



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

New England Chapter

CORDWORD

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



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AIR TRAVEL

SERVICE DOGS WIN



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Air Travel Poses Challenges for People with Disabilities, Organization Leading the Fight for Change asks the Public to Help

WASHINGTON (November 14, 2019) — Paralyzed Veterans of America is alerting the public to the challenges people with disabilities commonly face during air travel and asking for support of their efforts to ensure accessible air travel for all. This call to action comes as the busiest travel time of the year begins. *...continued on page 4.*



U.S. Justice Department Settles with Public Accommodations to Protect the Rights of Veterans Who Use Service Dogs

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**To Learn More
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Making a **DIFFERENCE.**

Making a difference in the lives of Veterans and the Disabled Community throughout New England since 1947.

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



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

New England Chapter

New England PVA Contact Information

1208 VFW Parkway, Suite 301
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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. 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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Air Travel Poses Challenges for People with Disabilities, Organization Leading the Fight for Change asks the Public to Help

PVA Website - Liz Deakin, Director of Communications



WASHINGTON (November 14, 2019) — Paralyzed Veterans of America is alerting the public to the challenges people with disabilities commonly face during air travel and asking for support of their efforts to ensure accessible air travel for all. This call to action comes as the busiest travel time of the year begins.

PVA has long been at the forefront of air travel accessibility. Now, the organization calls on Congress to pass legislation requiring accessible design standards that would include a path of travel for people with disabilities onto airplanes and improve enforcement of passenger rights for travelers under the Air Carrier Access Act with a private right of action. Furthermore, we urge airlines to increase training of their personnel and contractors to assist passengers with disabilities during the boarding and deplaning processes.

“The way things are now, flying with a disability is a danger,” said Charles Brown, national senior vice president of Paralyzed Veterans of America. “Earlier this year, I was injured when being transferred from a wheelchair to an aisle chair to board a plane for a cross-country flight. And again, when transferring to my seat. I ended up with a fracture that led to a serious infection, months in the hospital and follow up visits. If there were more standards and training for staff assisting passengers with disabilities, this would not have happened.”

PVA is asking the public to support their fight for equal accessibility for all people by signing up to learn how to help and take action at pva.org/travel.

“This is a matter of basic civil rights for all people with disabilities to have safe and reasonable accommodations in airports and on airplanes,” said David Zurfluh, national president of Paralyzed Veterans of America. “PVA has been leading the charge, but now we need everyone’s help. We are on a mission to create a world where independent living is a reality

for everyone. By supporting our efforts, the American public is showing lawmakers that accessible air travel is an important issue that demands action.”

Although progress has been made, there are still glaring problems. The 1986 Air Carrier Access Act aims to ensure people with disabilities receive consistent and nondiscriminatory treatment when flying. Unfortunately, travelers still encounter significant barriers such as damaged wheelchairs, delayed assistance and lack of procedures and training for airline staff. These obstacles are not only inconvenient and takes away their dignity, but can cause serious injuries.

This is why PVA supports the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act (S.669 / H.R. 1549), which would improve aircraft accessibility for all people with disabilities and enforcement of passenger rights under the Air Carrier Access Act.

PVA was instrumental in the passage of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2018, which includes a “bill of rights” and an advisory panel for passengers with disabilities, revised TSA screening procedures for people with disabilities, and required reporting by large domestic airlines to the Department of Transportation (DOT) the number of wheelchairs and scooters they enplane and subsequently mishandle. PVA has also taken legal action against the DOT for their ongoing delays in issuing a proposed rule that would address lavatory accessibility on commercial single-aisle aircraft.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than one in four Americans report having a disability and the majority of those are mobility related. This statistic, coupled with an aging population, makes accessibility a widespread issue.

Learn more and sign up for air travel accessibility news at pva.org/travel.

AHold, Inc. and Stop & Shop Donate \$5000 to New England Chapter



November 19, 2019, Quincy, MA - Rodger Wheeler Retail Business Services President and Veterans BRG Executive Sponsor and Stacy Wiggins Senior Vice-President and Stop & Shop Veterans BRG Executive Sponsor presented New England Chapter President Michael Negrete and Board Member Wayne Ross with a donation check of \$5000 from their November employee giving campaign.

