VHA Handbook 1173.15 (dated May 14, 2015) has three main flaws.
 1. Veterans with wheelchairs that have clothing guides are denied clothing allowance.
 2. Standard power wheelchairs without modifications are denied clothing allowance.
 3. Confusion over Static versus Reapply provision has caused veterans to lose the benefit.

Advocacy Program Priorities (Disability Issues)

1. *Air Carrier Access Problems for People with Disabilities*

- Passengers with disabilities, particularly those with significant disabilities, continue to experience a wide array of problems and seemingly discriminatory acts in air travel.
- **The Air Carrier Access Act must be amended and enforced to improve air travel for people with disabilities.**

2. *Complex Rehabilitation Technology.*

- Separate Medicare Complex Rehabilitation Technology (CRT) benefit is needed. CRT is designed to meet the specific and unique medical and functional needs of someone diagnosed with a catastrophic illness or disability.
- **PVA urges Congress to pass H.R. 1516/ S. 1013, the “Ensuring Access to Complex Rehabilitation Technology Act.”**

3. *The “Seniors and Veterans Emergency (SAVE) Benefits Act”*

- Veterans with service-connected disabilities and low-income veterans received no cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in 2016 for their compensation and pension benefits.
- **PVA urges passage of H.R. 4144 and S. 2251, the “Seniors and Veterans Emergency (SAVE) Benefits Act.”**

The Passing of Homer S. Townsend, Jr.

"The passing of Homer S. Townsend, Jr. is a tremendous loss for Paralyzed Veterans of America, and for every veteran and person with disability for whom he dedicated his life and career to defending. In addition to his military service to this country, he was a staunch advocate of civil rights and veterans benefits. He leaves an unmatched legacy. We are deeply saddened by his passing, and add our own sincere condolences to those being sent from around the country by friends, family, and colleagues."

Townsend, Jr. dedicated 41 years of his life to Paralyzed Veterans, serving the organization in many capacities, from the chapter level to national, including as the organization's 31st national president from October 1998 to September 2000. Since his passing, many leaders in the veteran community who have worked with Townsend, Jr. throughout the years have offered their condolences and remembered Mr. Townsend's long career serving veterans and all people with disabilities.

"Homer was always a strong advocate for Paralyzed Veterans of America, and all Veterans, but he always advocated in a constructive and positive way, focused on better outcomes for Veterans rather than his own standing. It was never about Homer. It was always about the Veterans he served," said Robert

McDonald, U.S. Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

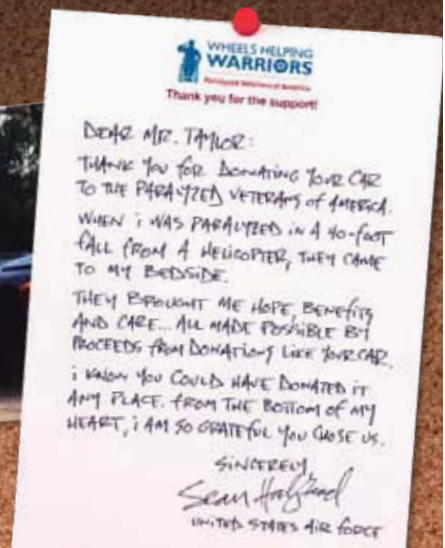
"Homer epitomized the best of America. His service to PVA and our nation's veterans was extraordinary. He will be missed," said former VA Secretary Anthony Principi.

"Homer Townsend, Jr. demonstrated the true meaning of lifelong service. His years of honorable service in the U.S. Marine Corps, tenure as Paralyzed Veterans President, and term as Paralyzed Veterans Executive Director distinguish him as one of our most highly regarded champions. His intellect, inimitable style, and political savvy made him a one-of-a-kind mentor to me. He left his mark on all of us, particularly those charged with carrying the organization forward, and the arc of our potential is directly attributed to his leadership. While he will be missed in body, his presence and influence will be deeply



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Regardless of the condition, all vehicles have value and are sold at auction. Proceeds from the sale help provide jobs, care and benefits for severely injured veterans and their families. Scheduling a pickup is free and easy, and you may be eligible for a tax deduction, too! There's no better way to give back to those who have given so much.

