

Placing in the Top 5 The 61st National American Wheelchair Bowling Association's Annual Tournament

By Debra A. Freed

Many of you may know by now that I have been selected once again to be a member of Para Team U.S.A. for bowling. The U.S.B.C. had worked super hard to get 4 women and 4 men to participate in the upcoming World Cup, which is being held in Sunshine Coast Australia. However, there were some logistical issues so we did not make the trip. However, U.S.B.C is making it up to the Team by providing a bowling camp in Arlington, TX and then a huge splash in Las Vegas in January – a.k.a. Team Trials. I won't make the camp, but I am going to Vegas in January.



Debra Freed, John Melvin, Ms. Becca Melvin, Mr. Rob from Hanover Bowl. Rob has been giving John & I lessons.

Myself, Chapter member John Melvin and his wife Ms. Becca traveled to Denver to participate in the American Wheelchair Bowling Association's (AWBA) 61 National Wheelchair Bowling Tournament. This was John's 2nd National Tournament and I think maybe my 4th or 5th since 2010.

other team in the mini-roll off, of which we did. Then we had to bowl two more games. Unfortunately, the team we bowled against beat us. For doubles, John and I ended up in 7th place out of what I believe was like 15

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There are three divisions in the AWBA. Scratch, A, and B. One would think that after nearly 12 years of bowling, I could and or should be either in A or Scratch. In my defense, I was still very actively employed until 2019. I am considered a B bowler.

There were 19 registered B bowlers, 21 registered A bowlers and 11 Scratch bowlers. John and I are both listed as B bowlers. We chose to work together as a Team and as Doubles partners. For Team, we also had Mike D. Mike is an A bowler. We made it to the roll off by tieing another team. In order to fight for Bronze, we had to first work to beat the

SUMMER SPORTS



Mark Sanders lets one fly at the summer disc golf clinic held at Borderland State Park in Sharon, MA on September 10th. More on page 9.



**THANKS TO ALL
THOSE WHO MADE
CONTRIBUTIONS
TO THIS ISSUE**

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Harley Freedman
Jack Foley

**A new Government Resource for Veterans
battling mental health issues**

**The Veterans Crisis Line's new number—988 then Press 1—is now established
for any veteran in a time of need.**

Signed into law in 2020, the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act authorized 988 as the new three-digit number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. All telephone service providers in the U.S. were required to activate this number by July 2022. Veterans can use this new option by dialing 988 then pressing 1 to contact the Veterans Crisis Line. Veterans may still reach the Veterans Crisis Line with the current phone number—1-800-273-8255 and Press 1— through chat, and by text (838255).

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Executive Director's Report

By Mark Murphy

Executive Director NEPVA

Dear Friends,

Having been back working at the Chapter for 3 months now, I am happy to be here and am filled with hope and optimism with the direction of our Chapter. Our staff and Board members have been working hard to ensure that things are running smoothly as we attend to the day-to-day operations of the Chapter while also planning for several initiatives and events ahead. I am confident that we will continue to make a discernable difference for all our members and grow our organization's reach and impact throughout each of the New England states.

The past many weeks have been filled with successful gatherings and events. Our friends at United Spinal invited a delegation from NEPVA to participate in their SCI Awareness Month kickoff at a Red Sox game at Fenway Park in September, which provided some great exposure for our Chapter. Our September disc golf event in Sharon, MA was incredibly well received by representatives from PVA who visited along with all attendees. I was happy to attend the PVA Wheelchair Basketball Clinic in New Haven, CT at the end of September. We also had a hugely successful 2nd Annual New England Chapter Golf Classic on September 26th, where we have well over 100 golfers registered. It was an outstanding event and we received solid feedback from all attendees. Other important happenings of late include the PVA National Directors meeting in Orlando, FL in October which I attended. It was nice to get apprised of what is happening in Chapters throughout the nation and at the PVA National level. Finally, the Boccia tournament that we held in Quincy the first weekend of this month was also a smashing success. As you can see, we have had a ton of good things happening throughout our Chapter and beyond!

