



Paralyzed Veterans of America

New England Chapter

CORDWORD

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



Sail to Prevail PVA Day

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CAREGIVER RULING

VA REQUIRES MASKS



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Paralyzed Veterans of America

VA PUBLISHES CAREGIVER FINAL RULE

The final rule making reforms to VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) was published on August 1. It becomes effective on October 1, 2020. Here are some of the most significant changes it makes to the current program:

"Inability to Perform an Activity of Daily Living": now means an activity of daily living (ADL) for which a veteran or servicemember requires personal care services ...*continued on page 17.*



FACE COVERINGS OR MASKS NOW REQUIRED AT ALL VA FACILITIES

All VA facilities require the use of face coverings or masks for all patients, families, staff, and volunteers. The health and safety of Veterans, and the staff who care for them, is and always has been VA's top priority.

During the coronavirus pandemic, we're all trying to do our part and help stop the spread of COVID-19. Whether it's*continued on page 19.*

Turn Your **Used Vehicle** Into Support for Paralyzed Veterans of America



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

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We'll use the proceeds from the sale of your car, truck, RV or boat to change lives and build brighter futures for our seriously injured heroes.



Donating your car is easy, and your gift is tax-deductible

Vehicle donations to PVA are tax-deductible! Most vehicles are sold through local used-car markets. Our vehicle donation program works to get the highest return per vehicle and handles all the paperwork, too! Whether your vehicle sells for \$500 or less, more than \$500, or more than \$5000, you will be provided with the proper donation tax receipt(s).



Call 877-900-VETS or donate online at pva.careasy.org

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PROGRAM DIRECTORS

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Out Front

Michael G. Negrete, Chapter President

I want to first start off by letting you know the Chapter COVID-19 Member Grant Program has distributed \$10,000 in relief funds to our members! I'm especially please to see members taking this Program to heart by only applying if truly in financial need. This has ensured our ability to maximize and distribute the available funds to those members most in need of assistance. If you do find yourself food insecure, challenged with PPE expenses, or other basic living expenses because of the COVID-19 pandemic, please contact the Chapter. We are here to help you however we can. Detailed grant application information is on the Chapter website's homepage at www.newenglandpva.org.

We continue our Crisis Standards of Care (CSC) advocacy efforts throughout New England. This past month the focus has been on Connecticut and my resident state of New Hampshire. Although these two States appear in law and voice to be heavily against any type of discriminatory acts within the healthcare environment, they haven't reflected this any of their CSC policies or haven't made their CSC policies publicly available for review. I want you to know though, we are making a difference. Through our Government Relations Director Kristen McCone Gordon's advocacy efforts we have been able to affect positive change in the CSC guidelines for the state of Massachusetts and their governing policy committee. To learn more about these advocacy efforts, and others, please see Kristen's report on page 6. Also, if you have a legislative issue or story to share, please feel free to reach out to Kristen anytime. Her email address is kristen@newenglandpva.org or at 800-660-1181.

The Chapter Board of Directors, Staff and I continue to hold our monthly Board meetings via Tele and video conference. At our August meeting we had to make the difficult decision whether or not we could safely hold our Annual Membership banquet. After reviewing the State's mandated COVID-19 phased guidelines, it was unfortunately determined this would not be possible. The motion to cancel the banquet for 2020 and endeavor to set a date in 2021 was officially made and passed by the Board of Directors. With this decision though, each member will be receiving a unique gift, so please keep an eye on your mail in the coming weeks for this gift from the Board of Directors, Staff and I.

Moving on with COVID-19 restrictions. I recently participated in a Veterans Service Organization update teleconference hosted by Director Vincent Ng on behalf of the Boston VA Healthcare system. He stated that there is only a very small percentage of COVID+ Veterans entering the Boston Healthcare system to be cared for. He also stated some elective procedures and appointments were starting to be allowed and scheduled, but that telehealth visits would still be leveraged whenever possible and appropriate, both for the convenience and safety of Veterans and staff. Director Ng also covered the adjustments being made to the VAMC COVID protocols that now allow a limited number of visitors to see patient while hospitalized or residents. For details on any of the Boston VA Center's access and policies please visit their [website](#).

As a reminder, check in on our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page frequently for the latest sports activities, events and Chapter news.

I want to wrap up a little differently this month, in honor of our Executive Director's military service. There were a number of military events celebrated in July, but I want recognize one you may not have been aware of. July 29th marked the 245th birthday of the U.S. Army's smallest branch who's motto is Pro Deo Et Patria = For God and Country. This is the motto of the Army's Chaplain Corps established by the Continental Congress in 1775.

Starting in Word War II, Chaplains were tasked with ministering in combat, and under fire, completely unarmed. Although the Geneva Convention gave Chaplains protected status as noncombatants, of the 33 chaplains interned by the Japanese in the Philippines, 18 died and many that survived were beaten for attempting to invoke the Geneva Convention in efforts to minister to their soldiers. In total during World War II, 124 chaplains were killed in action. In fact, Army Chaplains have served in more than 270 major wars and combat engagements. There have been nearly 400 Army Chaplains who have laid down their lives in battle, and six have been awarded the Medal of Honor.

Over the years of their service though, our Armed Forces have learned to value Chaplains for providing inspiration and hope in desperate times, for being the lone voice of compassion in a hostile environment, for being a safe and approachable source of help, and for providing a perspective on life that can only emanate from a Chaplain's personal relationship with the Almighty. Historically, these are the things for which Chaplains have been valued. However, in the end here, the most powerful thing the men and women in uniform have come to value Chaplains as, is as servants of God and friends to Soldiers.

