



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

Vaughan Chapter

the Wheel

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE VAUGHAN CHAPTER PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

November 2017

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Vaughan Chapter is more than pleased to let you all know that selection of our Leadership Team is complete.

It gives me great pleasure to be the bearer of good news for the membership. Since the last newsletter went out, we have made huge strides in our search for members willing to serve on the Vaughan Board. Seven members have stepped up and the chapter now has a new, and I might add complete, Board of Directors (BOD).

After a few months of interaction in their role as Board members, I made the decision that the time had come to select four of them as the officers of the chapter. I officially appointed Jose Cordova as President, Anthony Powell as Vice President, Dennis Scanlan as Secretary and Gerald Brown as Treasurer. The remaining

members, Art Wolf, Robert Arciola and Theotis Smith are assigned as Board Members.

I have stepped aside as Chairman and turned things over to the new BOD. They meet on a monthly basis and have been quick to assume their new roles. The meetings are now chaired by President Jose Cordova. The group is proving to work well together and is dedicated to bringing forward programs to the membership that will benefit our Vaughan Members and breathe new life into the chapter.

The National PVA Board of Directors held their Fall BOD Meeting in San Antonio on October 24-26, 2017. I requested that the

Vaughan Board attend this meeting to get a broader feel of what PVA is all about.

During my report to the National Directors updating them on the progress the chapter has achieved, it was my plan to introduce your new Vaughan Chapter Board to the National Directors.

I asked Vaughan Chapter President Jose Cordova to say a few words to the National Board.

Vaughan Chapter is grateful to these members for stepping forward to keep our Chapter functioning. New members are most welcome. We need all members to be active in order to keep Vaughan Chapter in good standing with National PVA in Washington, D.C. Congratulations to our new Leadership!!!



Vaughan Chapter, Officers and Board of Directors

(left to right); Arthur Wolf-Board of Directors, Anthony Powell-Vice President, Dennis Scanlan-Secretary (standing), Maria Hernandez-Executive Director, (standing), Josue Cordova-President, Gerald Brown-Treasurer, Robert Arciola- Board of Director, Theotis Smith-Board of Director (not shown in picture)

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Paralyzed Veterans of America

Vaughan Chapter

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Bill Lawson; Past National President
Ken Weas; National Senior Vice President

Chapter Officers

Josue Cordova, President Anthony Powell, Vice President
Dennis Scanlan, Secretary Gerald Brown, Treasurer

Chapter Board of Directors

Robert Arciola, Theotis D. Smith, Jr., Arthur H. Wolf

National Chapter Liaison

Ken Weas

Hospital Liaison

Arthur H. Wolf

Advocacy Director

Robert A. Arciola

Sports Director

Robert Arciola

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2018 Membership Meetings

January 24th	February 28th	March 28rd
April 25th	May 23rd	June 27th
July 25th	August 22th	September 26th
October 24th	November 28th	

WHERE: Hines VA Hospital; Building #128, SCI Multipurpose Room

TIME: 12:00 (noon) CST. **Lunch is provided.**

If NOT able to attend in person, you may also join via conference call by dialing in at 1800-724-2485 conference code: 456000 (State your name when joining the meeting)

2018 Board of Directors Meetings

Vaughan Chapter, Board of Directors Meetings are held at the Chapter Office on the third (3rd) Wednesday of each month. You are welcome to attend as a member (no voice and no vote). Listed below are the dates of the B.O.D meetings for 2018.

January 17th	February 21st	March 21st
April 18th	May 16th	June 20th
July 18th	August 15th	September 19th
October 17th	November 21st	

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VPVA Executive Director's Letter

By Maria Hernandez
Executive Director

Hello, Vaughan PVA Members;

This is the last newsletter for this year 2017. Lots of great things have happened to benefit the Vaughan chapter. The Chapter has worked very hard to move forward so that we can become a chapter in good standing. With help from Immediate Past President, Bill Lawson and Vice President, Ken Weas Vaughan Chapter, we now have newly appointed Officers and several new Board of Directors. I personally want to thank Bill Lawson and Ken Weas for their support and guidance during these last months, and a great thumb's up to the new Officers and Board of Directors for accepting these roles and responsibilities, I have no doubt that we will reach our goal in becoming a chapter in good standing again.

