

## Reflecting on our Milestones

By Mark Murphy, Executive Director NEPVA

As we approach the end of 2024, I find myself reflecting on the many milestones we have achieved this year, the challenges we have overcome, and the incredible resilience of the veterans and community we serve. It has been a year of growth, connection, and unwavering support, and I am proud to share some highlights as we look toward 2025 with renewed hope and determination.

### A Year of Progress and Purpose

One of the most significant achievements this year was the success of our annual events, including our recent and highly anticipated Boccia Tournament at the Brockton VA, which brought together veterans from across the region for a day of friendly competition and camaraderie. This event, along with our other sports and recreation programs, is a testament to the strength and determination of our veterans. These opportunities not only provide a chance to stay active but also foster a sense of belonging and empowerment that is crucial to mental and emotional well-being. See my article in this edition to learn more about the tournament.

In addition to our sports programs, we have made strides in advocacy, ensuring that our voices continue to be heard at both the local and national levels. This year, we saw significant progress in improving access to healthcare services for veterans and pushing forward with important legislative efforts to support the needs of individuals living with paralysis and MS or ALS.

Our work is only possible because of the collective effort of our community - the members, caregivers, volunteers, and donors who share our mission. It is through your dedication that we can provide the essential ser-

vices and programs that make a real difference in the lives of those we serve.

### Looking Ahead to 2025

As we look ahead to 2025, we are excited about the new opportunities on the horizon. One area of particular focus will be expanding our outreach and enhancing our support services for veterans and families who need them most. We will continue to advocate for improved healthcare, earned benefits, and quality of life for veterans with disabilities, and we will explore new ways to increase access to adaptive sports, recreation, and educational programs.

We are also focused on growing our community partnerships and fundraising efforts to ensure that we can meet the evolving and unique needs of our members. Your continued support, whether through volunteering, donating, or simply spreading the word about our crucial work, is more important than ever.

*continued on page 3*



Mark, Brad, and Angela Weir, Medical Services Director for PVA.

## Accessible Air Travel: Survey

The Human Engineering Research Laboratories in Pittsburgh is conducting a national survey about accessible air travel. The study aims to estimate the pent-up demand for air travel among mobility device users and identify the specific needs and pain points experienced during their travel. Your participation will provide valuable insights that can help improve the accessibility and overall travel experience for mobility device users. The survey should take no more than 20 minutes to complete.

To take the survey, please [click here](https://www.herl.pitt.edu/node/1151)  
<https://www.herl.pitt.edu/node/1151>



## 2024 PVA Priorities

**Protect Access to VA's  
Specialized Health Care Services**

**Expand Access to VA Long-Term Services  
and Supports and their Survivors**

**Improve VA Benefits and Health Care  
Services for Paralyzed Veterans and their  
Survivors**

**Protect the Civil Rights  
of People with Disabilities**

**Improve Access to Social Security Benefits**

**Increase Employment Prospects for  
Veterans with Disabilities**

### NEPVA OFFICERS & BOD

#### Officers

President, Brad Carlson  
 Vice President, Mike Moran  
 Acting Secretary, Mark Sanders  
 Treasurer, Chuck Houle

#### Executive Board

Bernice DeBlois  
 Erica Haddad  
 Chuck Houle  
 Gary Jezierski  
 Mike Moran  
 Mark Sanders  
 Dustin Soroka  
 Jim Wallack

### PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Bass Trail Liaison, Mike Moran  
 Community Outreach, Mark Sanders  
 MS/ALS Liaison, Chuck Houle  
 Peer Mentor Rep., Mark Sanders  
 Sports Director, Brad Carlson  
 National Director to PVA, Brad Carlson  
 Women Veterans POC, Bernice DeBlois

#### NEPVA Staff

Executive Director, Mark Murphy  
 Office Volunteer, Denise Pease

### HOSPITAL LIAISONS

Brockton, MA VAMC, Gary Jezierski  
 West Roxbury, MA VAMC, Mark Sanders  
 Northampton, MA VAMC, Tim Kelly  
 Providence, RI VAMC, Mike Guilbault  
 Manchester, NH VAMC, Mike Moran  
 West Haven, CT VAMC, Ed Dusick  
 White River Jct, VT VAMC, Chuck Houle  
 Togus, ME VAMC, Neal Williams

