



**Paralyzed Veterans  
of America**

New England Chapter

# CORDWORD

The Monthly News Magazine of the New England Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America

## 2018 BUNKER HILL DAY PARADE



**INSIDE THIS EDITION**

**VA MISSION ACT**

**WE NEED YOUR HELP**



### NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER OFFICES

PVA ELECTS NEW LEADERSHIP	4
SEC. PETER MOORE RECOGNIZED	5
FAA REAUTHORIZATION ACT	8
AIRLINE SVC ANIMAL CHANGES	8
BUNKER HILL DAY PARADE	13
CHAPTER EVENT SCHEDULE	16



### PVA President David Zurfluh's response to President Trump signing the VA MISSION Act.

WASHINGTON, DC — Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) issued the following statement from its President, David Zurfluh, in response to President Trump signing the VA MISSION Act into law:

“On behalf of Paralyzed Veterans of America members—veterans with spinal cord injury or disease—their families, ...continued on page 4.



**Paralyzed Veterans  
of America**

New England Chapter

### By Debra A. Freed, Chapter Executive Director.

Summer is finally here and I know many are very grateful, myself included. There is a lot to tell you so here we go. PVA held its 72nd Annual Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Nice place, right at the Mall of America. I didn't get to see much else as by the time we would get done at the end of the day, too beat to go too far. Please check out [www.pva.org](http://www.pva.org) for the latest updates concerning ...continued on page 5.



# Out Front

**Michael G. Negrete, President**

I traveled to Minneapolis, MN in May to attend the 72nd Annual PVA Convention. It was an opportunity to learn about activities at the National level, conduct PVA business, meet with other Chapter and PVA friends, as well as, make some new ones.

Ok, the bad. A major thing effecting Chapters this year was PVA's approval of a deficit budget for the 2019 fiscal year. The budget had been worked on by PVA's Budget Committee, which I am a member, and PVA's Board of Directors to ultimately reduce the deficit to roughly \$3 million dollars. Part of this reduction was a 10% across the board reduction in all Chapter Grants. What is a Chapter Grant you ask? PVA essentially subsidizes each Chapter with \$158K annually, broken down and received by each Chapter in monthly payments. Half of this grant is allocated by PVA for Chapter operational expenses, the other half for mandated PVA Programs. This reduction roughly equal \$16,000.00 annually. With our Chapter already trying to manage a \$250K budgetary loss from PVA's elimination of our telemarketing program, it is even more paramount now, that we ALL participate in our fund-raising and awareness campaigns. If you're unable to participate for some reason, consider making a donation directly to the Chapter. You, and those you know, can either mail a check or conveniently and securely use a credit card on the Chapter website.

Without the needed involvement in the operation of the Chapter, it continues to make it exceedingly difficult to sustain the level of member benefits and activities we've been fortunate to provide so far. Please consider what you can do and contact the Chapter office at 800-660-1181 or contact me directly at 857-229-8825. I'd be more than glad to listen to you, as well as, share the needs of the Chapter with you..

Now the Good. Summer's warm weather is truly here! Take a look at the variety of Chapter activities offered on the back cover. Never been to one, no problem. Give the office a call and we'll give you all the details. Besides the activities themselves, you'll enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow members and make some new friends. And if you're a regular, meet some old friend and make some new ones, too. There's something for everyone to participate in and enjoy, no matter your ability or skill level!

Michael G. Negrete  
President and Paralyzed Veteran

# From the Director's Desk

**Debra A. Freed, Executive Director**

There is a lot going on now that Summer is here. On behalf of the New England Chapter, the Boston, Bedford, Northampton, Togus, Manchester, West Haven and finally White River Junction VAs, please get out and enjoy the good weather. Without the support and dedication of VA, staff, and like organizations, many of these events would not take place.