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Chief's message

continued from page 4

This fiscal quarter the SCI Center has seen an influx of new staff especially to the RCF. Of special note is the new Wound Care Nurse Practitioner Nancy Chaiken who has joined the Service. Hopefully her job will become ever lighter as she educates more and manages fewer skin breakdowns. The complication of a pressure induced skin break is not always preventable, but certainly it is more easily managed if recognized at an early stage and intervention (pressure relief, reduced sitting time, altered turning schedule, closer inspection) is properly instituted. The Springtime is a time for getting outside, enjoying flowers, trips, and family and friends. This increased outside activity means increased sitting time, increased moisture, more strenuous activities, less time to remember pressure relief plus some indulging in food and drink. All things that may contribute to skin breakdown. So please remember to "spring" into action in practicing good skin prevention activities!!

It has been very pleasurable for me to see all the Veterans with SCI who have resumed their outside wellness activities as well as participating in the new opportunities for exercise and competition that abound. Staying active in mind and body is a huge part of staying well. Thanks you to all the staff and volunteers along with the families and friends who make this possible for us all.

I look forward to a very active healthy Spring and Summer.

With great pride.

Michael S.A. Richardson MD FACP
 Chief, Spinal Cord Injury/Disorder
 Edward Hines Jr VAMC

 **Paralyzed Veterans of America**

YOUR FUTURE AWAITS

Paralyzed Veterans' scholarship program now accepting applications

Paralyzed Veterans of America invests in our members and their families. Our Educational Scholarship Program assists members and their immediate family members by providing scholarship funds to help with a post-secondary education.

We will award scholarships in the amount of **\$1,000** to full-time students and **\$500** to part-time students for an academic year.

APPLICANT MUST BE:

- A Paralyzed Veterans of America member, spouse of a member, or an unmarried child (under 24 years of age) who is dependent (as defined by the IRS) on the member for principal support
- A United States citizen
- Accepted and enrolled as a full- or part-time student in an accredited U.S. college or university

Previous award recipients may apply.

Download an application at pva.org, or for more information contact Christi Hillman at 800.424.8200, ext. 776; ChristiH@pva.org. Applications must be completed in full and postmarked no later than June 17, 2016.

Service Officer's Report

By Robert Statam, NSO III

Death Benefits based on a Service Connected Condition(s)-Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

We often ask ourselves what if the inevitable should come about, and where does this leave our loved ones. This is when I find myself explaining the Dependents Indemnity Compensation (DIC) and Death Compensation. The veteran and the surviving spouse have asked this question quite often, but unfortunately they are surprised to learn that the veteran's entitlements do not continue on to the surviving spouse. The individual who qualifies for these benefits such as a surviving spouse, surviving child, or surviving parent are normally those who are relative next to kin. Now the VA has two separate programs that pay such benefits to survivors of veterans whose deaths have been determined to be service connected; these programs are called (DIC) and Death compensation. For Instance, monthly benefits for the death of a veteran whose service-connected disability was totally disabling for the last ten years, five years, or in some cases one year qualifies for this program. Also, if the veteran's death was attributed to the negligence of the VA's medical treatment, or Vocational Rehabilitation, this is generally known as an 1151 claim. The survivor, who qualifies to receive death compensation, may elect to receive DIC instead.