On behalf of the Chapter I want to send my gratitude to every single volunteer who has helped in every way, shape and form for taking the time to volunteer at our chapter's different events and outings, especially our latest functions, which was our annual picnic. This year the group that volun-

teered at our picnic and donated gift cards for our general raffle and good bags for our members was UroPartners from Westchester, IL. We thank Christopher Setzler, Chief Operating Officer and his staff for volunteering and donating their time. Vaughan Chapter is grateful to have had them aboard. UroPartners is the largest urology group in the Midwest providing advanced care in urological conditions by some of the most renowned physicians in Chicago. It is a group of 60 experienced urological specialists at over 30 Chicagoland locations. Despite the heat and humidity, everyone took the time to assist our members, serve, feed, and help out serving and cleaning.

Our sincere gratitude to Dr. Steve Braverman, Hines VA Hospital Director and his lovely wife Susan who honored us with their presence in attending the Picnic and sharing time to feed and talk to our members; Vaughan Chapter is grateful to him for taking the time to always join us whenever he is invited. We know he is very busy but always makes time for

our veterans

For the first time, Vaughan Chapter will be having a Veterans Day Dinner to honor you who have served to thank you for your service. We hope you can join us and let us pamper you for one evening. You should have received the invitation by now, but if you didn't please call our office to reserve your spot. Dinner is going to be on Saturday, November 18th from 5-9pm at Via Bella Banquets in Countryside IL.

All the different events and outings we have added to our calendar of events this year was for you to enjoy the different activities we want to have each year as part of our calendar of events and for you to participate and at the same time to get involved and represent the chapter. We would love to see more involvement from the members at our different events, outings, fundraisers and dinners. The plan for the upcoming year 2018 is to expand our calendar of events and see everyone's participation.

continued on page 4



left to right; Becky Kusek, Germaine Griffin, and Amanda Tribuzio

left to right; Germaine Griffin, Rodney Robinson and Laurie Lopez.

cover story*continued from page 1*

You should be very proud of Jose! He “knocked it out of the park” with his remarks to those assembled there. They were certainly impressed and indicated they are looking forward to another update during the Annual Convention.

A leadership seminar was scheduled for the day following the close of the Fall Meeting. Your new chapter leaders participated in this forum and came away with an expanded knowledge of their roles as members of the Board. I have also requested that a team from National PVA come to the chapter office for a more intense training session.

Now that you have a Board of Directors in place, don't hesitate to contact one of them with any suggestions you feel might improve the services to the membership. Remember that they are here to serve you and service to the membership is a main topic of discussion at every BOD meeting. They will be asking for volunteers to help with the many programs that are planned so come forward and give them a hand. The chapter has made significant progress and I

look forward to seeing much more. Your willingness to volunteer will result in a positive outcome for all Vaughan Chapter members and the chapter as a whole.

Bill Lawson



Vaughan Chapter President, Josue Cordova

Executive Director's Report*continued from page 3*

I encourage you to mark your calendar for Tuesday, December 19th, 2017 for our Annual Christmas luncheon. As always we do plan to make it enjoyable and memorable with lots of raffle prizes and gifts. Hope to see you all there and enjoy our last event of the year. Thank you for your time and see you soon.

Lastly, on behalf of the appointed Officers and Board of Directors I want to thank Immediate Past President, Bill Lawson for the opportunity given to all of us to attend the Board of Directors Meetings and Chapter Leadership Semi-

nar down in San Antonio, TX. It is my opinion that attending was extremely helpful to the new leadership and great way to start moving forward. We all had the opportunity to be part of the business & activities that National had on the agenda, but the most important part of this trip was attending the Chapter Leadership Seminar where we were taught the do's and don'ts of been a leader in a non-profit organization. Overall attending the board of directors meeting was definitely a learning experience for all of us.