### CHAPTER VOLUNTEERS

Jim Clark                      Denise Pease  
 Denise Harvey                Holly Warshaw  
 Maureen Morrison-Bohnwagner

### NEPVA ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

1208 VFW Parkway, Ste 301,  
 West Roxbury, MA 02132  
 Telephone: (617) 942-8678, 1-(800) 660-1181  
 FAX: (857) 203-9685;  
 Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00am-4:30pm

**Cord Word** is published twelve times a year by the New England Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America, 1208 VFW Parkway, Ste 301, West Roxbury, MA 02132 in the interest of Chapter members. Membership in NEPVA entitles you to a free subscription to Cord Word. Articles published in Cord Word do not necessarily reflect the views of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, New England Chapter. NEPVA neither endorses nor guarantees any of the products or services advertised herein.

## Executive Director's Report

By Mark Murphy

Executive Director NEPVA

*continued from page 1*

### A Heartfelt Thank You

None of this would be possible without the incredible generosity of our donors, partners, and volunteers. Your contributions, big and small, allow us to provide critical resources, create opportunities for veterans to thrive, and advocate for lasting change. I cannot thank you enough for your commitment to our mission and your dedication to making our Chapter a beacon of hope and empowerment for all those we serve.

As we continue along in this holiday season, I want to take a moment to express my deep gratitude to each one of you for being a part of our community. This time of year is an opportunity to reflect on all that we have accomplished together, but also to look forward to the important work that still lies ahead.

On behalf of the entire team in our Chapter, I wish you and your loved ones a peaceful and joyous holiday season. May this time of year bring warmth,



*Your continued support, whether through volunteering, donating, or simply spreading the word about our crucial work, is more important than ever.*

comfort, and hope as we close out 2024 and look ahead to the promise of a new year.

Thank you for your continued support and for being part of the New England PVA family. Together, we will continue to empower, advocate for, and honor

the brave men and women who have sacrificed so much for our country.

Sincerely,

Mark Murphy, Executive Director

### Wishing You Peace, Joy, and Hope

## Update on VA Funding Shortfall--from the Washington Update

At the end of September, Congress approved, and the President signed, H.R. 9468, the Veterans Benefits Continuity and Accountability Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2024. This legislation provided an additional \$2.9 billion in funding to pay veterans' pension and disability benefits for fiscal year (FY) 2024. The legislation did not address the \$12 billion healthcare shortfall VA previously identified for FY 2025. On November 1, the Veterans Benefits Administration revealed that it carried over approximately \$5.1 billion from FY 2024 to FY 2025, including the supplemental funding appropriated by Congress in September. This means that VA did not need to receive any additional funding to pay benefits timely on October 1.

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) showed that VA was able to carry over from FY 2024 to FY 2025 approximately what was anticipated in VA's FY 2025 budget request. However, VHA acknowledged that they limited the purchases of new equipment and that the cost of the workforce was lower than expected. Community care also grew at a lower rate. VHA further noted that their efforts to reduce costs are not sustainable and they still require additional funding in this calendar year.

On November 20, Under Secretary for Health Dr. Shereef Elnahal and Under Secretary for Benefits Josh Jacobs testified before the House Appropriations Military Construc-

tion/VA Subcommittee regarding VA's funding shortfall. Under Secretary Elnahal testified that VHA's shortfall for FY 2025 is not \$12 billion as previously reported. He confirmed, however, that additional funding will be needed to facilitate hiring and other VHA priorities.

Congress has yet to decide on a strategy for keeping the government funded beyond December 20. This news leads to serious questions about VA's management of its funding and the department's failure to adequately forecast its financial needs. It also presents significant challenges to VA's request for additional funding for VHA.