The process for applying for these benefits can come at times when most family members are consumed with a number of decisions to make. The PVA in most cases walk our clients through this difficult time, as we provide the eligible survivor of the veteran with the necessary VA

forms, such as VAF 21-534ez, for DIC. It is important to know that there is no time limit for filing a claim for DIC benefits, but if the claim is received by the VA within one year of the veteran's death, and the survivor is granted benefits the survivor will be entitled to receive retroactive (past due) benefits back to the first day of the month following the month in which the veteran died. Therefore, if the claim is not received within this time frame, the survivor will be entitled to receive benefits back to the first day of the month and the month in which the claim was received. This is why is very important to contact us and the VA, when these troubling times come about, so that we may assist in preserving the earliest effective date of claim as possible. It is also important to know that the rate of DIC benefits are paid by VA and generally, with increases, due to surviving children of the veteran and based on the cost of living regulated by Congress from year to year. Today's rated for DIC benefits for a surviving spouse with no children, is a monthly entitlement amount of \$1,254.19. It is good to know that since the eligibility for these benefits vary, you should always consult your PVA representative before filing these claims.

If you should have any questions concerning this topic, please feel free to contact Robert Statam, NSO III at the Chicago Regional Office, PVA @ 312-980-4278, or Winston Woodard, VHBS at the Hines VA Medical facility @ 708-202-5623.

RFC at Chicago Auto Show

RCF patients would like to thank the Vaughan Chapter for providing volunteer's staff and transportation for us to attend the Chicago Auto Show at McCormick place on February 19th. Thanks to Maria for bringing this event to our attention and making arrangements for us to attend. We would also like to thank Nathan Terry, the bus driver and the three volunteers who went with us to assist us. All the guys who attended had time to explore all the vehicles and had a fun time doing so. Thanks as well for dinner at Portillo's Hot Dogs, it was great for the guys and me to get out and socialize on a nice day.

Sincerely,
Chuck Scott





Paralyzed Veterans of America

SPORTS & RECREATION SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

For more information, contact Paralyzed Veterans Sports at 800.424.8200 or pva.org/sports

PARALYZED VETERANS NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS CIRCUIT

CAL-DIEGO

Jan. 22–24, 2016

Rifle & Pistol Shoot

Jan. 22, 2016

Redlands, CA

VAUGHAN

April 22–24, 2016

Edwardsville, IL

COLONIAL

June 3–5, 2016

Baltimore, MD

FLORIDA GULF COAST

March 3–5, 2016

Odessa, FL

IOWA

June 17–19, 2016

Pistol Shoot

June 17, 2016

Cedar Rapids, IA

NEVADA

March 18–20, 2016

Pistol Shoot

March 18, 2016

Las Vegas, NV

PARALYZED VETERANS BASS TOUR

FLORIDA

GULF COAST

April 1–3, 2016

Lake Toho

Kissimmee, FL

NATIONAL

June 10–12, 2016

Potomac River

Waldorf, MD

MID-ATLANTIC

June 16–18, 2016

James River

Richmond, VA

VAUGHAN

May 13–15, 2016

Rend Lake

Mt. Vernon, IL

KENTUCKY-INDIANA

May 20–22, 2016

Kentucky Lake

Gilbertsville, KY

ANNUAL PVA/AWBA BOWLING TOURNAMENT SERIES

FLORIDA

GULF COAST

Feb. 26–28, 2016

Tampa, FL

CAL-DIEGO

TBD

BOCCIA CLINICS

CAL-DIEGO

Oct. 28–29, 2015

San Diego, CA

KENTUCKY-INDIANA

March 18–20, 2016

Louisville, KY

ANNUAL PVA/NWPA BILLIARDS TOURNAMENT SERIES

MID-ATLANTIC

March 18–20, 2016

Midlothian, VA

MOUNTAIN STATES

April 22–24, 2016

Fountain, CO

MID-AMERICA

April 1–3, 2016

Oklahoma City, OK

BUCKEYE*

July 22–24, 2016

Independence, OH

* A non-NWPA sanctioned event

ANNUAL AIR RIFLE & PISTOL PROGRAM

CAL-DIEGO

Jan. 18–19, 2016

San Diego, CA

BUCKEYE

April 29–30, 2016

Geneva, OH

MID-ATLANTIC

March 10, 2016

Richmond, VA

NATIONAL

TBD

PARALYZED VETERANS HANDCYCLING SCHEDULE

CLERMONT

ROAD RACE

February 6–7, 2016

Clermont, FL

ONE CITY

MARATHON

March 13, 2016

Newport News, VA

VALLEY OF THE

SUN RACES

February 12–14, 2016

Phoenix, AZ

RIMS ON THE RUN

March 19–20, 2016

Deland, FL





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Sherman Gillums Jr., Acting Executive Director PVA