Now that things have been opened more post-pandemic, we hope to have several more in-person gathering for our members, including at VA hospitals throughout New England.

In addition to these great events and our solid sports programming, we are looking at how we can continue to communicate effectively with our membership. We have established new emails for our staff and board members, and we are working to transfer our current website to a



new domain name and keep it updated with upcoming news, events, and other updates. As Kristen's position has expanded to a full-time role as Director of Government and Community Affairs, she has established strategies and plans to keep our staff and Board members aware of all pertinent details for upcoming events, which will help keep us organized and on task. Now

that things have been opened more post-pandemic, we hope to have several more in-person gathering for our members, including at VA hospitals throughout New England. Stay tuned for more information on that front.

My new Chapter email address is MMurphy@pvanewengland.org. Feel free to reach out to me directly now and moving forward. Again, I am delighted to be back at the Chapter and am very much looking forward to the work ahead!

Sincerely,

Mark Murphy
Executive Director

Government Relations Report

Kristen McCone Gordon
Government Relations Director

Senator Sanders cosponsors the AUTO Act at NEPVA's request

I'm thrilled to report that Senator Sanders has signed on as a cosponsor to the AUTO Act!

Along with NEPVA Director Chuck Houle and his wife Eileen, I had the privilege of meeting with members of Senator Sanders' DC and District staff in White River Junction, VT in August. We discussed the work our Chapter does to support and advocate for paralyzed veterans, emphasized the need for quality healthcare for our members in VT, and requested the Senator's support as a cosponsor on the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act and the AUTO Act. On behalf of the Chapter, I want to express my gratitude to Chuck and Eileen Houle for their strong and effective advocacy!

If you are a VT resident, please take the time to thank the Senator for his support and encourage him to also cosponsor the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act today!

Final Call: Please tell your Representatives to cosponsor the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act

We are getting close to the end of the 117th Congressional session. Our organization has had great success gaining traction on our legislative priorities and we want to finish strong. Please join us in telling Congress to improve access to air travel for paralyzed veterans by passing the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act. All of the information you need to take action is available here: <https://www.votervoices.net/PVA/Petitions/2969/Respond>

As a reminder, this legislation would: 1) strengthen ACAA administrative enforcement and establish a private right to action; and 2) ensure new airplanes are designed to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities by requiring airlines to meet defined accessibility standards. These standards will ensure safe and effective boarding and deplaning, visually accessible announcements, seating accommodations, restrooms, and better stowage options for assistive devices. They would also require the removal of access barriers on existing airplanes to the extent that it is readily achievable and may be done without much

Throughout this legislative session, we've shared countless stories with Congress about our members being injured while boarding planes, of wheelchairs being damaged while stored, and of airline staff not being properly trained to understand the difficulties that a wheelchair-bound person experiences while flying. The personal stories seemed to really resonate with congressional staff, and we've been pleased that many members of the New England Congressional Delegation have agreed to cosponsor this important piece of legislation. The current New England Congressional Delegation cosponsors of the ACAA are: Congresswoman Pingree; Congressman Pappas; Congresswoman Pressley; Congressman Larson; Congressman Cicilline; Congressman

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NEPVA discusses legislative priorities with Congressman Keating

Chapter President Brad Carlson, Executive Director Mark Murphy, and I had the privilege of briefing Congressman Keating earlier this month on our Chapter's work and legislative priorities.

Congressman Keating represents Massachusetts' 9th Congressional District, which includes the largest percentage of veterans in the state. His district also covers the Cape Cod Curling Club, a place where many NEPVA members frequent. During our conversation, we discussed the services and opportunities that our Chapter provides our members throughout New England and requested his support on our legislative priorities.

We are thrilled to share that the Congressman has agreed to cosponsor the AUTO Act, the Veteran Families Health Services Act, and the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act. We very much appreciate the Congressman's strong support of paralyzed veterans and hope to see him at the Cape Cod Curling Club in the future!

President's Report

by Brad Carlson
NEPVA President

It's been a busy and productive fall in the Chapter office!