Thank you

Maria Hernandez, Executive Director



Left: left to right; Theotis Smith and Benny McQueen

Right: Fred Reeves and Bunny Geltner

President's Report

by Josue E. Cordova, VPVA President

Greetings, Vaughan Chapter Members

It's my honor to write to you in the last Newsletter for FY 2017. My name is Josue E. Cordova I've been a Vaughan Chapter member for the past 22 years. In July of 2016 I was appointed to the Board of Directors where I served until August 16, 2017 when I was appointed Vaughan Chapter President.

Through these past years I've witnessed as well as you the struggles our chapter has gone through trying to gain its independence to be the organization we've always envisioned it could be. I as well as our incredible new officers and board of director members could no longer sit on the sidelines and not get involved. We are working very hard to be leaders who lead by example and not just be men and women with new titles.

In March, I had the opportunity to attend the 2017 Advocacy/Legislation Training Seminar in Virginia and Washington D.C. to petition for not only Paralyzed Veterans rights but also for the rights of the disabled communities throughout the country. In October 2017, I as well as our officers and Board members were able to attend the PVA National Board of Directors Conference to not only train and learn firsthand from our National and Chapter officers throughout the country but to show the National Board of Directors that Vaughan Chapter is ready to take the reins back to be leaders, not only in our community but throughout the country.

As Vaughan Chapter President, some of my goals are to not only establish an independently functioning chapter but to ensure our members know that they are our priority. We do understand that our members can't do everything every time when it comes to being involved with the Chapter but if all our members can do something for our chapter sometimes, then we are definitely on our way to become a

chapter that all other chapters with thrive to be like.

Again, I am humbled and honored to hold this position as Chapter President. I will work hard to be a Leader of example with my priority being my actions and not just words.



Fundraising



Attached are photos of specialty items to raise funds for Vaughan Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America. The monies from fundraising of these items will be used to continue funding the various activities our Chapter sponsors for our disabled military veterans. These activities help our veterans get back into the mainstream of life in spite of their traumatic injuries and diseases. We hope you will support our fundraising efforts of these wonderful gift items. We look forward to your support by purchasing any of our items that will bring joy and happiness to our veterans who gave so much. Items can be purchased with cash, check or credit card. Please take a moment to share this information with your friends and support our cause. You can also find additional information in our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/VAUGHANCHAPTE RPVA/>



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Contact VPVA Office at (708) 947-9790 or reply to vpva@vaughanpva.org to place your order. Cash, charge cards and/or checks accepted.

Greetings from the Chief

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

Greeting again from the Spinal Cord Office

Fall/Autumn has come in suddenly and with windy fury. Some trees near my house seem in shock with their leaves still green despite the cold – they don't know what to do in all this temperature changes.

The Campus at Hines remains a very busy set of construction zones with many areas trying to finish in time for the coming frosty weather. The Main Building façade continues with a makeover, the main boiler plant replacement sits exposed in the quadrangle, and the various parking lot restriping and resurfacing come and go each week.

The great news is that our SCI/D parking lot – known as the IOWA lot has been reconfigured, resurfaced and restriped all within two weeks. The lot is now a one-way directional drive going from east to west in order to allow increased number of spots, the number and designation of van spaces have been increased and are more clearly marked, and the other spaces are likewise increased and better marked.

Finally, the signage at the entrance is cleaner and clearer. The bottom line is a better provision for SCI parking. Of course, this improvement just invites other Veterans and families to want identical parking. Although we cannot prohibit disabled

non-SCI Veteran from using the lot, we will continue to monitor usage to ensure that sufficient space exists each week to accommodate our veterans with SCI/D and their family. The parking outside RCF has also been redone in a similar manner naturally – so let the rains and snows arrive this winter! With both lots now functioning there will be parking for SCI in one or other.

During this inconvenience I do apologize, but hope that the notifications and warnings that were placed were sufficient to tell what was happening and what alternate arrangements could be made.

The next large project of improvement is targeted to come at the end of this month with the new flooring for Building 128. The floors in our hallways have continued to buckle, bend, unhinge, and ripple. Strips of blue tape and grey glue have made the corridors unsightly so the project to improve is being undertaken. This is a major project, expected to last at least eight months (8), and although being done in carefully planned phases to cause the minimal disruption to clinical care, it will be very inconvenient to staff and Veterans alike. My hope is that at the end when

everything is in place, the annoyance will be worthwhile. This has been a long-standing need and I welcome a chance finally to have an environment that is worthy of the men & women who signed up to defend our country in times of war as well as peace.