## Washington Update

### House Passes Veterans Omnibus Bill

For months, PVA has been urging Congress to pass the Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act to ensure the protections and resources our catastrophically disabled veterans and their caregivers need are put into place without delay. Late last year, House and Senate leaders decided to roll the measure into a larger omnibus package addressing a wide variety of veterans-related issues. The new bill, the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act (H.R. 8371), sought to enhance and reform the delivery of healthcare, benefits, and services at the VA.

Normally, creating an omnibus bill enhances chances of passage, but the package stalled quickly when disagreements arose over several provisions in the bill. Last week, the leaders of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees worked through the differences which had been holding the bill up since May, allowing for a successful House vote on November 18.

The bill, which easily passed the chamber by a vote of 389 to 9, will make critically needed improvements to VA's Home and Community Based Services, such as lifting the department's cap on the amount they can pay for home care from 65 to 100 percent, increasing access to the Veteran Directed Care program, and improving support to caregivers of veterans.

percent, the VA could even exceed the 100 percent rate if the Secretary determines certain factors require the higher cost in the best interest of the veteran or if that veteran has amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, a spinal cord

.....

***“Improving access to home and community-based services is crucial to the health and well-being of our wounded, ill, and injured veterans and their caregivers.”***

.....

injury, or a similar condition. Any one of these changes would provide severely disabled and aging veterans with more and better options to receive their care at home rather than in a facility.

Another section of the bill would allow VA to cover the cost of some veterans' care at private assisted living facilities. Currently, VA is able to refer veterans to these facilities, but they can't pay for it. The bill directs the department to create a three-year pilot program in two Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN), with at least one program site in a rural area and another serving a State Veterans Home to test the benefit of having VA pay for this care. Veterans eligible for the pilot would include those already receiving nursing home-level care paid for by the VA and those who are eligible to receive assisted living services or nursing home care. At the conclu-

sion of the pilot program, participating veterans will be given the option to continue receiving assisted living services at their assigned site, paid for by the VA. We believe this would help veterans and the VA alike by giving

.....

greater access to assisted living and reducing costs for long-term care, allowing more veterans to receive needed assistance. Other provisions in H.R. 8371 would streamline

VA information sources for veterans and caregivers alike, ensure a warm handoff to other VA programs if a veteran is not eligible for VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, and create mental health care grants for certain caregivers who become strained by the demands of assisting veterans with heightened needs.

In response to the House's passage of the omnibus legislation, PVA National President Robert Thomas said, "Improving access to home and community-based services is crucial to the health and well-being of our wounded, ill, and injured veterans and their caregivers." President Thomas urged the Senate to quickly pass the bill. PVA members are encouraged to use PVA Action Force to urge their two senators to support its swift passage.



## From the President's Desk

by Brad Carlson  
NEPVA President

Dear Friends,

Well, Thanksgiving has come and gone, and I hope you all had a wonderful holiday. Christmas is right behind and coming quickly. Two months ago, I wrote an in-depth article on receiving your individual allotment and other payable items due to you. I have still been inundated with phone calls, and that was not the purpose of the article! Please understand, I don't mind phone calls because I am here to serve you along with all your Board of Directors. However, when it comes to the Chapter office and Chapter operations there is a chain of command that starts with Executive Director Mark Murphy. All financial related or reimbursement requests MUST be sent to him only as he is one to help process the reimbursement. I am not the intermediary. We have an accounting system that includes our bookkeeper, Executive Director, and audit team. We are audited once a year and all monies in our Chapter must be accounted for. Please

*The new Bass Trail is currently being worked on with a brand-new planning committee and will be run directly through our Chapter.*

follow the rules and you will be paid promptly. I want to remind you that our Chapter is not a bank. Every allotment and reimbursement requests are reviewed by our staff and

the Board of Directors and is then dealt with

on an individual basis. Once approved, a check will be released. Again, follow the proper channels and if you have any questions, please contact Mark.

There are many events coming up and I would like to see everyone enjoying them. The new Bass Trail is currently being worked on with a brand-new planning committee and will be run directly through our Chapter. We have new locations while also maintaining most of the favorite trail locations from the past. I am happy to announce that Board members Jim Wallack and Mike Moran will be co-chairing this committee and will bring their extensive knowledge to the table. We are focusing on single day tournaments to give us more tournaments and time on the water. This new trail is focused solely on our members. More information will follow as it becomes available. I'd love to see a lot of new faces out there!