Michael G. Negrete
Chapter President/PVA National Director
and Paralyzed Veteran

From the Director's Desk

Mark Murphy, Chapter Executive Director

Over the past month, our COVID-19 Relief Member Grant Program has really taken shape. It appears that our mailing of the relief grant postcards proved to be an effective way of communicating with our members about this program, as it resulted in more applications for grants than just the email blast alone. Thus far I have spoken on the phone to all members who have applied for a grant. Through these calls I have noticed that while this program has been a concrete way to help our members who need some financial assistance as a result of the pandemic, these phone calls have also presented an opportunity to share with members information about what is happening today at the New England PVA. This has been an added benefit of this program as we always want to communicate effectively with our members and to keep them in the loop. To give you an example of how well received this program has been, one of our recent grant awardees reached out to say, "Thank you so much for the grant I received yesterday. It was greatly appreciated and will be put to good use." It is my sincere hope that we will continue to make a positive difference for our members who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and the circumstances surrounding it.



On Monday, August 10th I was happy to play in the New England Healing Sports Association (NEHSA) 16th Annual Golf Tournament at Eastman Golf Links in Grantham, New Hampshire. Please check out my separate article page 10 about the day. (**Spoiler Alert: My team won!**)

I had so much to share in my ED column last month I did not quite have the space to write a word or two on the milestone anniversary we celebrated late last month, namely the 30th anniversary of the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA.) When I was down in Washington D.C. in early March with our New England Chapter delegation for the annual PVA advocacy/legislation seminar (and the last time I traveled!) I learned that PVA was very influential in the passage of this legislation that forbids discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in employment, public services, and public accommodations. 30 years later, ADA still stands as the most comprehensive civil rights law affecting people with disabilities ever passed into law. I am fortunate to have seen firsthand that through New England PVA's intentional focus on legislative advocacy and with Kristen McCone Gordon's able leadership as our Government Relations Director we are continuing to fight against efforts to weaken the ADA, and strongly advocate for legislation that promotes compliance with the law.

The core purpose and aim of the ADA is to break down barriers encountered by veterans and all persons with disabilities, which also happens to be the mission of New England PVA. May we all continue to actively advocate for barrier free communities throughout New England for the next 30 years and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Murphy".

Mark Murphy
Chapter Executive Director



From the Hill

Kristen McCone Gordon, Chapter Government Relations Director

August is shaping up to be a busy month. Our government relations efforts continue to grow and are increasingly making an impact at both the state and federal levels. I'm pleased to share our recent accomplishments, several opportunities to engage, and a preview of the work that lies ahead. As always, please contact me with any questions on our legislative

priorities, issues of concern, or ideas for the Chapter to explore.

New England PVA's advocacy helps to pass Specially Adaptive Housing Legislation

I'm thrilled to announce that the House passed H.R. 3504, The Ryan Kules and Paul Benne Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019. The legislation is now on President Trump's desk awaiting his signature. Once signed, the overall value of the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant will increase to \$98,492 beginning on October 1, 2020, and qualifying veterans will have twice as many opportunities to access their grant. As of October 1, 2030, eligible veterans who have exhausted their benefit will be able to apply for a supplemental grant if VA determines their residence still needs modifications. For more information, you can find PVA's press release [HERE](#).

Under the strong leadership of our national PVA office, and alongside Chapters across the country, New England PVA played an important role in making this happen. I want to thank all of you who participated in this effort through VoterVoice. Be assured that your voices were heard and the time you spent on this made a difference.

Action needed to advance the AUTO Act

Our next legislative priority will focus on H.R. 5761, The Advancing Uniform Transportation Opportunities for Veterans Act (AUTO Act). The AUTO Act, along with its Senate companion bill S. 4155, authorizes additional VA automobile grants to eligible veterans. The legislation would allow veterans to use the automobile grant once every ten years for the purchase, not lease, of an adapted vehicle. Further, it allows veterans who have non-service connected catastrophic disabilities to receive the same type of adaptive automobile equipment as veterans who are service connected.

I will continue to raise that paralyzed veterans should not have to shoulder the burden of the full cost of a vehicle in my conversations with congressional staff. Please also be on the lookout for a new VoterVoice opportunity in the coming days. Together, let's get this over the finish line!

PVA seeks to ensure accessible hotel accommodations

Too often, paralyzed veterans face accessibility challenges while traveling and staying in hotels across the country. One of PVA's legislative priorities seeks to address this problem by demanding equitable access for paralyzed veterans, and all people with disabilities, in hotels. H.R. 5412, the Travel and Tourism For All Act, directs the National Council on Disability to conduct a review of the implementation of the ADA in the travel, tourism, and hospitality industries.

Our New England PVA team discussed this issue in great detail with the New England Congressional Delegation during our visit to Capitol Hill earlier this year. Chapter President Michael Negrete shared personal experiences of the often inhumane treatment he has experienced while traveling. As a direct result of Michael's openness, both Representatives and their staff were very receptive to this legislation and genuinely concerned with the challenges our members face.

We now need to hear from you. No PVA member should face accessibility obstacles while traveling the country they have sacrificed so much for.



National PVA is requesting all members who use a wheelchair or scooter to share any challenges encountered during hotel stays. Please visit pva.org/ADA to share your story.

Working to protect your rights during COVID-19

Throughout New England, we continue to monitor and advocate for non-discriminatory Crisis Standards of Care guidelines. We have been resolute in our message that no one should be denied life-saving treatment during this pandemic on account of either underlying disabilities or projected estimations of one's quality of life.