The Flooring Project will require us to adjust our inpatient admissions including decreasing our respite care bed availability. Travel times from ward to ward, from ward to clinic, and from ward to procedure room will all be longer and more circuitous. This can't be helped, but is only temporary and is for a greater good.

Please look out for further notification on actual dates, portions, and alternate arrangements that will be made during this time of inconvenience. Build we must for a better SCI/D. Thank you in advance for understanding. Thank you even more for the service you gave to our country and to us. Happy thanksgiving when it comes.



Left to right, Arthur Wolf, Hospital liaison, Dr. Richardson, SCI Chief, Anthony Powell, Vice President and Winston Woodward, III PVA NSO.



Sports & Recreation

by Robert Arciola, Sports Director

Chapter members Ray Hodor, Charlie Johnson, Robert Arciola, Winston Woodard and Terry Bowers attended Land of Lincoln Bass tournament. This was our 20th year hosting it in Illinois. Our overall participation the last four years is as follows: 50-2015, 61-2016, 63-2017 and 65-2018. We ranged from 16 to 21 PVA members in attendance. Please note this total includes the able-bodied boat partners. This year happened to be the largest in revenue of the four tournaments with \$4,330 in entry fees alone.

We managed to get the same amount of boats in the water at 27 and surprisingly had 12 bank anglers. The weekend was filled with unseasonable weather on Saturday and Sunday, which caused us to have to rent two heaters to warm the tent we were in. It was near freezing at the start of each day. Sunday it was sunny. Despite the coldness, everyone enjoyed the weekend and anglers managed to locate and catch fish. A event report is already filed with IDNR and dates are secured for next year being October 5-7, 2018. Thank you Ray Hodor, Winston Woodard, Barbara Arciola, Janet Johnson, Mike Hooe, IDNR numerous Sessor, IL VFW members and local anglers for their help in the event.

The chapter lacrosse team leadership has already begun to meet for the 2018 season. Recruitment and rebuilding will be the main goal for this season. We anticipate greater awareness and public relations to help in recruiting athletes and obtaining additional funds. We have a new coach in Jason Pereles who comes from the Milwaukee Eagles lacrosse team and is a lacrosse coach at Whitney Young High School. We are focused to get 8-10 dedicated athletes to practice each time and reestablish our Chicago Cougar team. We



are aiming to once again have practice at Concordia University or J Sterling Morton High School as we did last year. This season we will also recruit athletes from Vaughan Chapter PVA and local high school, college, and disability organizations to keep a cohesive group together and emerge as a team.

Last month the chapter received just one response from three bowling centers to host our 2018 Midwestern Invitational. I am very hesitant to move forward with a center that I do not feel comfortable with regarding access. I know one other center has complete access and can accommodate more than our needs. It's very difficult to get a response from them. The support I've been given is to avoid businesses that fail to respond. I'm in a dilemma as to whether or not to advance with the most accessible facility, or to try again and com-

municate to the facility I believe is best suited. I need input from the board because time is short.

The next event we host will be the PVA Trapshoot in April followed by the Midwestern Invitational in May. I need help with both.

These events are for your enjoyment. They simply couldn't be possible if it weren't for the sponsors, volunteers and donors. Please look them all up and send a simple thank you to them to show your appreciation because it really matters. If you can't attend an event, please send an email, letter or make a call to let them know these people and businesses are making a difference.

Lastly, our sports team meetings will resume meeting in December.



Robert Arciola at the Land of Lincoln BASS Tournament and tournament winners.

Hospital Liaison Report

by Arthur H. Wolf

During the last three months, we have seen many changes at Hines Hospital, but more changes are needed. The parking lot is almost finished, Waiting on Signs. If anyone has an issue with parking please call our office and give date and time of problem.

I have seen many of members who have issues that made life difficult for them and their families.

Our Social workers and Nurses have made major efforts to find solutions and comfort for all of veterans with special needs and family comfort. Major plans are in place at VA Headquarters to assist family caregivers.