Unfortunately, my article is not a happy one. I ask that you read it and understand it was not pleasant to write. But, you need to know where we are and where we are going as an organization. For an organization that has 855 members, about 30 are truly active. PVA is looking into making changes. What they will be, we do not yet know. Until then, be positive, participate as often as you can. Last but not least, I hope all the Dads out there and the Moms pulling double-duty had a very Happy Father's Day.



Debra A. Freed  
Executive Director

# New England PVA Contact Information

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## CHAPTER ADMINISTRATION

### NEW ENGLAND PVA OFFICERS

President	Michael G. Negrete
Vice President	Mike Guilbault
Secretary	Peter Moore
Treasurer	Charles Schena
National Director	Neal Williams
ADA Coordinator	Neal Williams

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Michael Moran	Jim Wallack
Mark Sanders	Neal Williams
Walter Farrington	

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Debra Freed	Executive Director
Jerry Cole	Admin/Bookkeeper

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### PROGRAM DIRECTORS

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Peer Mentor Representative	Mike Guilbault
Scholarship Chairman	Wayne Ross
Sports Director	Mike Guilbault
Assistant Sports Director	Michael Moran
Volunteer Coordinator	Debra Freed
Women Veterans' Liaison	Debra Freed

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## NEW ENGLAND PVA NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICES

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Fax: 718-741-4237  
Amauris Polanco  
Veterans Health & Benefits Specialist II

*CordWord* is the New England Chapter, Paralyzed Veterans of America's (New England PVA) monthly magazine that covers news, health, research, lifestyle and issues of interest and concern to Veterans and others with spinal cord injury and disease. Anyone interested in submitting an article to *CordWord* should email [media@newenglandpva.org](mailto:media@newenglandpva.org). The assertions and opinions expressed in articles and announcements in *CordWord* reflect the views of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the New England PVA. New England PVA can in no way whatsoever be held responsible for the content of such views nor can it be held liable for any direct or indirect damage that may arise from such views.

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# Paralyzed Veterans of America Commends President Trump for Signing VA MISSION Act

By Dana Kauffman - Public Relations Specialist, PVA



WASHINGTON, DC — Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) issued the following statement from its President, David Zurfluh, in response to President Trump signing the VA MISSION Act into law:

“On behalf of Paralyzed Veterans of America members—veterans with spinal cord injury or disease—their families, and caregivers, we wish to express our

gratitude to President Trump for signing this bipartisan legislation into law. The VA MISSION Act will strengthen the ability of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to deliver health care in both the community and in VA facilities around the country, as well as assess and realign VA infrastructure. Of critical importance to PVA, the MISSION Act will

finally expand the VA Comprehensive Family Caregiver Program to those veterans injured prior to September 11, 2001.

This legislation wouldn't have made it across the finish line without the enormous efforts of Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Johnny Isakson (R-GA) and Ranking Member Jon Tester (D-MT), as well as House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Phil Roe (R-TN). We would also like to thank Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) for her persistent advocacy for the caregivers of our nation's veterans.

Now that the VA MISSION Act has been signed into law, we will work tirelessly to ensure that this legislation is implemented properly, and that the VA Comprehensive Family Caregiver Program is made available to veterans who served prior to 9/11 as swiftly as possible.”

## Paralyzed Veterans of America Elects Leadership for 2018-2019 Term

By Lani Poblete, Associate Director, PVA Media & Public Relations



Washington, DC—Paralyzed Veterans of America today announced that David Zurfluh, an Air Force veteran, and native of Washington state, will serve as national president for a 2nd consecutive term. Zurfluh was re-elected by Paralyzed Veterans of America's board of directors during the organization's 72nd Annual Convention last week.

The following individuals were also re-elected to their respective positions: Ken Weas, national senior vice president; Hack Albertson, national vice president; Charles Brown, national vice president; Robert Thomas, national vice president; Larry Dodson, national secretary; and Tom Wheaton, national treasurer. Tammy Jones, from the Texas

Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America, was newly elected to the fourth vice president spot on the executive committee. With the re-election of Zurfluh, Al Kovach, Jr. will continue to serve the organization as immediate past president. The executive committee will begin its new one year term on July 1, 2018.