I recently participated in a call with Governor Lamont in Connecticut to discuss this and other issues facing persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. While he was clear that he would not tolerate Connecticut residents being denied equal medical treatment based on their disabilities, his Administration has yet to release written standards for rationing medical care should hospitals become overwhelmed during this and future public health emergencies. I am pleased to announce that directly following this call, and in large part due to the strong coordinated efforts of the Connecticut Cross-Disability Lifespan Alliance and our friends at the Disability Rights Connecticut, Governor Lamont has announced the formation of a stakeholder group to draft state guidelines on this issue. I look forward to keeping you updated on how New England PVA will continue to advocate for your rights throughout this process.

We are also now advocating for this issue in New Hampshire. Along with other disability advocates in the state, our Chapter has signed onto a

letter to Lori Shibinette, Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services, expressing concern that the state's guidelines simply don't go far enough in protecting your rights. If you would like a copy of the letter, or would like to discuss this issue in greater detail, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

National PVA hosts upcoming webinar on Social Security Disability Benefits and Work Incentives

On August 25, PVA's Government Relations Department will host a webinar titled, "Social Security Disability Benefits and Work Incentives - What Veterans and Their Families Should Know." This webinar will provide an overview of the SSDI program, and feature subject matter experts who will explain the process to qualify for benefits and work incentives for beneficiaries seeking to return to work. It is open to all PVA members and chapters. Information about the event, including the registration link, is below. It will be recorded for those unable to attend live.

When: Aug 25, 2020 2:00-3:00 PM Eastern Time

Topic: Social Security Disability Benefits and Work Incentives - What Veterans and Their Families Should Know

Register in advance for this webinar: https://pva.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_uA4duu2oRimhRIIEuV9zAQ



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Phone: 844-846-3346



And A Sailing We Will Go

By Chapter Member Debra Freed



Sail To Prevail Founder and CEO Paul Callahan

Back in early March, Sail To Prevail, began emailing folks who may want to participate in the annual PVA/Veterans' Weekend. Ms. Patty Brdar, Executive Assistant for Sail To Prevail and a member of the team since 2010. Patty is a wiz in organizational skills. Patty would normally be up in Newport for the Summer Programs but was not able due to Covid-19. However, working remotely from Florida, she was able to ensure commitments from most everyone who registered to participate. She even had a waiting list. Don't you just love technology?

Ms. Patty emailed me about the upcoming Sail To Prevail PVA/Veterans weekend which would, with luck, still go off. Between March and July 25th, there would be some changes. What is usually a two day event, it would be only one. What usually had been 2 sessions each day, to allow a larger number of veterans to participate would only be one extended session. The Annual Commissioning and early evening "meet & greet" of sponsors and supporters would not be allowed due to State COVID regulations.

Paul Callahan, founder and Chief Operating Officer, truly wanted to host this annual PVA/Veterans event. As stated, the event would limit the number of veterans. However, this would allow those in attendance to stay out for nearly four hours if they so wished. There was a limit of four to a boat, 3 veterans and/or caregivers and one sailing instructor.

There were 6 Sailing Instructors. The Head Sailing Instructor was Jackie Morrison. Jackie started working for Sail To Prevail last summer, and she feels it was the best decision she ever made. She instantly fell in love with the staff and the amazing participants and enjoyed the opportunity to sail around Newport again this summer! Jackie was responsible for organizing the participants and Sailing Instructors into boats. Our young instructor was Huck Whittemore.

I shared a boat with Chapter member Paul Raiche and his wife Barbara. The sailboats are 20 feet long and have 2 adjustable seats for persons with disabilities, which was great for Paul. The dock has several areas where a hydraulic lift can be moved between boats to assist with loading and unloading those who cannot climb in or out on their own.

Paul manned the tiller, or as it is unofficially referred to as "Captain the Ship." That was fine with me. While I was willing to do whatever was asked, I did let them know in advance that I suffered a new injury last year, and it would limit my ability to move from port to starboard adjusting the sails as we moved through Narragansett Bay. Besides, I would get to take photos. It really was a very beautiful day weather wise, which included a decent breeze to move us from dock, to bay and back again.

We learned that our sailing instructor, Huck Whittemore, is only 17 and a soon to be senior in high school. Huck stated that he has been sailing since the age of 10. His young age was no barrier to assisting Paul in navigating through the Bay, through some crowded areas and back to the Sail To Prevail dock. Huck was very knowledgeable in all aspects of sailing.

We had two first-time sailors at PVA Day: Ms. Carin Klipp, and Mr. Paul Hanley. Paul had this to say: "Sunshine, sails, and good people!" Another Chapter member and long time attendee Wayne Ross. Wayne, a quadriplegic and Air Force Veteran shared his note he sent to Patty: "I had a wonderful time on Saturday the wind and weather were super. I have been to most of the PVA sailing days over the past 11 years, and I can't remember a nicer day. Thanks to the steady breeze we covered more ocean than ever before and went all the way to the big bridge, the house on the rock, the open ocean, Goat Island and the inner harbor. Debra Freed, the former executive director of the NEPVA, was there along with some other folks I've never met." Another long time attendee was Roland Filion who hails from Rhode Island. I do not believe anyone had a poor day.

Because of my injury, I had let Patty and Jackie know that I would not be able to stay out more than 3 hours. Paul, Barbara, and Huck were very good about going in early. They dropped me off and planned to go back out for another hour. I was grateful to learn that I was not the only one who needed a bathroom break. Huck took the opportunity as did two other boats.

I commend Ms. Patty Brdar, Ms. Jackie Morrison and, of course, Mr. Paul Callahan for making the necessary arrangements and commitments to keep everyone as safe as possible. I do not know or believe anyone has contracted Covid-19 from this event. Depending on how things go, Sail To Prevail will again be a participant in the annual New England Summer Sports Clinic next year. We truly look forward to a return to a full PVA/Veterans Weekend event in the Summer of 2021.

