

New England Chapter

#### May 2025

The Newsletter of the New England Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America

### New England PVA Receives National Recognition at 79th Annual PVA Convention

By Mark Murphy, Executive Director NEPVA

his month I had the honor of traveling to Austin, Texas, alongside our Chapter President and National Director Brad Carlson and his wife and Chapter volunteer Kathy Carlson, to represent our New England Chapter at the 79th Annual PVA Convention. It was a powerful gathering of veterans, leaders, and advocates from across the country, and we were deeply humbled to return home with one of the highest honors a Chapter can receive: the Stanley D. Brown Most Improved Chapter Award.

Accepting this award on behalf of our Chapter was a moment of pride - and a moment of reflection on how far we have come in the last several years. Over the past year, our team has worked with determination and heart to expand our impact, deepen our membership engagement, and advocate fiercely for the needs of paralyzed veterans throughout the New England region. This award recognizes those efforts, and it belongs to everyone who has played a role in our success - our dedicated staff, Board,

volunteers, partners, and most importantly, our members.

Under Brad Carlson's leadership as President, and with the support of our entire Board of Directors, we have seen a revitalization of our programs and services - from adaptive sports and peer mentoring to advocacy and hospital outreach. Perhaps most notably, we had the strongest fundraising year of any PVA Chapter in the country - a testament to the generosity of our supporters and the trust they place in our mission. These funds are being invested directly into the programs that improve quality of life and restore independence for our members. The Stanley D. Brown Award is not the end of the road for us – it is a milestone on our continued journey. It tells us we are on the right path. But we know the work is never done. Veterans living with spinal cord injuries and disorders in New England still face systemic barriers to access, care, and

...our team has worked with determination and heart to expand our impact, deepen our membership engagement, and advocate fiercely for the needs of paralyzed veterans throughout the New England region.

community. At the New England PVA, we are more committed than ever to breaking those barriers down. As we look ahead, we do so with renewed energy, gratitude, and purpose. This prestigious recognition from our National organization encourages and motivates us to continue this critical work and doing it with joy, fun, collaboration, and friendship.



Robert Thomas, President of PVA presents Mark and Brad the Stanley D. Brown most improved Chapter award.

#### May 2025

#### **Cord Word**

he New England Chapter, Paralyzed Veterans of America (New England PVA) is a congressionally chartered veterans service organization founded in 1947 that has developed a unique expertise on a wide variety of issues involving the special needs of our members - veterans of the armed forces who have experienced spinal cord injury or dysfunction.

# Paralyzed Veterans of America

New England Chapter

#### The New England PVA uses that expertise to be the leading advocate for:

- Quality health care for our members
- Research and education addressing spinal cord injury and dysfunction
- Benefits available because of our members' military service
- Civil rights and opportunities that maximize the independence of our members

 $\mathbf{T}$ o enable paralyzed veterans to continue to honor this commitment, we recruit and retain members who have the experience, energy, dedication, and passion necessary to manage the organization and ensure adequate resources to sustain the programs essential for the Chapter to achieve its mission.

#### **NEPVA OFFICERS & BOD**

#### Officers

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

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*From the Executive Director's Desk* 

**Cord Word** 

Dear Members, Friends, and Supporters,

our members and the broader disabilt has been an exciting season for our New England ity community. Stay tuned for updates Chapter, and I am thrilled to share some incredible from Capitol Hill as we raise our voices updates and upcoming events with you. We recently together for lasting change. returned from PVA's 79th Annual Convention in Austin, Texas, where our Chapter was honored with the Mark your calendars! Our Annual Golf Tournament Stanley D. Brown Most Improved Chapter Award! This returns on Monday, August 18th at the beautiful South prestigious recognition is a testament to the hard work, re-Shore Country Club in Hingham, MA. This event is one of newed energy, and community support that have powered our biggest fundraisers of the year - and perhaps our most fun. Whether you are a long-time player or a first-time ...our Chapter was honored with the participant, we hope you will join us for a great day of golf, Stanley D. Brown Most Improved fellowship, and support for a great cause.