WASHINGTON, DC— Paralyzed Veterans of America (Paralyzed Veterans) is pleased to announce Sherman Gillums, Jr. as the Acting Executive Director of Paralyzed Veterans of America, effective January 11, 2016. A U.S. Marine Corps veteran, Gillums has held a number of positions within the organization, most recently deputy executive director, where he has worked to elevate the organization's public profile and develop impact-driven and innovative approaches to serving veterans, dependents, survivors and caregivers through Paralyzed Veterans' core programs.

"I owe my predecessor, former Executive Director Homer Townsend, Jr., a debt of gratitude for his mentorship and dedicated service to Paralyzed Veterans of America," said Gillums. "He has established a foundation upon which I hope to build as we continue our mission of positively impacting the lives of veterans, their families, and caregivers. This year, as our country prepares to elect new leaders and the Department of Veterans Affairs continues its evo-

lution, we will ensure the voices of those with the greatest needs are heard loud and clear."

Gillums began his military career in 1990 at the age of 17, retiring at the rank of Chief Warrant Officer-2 in 2002. During his career, he served as a Marine drill instructor and helped pioneer the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program at the Marine Corps' largest West Coast base. Four months after the September 11, 2001 attacks, while preparing to deploy to Afghanistan with the 1st Marine Division, Gillums was severely injured in a vehicle collision where he sustained a cervical spine injury that ended his military career at age 29. Gillums received an honorable discharge from military



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Homer Townsend, Jr

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embedded in our organizational character as we look ahead," said Paralyzed Veterans Acting Executive Director Sherman Gillums, Jr.

Mr. Townsend, Jr. first volunteered as acting executive director of Paralyzed Veterans in 2006. That same year he was awarded Paralyzed Veterans' Speedy Award, the organization's highest honor, in recognition of his significant contributions to improving the lives of America's paralyzed veterans. He remained executive director, after being officially appointed to the position in 2008, until his recent retirement this past January. He also served as the first Chairman of the Paralyzed Veterans' Field Advisory Committee, advocating for the VA Spinal Cord Injury/Disease (SCI/D) system of care.

A disability rights champion, early in his career, while serving as Arizona chapter executive vice president, he was responsible for bringing the Access to the Skies Conference out of Washington, DC to Phoenix, AZ where thanks to his hard work advocacy it grew from 40 attendees to more than 200, bringing light to the access problems individuals with disabilities face when traveling.

In addition to his work with Paralyzed Veterans, Townsend, Jr. also served as a member of the President's Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities, the Arizona Governor's Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities (1992-1996), and the Mesa Mayor's Committee on Handicap Awareness for six years, two of which he served as chair of the committee. He was presented the key to the city by the mayor for his dedicated service.

Originally from Woodland, Maine, Townsend, Jr. joined the U.S. Marine Corps in November 1969, where he served as an aircraft electrician for 5 ½ years. He sustained a spinal cord injury as a result of a motor vehicle accident in 1974, and was medically retired from the Marine Corps in 1975 at the rank of staff sergeant.

Since 2011, Mr. Townsend, Jr was the Chapter's Chief Executive Officer, and was assisting Vaughan Chapter to regain chapter as a fully functioning PVA Chapter. We will continue working with his mission with new Acting Executive Director, Sherman Gillums, Jr. On behalf of Vaughan Chapter members we Thank Mr. Townsend, Jr for his contribution to the Vaughan Chapter.