P.S., The couple on the waiting list went sailing another day, compliments of Sail To Prevail, and "they had a blast"!



Chapter members Debra Freed and Paul Raiche (wife Barbara) with Sailing Instructor Huck Whittmore



Chapter volunteer Jim Tynan, Chapter member Roland Fillion and Paul Hanley



Chapter volunteer Jim Tynan



Chapter Board member Wayne Ross and Sailing Instructor Joe Wicker



Chapter volunteer Jim Tynan, Chapter member Roland Fillion and Paul Hanley with Sailing Instructor Evan Chenard



Chapter member Wayne Ross, Stephen and Bertha McCarthy and Sailing Instructor Joe Wicker

16th Annual NEHSA Charity Golf Tournament

By Mark Murphy, Chapter Executive Director



Mark Murphy, New England PVA Chapter Executive Director

On Monday, August 10th I was delighted to play in the New England Healing Sports Association (NEHSA) 16th Annual Charity Golf Tournament at Eastman Golf Links in Grantham, New Hampshire. As you may be aware, NEHSA was founded by a group of Vietnam veterans in 1972, many of whom had sustained significant combat injuries. They found re-acclimating to life after war challenging, so they felt a need to get back to the things they loved, one of which was skiing and the outdoors. From this need, NEHSA was born. Working in partnership with VA hospitals and other community support systems, NEHSA provides winter and summer sports activities to veterans and civilians from across the New England area.

#AdaptatHome Fitness Kit

via www.moveunitedsport.org



THE GOAL: Reach and engage more people with disabilities, especially those who may not have been engaging in adaptive sports and physical activity!

Move United is committed to continuing to provide free virtual exercise and well events to keep athletes active, engaged and connected during this time. The [#AdaptatHome](https://www.moveunitedsport.org) virtual calendar of events featured and curated over 750 live and on-demand programs available to athletes at home for free since April and will continue to provide these programs through the summer and beyond!

New England PVA has had a solid relationship with NEHSA over the years, as their mission is all about serving individuals and families through adaptive sports and promoting healing and accomplishment.

It was an honor to represent the chapter at this annual tournament. The weather was beautiful, and it was a nice opportunity for me to meet some new people and share with them the positive things happening at New England PVA. A fun part of the day was at one of the par 5 holes a World Long Drive Golf Professional entertained the tournament participants by hitting over 400-yard drives and unbelievable trick shots. A trick shot that our group witnessed was the long drive pro hitting a 275-yard drive while using a putter. I am lucky if I hit the ball that far with my driver! Beyond this, I am happy to report that my team came in first place at the tournament with a score of -11. We started off a little slow, but then scored -7 on the back 9, including an eagle and then making birdies on the final 5 consecutive holes. As I told a few of our members, I will always be open to playing golf on a “work” day, especially when you go out and win the whole tournament!

In conversations I had with several people at the tournament and in my group, I learned a lot more about NEHSA and the importance they place on adaptive outdoor recreation. They have many tangible programs that make an impact on a large swath of individuals with physical and mental disabilities, veterans and civilians, children, and adults. If you would like to learn more about NEHSA, feel free to visit their website at www.nehsa.org.

Are you in need of equipment to help you stay active and connected from home? We’ve got you! [Complete the brief form to register](#) to receive your FREE Fitness Kit. 500 fitness kits available. Move United will review and process requests. Individuals with disabilities confirmed to receive a kit will be notified via email.

Fitness Kits to include:

- Exercise Band (latex free)
- Cordless Jump Rope
- Ball (latex free)
- Towel (which can be used as a slider too!)
- Buff
- T-shirt

These items will be incorporated into the [#AdaptatHome](https://www.moveunitedsport.org) virtual workouts this summer! Make sure you check out the calendar of hundreds upcoming events and on demand programs!

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NVWG at Home2020

By Chapter Member Debra Freed



Because of COVID-19, the 40th Annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG), to be held in Portland, Oregon, were canceled. The in-person event and the various competing sports were canceled. So, what to do and help keep athletes safe, sane, and healthy?

The Veterans Administration (VA) and Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) came up with a solution to hold the Games. They introduced the NVWGatHome event. This process would take on a very different look. The events would be: Air Rifles, Cascade Cup Challenge, Disc Golf, E-Sports, 30 Day Cycle/Community Challenge, and finally The Team Challenge, a.k.a. The Butler Cup Challenge.

Anyone who was already registered for the original NVWG event could register for the NVWGatHome event. Unfortunately, only two of the 20 plus NEPVA Coasters registered for the NVWGatHome event: Myself, and Mike Guilbault. Mike and I discussed how we might be able to help each other out. The 30 Day Cycle/Community Challenge would be the easiest for both of us. The premise was to ride, walk, roll, for 30 (31) days outside. Mike would push in his wheelchair and message me each morning of his previous day/night's push. Mike would use Mapmyride. I would use STRAVA and my Cat's Eye for verification. I also posted every day that I was going out. Trust me, there is no one in my area that could take over my handcycle, so all the riding, I truly did – a total of 472 road miles in 31 days and nearly 70 miles on the trainer. The nice part was road miles would double as Community miles so my overall total was 1,014 miles. Mike did 167 miles just pushing in his chair and now having been to La Salette, I know how hard he worked to get those miles. And his power assist was his own strength and energy!

Almost all of the events had a preliminary portion. The Air Rifles was one such event. The VA/PVA would send out special targets and the rules were to shoot 40 shots in a 60 minute time limit, then either scan or photo the targets with your name to the email and deadline given in the instructions. The cutoff would be the first 10 of SH1 and SH2 shooters. I missed the cutoff by 2 people.