# **Chapter Award!**

our growth and impact over the past year. I was proud to com/event/2025-paralyzed-veterans-golf-tournament attend alongside our Chapter President and National Director, Brad Carlson, and his wife, Kathy Carlson, a dedi-Finally, we are looking forward to another heartwarmcated Chapter volunteer. Their commitment to our mission ing and fun-filled tradition: the BBQ/Field Day with the was on full display as we celebrated this milestone together Brockton Spinal Cord Injury Unit (SCIU) on May 31st. For with fellow Chapters from across the country. See my dedithe past 2 years, the VA pharmacy staff and their families cated article in this newsletter for more information about have come together to host this joyful event, filled with our Chapter being nationally recognized by PVA. laughter, games, and heartfelt connections. This year's BBQ is set to run from 10:00am to 3:00pm, with lunch served at Looking ahead, we are preparing to bring that same energy 11:30am. Activities will include bocce, disc golf, corn hole, to Washington, D.C., for PVA's Annual Legislation Seminar ladder toss, and possibly even a friendly cribbage game. next month. We have already lined up numerous meetings Last year, kids joined in the fun by making friendship with members of the New England congressional delegabracelets and helping with name tags - a true family affair tion to advocate for policies and resources that support that celebrates community and our veterans.



www.pvanewengland.org

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By Mark Murphy Executive Director NEPVA



## Register now: GolfStatus - https://events.golfstatus.

Whether it is policy, recreation, or national recognition, our Chapter is on the move - thanks to you. Thank you for being with us as we continue to serve those who have served.

#### Sincerely,

Mark Murphy **Executive Director** New England Chapter, Paralyzed Veterans of America

### Washington Update

#### **VA OIG Weighs in on VA Budget Shortfalls and Projections**

n July 2024, the VA informed Congress that it anticipated a \$3 billion shortfall for the remainder of fiscal Lyear (FY) 2024 related to compensation and pension and readjustment benefit payments, and a \$12 billion shortfall in FY 2025 funds needed for veterans' health care. Congress passed the Veterans Benefits Continuity and Accountability Supplemental Appropriations Act (P.L. 118-82) in September, giving the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) the \$3 billion it said it needed to keep making compensation and pension payments through the remainder of FY 2024. However, the VA told Congress in November that it rolled over more than \$5 billion in unobligated funds into FY 2025, meaning the additional funding was not needed. At the same time, the VA said they were reducing their projected health care funding shortfall in FY 2025 to \$6.6 billion. The pair of announcements only aggravated Congress's already waning confidence in the department's ability to manage its finances.

In September 2024, Congress passed a supplemental appropriations bill that directed VA's Office of Inspector General (VA OIG) to look into the circumstances that led to the funding shortfalls for VBA and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). The VA OIG looked at both problems carefully and released a pair of reports on March 27.

In its report, Review of VA's \$2.9 Billion Supplemental Funds Request for FY 2024 to Support Veterans' Benefits Payments, the VA OIG found that inaccurate reports of benefits usage above budgetary projections and the failure to include all available budgetary resources in calculations contributed to the concerns about a VBA shortfall. They also found that the VBA continued to emphasize the risk to veterans in its communications to Congress, even when existing data suggested they did not need the extra money. Also, some of VBA's assumptions driving the supplemental funding request were not supported. VBA officials stated they anticipated a surge in claims processing at the end of the fiscal year due to both expanded eligibility for millions of veterans under the PACT Act (P.L. 117-168) and VBA

regional office performance goals. However, data from the VA Office of Budget showed no significant end-of-year spikes in obligations in the past five years for either the compensation and pension account or the readjustment benefits account. The VA OIG made four recommendations to prevent the problem from occurring again. They include the development of better financial management controls and monthly fiscal reviews to routinely assess performance and cost drivers that may affect the status of available funds.