“I joined Paralyzed Veterans of America the same year I was injured,” said Zurfluh. “As I lay in my hospital bed after my injury, lost, broken and wondering about my future, Paralyzed Veterans of America came to my aid, gave me hope and showed me a path to succeed in life. I am honored to lead the organization and be the voice for its members and supporters for another year.”

Zurfluh is a U.S. Air Force veteran who served his country in Operation Desert Shield/Storm before being injured in a motor vehicle accident in 1995 while on active duty in Hachinohe, Japan. Following one year of inpatient rehabilitation and two years of outpatient care, he resumed life as an incomplete quadriplegic.

# Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union Recognizes Chapter Secretary Peter Moore as Local "Hometown Hero"

*Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union Edited By Michael G. Negrete, Chapter President*



**Pictured: Peter Moore, wife Jessica and daughter River**

Throughout the month of May, the Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union gave community members the chance to nominate someone they know who goes above and beyond in their community. Between April 25th and

May 25th, Jeanne D'Arc received a total of 51 submissions, all of which described someone who has made a positive impact on the lives of others.

"We were truly amazed and inspired by the selfless actions our neighbors take to pay it forward each day," said Mark S. Cochran, President and Chief Executive Officer of Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union.

The Jeanne D'Arc chose a Hometown Hero every Friday during the month of May. Chapter Secretary Peter Moore of Tyngsborough, MA was Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union's week three winner of the Hometown Hero campaign.

Peter was nominated by his wife, Jessica Wilson. Peter, a Navy veteran, is active in the community in many ways. Besides serving on the Board of Directors of the New England Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans, he also volunteers for local organizations like the Folk Festival, Mill City Grows and with an after school program at Lawrence High School where he mentored students in a robot building competition.

## VA Caregiver Support Program Introduces New Partnership with CaringBridge

*US Department of Veterans Affairs*



The Caregiver Support Program would like to introduce a new partnership with CaringBridge. It is a non-profit that allows people going through a health journey to create a free, secure and private website to keep family and friends updated on their health, treatment and recovery. CaringBridge has created a customized and dedicated landing page for Veterans, Service Members, and their Caregivers to connect with family and friends. The Caregiver Support Program and CaringBridge welcome those in need to create a website and experience the support of their

loved ones.

Creating a website is easy. You can personalize it by giving it a name, adding photos, and creating a section that identifies ways your family and friends can support you through your journey. You have the ability to post quick updates and/or longer journal entries. Your personalized CaringBridge website can be linked to personal fund-raiser sites and other helpful tools.

CaringBridge has been in existence for 21 years and today is the largest nonprofit social network dedicated to health with a global footprint:

- More than 2.1 billion visits to CaringBridge since 1997
- 90% of CaringBridge funding comes from those who use CaringBridge
- Every 8 minutes a CaringBridge website is created
- 1 in 12 people in the U.S. turn to CaringBridge either as a patient or as a family or friend supporting a loved one
- Over 60% of the websites started on CaringBridge are by Caregivers

Please visit CaringBridge to get started today!

[www.caringbridge.org/military-service](http://www.caringbridge.org/military-service)



1ST ANNUAL NEPVA COMEDY NIGHT BENEFIT

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**THURS JUNE 28**



**Paralyzed Veterans  
of America**  
New England Chapter

# We Need Your Help!

By Debra A. Freed, Chapter Executive Director

Summer is finally here and I know many are very grateful, myself included. There is a lot to tell you so here we go. PVA held its 72nd Annual Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Nice place, right at the Mall of America. I didn't get to see much else as by the time we would get done at the end of the day, too beat to go too far. Please check out [www.pva.org](http://www.pva.org) for the latest updates concerning the elections. Congratulations to all who ran and to those who won.

PVA's budget was submitted to the National Board of Directors and I have to tell you, it wasn't pretty. Because of shortfalls at the National level, there will now be shortfalls at the Chapter level. I thought the Combined Federal Campaign would do better because we are a well-established Veterans Service Organization. So far, it too is not at all pretty.