In addition to continuing our strong fundraising and government relations efforts, we have been focused on offering adaptive sporting events and recreational opportunities for all our members to enjoy. It's been wonderful to see so many of our Chapter members in person again. I want to encourage everyone, especially those who haven't attended a Chapter event in the past, to please consider coming out and joining us. Information on upcoming events will be available on our Facebook page, newsletter, and on our website. So, please stay tuned and give one of our offerings a try! All abilities are always welcome!

I'm thrilled to relay that the annual New England Chapter Golf Tournament was a great success. See my sports report in this newsletter for additional information.

We also partnered with National PVA to host several adaptive sporting events for our members throughout New England. Our Disc Golf Clinic (held in Canton, MA) was well-attended and introduced many of our members, including myself, to a new and enjoyable recreational activity. The Wheelchair Basketball Clinic, held at Southern CT State University, brought PVA members throughout the country together for a weekend of exercise and friendly

My team and I are busy planning events for 2023 and want to hear from you. What type of Chapter event would most interest you? For those of you not interested in sports, what activities do you enjoy?

competition. I also enjoyed seeing many of you at our first-ever Boccia Tournament held earlier this month in Quincy, MA. Again, see my sports report in this newsletter for additional information.

My team and I are busy planning events for 2023 and want to hear from you. What type of Chapter event would most interest you? For those of you not interested in sports, what activities do you enjoy? My goal as Chapter President is to ensure that the Chapter is meeting the needs of **all** our members. Please know that my door is always open, and my phone is always on, for every single one of you.

Sincerely,

Brad Carlson



NEPVA representing the Chapter at Mohegan Sun's Vets Rock 2022, an annual event saluting and supporting Veterans across New England.



Chapter President Brad Carlson and board member John Melvin, Volunteer Holly Washaw and VA employee Joanie attend the VA Boston Healthcare System SCIU Thanksgiving Day luncheon in Brockton.

OUR GOLF TOURNAMENT FUNDRAISER WAS A HUGE SUCCESS



Top: Steve Kuketz of the Mass Para-Golfers association brought his adaptive golf carts.

Middle left; Tournament winners with Brad and Mark. Middle right: Installations Plus was one of our sponsors.

Bottom: Holly Washaw and Jim Clark received awards for all the volunteer hours they contributed to make the tournament happen.

Northeast Passage Celebration

Northeast Passage (NEP) is an organization in Durham, NH that began providing recreational activities for people with disabilities in 1990, and joined forces with the University of New Hampshire in 2000. NEP has an inventory of equipment for people of all abilities, and a team of educated therapists who will get anyone and everyone enjoying sports and the outdoors.

The New England Summer Sports Clinic for Disabled Veterans hand-cycling event has been staffed by highly motivated knowledgeable individuals from NEP who can fix anything. They also host veterans only events; I have participated in stripper fishing and water skiing on several occasions.

On November 3rd I attended the 2022 Celebration for sponsors and friends at Wentworth By The Sea in Rye, NH. I learned a bit more about the organization and was not surprised to hear five of the seventeen members of the US Paralympic Gold Medal Hockey Team came from their program.



By Wayne Ross
NEPVA Board Member



Left to Right: Philip Brekke, Jill Gravink,
Wayne Ross, Nate Loomis, Nicole Taylor &
Miranda Zuba.

They say the way to the Paralympics is through Northeast Passage!

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FISHING WITH MICKEY G

Fish On, Yes I Have One!!

On September 9-11 I was able to attend the NEPVA Bass Trail Lake Winnepesaukee Bass Tournament at Camp Robindel in Moultonboro, NH. After arriving and enjoying a good meal of Chicken Parmesan and Mac & Cheese it was great to catch up with my fellow anglers, some Nam Knights and other volunteers and even some of the boat captains. It was great seeing many of these folks who have been coming to the Bass Tournaments for many years. This year makes the 23rd year since we held the first Tournament on the Charles River in 1999. The anglers, volunteers and boaters have turned into a large happy family! Some got together and socialized by a campfire while others got to bed early for the early morning start. We were fed a great breakfast, the pairings were announced and we headed out to the boats to fish until 2:00 PM when we needed to return for the weigh-in. After the weigh-in there is some chill time to relax and clean up. We then had a 6:00 PM meal followed by the Awards Banquet and another evening of fun by the campfire or hanging in the banquet hall and listening to some music by a good guitarist and singer. Sunday we are fed a nice breakfast and then head home after packing up and cleaning the bunkhouses.