Paul Kolb Memorial Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner

On March 19th, we held the annual Paul Kolb Memorial Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner. Outpatient and RCF members were transported to the event. Attendance was lower than other years, but everyone enjoyed plenty of food and entertainment. For next year, the menu will be changed to beef, chicken and pasta the name will remain Paul Kolb Memorial Dinner. We hope this change will bring more veterans and guests to the dinner. Thank you to all the volunteers who assisted our veterans, Rev. Melvin L. Jones, who assisted with invocation and benediction and to Richard Wacker and the Boy Scouts of America Troop 50 from Park Ridge, IL who assisted in the opening ceremony and presented and retrieved colors. Special thanks to Dr. Richardson; Chief, Spinal Cord Injury and SCI staff for attending and to office staff on doing a great job planning a fine evening.



Above: (left to right) Rev. Melvin Jones, Robert Arciola, Maria Hernandez, Robert Statam, Dr. Richardson and Ning Jiang MD. Below: Rich Wacker & Troop 50 from Park Ridge



Sherman Gillums

continued from page 14

service and went on to pursue a new career in advocacy for veterans with disabilities.

After his discharge from the military and following a period of intense rehabilitation, Gillums completed his graduate studies at the University of San Diego School of Business Administration and began a new career with Paralyzed Veterans as a national service officer in San Diego, CA. There, he developed Department of Veterans Affairs benefits claims and clinical appeals for veterans and families in the area. He later became involved with the local Paralyzed Veterans chapter and went on to become chapter president. He also served on Paralyzed Veterans' National Field Advisory Committee, which focuses on monitoring and improving health care for catastrophically disabled veterans.

Gillums returned to the VA benefits claims arena as an appellate representative at the Board of Veterans' Appeals in Washington, DC. He was selected to serve as associate executive director of the Paralyzed Veterans' veterans benefits department in 2011, and was subsequently promoted to the organization's deputy executive director in 2014. During that time, he also served on the Federal Advisory Committee for Prosthetics & Special Disabilities and the Department of Defense's Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program. Gillums has testified as an expert witness before Congress on behalf of Paralyzed Veterans of America and appeared on CNN, Fox & Friends, and CSPAN, as well as had published opinion pieces in the New York Times and Buffalo News.

Gillums resides in Virginia with his wife Tammie, their five children, and Blue, their 5-month old Cockalier puppy.

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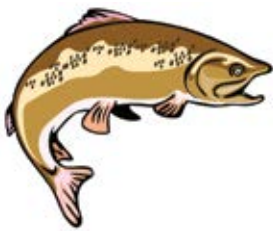


VPVA 2016 Calendar of Events

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Vaughan Chapter

800-727-2234



- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| May 13th – 15th | Land of Lincoln B.A.S.S Tournament, Rend Lake, Mt Vernon, IL |
| May 14th | Hines VAH Local Wheelchair Games |
| May 28th | Chicago Memorial Day Parade |
| June 4th – 11th | 15th Annual Castaway Disabilities Fishing Event
Iowa City VA Medical Center (319) 358-5962 |
| June 8th – 12th | GLASA (Great Lakes Adaptive Sports)
To register for the Regional games go to www.glasa.org |
| June 11th | VPVA Busse Woods Fishing Derby
Busse Woods Forest Preserve, Elk Grove Village, IL
FREE Lunch, 10am – 3pm |
| June 24th – 26th | Abilities Expo , Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center
Admission is FREE Friday & Saturday 11am – 5pm, Sunday 11am – 4 pm |
| June 27th – July 2nd | 36th National Veterans Wheelchair Games Salt Lake City, UT |
| July 10th – 14th | 30th National Veterans Golden Age Games, Detroit, Michigan
Contact info: Jeanene.LeSure@va.gov or call (813) 903-4582 |
| July 16th | The Rockin for the Troops Concert , Cantigny Park, Wheaton, IL \$25 |