While we, the current Chapter Board of Directors (all volunteers), the staff, and other volunteers work tirelessly to raise money, we just can't do it alone. Please remember, we went through some drastic changes in 2016/2017 to try and save as much money as possible - I took a voluntary reduction in pay, we restructured staff and moved to another location. The moving to where we are now was and is really a huge plus. We're now just down the block from the West Roxbury VAMC

Putting it as politely as I know how, if we don't start getting in funds to cover our programs, two things will have to happen. One, we will cut programs and or be forced to limit how many folks can go to various events OR two, should the Chapter Board vote to keep things the same for the next two years, then there is a possibility of becoming insolvent by exhausting our financial resources. PVA requires Chapters to maintain

3 years' worth of operating expenses. We currently maintain a bit more than 2 years worth. In March we only sent five Chapter representatives to visit our members of Congress on Capitol Hill for Advocacy & Legislation and all but myself were volunteers. We currently have 23 athletes going to the 38th Annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Orlando, Florida. That currently amounts to 27 rooms at a cost of nearly \$1,000 per room, making up the most expensive part of the trip.

Speaking for myself, PVA saved my life in 2004. I continue to work as hard as I can to keep this organization afloat and continue to provide as much as possible for our members. Please remember that there are over 33,000 other non-profits just in Massachusetts alone that we are competing against for donations. So, what can you do? Or better yet, what will YOU do?

On a happier note, on May 18th myself and Denise Pease assisted with putting together 300 "swag bags", then on the 19th, we hosted an information table at the 10th Annual Women Veterans Conference that was held in Devens, MA. An outstanding job done by Gail McAuliffe - Director of the Women Veterans Program and Women Veterans Steering Committee and all the Committee members and volunteers. I want to say "Thank You" to Denise Pease for giving up her Friday and Saturday to support myself and all the women veterans who attended.

Finally, I ask that you come out and support what we hope will be an annual event: the 1st NEPVA Comedy Night Benefit, Thursday June 28th, at Chunky's Pub & Cinema in Nashua, N.H. It's only \$20 a ticket and all three of the comedians are U.S. Veterans.



Paralyzed Veterans  
of America

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# Provisions to Improve the Air Travel Experience of People with Disabilities Included in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018

Washington Update Volume 24, Number 5

On April 27th, the House passed the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (H.R. 4) overwhelmingly by a vote of 393-13. This legislation includes many amendments from the Air Carriers Access Amendment Act (H.R. 5004) as introduced by Congressman Jim Langevin (D-RI).

PVA supports the following provisions included H.R.4:

- Development of an airline passengers with disabilities bill of rights.
- Increased civil penalties for harm towards passengers with disabilities or their wheelchairs.
- Establishment of a Select Subcommittee on Aviation Consumers with Disabilities to the Advisory Committee for Aviation Consumer Protection.
- Evaluation of areas for improvement to increase airport accessibility and training of air carrier and contract personnel.
- Requirements for the U.S. Access Board and the DOT to investigate the feasibility of in-cabin wheelchair restraint systems for people with disabilities.
- Directions to DOT to revise its service animal regulation.
- Requirements for passengers with disabilities to receive timely and effective assistance at the airport and on the aircraft, including

personnel providing hands on assistance possibly being required to receive hands on training to perform that assistance and on the use of any needed equipment.

The Senate's FAA reauthorization legislation is still pending and will likely come to the floor in June. The Senate legislation, S.1405, passed out of Committee on June 29, 2017, and has many of the same provisions affecting passengers with disabilities as the House version (H.R. 4). Of note, the Senate bill does not include specific direction for DOT to revise policies regarding service animals.

Other parts of the ACAA (H.R. 5004 / S. 1318) that could possibly be added as amendments when the Senate bill goes to the floor are a private right of action, the referral to the Department of Justice (DOJ) of alleged violations, and a requirement for airlines to use aircraft that meet accessibility standards as defined by the ACCESS Board and the DOT.