We had fantastic weather and the fish were biting so it turned out to be a great day. I had a first time boat captain and he will definitely be coming back again. We caught many fish, sadly some rock bass, a sunfish and some of the shortest smallmouth bass I've ever hooked i.e. 6"-8". We did end up with a 5 fish limit of 9.87 pounds. That was not close to a winning weight but somewhere mid pack. It turns out the boaters enjoy the event as much as we do.

The fact they can get those of us that seldom get a chance to get out on a boat fishing and get us catching some bass brings them great joy. The boaters are all avid tournament fisherman and to see the smiles and happiness we get catching some bass is very rewarding to them. One of our fisherman even ended up catching a Rainbow Trout; yet, while it could not be



The Nam Knights have been to every tournament since the first and insure each angler is safely loaded into the boat. Many thanks to Nam Knights President Ray 'Hunter' Brunelle and his crew for their dedication through the years.

weighed in it sure was a thrill and rare occasion catching the trout while bass fishing. I know it's the first time I have ever heard of it happening and I have fished most every tournament we have held since our first 23 years ago. I think I can count on one hand those I have missed. We can't thank the Camp Robindel owners enough for allowing us to hold our tour-

namment at their amazing property. For those of you that have never attended one of our tournaments, if you enjoy fishing you really should come out and join us.

The Nam Knights have been to every tournament since the first and insure each angler is safely loaded into the boat. Many thanks to Nam Knights President Ray 'Hunter' Brunelle and his crew for their dedication through the years. Our tournaments are held rain or shine and they ride their bikes to each event even if they have to ride hours in the rain. They also join the volunteers that work the sportsman's shows fundraising and spreading the news about our NEPVA Bass Trail to others. Watch for the full story with pictures and results in the next issue of the *Cord Word*.

Summer 2022 Event Review

On September 10th, a handful of NEPVA members joined Vickie Lincks of PVA and semi-pro disc golfer Jeff Shattuck, for a Disc Golf clinic at Borderland State Park in Sharon, MA. Most participants were new to the sport so the early part of the clinic focused on basic skills and techniques. After lunch half a dozen baskets were placed around a picnic area and players challenged each other to a few rounds.



John Melvin enjoys shooting on the shotgun range, during Bass River Rod & Gun Club's Disabled American Veterans' Shoot. He's a Rockland resident, a member of the board of directors for the New England Paralyzed Veterans Association, (NEPVA) and shoots trap on a regular basis.

NEPVA/National Bocci Clinic

On November 5 & 6 the New England Chapter held a National Boccia Clinic in Quincy, MA at the beautiful Marriott Courtyard Hotel. The hotel was just as excited as we were as they had never hosted an event like this. The Manager and Event Coordinator, Dani, was a dream to work with.

Boccia is generally held in a gym on a hard surface floor. The carpets in the function room were a hard matte carpet, which worked out well. We had tried to hold this event at the Brockton VA gym, but it was undergoing renovations and was unavailable. The hotel provided for a more upscale event.

Mr. John Albino, National Boccia Director, was on hand

to teach the sport in an exciting way. By 10:00 a.m. on Saturday the matches started. Great competition at the singles event all day. Most knew the game already, but again, competition was fierce and fun. A 5 star lunch was provided by the Marriott.

Play resumed on Sunday morning as we played doubles. The day was finished around noon time. We had a very successful turnout for this event and fun was had by all.

Please check out our Facebook page for regular updates on upcoming events. Please come out and have fun with your fellow Chapter members!

We are currently working on a National Pickleball and National Billiard events for the Spring.