Last month we held a National Boccia Tournament at the Brockton VA gym. As always, a great time was had by all involved. On Saturday it was all about boccia of all levels and disabilities. Lunch was of course provided. On Sunday, they switched it up to cornhole and pickle ball for the day. Special thanks to all volunteers who made this event happen. Holly Warshaw, Joanie Lynch, Jim Clark, Denise Pease, and Gary Jezierski, just to name a few. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated team of volunteers that care so much about our Chapter. I was unable to attend as I was attending the PVA Fall Board of Directors meeting in my capacity as our Chapter National Director to PVA. Mark Murphy and my wife Kathy also were with me for the week,



Brad and Carl Blake, Chief Executive Officer for PVA at the PVA Fall Board of Directors meeting.

continued on page 15

## Annual New England PVA Boccia Tournament: A Celebration of Skill, Spirit, and Community

by Mark Murphy, Executive Director NEPVA

This year's annual Boccia Tournament at the Brockton Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC) on November 16-17th was another unforgettable weekend of competition, camaraderie, and inspiration. Hosted by the Paralyzed Veterans of America in partnership with the New England Chapter, the event brought together veterans, caregivers, volunteers, and supporters from across the region for a thrilling and heart-warming display of athleticism and resilience.

Boccia, which is a precision ball sport, is one of the few adaptive sports that allows athletes with significant physical disabilities to compete equally. For many of the participants, it is not just about winning — it is about the chance to challenge themselves, showcase their skills, and bond with others who understand the unique journey of living with paralysis, MS, or ALS.

### A Day of Competition and Community

The tournament, which took place at the Brockton VAMC's state-of-the-art facilities, attracted a wide array of participants, ranging from veterans who have been playing for years to first-time competitors eager to test their skills. The day was filled with intense matches, as athletes maneuvered their way through the rounds, carefully aiming for precision in every throw.



*“Our veterans continue to amaze us with their determination, not only in the face of competition but in the way they support and encourage one another,” said Chapter volunteer Holly Warsaw. “This event is a testament to the incredible spirit of the PVA community. Everyone here is a winner — whether they’re walking away with a trophy or simply with a greater sense of accomplishment and pride.”*

### Celebrating the True Spirit of Adaptive Sports

While there were certainly thrilling moments and nail-biting finishes, the true essence of the tournament was seen in the camaraderie and support that permeated the weekend. From volunteers who helped facilitate the matches to the families and caregivers who cheered on their loved ones, it was clear that the tournament is about more than just sports — it's about community.

One Chapter member, a Navy veteran who has been competing in boccia for several years, shared, “The tournament brings us all together, and it's a great way to show that just because we live with disabilities doesn't mean we stop pushing ourselves to do more. It's a challenge, but it's also a lot of fun.”

### Looking Toward the Future

As the tournament concluded, Holly took a moment to thank all the participants, VA staff, and volunteers who made the event a success. The support of grantors, donors, and organizations who continue to back these programs is essential to ensuring our veterans have access to adaptive sports and recreational activities that enhance their quality of life.

“We're already looking forward to next year,” said Brad Carlson, PVA National Director and the New England Chapter President. “Our goal is to continue expanding this event, bringing in even more participants, and providing a

*continued on page 7*

## PVA Supports Women Veterans and Servicemember Caucus Event on Capitol Hill

**O**n November 20, PVA Associate Legislative Director Julie Howell participated in an informational session held by the Service Women and Women Veteran Congressional Caucus. Comprised of elected officials, Department of Defense fellows, and other people passionate about military and veteran affairs, the Caucus holds open events to educate audiences about the unique experiences and needs of women veterans.

November's event focused on the transition from military service to veteran status and included speakers from the American Legion, VFW, and PVA. Key takeaways were the need for increased mental health support in combating veteran suicide, the need to ensure early access to VA benefits for transitioning service members through the benefits due at discharge program, and the need for improved accountability in accessing Transition Assistance Program (TAP) curriculum a year before discharge.