I still think we need more of a local social program at Hines and our Spoke locations for Veterans and family support teams. Over the last 15 years in house social activity has declined and we all need to work toward helping each other improve those issues.

We are also asking each member to reach out to friends outside of Hines for donations to help our local and National PVA units. Small amounts sent to Vaughn Chapter office can add up too many programs that help us all and our families.

My wife has spent almost 8 weeks helping others in Florida and Houston, and I am happy she has found

joy in helping others. My life was bit rough with Cookie being on the road, but my brother and sister have

stepped up to help me. Also, the Out-patient Clinic for Spinal Cord has been a continued blessing for all of us and me.

Some issues are hard to work for remote location but I have found many of our US House members willing to step in to help when the going gets



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ALS Outreach

Mr. Statam, Chicago NSO and I conducted an outreach to I attended "The ALS Association Greater Chicago Chapter Educational & Scientific Symposium". The educational experience created an opportunity to share the mission of the Paralyzed Veteran of America and meet with some of the staff of the ALS Greater Chicago Association. Our offices work with these individual throughout the years to reach out to those afflicted with the terrible disease. Julie M. Sharpe, Executive Director, Joumana Baroodi, RN, BSN care Services and Consultant-Support Group Facilitator and Audrey Scafidi, LPN is our clinical nurse for the homecare team that serves Hines VAMC, Chicagoland and suburbs. These individuals are points of contact with our outreach to the ALS community. We met with an array of nurses locally and other vendors with interest in ALS. We acknowledge the working relationship with PVA and created some new relationships. We shared in cutting edge development with new medications and treatment in ALS with a informative presentation from Dr. Roos, M.D.

Raymond P. Roos, MD, is an established expert on neuro-degenerative diseases (such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and prion diseases (e.g., Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease),



Outreach ALS greater Chicago, Winston Woodard, III & Robert Statam

multiple sclerosis (MS), inflammatory central nervous system diseases, and neuropathy. He directs the ALS/Motor Neuron Disease clinic. The 2017 Educational Symposium was an outstanding step towards our ability to network, communicate, and share new information and strengthen our relationship in the future.

Winston Woodard III,
Senior Veterans Health & Benefits Specialist
Hines SCI

PVA NEWS

Paralyzed Veterans of America “Deeply Disappointed” in New Tax Reform Plan

Organization cautions on provisions that undermine economic independence and community integration of veterans with disabilities

WASHINGTON, DC— Paralyzed Veterans of America (Paralyzed Veterans) today reacted to the new tax reform plan via a strongly worded letter to U.S. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Brady and Ranking Member Neal, saying in part that the provisions will “eliminate important sections of the tax code that directly affect veterans and people with disabilities.” While the letter went on to say the organization appreciates the efforts to effect broader tax reform, it reiterated caution on several key issues it had laid out in a similar letter to the committee earlier this year.

Citing serious concerns, including the repeal of medical expense deductions, work opportunity tax credits and credits for accessibility expenditures, Paralyzed Veterans Associate Executive Director of Government Relations Carl Blake today issued the following press statement:

“Only days away from Veterans Day, I cannot imagine a more disappointing message to the most catastrophically

injured men and women who served our country than to hinder their financial independence, detrimentally affect their quality of life, or undermine the civil rights provided to them under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA),” he stated.

“Nearly 300,000 veterans benefitted from The Work Opportunity Tax Credit between 2013 and 2015, the large majority of whom are veterans who have served during the War on Terror since September 11, 2001. Additionally, the Disabled Access Credit is a vital tool in helping small businesses abide by the Americans with Disabilities Act,” he continued. “I’m certain Congress doesn’t wish to place further burdens on veterans and people with disabilities who face barriers to employment, impose financial hardships for medical expenses, or further compromise on outstanding compliance issues with our country’s critical disability law. We urge policymakers to find a better balance that doesn’t abandon our commitment to spinal cord injured veterans and all disabled Americans.”

To request a copy of the full letter, contact Tracey Lynn Shifflett (TraceyS@pva.org; 202.416.7670).

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 absolutely 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 10/1/2016 to 9/30/2017).



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**Paralyzed Veterans
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Vaughan Chapter

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Focus Group: Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders

Help us learn how
we can better help you!