Brad Carlson



Gary Jezierski, John Arbino, Wayne Ross, Ryan Owens, Brad Carlson, Mark Sanders, Elias Rojas, Debra Freed and John Melvin enjoyed our 2 day national Boccia tournament

Sports & Rec. Report

by Brad Carlson
Sports Director

Hi All,

For those who have not come out to have some fun, let me tell you about it. NEPVA is on a quest to be the top Sports Program of the year with National. We are on our mark as we have held so many national events. For example: on September 10th we held a NEPVA/National Disc Golf Clinic at Borderland State Park in North Easton, MA. We had a great turn out and a lot of fun. Disc golf skills were taught and we were playing matches before lunch. After lunch we resumed playing. The weather was great and everyone had a great time.

On September 26th we had our Second Annual Golf Tournament at Marlborough Country Club in Marlborough, MA. Last year we had 64 players and we increased to 100 players this year. We had five Para Golfers on the course! We predict selling the tournament out next year. Boxed lunches were provided for golfers to take out onto the course and we had a great sit down dinner after the tournament. Tito's Vodka and Hooter's of Shrewsbury were a couple of our sponsors that attended the Tournament.

On November 5 & 6 we had a NEPVA/National Bocci Clinic at the Marriott Courtyard in Quincy, MA. Another good crowd of players and great competition all weekend. The Marriott did a fantastic job and provided awesome food for us.



NEPVA member Dustin S. at the putting green challenge.

Lastly, on November 13th, we partnered with Adaptive Sports New England and Move United, For a Wheelchair Football Clinic at Gillette Stadium in the Field House. Over 40 athletes were there. Also the New England Renegades professional Women's football team were on hand to help out and volunteer. Steve Nelson a former Patriots hall of famer and Jalen Mills, Patriots Cornerback were in attendance for coaching.

That is a lot in a few short months! Our programs are constantly growing as we team up with other organizations and continue to work with PVA National. We will be partnering with Move United which will open up many more opportunities for our Chapter. We are working hard to give you the best sports program in the country. Please come out and enjoy these events. Check out our Facebook page for upcoming events.

The Ski Program Agenda will be in the next *CordWord*.

Happy Holidays!

Brad Carlson
Sports Director



Brad presents a Thank You plaque to Hooter's of Shrewsbury. They were one of our golf tournament sponsors. The young ladies staffed the putting green challenge as well as the hole-in-one raising the Chapter a tidy sum.



2022-2023 ANNUAL CALENDAR



PVA BASS TOURNAMENT SERIES

Mid-America Bass Tournament
September 16-18, 2022
Eufaula, OK

Vaughan Bass Tournament
October 7-9, 2022
Rend Lake, IL

Southeastern Bass Tournament
September 30-October 2, 2022
Evans, GA

**Florida Gulf Coast Bass
Tournament**
March 24-26, 2023
Kissimmee, FL

**Kentucky-Indiana Bass
Tournament**
April 21-23, 2023
Kuttawa, KY

Mid-Atlantic Bass Tournament
June 2-4, 2023
Hopewell, VA

Capital Clash Bass Tournament
June 9-11, 2023
Waldorf, MD

PVA BILLIARDS TOURNAMENT SERIES

Mid-South Billiards Tournament
October 28-29, 2022
Memphis, TN

**Mid-Atlantic Billiards
Tournament**
March 17-19, 2023
Richmond, VA

**Mid-America Billiards
Tournament**
June 16-18, 2023
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Buckeye Billiards Tournament
June 24-26, 2023
Columbus, OH