I tried the disc golf. That is an interesting game and will be back again next year. The E-sports, a.k.a. computer/play station/nintendo, game

was called Rocket League. The premise is using cars to knock a ball into the opponent's goal. There was a preliminary match and while I scored decently, I was scoring for my opponent! It usually helps to protect your own goal!!! However, it was an interesting learning opportunity and there will be opportunities to continue to learn E-Sports as well as having this event again in 2021. (no guarantee it will be Rocket League again)

Mary Hobbs has already sent an email it went over so well that there has already been another day of competition and there will now be a weekly Rocket League training session!

Now on to the Cascade Cup. What was this all about? This is an adaptive Cross-Fit program. The premise for this event was to see what you can do within a time limit. So, for example, one part was to toss a "medicine" ball against the floor, a.k.a. "slam ball," so many times (50) or within a time limit of 14 minutes. Mike & I each managed to have someone video tape this event or videotaped it ourselves. We each did well timewise. The process also provided weekly training via Zoom or Webex. These were very, very helpful. Some of the training consisted of performing "box turns" or u-turns for a minute, then raise an item that had some weight to it, over your head for one minute, go back to the box u-turns, then the weights. Another training had us slaloming through cones as well as the weight workout so chair agility was stressed during all training and ended up a nice way to decrease your time in the Finals. It could get a little hectic but the training would pay off as both Mike and I would do well enough in the preliminaries to make the Finals.

One of the issues for both of us, is while I have Joy at home, Joy is working from home, so her ability to help with videotaping was limited. Mike could not rely on neighbors, in part because of C-19. So, Mike and I got together. Mike lives near La Salette Shrine and so we were able to conduct our preliminary and final on the grounds there and find a wall where we could mark as high as 9 feet to throw the medicine ball to. Mike didn't need to throw as high so we also marked off 3 and 6 feet to see how close we got to the required heights per classification.

Mike Guilbault would take first in Cascade Cup and 2nd in the 30 Day Cycle/Community Challenge. I was bested by better folks and didn't take home any medals this year. But wait until 2021!!!!

Finally, I want to give shoutouts to the following folks. Dave Tostenrude, VA Director for the NVWG, and Jen Purser, PVA's AED for Sports and the NVWG. They were instrumental in developing the plan and process to be used. They did everything they could to make it as easy as possible for athletes to participate from home. Of the over 500 or so who originally registered, 127 re-registered for the NVWGatHome event. The VA and PVA were pleased with the number of athletes who wanted to participate.

More shout outs need to go to the officials of various events. For E-sports, it would be Travis Greaves, PVA Sports and James Kaplan. James is the head official for Adaptive E-Sports Recreation & Virtual Reality Therapy at the James A. Haley VA in Tampa, Florida. Trust me, they were great with their patience and timing. They too would provide training opportunities.

So, there was little excuse for not giving the event a good go.

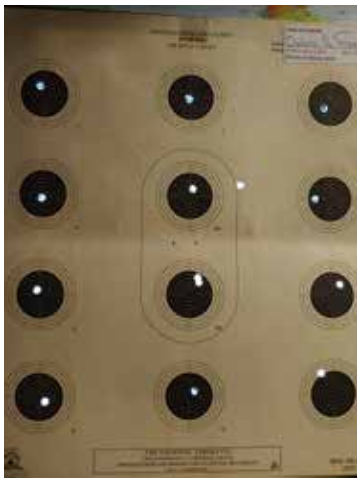
Many may know the name John Arbino. John is the Director for Airguns, and Boccia. He provided weekly webinar sessions Airguns 101 & 102 if you missed anything in the first round of webinars.

Disc Golf's officials were Jeff Shattuck and Kristen Parsley. They provided an opportunity to practice before hand using whatever you had available as a basket. I suggested a wheelbarrow and for the event, we each had an opportunity to use either an "official disc golf basket", a wheelbarrow or a marked wall space. So, thanks for taking my suggestion!

And last but certainly not least are the Cascade Cup officials. Sincere thank yous to the Program Coordinators/Officials: Christine Lafex, (Rec

Therapist/Adaptive Sports Therapist at the Orlando, FL VAMC), Logan Aldridge, and Alex Zirkenbach from Adaptive Fitness Academy. They were great, also providing weekly webinars/trainings. Trust me, it was well worth it. Adaptive Fitness Academy is continuing to do a weekly workout each Saturday at 13:00. Check it out Alex and Logan really are very fit and fun. Their training sessions were so helpful; yet, to head to NYC and be competitive in 2021 more training will be needed!

Another shout-out goes to La Salette Shrine. They really do have a nice property and did not blink an eye when we used an out of the way area. It really was perfect, especially for the finals as we needed a space that could provide a 25 meter (82feet) sprint and agility test.



Debra Freed's 3rd of 4 preliminary shoot targets.



Mike Guilbault testing his 30 wall balls using double his weight requirement.



Debra Freed's disc golf competition set up at 5, 7, and 10 ft.



The measurement for 25 meter/82 foot sprint and agility test at La Salette Shrine

New England Paralyzed Veterans of America meets Brian Hanaford and Accessible Racing

By Mike Moran, Chapter Secretary and Asst. Sports Director



Summer is upon and we're figuring out what is and isn't possible to do in the outdoors. We've dealt with cancellations of all our outdoor activities and that has an effect on our well-being. Throughout the year we have a myriad of activities to choose from both locally and nationally. Fortunately, things developed quickly, and we were Zooming with each other and finding new ways to experience the outdoors, indoors.