After the Senate passes its version of FAA Reauthorization, the two measures will be conferenced to work out the differences with the goal of having legislation for the President's signature before the current FAA authorization expires at the end of September.

## More Airlines Announce Changes to Their Service Animal Policies

Washington Update Volume 24, Number 5



American Airlines is the latest to announce that it will make changes to its service animal policy. Starting July 1, American will require travelers with emotional support animals to attest to their animal's behavior via an airline

provided form. The airline also announced additional changes including restrictions on types of animals and enforcement of the requirement to complete medical and the now animal behavior documentation 48 hours before takeoff.

On March 1, Delta Airlines and United Airlines made similar changes to their service animal policies. Alaska Airlines also made changes to its policy that went into effect on May 1. Additional airlines are considering revisions to their policies.

Prior to making its announcement, American met with members of the disability community to discuss our concerns. During our discussions, PVA made it clear that we do not believe that airlines have the authority

to place additional requirements on passengers traveling with emotional support animals, beyond those listed in the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) regulations. One positive aspect of American's policy change, that is a direct result of our conversations, is the implementation of additional training for American personnel and contractors regarding service animals and emotional support animals.

PVA and nine other disability organizations sent a letter to U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary Elaine Chao on February 6th asking the Department to deem Delta and United's policies to be in violation of the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA). On May 16th, DOT issued an Interim Statement of Enforcement Priorities Regarding Service Animals. DOT also released an ANRRM to begin the process for revising the ACAA's service animal regulations.

In the meantime, Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) introduced legislation in the Senate, S. 2738, which would eliminate access for emotional support animals under the ACAA. PVA does not support this legislation. We believe that DOT should continue to move forward with its regulations to allow all stakeholders to engage in the process of determining access for service animals and emotional support animals.



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# VETRN StreetWise 'MBA'™ Program Opportunity

VETRN Inc - a 501 (C)3 Non-Profit Organization



Veteran Small Business Owners in New England and Family Members are now invited to apply for participation in the next VETRN StreetWise 'MBA'™ program, to begin in September 2018. This award-winning program is designed to support Veteran-owned small businesses to build operational capacity, increase revenues, and create sustainable jobs. The VETRN StreetWise 'MBA'™ is tuition-free, and is being held exclusively for existing veteran small business owners and their family members.

"VETRN is proud of its exclusive veteran small business classes to date and is excited to bring the next StreetWise 'MBA'™ program to veteran small business owners in order to help them grow their businesses. We look forward to continuing our veteran classes and to successful growth from our veteran business owners," said Lee Goldberg, VETRN President.

This tuition-free, six-month program uses a peer-based learning method to provide small business owners with the business knowledge,

management know-how, and relationships they need to achieve scale. Businesses that have completed the StreetWise 'MBA'™ program have created jobs at 8x the rate of the private sector as a whole.

The September 2018 program will cover topics vital to small business success, including strategic planning, marketing and sales, human resources tactics, business strategy development, and access to capital and new contracts. Participants will be assigned a Mentor at the beginning of the program and will emerge with a successful, three-year strategic growth plan and over 100 hours of combined peer-to-peer mentoring, work assignments, and classroom training in areas vital to small business success. They will also have access to the VETRN professional resource network to assist them as needed.

Customized for Veteran-owned businesses in MA, RI, NH and Maine, the VETRN program is designed for existing veteran small business owners that generate revenues of \$100,000 or more annually, have been in business for at least one year, and have one or more employees. Past Streetwise 'MBA'™ alumni have secured almost \$3 billion in government and institutional contracts. If you are interested in applying to this award winning program, apply online at [www.vetrn.org](http://www.vetrn.org) or send an E-mail to [info@vetrn.org](mailto:info@vetrn.org).