AIR RIFLE & PISTOL PROGRAM

National Postal Matches
November 2022 – March 2023

Wisconsin Air Gun
March 11-12, 2023
Milwaukee, WI

*Additional in-person events
coming soon!*

PVA BOWLING TOURNAMENT SERIES

**Great Plains Bowling
Tournament**
July 28-31, 2022
Council Bluffs, IA

**Mid-Atlantic Bowling
Tournament**
September 9-11, 2022
Richmond, VA

Nevada Bowling Tournament
December 2-5, 2022
Las Vegas, NV

**Florida Gulf Coast Bowling
Tournament**
February 23-25, 2023, Tampa,
FL

**Mid-America Bowling
Tournament**
March 31 – April 3, 2023
Oklahoma City, OK

PVA NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS CIRCUIT

North Central Trapshoot
September 9-11, 2022
Sioux Falls, SD

Oregon Trapshoot
September 23-25, 2022,
Oregon

Wisconsin Trapshoot, May
19-21, 2023, Green Bay, WI

Cal-Diego Trapshoot
March 17-19, 2023
Redlands, CA

Nevada Trapshoot
March 31-April 2, 2023
Las Vegas, NV

Vaughan Trapshoot
May 26-28, 2023
Elburn, IL

Iowa Shooting Trapshoot *
June 16-18, 2023
Cedar Rapids, IA
**Year-End Tournament*

BOCCIA

**New England Boccia
Tournament**
November 5-6, 2022
West Roxbury, MA

**West Virginia Boccia
Tournament**
December 3-4, 2022
Charleston, WV

Bayou Boccia Tournament
February 3-5, 2023
Gulfport, MS

Gateway Boccia Tournament
March 17-19, 2023
St. Louis, MO

HANDCYCLING

**Echelon Racing League Virtual
Paracycling Series (Online)**
November 2022 -February 2023

**PVA High Performance
Off-Road HC Camp**
August 13-18, 2022
Crested Butte, Colorado

**Off-Road Handcycling
Championships**
August 19-21, 2022
Crested Butte, Colorado

Pocahontas Off-Road Camp
September 29 – October 2, 2022
Chesterfield, VA

Tampa VA Handcycling Clinic
January 21, 2023
Tampa, FL

PVA High Performance Camp
January 30 – February 3, 2023
Brooksville, FL

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

**PVA – NWBA Lakeshore
Basketball Camp**
August 4-7, 2022
Birmingham, AL

Bay Area & Western Disc Golf
August 19-20, 2022
San Jose, CA

New England Disc Golf Clinic
September 10, 2022
Ft. Devens, MA

PVA Rugby Clinic
September 16-18, 2022
Phoenix, AZ

New England Basketball Camp
September 23-26, 2022
New Haven, CT

**PVA Wheelchair Rugby
Invitational**
February
New Haven, CT

NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES



July 4-9, 2023
Portland, Oregon

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER FOR AN EVENT: [PVA.ORG/ADAPTIVE-SPORTS](https://pva.org/adaptive-sports)

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Welch; Congressman Lynch; Congressman Moulton; Congressman Auchincloss; Congressman McGovern; Congressman Keating; Senator Blumenthal; Senator Markey; Senator Hassan; Senator Whitehouse; and Senator Murphy.

We won't stop asking for support until the entire Delegation has signed onto this important bill. Please take a moment to tell Congress that our veterans deserve the right to fly comfortably across the country they served to protect. Fill in your information here: <https://www.votervoice.net/PVA/Petitions/2969/Respond> to send an automated email to Congress today and tell your friends to do the same!



Steve Kuketz of the Mass Para-Golfers Association with NEPVA members Gary Jezierski and Mark Sanders at Marlboro Country Club.

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Women Veterans: We Served Too!

By Debra A. Freed

Many of you know I am a United States Air Force Veteran. My era was from January 1981 to May of 1985 or known as Peace Time. It took a while for me to understand and even appreciate my service. Not really sure why. Maybe because VA was still not woman veteran friendly. It was pretty evident when I had to use the men's room on the ward of the Newington VAMC because I had my 3rd back surgery and there were no separate women's bathroom.

Fast forward 30 plus years and women veterans now make up nearly 18% of the armed forces. Many veteran service organizations (VSO) have been working to recognize women veterans. I am proud to be a member of Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). It may have taken them a while but they were one of the first VSOs to allow a woman veteran to be a member of their National Board of Directors.

Anita Bloom was a PVA member and a trailblazer. She was one of the 1st women veterans who was on the National Board of Directors. While it may have taken awhile, PVA allowed the creation of a women veterans' committee. The Committee came up with the name Anita Bloom to recognize its trail blazer. So, the Committee with the support of PVA and a couple of sponsors created the Anita Bloom Women Veterans Empowerment Retreat or as it has been referred to WVER.