We are truly thankful to RBS, Stop & Shop and their employees for their time and efforts to support our local PVA chapter. Its because of dedicated and generous donors like RBS and Stop & Shop that allow us the opportunities to continue advocating for and making positive impacts in the lives of our most catastrophically injured Veteran.

U.S. Justice Department Settles with Public Accommodations to Protect the Rights of Veterans Who Use Service Dogs

PVA Washington Update - Volume 25, Number 11

The Justice Department announced two settlement agreements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to protect and advance equal access for veterans with disabilities who use service dogs. One agreement is with Deerfield Inn & Suites, in Gadsden, Alabama. The second agreement is with the Landmark Hotel Group in Virginia Beach, Virginia, which manages the Holiday Inn Express in Hampton, Virginia. These matters were investigated and resolved in furtherance of the Department's commitment to ensuring that our veterans enjoy equal access to public accommodations, such as restaurants, hotels, and shops.

The ADA generally requires public accommodations to provide access to individuals with disabilities who use service animals, including those who use service dogs for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or anxiety. Yet, in public accommodations across the country, individuals with disabilities are frequently barred from entering with a service animal.

The Deerfield Inn & Suites agreement resolves allegations that, after driving many hours, a veteran arrived at the Deerfield Inn & Suites at 4:00 am. When the desk clerk learned that the veteran was accompanied by her service dog, the desk clerk refused to honor the reservation, insisting that no dogs were permitted in the hotel. Despite numerous attempts by the veteran to explain that the dog was not a pet, but a highly trained animal required for disabilities she acquired in the service of our country, the clerk would not allow the veteran to stay at the hotel. As a result, and given the late hour, the veteran ended up sleeping in her car in the

parking lot of a church.

Similarly, the complaint underlying the Landmark Hotel agreement alleged that, at the Holiday Inn Express managed by the Landmark Hotel Group, the desk clerk refused to honor a reservation by a veteran because he would not provide documentation that the dog with him was a service dog. The veteran informed the clerk that it was unlawful to ask for documents to establish that a dog is a service animal, but the desk clerk informed him that such documentation was corporate policy. The veteran then requested to speak to the hotel manager, who confirmed that it was the hotel's policy to require such documentary proof. The veteran was forced to find another hotel.

Under the ADA, public accommodations generally must make modifications to their policies, practices or procedures – such as a no-pet policy – to permit the use of a service animal by a person with a disability. A service dog generally may go wherever the public is allowed to go, and a public accommodation may not require documentation about the service dog.

Under these agreements, both entities will adopt and implement a service dog policy; provide training on the service dog policy to employees and managers; post the service dog policy at their facilities and in their advertising; and pay money damages to the two veterans. All entities cooperated with the Department throughout the investigations.

House Passes Comprehensive Package to Aid Women Veterans

PVA Washington Update - Volume 25, Number 11

The House recently approved H.R. 3224, the Deborah Sampson Act, which addresses inequities and barriers that women veterans face when accessing VA care and benefits. H.R. 3224 is named after a Revolutionary War veteran, Deborah Sampson Gannett, who served in the Continental Army from 1782-1783 and was awarded a full military pension for her military service after years of petitioning Congress.

The measure encompasses 16 bills and reflects years of work and negotiation among stakeholders. The bills and a brief description of each are available here: <https://juliabrownley.house.gov/brownleys-deborah-sampson-act-passes-house/>.

As a result of PVA's advocacy, the legislation includes a requirement for VA to report on an annual basis an assessment of wheelchair accessibility of VA women's health centers. This assessment will include the

accessibility of each kind of treatment provided at the center, including mammography. It will also address all other relevant factors, including door sizes, hoists, and equipment. PVA made this recommendation in response to concerns raised by PVA's women veterans committee regarding specific accessibility barriers at these clinics.

We applaud the House for advancing this important legislation. You can view a section-by-section summary of at <https://juliabrownley.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Deborah-Sampson-Act-SBS-10.25.2019.pdf>. In the coming months, we will be working with their Senate counterparts to incorporate additional provisions in their version that help meet the needs of catastrophically disabled women veterans.