PVA highlighted the disparities experienced by servicemembers who may be discharged due to illness or injury and the critical need for improved supports and services for them. Often when a servicemember separates from the military due to injury or illness they are denied access to critical support programs such as Skill Bridge which provides on the job training in a field of interest for the servicemember. Additionally, PVA stressed the need for improved mental health support for personnel who were forced to leave the military due to their health.

### Boccia

*continued from page 6*

platform for veterans to engage in healthy competition. But we'll always keep our focus on what really matters — community, connection, and showing that no challenge is too big to overcome.”

For those interested in joining the fun next year or learning more about the many programs and services offered by the New England PVA, please visit our website or contact us directly.

### Join Us in 2025

Whether you're a veteran, volunteer, or supporter, we hope you will join us for next year's Boccia Tournament. Stay tuned for updates and registration details. Together, we can continue to push the boundaries of what's possible — on and off the court.

If you would like more information on how to get involved or support future events through PVA National, please reach

out to John Arbino, Program Manager, Sports and Recreation for PVA at (202)416-6463 or JohnAr@PVA.org. For events run by the Chapter, you can always reach out to me at mmurphy@pvanewengland.org.

**Together, we are stronger.  
Together, we can do anything.**





## Sports & Recreation



Sports and Recreation programs offers over 60 free year-round adaptive sporting and recreational opportunities, benefiting thousands of Veterans and athletes with disabilities nationwide. From bass fishing to wheelchair rugby, our diverse activities promote a healthy and active lifestyle, fostering community and independence.

### Join Our PVA Online Fitness Classes: Fitness for Everyone, Anywhere!

Experience the benefits of online fitness from the comfort of your home. Maximize your time and effort to achieve the best results from your workouts. Workouts are adapted to your ability. All experience levels are welcome and can benefit.

#### Adaptive Strength Training with Jerod Warf

Join instructor Jerod Warf on Mondays at 12:30 PM EST for strength training. This program will focus on developing strong and healthy shoulders to benefit your daily life and longevity.

#### Adaptive Boxing with Pierre Fallot

Join Pierre Fallot on Thursdays at 1:30 PM EST throughout 2024 for a fun and effective workout that combines strength and cardio training.



*Scan the QR code  
to register for online  
fitness classes*

### Benefits of Online Fitness:

Enhanced Cardiovascular Health

Cognitive Improvements including:

better reflexes, memory, and hand-eye coordination)

Increased Strength and Endurance

Greater Range of Motion, Stress Relief

Following registration and on the morning of class, you will receive a confirmation email with a link to class. Join with a smart phone, tablet or computer that is connected to the internet.

If you do not have a Fitness Waiver and Release signed in the past 12 months, you will receive a release to sign digitally.

We look forward to seeing you in class! If you have any questions or issues with registration or log-on, please contact:

**Vickie Lincks**

**Program Manager, Sports and Recreation**

**Paralyzed Veterans of America**

**202-416-7654**

**VickieL@pva.org**



## Northeast Passage Veteran Recreation

We strive to create an open and welcoming environment for Veterans in all of our programs. Veterans and Active Duty Service Members from all eras and of all ability levels are encouraged to participate in this program. Most options are provided at no cost to Veterans & Members of the Armed Forces through funding from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, a partnership with Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Operation Hat Trick and local organizations.

Join Northeast Passage for any of our regularly scheduled Adaptive Sports & Recreation events or check out one of our competitive teams in sled hockey, wheelchair rugby, wheelchair lacrosse or power soccer.

We also have a consistent offering of Veteran specific recreation events throughout the year. Join us, and other local Veterans, for group outings that shift with the seasons.

### PICKLEBALL – Exeter, NH

Northeast Passage has partnered with the Exeter Area YMCA to run Indoor Pickleball (Para-Pickleball)!

Northeast Passage staff and volunteers will teach participants the rules and strategies of the game, as well as provide all equipment--paddles, balls, grip modifications, sport wheelchairs, etc.