I was privileged to attend the 4th Annual Anita Bloom Women Veterans Retreat hosted by PVA. I was lucky to attend last year in Tempe, AZ. This year, it was held in San Antonio, TX. This was great because I would get to meet one friend I only knew through PVA racing zoom meet-ups and a good Army friend I made a number of years ago at the Veterans Games in Alaska.

There were several educational sessions that included VA benefits, Advocacy & Legislation and much needed

caregiver information. It is a known fact that more women who served in the services are likely to suffer some form of breast cancer than the general population. PVA took the lead on the MAMMO Act, providing women veterans specialized care for our specific needs, which was made law in 2022.

The last session was an open afternoon. We stayed at the JW Marriott Resort in San Antonio, we were afforded the opportunity to enjoy the afternoon at the Lazy River. I believe I heard every one took the opportunity to get wet. I had also heard that one participant hadn't been in the water like this for over 20 years. I went around the Lazy River 4 times. It really was a great afternoon!

There are still a lot of male veterans who believe women veterans should not be entitled to the same benefits as they are. We signed the same blank check as our male counterparts. We have never asked for any more than we are entitled to as veterans of the U.S.



PVA Anita Bloom Co-chairs Anne Robinson of the Texas Chapter and Tammy Jones, PVA National President with several volunteers from First Nation and Amazon, who provided the Amazon Fire 7.

bowling

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Doubles teams. We couldn't really complain about that.

Between the start of Singles is the Community event the Up/Down event. This gives the community the opportunity to see the only difference between wheelchair users and them, we use 4 wheels and they use 2 legs. John, Ms. Becca and his team bowled next to ours. My team consisted of two brothers and a good friend of theirs: Wes, Tim, and Eric. I thought we had a chance, but not quite. However, they did leave with a great coffee basket from the raffle.

Back to Singles! The Singles event consisted of 5 three game sets; Twon on Thursday, two on Friday and 1 on Saturday. As stated, there were 19 B division players. I went from 10th after the 1st round to 4 after the 5th round. The roll off is called a Step-Ladder roll off. The person in 5th plays the 4th place. Should the 5th place player win, which was the case, moves up to 4th. Then the 4th place player plays 3rd, and so on and so on. I was just very lucky to make it to the roll off.

Each tournament is different and so they have different payout tables. Last year, they paid out to the 10th place, which I was 9th last year. This year, they only paid out to the 8th place. I also won 2 of the side pots.

I want to take this opportunity to say Thank You to several people. Mike from Kingston Bowl, who helped me get a new ball and very good travel bowling bag. I was sent to Mike by Rob who used to work at Westgate but now works at Boston Bowl in Hanover. Rob has been instrumental in assisting me getting to Mike for the new ball and bag. I want to thank John and Becca Melvin for transporting me back and forth to the bowling alley each day. I want to

thank Moe Morrison, the Chapter NEPVA Rollers Team Captain for her support and instruction. I want to thank my partner Joy for supporting me in my endeavors to be a TEAM USA member as well as hopefully making TEAM USA in Air Pistol. Last but far from least, I wish to thank Veteran Athletes United for supporting this endeavor.

These events are mostly all out of pocket and when there are many of them throughout the year, it can get very, very expensive.

TEAM USA is always looking for wheelchair bowlers. Bowling at the international level is considered scratch, however, I was blessed to

bowling this past tournament with three other women who are also TEAM USA. If you are a wheelchair user, like to bowl, please, please consider working towards being a TEAM USA para-bowler. Bowling and Para-bowling has been accepted by the Olympic and Paralympic programs. What a way to represent the USA!!!!!!

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ParaBowling Team USA.

Ms. Toodie Perry, Ms. Stacy Clowers, Ms. Jennifer Wooten, Ms. Debra Freed, Mr. George Horshler, Mr David Nelson, Mr. Eddy Hutchens. (Missing - Mr. Mark Shepard).

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Officers and Board Members would like to wish our members, their families and friends a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.



To all SCI/D staff and support staff throughout VISN-I, wishing you a Very Happy Holiday Season.