If you are a Veteran with spinal cord injury, you and your non-agency caregiver may be eligible to participate in a focus group about Veteran Engagement in Research.

We will ask about the types of things you wish we would study that would make your life better, and the types of research activities you would be most interested in getting involved in.

The SCI Veteran/ Caregiver focus group is scheduled for Thursday Nov. 30 at 12pm (Veterans) & 1:00pm (Caregivers). If you know of additional interested participants, please have them contact Cara Ray in Research at 708-202-4558.

Time frame:

November 2017 Meeting in Bldg. 1, RM C308.

Location:

Edward Hines VA Hospital
Spinal Cord Injury/Disorder Unit

Time commitment: The focus group will be 1 hour long.

Veterans and caregivers will be compensated for their participation.

Marylou Guihan, PhD

Contact – Cara Ray 708-202-4558 cara.ray@va.gov



Vaughan Members; earn Volunteer hours in the following areas of opportunities.

- Attend a membership meeting (beginning to end)
1- volunteer hour , (No mileage reimbursement)
- Chapter representation at, Access Chicago, ADA Celebration, and Memorial Day Parade, Valor Games outreach booth.
- Volunteer at the PVA Chapter Office (when needed).
- Awareness month
- Represent the chapter at community functions
- Serve on a local committee, VFW, American Legion, City, County, and State.
- Represent the chapter at an activity (pre-approved)
- Volunteer to work at a chapter event six hours or more (non-participant)
- Sign up a voting member (1 credit hour)
- Sell candy (3 credit hours of the selling of one box)
- Serve on a local event committee
- Write an article for the newsletter (1 credit hour)
- Serve on a chapter committee
- Mailing preparation at chapter office
- Anything else you might have on mind,

Please check with;

Maria Hernandez or
Sports Director, Robert Arciola.
708-947-9790.





**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

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Board of Director Bios



I would like to take a minute to introduce myself; my name is **Anthony Powell**; I am a Vietnam Veteran and a Paralyzed Vet I am honored to be appointed Vice-president for the Vaughan Chapter. My main job will be assisting the President and working closely with the membership and be a voice for our members, especially at Hines VA Hospital. This is all new

to me, but I will do my best to advocate for you and to learn everything that I need to become more knowledgeable and perform my duties in the best possible way. Hope to meet you in person at our upcoming events, Veterans Day Dinner on Saturday, November 18th, 2017 or at the Christmas Luncheon on December 19th, at the Hines VA Hospital, Auditorium.

My name is **Gerald L Brown**, my status is treasurer of the Vaughan Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America. I am a 75-year-old quadriplegic with limited finger movement in both hands. My injury occurred in 1964 because of an automobile accident. After my injury I earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration/Accounting from Indiana University. I also have an MBA in Computer Resource Management and Finance from Webster University. I retired in August 2001 with a work history that included the following, a national firm preparing income tax, internal auditor in a hospital and chief financial officer in a 501 c (3) organization.



I became a member of the Paralyzed Veterans of America in 1980 on my first visit to a VA hospital. The service officer Of the Paralyzed Veterans of America filled out the membership application including paperwork, submitting a claim for benefit. My history with the paralyzed veterans of America includes serving as local member and on the national level. What that learning process illustrated to me was that I spent the first 20 years after my accident trying to fit round pegs into square holes. Either they didn't fit, or they fail through. I am humble to be given the opportunity to serve again as a member of the Vaughan Chapter, Board of Directors and hope to continue my learning process.

I believe The Paralyzed Veterans of America, having learned firsthand how important PVA is to our rehabilitation process. I believe in the leadership of my fellow Board of Directors and hope that I might play a small role in continuing to make the Vaughan chapter Of the Paralyzed Veterans of America a dynamic organization serving our local spinal cord Injured Veterans.

PS, My friends call me Gerald:

My name is **Dennis Scanlan**, and I am a Marine Corp Veteran, and Vietnam served. I am honored to be appointed Secretary for the Vaughan Chapter. My main job will be assisting the officers and board of directors on my tasks and taking minutes at our monthly board of director's meetings. This is all new to me, but I will do my best to



meet the expectations of the board. I will do the best to perform my duties in the best possible way. I encourage all of you to attend our upcoming events thought-out the year and take the opportunity this great organization offer.