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www.mobilityworks.com

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# 2018 BUNKER HILL DAY PARADE

By Michael G. Negrete, Chapter President

New England Chapter, Paralyzed Veterans of America President Michael Negrete, Secretary Pete Moore, Board of Director Jim Wallack, Executive Director Debra Freed and Chapter Volunteers Jessica Moore and Terry Negrete participated in the 243rd Anniversary of the Battle of Bunker Hill parade.

A tradition dating back to 1786, the Bunker Hill Day Parade commemorates the first major battle of the American Revolution, which was fought on Breed's Hill on June 17, 1775, in Charlestown as part of the Siege of Boston. This parade is always held on the Sunday before or on June 17. The parade begins at the intersection of Vine and Bunker Hill St. and down Main street, and concludes on Winthrop St. by the Charlestown Militia Training Field. Families have been enjoying the Bunker Hill Day parade for years and years.



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info@newenglandpva.org  
www.newenglandpva.org

Paralyzed Veterans of America is the only non-profit Veterans' Service Organization chartered by the U.S. Congress to support and advocate for the benefits and medical care of our country's armed forces Veterans who have experienced a spinal cord injury or dysfunction spanning conflicts from WWII thru Iraq and Afghanistan.

PVA has developed a unique expertise, on a wide variety of issues,

involving the special needs of our catastrophically injured members. PVA uses this expertise to be the leading advocate and supporter for:

- Quality health care for our members.
- Research and education.
- Benefits available, because of our members' military service.
- Civil rights that maximize the independence of our members.

 @NEPVA1947

[www.newenglandpva.org](http://www.newenglandpva.org)



**Paralyzed Veterans  
of America**

New England Chapter

Paralyzed Veterans of America  
New England Chapter  
1208 VFW Parkway, Suite 301  
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Office Hours  
Mon-Fri, 9:00am - 4:30pm

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## COMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

**Jun 22:** Veterans Fair, Fall River, MA 9am – 2pm

**Jun 23:** Sail to Prevail - Paralyzed Veterans of America Weekend,  
Newport Sailing Clinic, Newport, RI

**Jun 28: 1st Annual NEPVA Comedy Night Benefit. Live  
Stand Up Comics, Silent Auctions and Raffles. 6pm to 9pm  
- Chunky's Cinema Pub, Nashua, NH**

**Jul 14-15:** Great American Airshow, Westover AFB, Chicopee, MA  
10am-5pm, Chapter hosting an information table

**Jul 16-20:** New England Summer Sports Clinic

**Jul 25:** Brockton SCI Pizza Party

**Jul 25:** Adaptive Golf Classes start. Contact sports@gaylord.org or  
203-284-2772 for Aug, Sep dates and to register.

**Jul 29-Aug 5:** National Veterans Wheelchair Games, Orlando, FL

**Aug 15:** Chapter Board of Directors Meeting, West Roxbury

**Aug 15:** West Roxbury Annual Ice Cream Social

**Aug 25:** Lake Hiawatha cookout, boat rides and fishing

**Aug 31:** Bellingham Shooting

**Sep 7-9:** NEPVA Bass Trail Fishing - Lake Winnepesaukee, NH

**Sep 18:** SAVES Bass Tournament Candlewood Lake, CT.  
Need to register through Gaylord at sports@gaylord.org  
203-284-2772

**Sep 21:** Shawme Gun Club Shoot Sandwich, MA

**Sep 26:** Brockton SCI Pizza Party

**Oct 5:** 71 Annual Chapter Banquet – Moseley's On The Charles, West  
Roxbury, MA

**Oct 5-7:** Maine Bass Trail event at Pine Tree Camp

**Oct 12:** Bass River Rod and Gun Club Shoot Yarmouth, MA

*For more information on upcoming sports events please  
contact the Chapter office at (800) 660-1181.*

*Mike Guilbault - Sports Director*

*Mike Moran - Asst. Sports Director*

**New England PVA's Official Facebook Page**

**[www.facebook.com/NEPVA1947](http://www.facebook.com/NEPVA1947)**

*Serving Paralyzed Veterans and the Disabled Community Since 1947.*