DoD Expanding Access to Commissaries, Military Exchanges and Recreation Facilities

PVA Washington Update - Volume 25, Number 10

A provision in the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act allows the Department of Defense to expand commissary; military exchange; and morale, welfare, and recreation retail privileges on stateside military installations to certain veterans and their caregivers. Beginning January 1, 2020, all service-connected disabled veterans, Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war (POW), and individuals approved and designated as the primary family caregivers of eligible veterans under VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family

Caregivers can use commissaries; exchanges; and morale, welfare and recreation retail facilities, in-person and online. Please note that veterans and their caregivers must have specific credentials in order to enter an installation. For more information regarding these privileges and access to military installations, please visit <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/products#!/detail/780>.

Legislation to End SSDI and Medicare Waiting Periods Introduced

PVA Washington Update - Volume 25, Number 10

On September 19, Senator Bob Casey (D-PA), Representative Lloyd Doggett (D-TX), and Representative Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) introduced the Stop the Wait Act, S. 2496/H.R. 4386. After navigating the bureaucracy and often waiting months to qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), individuals with disabilities must wait another five months to begin getting their benefits and another two years to obtain health coverage through Medicare. The Stop the Wait Act would eliminate these waiting periods that can adversely affect individuals with disabilities by delaying critical health care and economic supports. Indeed, in 2017, more than 10,000 Americans died while waiting for SSDI benefits to begin. The wait times are particularly harmful to adults with rapidly progressing diseases.

American workers who develop a disability and have paid into Social Security may be eligible for SSDI, a benefit financed by employee/employer payroll taxes. SSDI requires an application and determination period that can last more than 18 months, as well as a five month waiting period to obtain a disability payment, and then another 24 months to

receive Medicare benefits. The Stop the Wait Act aims to remove these unnecessary and onerous requirements by:

- Requiring the Social Security Administration to begin payment to an individual eligible for SSDI immediately after they are determined to be eligible for the program.
- Phasing out the 24-month waiting period for Medicare disability benefits.
- Directing the National Academy of Medicine to conduct a study to ensure the elimination of the waiting periods are resulting in better health and community living outcomes for eligible SSDI recipients and their families.

PVA was pleased to join with other aging and disability organizations in endorsing this legislation.



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

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Paid for by the Jeffrey Carlton Charitable Foundation

Veterans Day 11.11.19

By Debra Freed, Chapter Member

On November 9th, I had the privilege once again of placing flags at one of our most respected National VA Cemeteries – Bourne National Cemetery. With some very dedicated staff, and a large number of volunteers, we place nearly 77,000 flags. Even those veterans that are cremated, they are enshrined in special areas, flags are placed on the grasses near what are called the “crypts”. Because of my recent injury, I still wear my “body armor” when out and about. It was a bit rougher this year, but I was determined to assist. Ms. Holly Warshaw – long time volunteer for our Bldg 8 folks and Ms. Sally Stewart who also volunteers at Bldg 8. The three of us and another volunteer placed flags on lot 24 and assisted others in finishing up lot 26. Holly took us to visit two Chapter member graves – Louis Liggiero and Bruce Bohnwagner. The Cemetery has a great program to find graves among the 77,000 buried there.

I did not remember that Joy’s Aunt and Uncle are interred in Bourne as well. However, they were on the other side in Lot 9. Donald & Madeline Frankenhauser. They were both 1st Lieutenants in the U.S. Army during World War II. They were buried next to each other – Don passed away in 1987 and Madeline in 2008.



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Combining What's It Like with Veterans' Day

By Debra Freed, Chapter Member



I remain embarrassed to admit that once again, I messed up my dates and would miss the annual Women Veterans Appreciation Day and presentation of the Deborah Sampson award (Congrats Christine Tron – well deserved), held at the State House on November 8th. I wanted to keep my long standing commitment to the Chapter Vice President and



Sports Director by assisting with the “What’s It Like” program. What do we do for the 4 - 4th grade classes that get to attend this event? For one, our program coincides with the Cunningham School’s outstanding presentation to honor veterans.