#### Tuesdays:

12/17, 1/7, 1/14, 1/21, 1/28, 2/4, 2/11, 2/18, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25.

WE WILL RUN TWO SESSIONS FOR EACH DATE. PLEASE CHOOSE THE APPROPRIATE SESSION WHEN REGISTERING:

**BEGINNER 9:30AM-10:30AM:** Are you new to pickleball or looking to learn to play? Whether you are planning to play standing or pushing a chair, this session will allow individuals time to develop game skills, such as hand-eye coordination, mobility on the court, volleying over the net, and learning to keep score.

**READY TO PLAY 10:30-12:00PM:** Whether you are planning to play standing or pushing a chair, this session will focus on advancing competitive game skills.

If you are unsure of your level of play, please reach out to NEP to discuss which session would be appropriate for you.

**There is no cost for these events.**

To learn more about pickleball and rule variations, visit the USA Pickleball Website <https://usapickleball.org/play/wheelchair-pickleball/>.

**A** sampling of the programs Northeast Passage offers to Veterans:

Cycling

Saltwater and freshwater fishing

Fly Fishing/Tying

Indoor rock climbing

Wood carving and art

Water skiing

Kayaking & Paddleboarding

Archery

Bowling

Air Riflery

Find out more at  
[nepassage.org/veteran-recreation](http://nepassage.org/veteran-recreation)

### INDOOR ARCHERY Rochester, NH

**Join Northeast Passage** for some archery range shooting. All levels of experience and ability are welcomed! Shooting distances vary from 9-26 yards. There is also the opportunity to shoot on the range's TechnoHunt center--a virtual shooting range, with games and over 700 hunting scenarios, using your own bow and arrows.

USA Archery certified staff from Northeast Passage will provide instructions and tips to participants as well as equipment needs. If you have your own equipment, you are welcome to bring it.

Due to high demand and limited space, interested participants can register for three dates and waitlist the remaining dates.

**Fee: \$20.00 per session**

## Service Officers Report

by Michael Snape,  
Senior National Service Officer

### Waiver of Indebtness

Greeting to all chapter members. Cold has finally arrived in New England, signaling the future arrival of the dreaded “s” word (snow), but also the start of the holiday season. We wish all members a safe and pleasant holiday season.

The following information concerns applying for a waiver of indebtedness that may be incurred by veterans as a result of receiving overpayments in VA compensation. These occur when veterans continue to receive benefit payments, but are no longer entitled to the benefit received.

If the resulting overpayment creates a financial hardship, a veteran or may request a waiver of the indebtedness by submitting a VA Form 5655 Financial Status Report and a personal statement that explains why the veteran feels they shouldn't have to repay the debt. In their statement, they should provide additional information in support of the waiver request. This should be information that the veteran hasn't provided in writing and isn't already of evidence in their VA records. This form can also be filed on behalf of the veteran by a parent, sibling, adult child, a VA fiduciary, an accredited attorney, claims agents, or Veterans Service Organization (VSO) representative, or a person serving as the executor of the Veteran's estate.

Recently, the VA Financial Operations (FinOps) section updated the rules for the M24-3 Chapter 08 Committee on Waivers and Compromises, thus extending the waiver request period for Benefit Debts to one year from 180 days as required by the Cleland-Dole Act, which was signed into law December of 2022, which gives debtor up to one year to request a waiver. The

rule goes into effect December 2024 in accordance with section 254 of the Cleland-Dole Act. This extension applies one year from the date of notification of indebtedness.

The one-year period may be extended if the individual requesting a waiver demonstrates to the chairperson

***Chapter members who believe they meet the eligibility criteria noted to file for a waiver of indebtedness for their specific situation should contact their local National Service Officer to discuss the issue and request any needed assistance.***

of the Committee that, as a result of an error by either VA or the postal authorities, or due to other circumstances beyond the debtor's control, there was a delay in that individual's receipt of the (NOI) beyond the time customarily required for mailing (including forwarding). If the requester substantiates there was such a delay, the chairperson shall direct that the 1-year period be computed from the date of the requester's actual receipt of the notice of indebtedness.