That's where Brian Hanaford and his adaptive gaming wheel and [iRacing](#) platform will be able to provide you that and more.

Amid the COVID lockdown, Debra Freed received a call from Brian who owns [Accessibleracing.org](#). They've had dealings in the past and Brian had a new idea he wanted to pass on to the chapter. Debra has moved on from her main duties with the NEPVA, so she referred him to the chapters Vice President and Sports Director Mike Guilbault and me.

After years of planning, Brian's idea of building an adaptive gaming wheel which consists of the same hand controls as those used to drive an adaptive vehicle has come to fruition. Although it's a driving game, it's also a tool to develop hand and eye control which will assist most individual's in their progression to independence. New England PVA is working with Brian to advance the process, with plans of having an adaptive gaming wheel and [iRacing](#) platform at three VA's in New England. We'll keep you updated of the progress.

Brian and Riverside Speedway in Groveton, NH invited the New England PVA amongst others up to take part in a fun filled day at the track, with the opportunity to try the adaptive gaming wheel experience and drive his adaptive race car. The monster trucks were impressive to see as well. And last but not least, the resident stunt man and World War II Marine Veteran, Edward "Pete" Racine's attempt to set a record for the most barrel roles possible in a four-door sedan. Pete's 95 years young, he told me he keeps his youthful complexion on a diet of Jack Daniel's, butter and bacon, so much for the keto diet. Unfortunately, Pete wasn't successful in his

attempt due to the car, as we've learned over the years, safety first.

It was a beautiful day at the track and the day couldn't have happened without the following people.

Mike and Richard Humphries own Riverside Speedway and made sure we had everything thing we needed and allowed us great parking. There was an additional car available provided by George "Dodo Brockman.

Videographer Joe Mitchell Phlume MEDIA

Driving Instructor/Virtual World set up Marc Doggett

Technician Scott Colgan

Statistician Cari King Hero Motorsports Portland, Oregon

World War II Marine Veteran and stunt driver Edward "Pete" Racine

[iRacing.com](#) Charles and Anthony Estes

Troy Boisseneau and Ed Vickory worked their backs getting us in and out of the car.

Chris Day and Brad Sanborn Riverside Speedway employees also assisted in the many transfers that day.

The above people and I'm sure I missed some, afforded us a day of safe fun in the outdoors.

Once in the car and all strap in, if you aren't able to drive you're in the capable hands of co-driver Marc, he will take you around the track (you won't be disappointed). If you can use hand controls the car is in your hands as well as Marc's, either way, the experience effects all of your senses and will leave you wanting more. At the end of the day, everyone was smiling for ear to ear, permagrin was in full effect!

Brian is looking to raise awareness for all with disabilities and introduce more people to his adaptive gaming wheel and the opportunities it can provide. He's currently doing that with his adaptive race car, if you get a chance to try it you won't be disappointed!

Click [HERE](#) to watch a video demonstration of the iRacing platform.

We'll keep you posted on upcoming events.





Mike Moran, Chapter Secretary & Asst. Sports Director



Mike Guilbault, Chapter VP & Sports Director



Chapter Board member Wayne Ross coming around the corner



Wayne Ross, Chapter Board member



Jim Wallack, Chapter member



Mike Moran and Jim Wallack

VA Publishes Final Regulation for its Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers

via VA Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs



WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) published its final regulation to improve and expand the [VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers \(PCAFC\)](#) with the final regulation going into effect on Oct. 1.

Under the final regulation, PCAFC will include [eligible Veterans](#) that have a single or combined service-connected disability rating by VA of 70% or higher, regardless of whether it resulted from an injury, illness or disease.

This is a notable change to the definition of serious injury from the current regulations, among other improvements aimed at standardizing the PCAFC and improving transparency in the program.

[Expansion of VA's PCAFC](#) to eligible Veterans of earlier eras will occur in two phases. The first phase will begin October 2020 and will include eligible Veterans who incurred or aggravated a serious injury in the line of duty in the active, military, naval or air service on or before May 7, 1975. Phase two will go into effect two years later and include eligible Veterans of all eras.

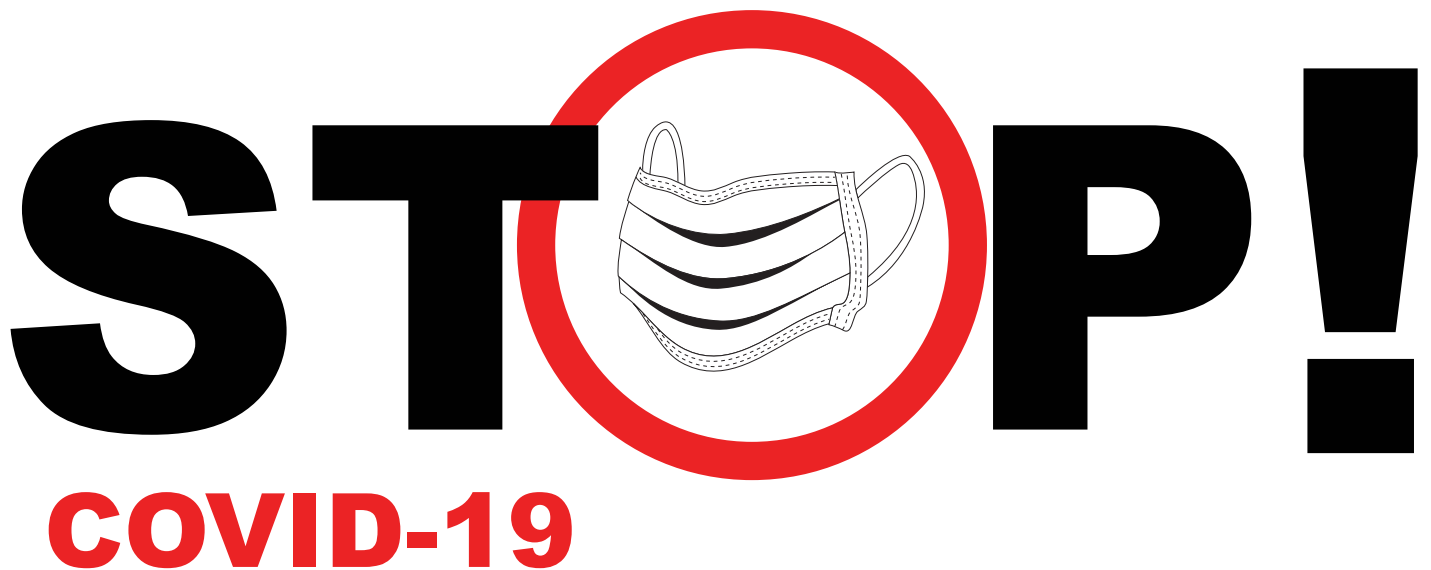
“The expanded regulation addresses the complexity and expense of keeping Veterans at home with their families who provide personalized care,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “This will allow our most vulnerable Veterans to stay with their loved ones for as long as possible. Expanding the program and eligibility for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers ensures we can continue to meet the changing needs of America’s Veterans and their caregivers.”