Hospital liaison

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tough. The Michigan 1st District spent many hours helping a newly disabled veteran. Congressman Jack Bergman and his staff are a hard-working crew for all our Veterans and are tireless.

I have been getting many calls for another Texas Hold-em event. We will keep you posted when we are able to get things but together. When we do, the need for volunteers will be a big issue for this type of event. Providing food and beverage along with dealers and assistance for the players is important.

I want to give a special thankyou to Bill Lawson, Our new board members, and Maria Hernandez. Their work with our Chapter has been tremendous and without them our future would have been very difficult. Please remember all those volunteers and caregivers in your prayers this holiday season.

Ship has done a great job of making sure all of those in hospital are getting canteen books. Thanks Ship, could not do it without you. Dan in RCF has also been a great help.

Have a Blessed Thanksgiving with your families and Friends.

Service Officer's Report

By Robert Statam, NSO III

VA- In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF) Treatment

In January 2017, VA regulations were amended to offer in-vitro fertilization (IVF) evaluation and treatment to Veterans with service-connected conditions that resulted in infertility, as well as to their spouses. The benefit was added to existing infertility services, while the new medical benefits rule allows some veterans and their spouses to receive in vitro fertilization reproductive help through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This new amendment is the beginning of a bright new future, for some thousands of troops who suffered traumatic wounds to their genitals and spines due to the widespread use of improvised explosive devices against U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, making it difficult or impossible for them to procreate. The Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) is very compassionate regarding this treatment involving wounded men who, on the average cost more than \$10,000 per pregnancy attempt, but the VA health care system has been barred from covering the costly procedures since 1992. I feel this is a brave new approach for many who also, live with spinal cord injury and disease, as it gives the spouses of eligible Veterans access to assisted reproductive technologies, including IVF.

This is a long-awaited benefit for many Veteran couples, and hundreds nation-

ally are expected to seek evaluation and treatment. If you are enrolled in VA health care system, you can schedule an appointment with your VA provider (e.g., primary care provider or gynecologist) to discuss evaluation. If you are eligible for this benefit, your

The inclusion of IVF in the medical benefits package is consistent with VA goal to restore the capabilities of veterans and to improve the quality of veterans' lives. These veterans can start building families'.

provider will refer you to a fertility specialist. This benefit which is, well overdue, is only the first step. The inclusion of IVF in the medical benefits package is consistent with VA goal to restore the capabilities of veterans and to improve the quality of veterans' lives. These veterans can start building families'. This benefit expansion impacts only those who are experiencing infertility as a result of a service-connected disability. That means the treatment is not open to veterans who qualify for general health care through income or their disability rating, but do not have a service-connected reproductive injury. The VA does give other fertility help to those who qualify for care but don't necessarily have service-connected reproductive injuries. Those treatments include infertility coun-

seling, blood testing, vasectomy and tubal ligation reversals and medications and equipment, these services can be extended to the veteran spouse.

According to the VHA Handbook 1176.01 Spinal Cord Injury and Disorder (SCI/D) System of Care policy mandates Sexuality and Fertility Counseling for both male and female Veterans with SCI/D must be offered the opportunity by means of a formal urological and psychological consultation.

Veterans who want to access the services and treatment and already have their reproductive injury documented should call their local SCI/D or VHA to schedule an appointment/annual evaluations with providers. Those with injuries not already noted as service-connected can contact your local PVA National Service Office for assistance and review of benefits.

If you should have any questions concerning this topic, please feel free to contact our office at (312) 980-4278, or Winston Woodard III, VHBS, at the Hines VAMC at (708)202-5623.

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**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

Vaughan Chapter

800-727-2234

Join Us!!!

Vaughan PVA
Cordially invites its members

**Join us, at our Annual
CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON**

Wednesday, December 19th

@

Hines VAH Auditorium

Bldg #9

Noon—3:00pm

(1) Guest per Member

Mandatory RSVP by:

December 12th by calling at 708-947-9790

or by email at vpva@vaughanpva.org or

dpettiford@vaughanpva.org