Chapter members who believe they meet the eligibility criteria noted above to file for a waiver of indebtedness for their specific situation should contact their local National Service Officer to discuss the issue and request any needed assistance.

continued on next page

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

*...get to know your PVA service officer as they can help you navigate through the questions you may have on disability ratings and navigating the VA system.*

### **Continuation of Veteran Directed Care Available for Eligible Hospitalized Veterans**

Did you know veterans who require continuation of Veteran Directed Care services during inpatient hospitalization can receive this service upon authorization by VA Central Office? If you are hospitalized at VA, and will require the assistance of your caregiver, request to speak with a VA Geriatric and Extended Care Social Worker. Ask the social worker to fill out a Veteran Directed Care Inpatient Hospital Support Request. Once the form is completed, the social worker will need to submit it to VA Central Office for approval. Please contact a PVA national service officer for assistance.

MAXIM HEALTHCARE SERVICES

**You Served Us;  
Now Let Us  
Serve You.**



Maxim Healthcare Services offers a variety of home care services that allow veterans to receive care in the comfort of home. We serve veterans with ALS, brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, tracheostomies, ventilators and more.

We work with the VA, TRICARE and CHAMPVA to serve veterans and their families.

**Contact us today!**  
[www.maximhealthcare.com](http://www.maximhealthcare.com)



## **PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA – REGIONAL NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICERS**

### **BOSTON VA REGIONAL OFFICE**

Joseph E. Badzmierowski  
Director of Field Services  
J.F.K. Federal Building - Room - 1575 C  
BOSTON, MA 02203  
phone: (617) 303-1395  
fax: (617) 303-1396

### **WEST ROXBURY/BROCKTON VAMC**

Zachary T. Nuetzel  
1400 VFW Parkway, Room AG 60  
West Roxbury, MA 02132  
West Roxbury phone: (857) 203-6091  
Serving Massachusetts and Rhode Island

### **TOGAS, VARO, I VA CENTER**

Michael Snape, National Service Officer III  
Bldg. 248, Room 112  
Augusta, ME 04330  
phone: (207) 621-7394  
fax: (207) 621-4829  
Serving Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont

### **BRONX SCI**

Amauris Polanco, National Service Officer III  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
James J. Peters VAMC  
130 West Kingsbridge Rd., Room 1D-52A  
Bronx, NY 10468  
phone: (718) 584-9000 ext. 6272

### **MANHATTAN**

Daisy Lozada, Senior Administrative Assistant  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
201 Varick St., Room 4W59.50  
New York, NY 10014  
phone: (212) 807-3114.  
Serving New York, New Jersey and Connecticut

### **SYRACUSE VAMC**

Charlie Tocci, East-North Area Manager  
800 Irving Ave., Room C419  
Syracuse, NY 13210  
phone: (315) 425-4400 ext. 53317  
fax: (315) 425-2940  
Serving New York & Western MA



# FY25 EVENT SCHEDULE

Note: \*\* means this is not a PVA-sponsored event.



## January 2025

PVA Racing High Performance Racing Camp	Jan 25-Feb 2, 2025	Tampa, FL
---	--------------------	-----------

## February 2025

Bayou Gulf States Bocchia Tournament	February 1-2, 2025	Gulfport, MS
Central Florida Air Gun Tournament	February 8-9, 2025	Orlando, FL
PVA Rugby Invitational	Feb 14-16, 2025	Louisville, KY
Florida Gulf Coast Bowling Tournament	February 16-19, 2025	Tampa, FL

## March 2025

Mid-Atlantic Billiards Tournament	March 14-16, 2025	Midlothian, VA
Wisconsin Air Gun Tournament	March 21-22, 2025	Racine, WI
Long Beach Bocchia Tournament	March 29-30, 2025	Long Beach, CA