Additionally, the new regulation will change the [PCAFC stipend payment methodology](#), define new procedures for revocation and discharge, and include certain advance notice requirements aimed at improving communication between VA and PCAFC participants as well as include information for [current program participants](#). VA is also standardizing operating procedures for the Caregiver Support Program, providing new training for staff and caregivers, and boosting operational capacity by hiring additional staff. With this expansion, Primary Family Caregivers in PCAFC will also have access to financial planning and legal services. VA is also working to fully implement the new information technology system required by the VA MISSION Act of 2018 by October 2020.

VA’s Caregiver Support Program offers support services for caregivers including training, peer mentoring, respite care, a telephone support line, and self-care courses for caregivers of covered Veterans enrolled in VA health care who need personal care services.

Caregivers can visit [VA Caregiver support website](#) or call the Caregiver Support Line at 855-260-3274 for questions.

The final regulation can be found here. If necessary, search for RIN 2900-AQ48, Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Improvements and Amendments under the VA MISSION Act of 2018.



What the VA's Final Regulation for its Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers Means to You!

By Roscoe Butler, PVA Associate Legislative Director



Paralyzed Veterans of America

VA PUBLISHES CAREGIVER FINAL RULE

The final rule making reforms to VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) was published on August 1. It becomes effective on October 1, 2020. Here are some of the most significant changes it makes to the current program:

- "Inability to Perform an Activity of Daily Living": now means an activity of daily living (ADL) for which a veteran or servicemember requires personal care services each time he or she completes one or more of a specified list of ADLs; thereby, excluding veterans and servicemembers who need help completing an ADL only some of the time.
- "In Need of Personal Care Services": now means that an eligible veteran requires in-person personal care services from another person, and without such personal care services, other in-person caregiving arrangements (including respite care or the assistance of a different caregiver) would be required to support the eligible veteran's safety.
- "Monthly Stipend Rates": now based on the Office of Personnel Management General Schedule (GS) Annual Rate for grade 4, step 1 based on the locality pay area in which the eligible veteran resides, divided by 12.
- "Serious Injury": now defined to mean any service-connected disability that is rated at 70 percent or more by VA; or is combined with any other service-connected disability or disabilities, for a combined rating of 70 percent or more.
- "Unable to self-sustain in the community": now means that an eligible veteran requires personal care services each time he or she completes three or more of the seven ADLs listed in the definition of an "inability to perform an activity of daily living," and is fully dependent on a caregiver to complete such ADLs; or has a need for supervision, protection, or instruction on a continuous basis.

- "Overpayments": any payment made by VA under this program to an individual in excess of the amount due, to which the individual was not eligible, or was made in error.

According to VA, once the Secretary has certified to Congress that VA's new caregiver information technology system is fully implemented, PCAFC will expand to eligible pre-9/11 veterans in two phases, beginning this October 2020. VA plans to provide an exact date for phase one in late August and will not begin accepting applications until October.

The first phase will expand the PCAFC to eligible veterans who incurred or aggravated a "serious injury" in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service on or before May 7, 1975. The final phase of expansion will occur two years after the first expansion and will expand the PCAFC to include eligible veterans from all eras regardless of when an eligible veteran's serious injury was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service.

Under the final rule, the term "serious injury" has been expanded to include illnesses such as ALS and MS, which is a win for PVA members. However, the implementation of a requirement to be rated at 70 percent or higher means that veterans receiving the lowest levels of caregiver benefits, as well as some of those receiving higher levels, will no longer be eligible for the program.

In response to the proposed rule, PVA submitted thirteen comments. You can view them here: <https://beta.regulations.gov/document/VA-2011-VHA-0012-0015>.

PVA's Government Relations staff will closely monitor VA's implementation of the caregiver expansion and will be ready to address any concerns should they arise.

Final Rule: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-07-31/pdf/2020-15931.pdf>

Connect With What Matters



Being there makes a difference

Recently the Ride-Away team joined forces with MobilityWorks so that we could provide our veterans with the largest selection of mobility solutions that best fit their physical capabilities and lifestyle. Veterans have unique needs so we treat each of them as individuals. First of all, we listen. Then, we work together find the best solution. Collectively, Ride-Away and MobilityWorks will continue to build on our mission to help veterans connect with who and what matters most.