After the presentation, we conduct our program in the gym. Mark Sanders, Mike Guilbault usually conduct the “slalom” portion of the event, and I conduct the basketball portion. These young people get to see there really is little difference between us when it comes to participating in sports, and pretty much anything else. We even got the school Principle and the Keynote Speaker, an Air Force Veteran herself, to test their basketball skills from the wheelchair! Because this program is highly spoken of by the children when they go back to their classes and go home, the Chapter has been asked to do three more schools in December and January 2020.

We are looking forward to them and hopefully, returning to Cunningham near Veterans' Day 2020!



NEW ENGLAND PVA NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Volunteers do invaluable work that makes a real difference to Veterans, their communities and the Chapter. Volunteering can change your life, too! Your talents and time are always welcome.

We are looking for Volunteers to help out in the office, attend local awareness events, and assist with event planning. Everyone can help somehow and in some way, at any place and during any time. If you might be too busy or can't get out, think about a financial donation. Even if its only \$5 or \$10, every little bit helps. To learn more about Volunteer opportunities and how you can help please contact the Chapter office at 800-660-1181 or email info@newenglandpva.org.

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Adaptive Ski Days

December: December 18, Bretton Woods, NEDS (full day)

January: January 8– Mt Sunapee, NEHSA (pm)

January 22nd– Mt Sunapee, NEHSA(am)

January 30– Mt Sunapee, NEHSA (pm)



February: February 11, Mt Sunapee, NEHSA (pm)

February 13, Loon, NEDS (full day)

February 26, Mt Sunapee, NEHSA (full day)

March: March 2, Women Veterans Appreciation Ski Day

March 12, Welcome Home Veterans Ski Day

March 18th, Mt Sunapee, NEHSA (am)

To sign up, please contact: Jennifer Stark, CTRS

@ ext. 4694

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

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Northeast PASSAGE

LIVING BEYOND DISABILITY

2019 FALL SCHEDULE

Pre-registration is required for all events.

You can register online or please contact Northeast Passage at 603-862-0070 or northeast.passage@unh.edu and we will gladly take care of your registration.

Payment can be made to Northeast Passage by credit card over the phone (603-862-0070) or at the event. We accept check, cash and all major credit cards.

PARA-PICKLEBALL

Pickleball is back! Northeast Passage has partnered with the Exeter Area YMCA to run Wheelchair Pickleball (Para-Pickleball).

NEP will provide staff, instruction, and a selection of sport wheelchairs for these events. This program is offered to individuals of all abilities, inviting standing and seated players alike. Review rule variations for seated players here on the USAPA.org website!

Whether you are playing standing up, or seated, we look forward to seeing you there!

Tuesday mornings from 10-11:30AM. Sign up for one or all of them!

12/3, 12/10, 12/17

All events will be at the Exeter, NH YMCA, these are free events.

REMINDER: Court Sports & Archery are in full swing!

COURT SPORTS

Come join Northeast Passage at UNH's Hamel Recreation Center for a night of Court Sports! We will provide court wheelchairs, people to fill out teams, and all the equipment needed for the specific games. We usually play wheelchair Ultimate Frisbee, but the possibilities are endless. This program is appropriate for participants of all abilities, ages, and levels of experience. Sign up for one or all dates.

Check website at <https://www.nepassage.org/calendar> for dates and times.

INDOOR ARCHERY

All skill levels are welcome! Instruction and equipment will be provided by NEP and range coaches who are all USA Archery certified instructors. If you have your own equipment you may bring it as long as it meets the range regulations--please contact us if you have questions. We hope to see you on the range!

Thursday afternoons from 1:00-3:00PM in Hooksett, NH

December 5, December 19

Fees: \$15.00, \$0.00 for Veterans

Veteran registration fees for this program are waived due to a grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

Check Northeast Passage's website at <https://www.nepassage.org/calendar> for more activities, dates and times.