In a second report, the VA OIG looked at the causes and conditions that led to the department's initial \$12 billion supplemental funding request for VHA. The VA OIG determined that the FY 2024 President's Budget, which included advanced appropriations for FY 2025, relied on outdated data and assumptions, including lower-than-actual costs for new medications and both direct and community care. Also, a legislative budget cap limited VHA's ability to increase the FY 2025 advanced appropriations, although leaders believed they could keep spending within funding limits by developing cost-saving options. The goals and options that emerged from a January 2024 financial sequester, such as reducing hiring and community care obligations, did not achieve the necessary cuts. The combination of these triggered the department's request for \$12 billion in supplemental health care funds, which eventually as we indicated previously was revised downward to \$6.6 billion. Congress passed a continuing resolution in mid-March 2025 to fund VA's remaining FY 2025 medical care expenses at \$6 billion from the Toxic Exposures Fund. The VA OIG recommended the department review how VHA projects its medical care budget needs, including staffing, and to develop a new approach to form more accurate estimates; consider changes to allow program offices and other experts to weigh in on inputs for model projections; and conduct fiscal reviews at least quarterly to assess key cost drivers.

May 2025

#### From the President's Desk Dear Friends,

'm writing to you this month with a deep sense of with courage, skill, and pride and renewed purpose following an energizing determination. Whether you're and impactful last number of weeks. I had the a member participating or privilege of representing our Chapter at the 79th a supporter volunteering or Annual PVA Convention in Austin, Texas with my wife cheering from the sidelines, Kathy and Chapter Executive Director Mark Murphy, we look forward to coming where leaders from across the country came together to together and participating in reflect on our shared mission and chart a bold path for the Games once again. PVA's future. One of the highlights of the Convention was Please see our Executive Director's article for more seeing our Chapter recognized with the Stanley D. Brown information on how to register for our Annual Golf Most Improved Chapter Award. This is a testament to Tournament on August 18th. It is shaping up to once again the incredible work be a terrific day!



of our members, staff, volunteers, and supporters. Over the past year, we've worked hard to strengthen our programming, deepen member engagement, and advocate more effectively for veterans living with spinal cord injuries and disorders. This award is your award, and I

couldn't be prouder of how far we've come together over the past few years.

The Convention wasn't just about national recognition - it was a working week of robust discussion and strategy. The daily meetings offered meaningful opportunities to help shape the direction of PVA nationally, from healthcare access and VA policy to membership support and organizational growth. I left Austin both inspired and energized about what lies ahead.

Speaking of what's ahead, we're thrilled to be preparing in earnest for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, taking place in Minneapolis this July. These games are the largest annual wheelchair sports event in the world and represent the power of adaptive sports to transform lives. We'll be cheering on our athletes as they compete

May 2025

by Brad Carlson NÉPVA President



Finally, next month we will head to Washington, D.C. to take part in PVA's Advocacy and Legislation Seminar. This is one of the most important weeks of the year for our organization. We'll be meeting directly with lawmakers to push for policies that expand access to care, strengthen benefits, and uphold the rights of paralyzed veterans across New England and the entire nation. Your stories and your needs fuel these conversations, and we'll be carrying your voices with us to Capitol Hill.

Thank you for being part of our community. Whether you're a veteran, a family member, a caregiver, or a supporter, you make our mission come to life in action.

Sincerely,

Brad Carlson. Chapter President and National Director



Brad and Mark at the 79th Annual PVA Convention in Austin, Texas meetings.

#### May 2025

#### Cord Word

#### Brockton VA Pharmacy Cookout and Field Day May 31st from 10:00am-3:00pm

For the last 2 years, pharmacy staff and family members from the Brockton VA have worked together to put on a BBQ and Field Day with the Brockton SCIU residents. Each year, we have a ton of fun making new friends, seeing old friends, and celebrating the veterans.



The pharmacy service provided an excellent BBQ, serving lunch at around

11:30am. The planned field events include bocce, disc golf, corn hole, ladder toss, and potentially a cribbage game (time-permitting). Many attendees bring family members and friends to enjoy the BBQ as well. The entire runs from about 10am to 3pm.

#### VA Summer Sports Clinic July 21st-July 25th





# **Oppose Dismantling the VA's SCI/D System of Care**

ime has proven that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is the best provider of care for veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D). It is essential that leaders in Washington, DC know this so they can ensure the VA's SCI/D system of care is protected. In recent years, we have seen cracks begin to develop in the system as it struggles with numerous clinical vacancies and infrastructure deficiencies that compromise veterans' care. We need to reverse these trends.