MobilityWorks has more than 50 locations across the country with the largest selection of accessible vehicles and adaptive solutions:

- Minivans, full-size vans and trucks
- The latest in adaptive technology
- Complete maintenance and service
- Rental vans — veterans receive a 10% discount

MobilityWorks is committed to serving you. Contact us today so we can evaluate your needs and find a solution that best fits your lifestyle.



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Lifts and stowage products



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USA's largest accessible van dealer!

Gray

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Gray, ME 04039
207-747-2064

Londonderry

54 Wentworth Avenue
Londonderry, NH 03053
603-210-4610

Norwood

333 Boston Providence Turnpike
Norwood, MA 02062
781-222-3622

Essex Junction

5C David Drive
Essex Junction, VT 05452
802-222-0265

North Attleboro

57 George Leven Drive
North Attleboro MA 02760
508-859-0940

East Hartford

104 Pitkin Street
East Hartford, CT 06108
860-215-4100



www.mobilityworks.com

AUGUST MEMBER BIRTHDAYS!

August 2

Richard R. Fucci
Frank R. Mund, Jr.

August 3

Malcolm M. Clark
Richard J. Cummings
Roger B. Wainwright
Joseph J. Dube

Joseph J. Prizio

David J. Boiros

August 4

Everett P. Davis
William L. Holland

August 5

Martin A. Turbide

August 6

Raynor E. Chaplin
Larry G. Hughson
Nancy H. Kangas
Stephen P. Wandelear
Ronald K. Vezina
Thomas G. Amendola
Bradford E. Carlson

August 8

John J. Martin
Roy H. Lain
John D. Abrams
Bryden F. Dow, Esq.
Jean V. Smith

Carolanne M. Ward
Raymond R. Boulanger, Sr.

August 09

Roland R. Filion
Mark L. Desrochers

August 10

Ronald R. Pomerleau
Donald M. Sherman
William E. Packard
Martin E. Ramirez

August 11

Paul E. Nelson

August 12

Brian R. Linneken
Steven E. Sliwinski
Aaron S. Rollins
Dustin Soroka
Peter J. Moore

August 13

Martin Stahly
James L. Ulm
Walter D. Hills

August 14

Edward S. Hardie
George W. Papadopoulos
Richard F. Oberman
Nicolas Van Landeghem

August 15

Samuel F. Penny, Jr.

Daniel J. Ernst
Michael W. Soplop
Richard L. Staples

August 16

Roger A. Bergeron
Nicholas M. Zallas

August 17

James M. Collins
Robert J. Mitchell, Jr.
Daniel F. Keohane
Shawn P. Tierney

August 18

John J. Cheney
Daniel J. Rowe
Thomas E. Bird

August 19

Peter C. Thurston
Pierre Paradise
Jeffrey J. Renna
Julie A. Smith
Robert J. Packer
Brian E. Dumas

August 20

Philip W. Gorman
Ralph L. Hight
Paul Ally
Ryan T. Bugler

August 21

Guy J. Mathieu

Coleen J. Thompson
Steven J. Gardiner
Michael D. Iannone

Gabriel J. Cristofalo
Jason A. Januskiewicz

August 22

Anthony F. McDermott

August 23

Denis M. Crist
Roger A. Kellough

August 26

Michele Millon
Ronald J. Gendron

August 28

William F. Falco
Joseph P. Denton

August 29

Dennis F. Gammon
Robert A. Tolstuk, Sr.

August 30

Richard H. Bergman
James M. LaBelle
Don Cheve

August 31

William H. Corbin
Ralph J. Brewer
Russell J. Tracy

Do You Have a Mask?

via www.myhealth.va.gov



Face coverings or masks now required at all VA facilities

All VA facilities require the use of face coverings or masks for all patients, families, staff, and volunteers. The health and safety of Veterans, and the staff who care for them, is and always has been VA's top priority.

During the coronavirus pandemic, we're all trying to do our part and help stop the spread of COVID-19. Whether it's social distancing, washing our hands, or cleaning surfaces, we're trying to protect ourselves and stay healthy.

We recommend you bring your own face covering, such as a cloth mask or scarf. This is required for all patients and families in public and administrative areas of facilities. If you don't have a face covering, ask a staff member, and they will provide you with one. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers [helpful guides](#) on making suitable masks at home for personal use.

If you have non-urgent medical concerns, schedule an appointment with your health care team through [VA Video Connect](#). This tool allows Veterans at home to meet with VA health care providers through live video on any computer, tablet, or mobile device with an Internet connection.

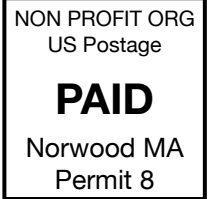


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info@newenglandpva.org
www.newenglandpva.org

Office Hours
Mon-Fri, 8:30am - 4:30pm



NEPVA Charles River Bass Tournament

Date: Saturday, September 12, 2020

Time: 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM EDT / Boaters arrive at 6:00 AM

Where: Newton Yacht Club - 12 Nonantum Rd Newton, MA 02458 / 617-965-6210

Details: 21st Annual, one day catch and release bass tournament with awards ceremony, and lunch at the Newton Yacht Club on the Charles River. Assistance provided boarding and unloading from boats. PPE will be provided and we will be following State guidelines for COVID-19.

Any questions please call 1-603-581-9617.

**For the most timely Sports and Activities Information please visit the
Chapter website at www.newenglandpva.org
or email Sports Director Mike Guilbault at rollingilbo@newenglandpva.org**

Serving Paralyzed Veterans and the Disabled Community Since 1947.