## April 2025

Wheelchair Football Camp	April 3-6, 2025	Birmingham, AL
Citrus Slam Bass Fishing Tournament	April 4-6, 2025	Kissimmee, FL
Pocahontas Off-Road Spring Camp	April 9-13, 2025	Chesterfield, VA
PVA Off-Road Classic Paracycling Race	April 12, 2025	Chesterfield, VA
Mid-America Billiards Tournament	April 10-12, 2025	Oklahoma City, OK
Bluegrass Bash Bass Tournament	April 11-13, 2025	Kuttawa, KY
Texas Bowling Tournament	April 30-May 2, 2025	San Antonio, TX

## May 2025

Puerto Rico Year-end Bocchia Tournament	May 3-4, 2025	San Juan, PR
Vaughan Trapshoot Tournament	May 23-25, 2025	Elburn, IL
Texas Air Gun Tournament	May 31-Jun 1, 2025	San Antonio, TX

## June 2025

Capital Clash Bass Tournament (Year-end event)	June 13-15, 2025	La Plata, MD
PVA Colonial Pickleball Tournament	June 14-15, 2025	Perry Point, MD
Iowa Trapshoot Tournament	June 20-22, 2025	Cedar Rapids, IA
Teton Outdoor Adventure	June 23-27, 2025	Jackson Hole, WY
PVA Bowling National Championships	June 26-29, 2025	Omaha, NE



# MOBIUS MOBILITY



Qualified  
Veterans can  
get an iBOT®  
through their  
local VA!



Discuss the  
iBOT® at your  
next mobility  
consultation at  
the VA!

To learn more about the iBOT® scan the QR code  
Or call us at **1-833-346-4268**

Please mention you saw this in your local PVA Chapter's Newsletter



[info@mobiusmobility.com](mailto:info@mobiusmobility.com)



[mobiusmobility.com](http://mobiusmobility.com)



**1-833-346-4268**



# obi

## INDEPENDENT EATING IS POSSIBLE

### TRY OBI!

Request to try Obi  
and experience  
independent eating  
in your home!

**CONTACT US  
TODAY!**

- Eat what you want, when you want!
- Easy to use and easy to clean
- Custom positions and switches

**Qualifying veterans may receive  
Obi at no cost through the VA.**

Manufactured in the USA

**VA@MeetObi.com (844) 435-7624 www.MeetObi.com**



## President's Report

*continued from page 6*

and the meetings were quite fruitful and productive. Once we got home, we instantly missed that Florida weather!

Please keep your eyes open for the upcoming schedule of events for all sports programs and dates coming up for next year. While this may be a lot of information, remember we are working hard for you, so please come out and enjoy all these new and exciting programs.

**I**n closing, Kathy and I wish you a great and safe holiday season and look forward to an even stronger 2025. Get out there and enjoy all our Chapter has to offer!

Sincerely,  
Brad Carlson,  
Chapter President  
& National Director



## 2025 COLA for Veterans & Social Security Benefits

The Social Security Administration announced on October 10 that Social Security beneficiaries will receive a 2.5 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase starting in 2025. The increase is reflective of the effects of inflation. Prior to departing for the current congressional recess, House and Senate lawmakers approved legislation to ensure certain VA compensation programs will receive the same COLA.

## Indego® Gets Paralyzed Veterans Walking Again

**NEW VA Program offers eligible veterans an Indego® exoskeleton at NO COST!**



### What's the Indego exoskeleton?

It's an FDA-approved robotic device that enables spinal cord injury patients (level T3-L5) to walk again.

- ✓ Regain your independence
- ✓ Enjoy eye-level conversations
- ✓ Improve your cardio & bone density



Scan with your mobile phone to receive information or schedule a demonstration.

Contact us today to find out if you are eligible to receive an Indego exoskeleton at no cost.

Phone: 844-846-3346

Email: [support.indego@parker.com](mailto:support.indego@parker.com)



Paralyzed Veterans of America  
New England Chapter  
1208 VFW Parkway, Suite 301  
West Roxbury, MA 02132

tel: 617 942-8678  
800 660-1181  
fax: 857 203-9685

Email: [info@pvanewengland.org](mailto:info@pvanewengland.org)

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00am-4:30pm



Paralyzed Veterans of America

New England Chapter

*Happy Holidays*

*to all our*

*Members,*

*Volunteers*

*and Friends!*