Paralyzed Veterans of America

ANNUAL AIR RIFLE & AIR PISTOL PROGRAM

Camp Pendleton Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
December 2-3, 2019
Camp Pendleton, CA

Cal-Diego Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
January 27-28, 2020
San Diego Naval Base
San Diego, CA

Mid-Atlantic Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
March 4-5, 2020
Colonial Shooting Academy
Richmond, VA

Wisconsin Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
March 21-22, 2020
Milwaukee Area Tech College
Milwaukee, WI

Buckeye Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament*
April 16-18, 2020
Spire Institute
Geneva, OH

**Buckeye Wheelchair Games*

PARALYZED VETERANS BOATING/FISHING TOUR

Mid-America Bass Tournament
September 20-22, 2019
Lake Eufaula
Eufaula, OK

Vaughan Bass Tournament
October 4-6, 2019
Rend Lake
Mount Vernon, IL

Florida Gulf Coast Bass Tournament
April 3-5, 2020
Lake Harris
Tavares, FL

Kentucky-Indiana Bass Tournament
April 24-26, 2020
Lake Barkley
Kuttawa, KY

Mid-Atlantic Bass Tournament
June 5-7, 2020
James River
Richmond, VA

Capital Clash Bass Tournament*
June 12-14, 2020
Potomac River
Marbury, MD

**Year-End Tournament*

ANNUAL PVA/NWPA BILLIARDS TOURNAMENT SERIES

Mid-Atlantic Billiards Tournament Chuck Willis Mem.
March 20-22, 2020
Diamond Billiards
Midlothian, VA

Mid-America Billiards Tournament
April 3-5, 2020
Slick Willies Pool Hall
Oklahoma City, OK

Buckeye Billiards Tournament
June 5-6, 2020
Wickliffe Lanes
Wickliffe, OH

Mountain States Billiards Tournament
June 20-21, 2020
Widefield Corner Pocket Billiards
Fountain, CO

ANNUAL PVA/AWBA BOWLING TOURNAMENT SERIES

Nevada Bowling Tournament
December 5-8, 2019
Sunset Station Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas, NV

Mid-America Bowling Tournament
April 9-12, 2020
Firelake Bowling Center
Shawnee, OK

Vaughan Bowling Tournament
April 30-May 3, 2020
Bowlero
Romeoville, IL

PARALYZED VETERANS NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS CIRCUIT

Mid-Atlantic Shooting Sports Tournament
TBD
Conservation Park of Virginia
Charles City, VA

Nevada Shooting Sports Tournament
March 13-15, 2020
Clark County Shooting Park
Las Vegas, NV

Cal-Diego Shooting Sports Tournament
March 27-29, 2020
Redlands Shooting Park
Redlands, CA

Lone Star Shooting Sports Tournament
May 22-23, 2020
Desoto Gun Club
Waxahachie, TX

Vaughan Shooting Sports Tournament
June 5-7, 2020
St. Charles Sportsman Club
Elburn, IL

Iowa Shooting Sports Tournament
June 12-14, 2020
Otter Creek Sportsman Club
Cedar Rapids, IA

Wisconsin Shooting Sports Tournament*
June 26-28, 2020
Brown County Sportsman Club
Green Bay, WI

**Year-End Tournament*

BOCCIA

PVA National Boccia Tournament
October 22-26, 2019
The Pavilion at Lamay
St. Louis, MO

Bayou Boccia Tournament
January 31-February 1, 2020
Harrison County Shelter
Gulfport, MS

Buckeye Boccia Tournament*
April 16-18, 2020
Spire Institute
Geneva, OH

Mid-Atlantic Boccia Tournament
May 7-9, 2020
Fort Monroe
Community Center
Hampton, VA

Vaughan Boccia Tournament
June 26-28, 2020
Fountain View Recreation Center
Carol Stream, IL

**Buckeye Wheelchair Games*

CODE OF HONOR QUAD RUGBY INVITATIONAL

February 7-9, 2020
The St. James
Springfield, VA

NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES



HANDCYCLING

Museum of Aviation Marathon
January 18, 2020
Warner Robins, GA

Top End Euro-American HC Championships
February 1-2, 2020
Gainesville, FL

PVA Racing High Performance Camp
February 3-8, 2020
Brooksville, FL

Valley of the Sun
February 14-16, 2020
Phoenix, AZ

For more information, visit: pva.org/sports

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COMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

Dec 4 - Seated Yoga Classes, 3:00-4:00 PM at Gaylord Hospital. For more info and to register email sports@gaylord.com or call 203-284-2772.

Jan 13-17: VA New England Winter Sports Clinic. See page 15 for registration details.

For more information on upcoming sporting events or activities 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



Serving Paralyzed Veterans and the Disabled Community Since 1947.