Join PVA National President Robert Thomas by signing your name to ensure Congress and the Administration know that its SCI/D system of care is necessary for the health of paralyzed veterans and is an essential part of the VA system. Our goal is to uplift your voice with the petition when President Thomas testifies before a Joint Session of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees this spring.

#### **Petition Text**

e urge you to oppose dismantling the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Spinal Cord Injuries and Disorders (SCI/D) system of care, as veterans overwhelmingly prefer to receive their care at the VA and community providers are not equipped to adequately meet their needs. Veterans with an SCI/D tend to have complex medical needs, resulting in a need to see a multitude of medical specialists in a variety of different fields. The cohesive medical care provided by the VA medical system ensures that veterans can receive the care they need in one place. It also alleviates the often burdensome need to forward their complex medical history from one specialist to another to ensure their complex cases are fully cared for.

The VA's SCI/D system is the crown jewel of its health care system. The VA's integrated approach enhances continuity of care and fosters trust among veterans, who value the specialized services tailored to their unique needs. The failure in recent years to properly fund, staff, and invest in the system's infrastructure is slowly dismantling the SCI/D system of care, leaving paralyzed veterans with inferior care options in the community. The United States government must affirm its commitment to those who served, particularly those with the most significant disabilities, and ensure they receive the best possible care where they feel safe and comfortable.

#### **PVAction Force Update: Sign Our Petition**

We need your help as we raise our united voice through our petition urging Congress to oppose any efforts to dismantle the VA's spinal cord injuries and disorders system of care. Our goal is to reach 5,000 signatures by June's Advocacy/ Legislation Seminar. We currently have over 2,800 signatures. When we meet with members of Congress in June, we plan to share the number of individuals in their states and districts who have signed the petition to raise awareness on how important this is to us. If you have not had the chance to sign it, there is still time. Sign your name to our petition today.

Scan the QR code to access the petition and help save the VA SCI/D system of care.





## We hope to see you there!

#### **Cord Word**

### **Sports & Recreation**

#### **Northeast Passage Veteran Recreation**

TATe 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.

northeastpassage.org

iscover adaptive recreation programs in Massachusetts state parks. These programs offer specialized equipment, modifications, and staff support and instruction.

The Universal Access Program offers guided adaptive recreation programs year-round and statewide. We strive to make our programs accessible to as many people as possible. We want our programs to feel welcoming, safe, and approachable to people with disabilities.

Our structured programs offer adaptive equipment and gear. Our staff have experience in providing activity instruction and support to people with a broad range of disabilities. We choose our programs locations to be as accessible as possible to people using mobility devices. Our program bases have accessible parking close by.

You will need to pre-register to attend a program. We understand that our program designs and locations may not be accessible to you depending on your individual situation. If you need an accommodation, please let us know during registration. We will do our best to provide the type of support you need to take part in our programs.

Each program has Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC). For safety and risk management considerations, everyone who attends our programs must meet these EEC. If you have questions about the EEC or about accommodations at programs, please get in touch with us.

www.mass.gov/orgs/universal-access-program

#### **Northeast Passage** offers to Veterans:

Cycling

Saltwater and freshwater fishing

May 2025

**Fly Fishing/Tying** 

Indoor rock climbing

Wood carving and art

Water skiing

Kayaking & Paddleboarding

Archery

Bowling

**Air Riflery** 

### **Enjoy Massachusetts State Parks with the Universal Access Program**

The Department of Conservation and **Recreation's Universal** Access Program provides outdoor recreation opportunities in Massachusetts state parks for visitors of all abilities. -www.pvanewengland.org

#### **Cord Word**

## **Gaylord Veteran Adaptive Sports**

he Sports Association Veteran Adaptive Sports Series (SAVES) is designated adaptive sports programming for veterans who have a physical disability or visual impairment.

#### **Programs have included;**

- \* Kayaking,
- Fishing,
- Waterskiing,
- Adaptive Cycling,
- Archery,
- oga,
- Golf,
- **Bowling.**

▲ T e work with several groups from the VA who join us for regular adaptive sports programs. We also encourage veteran participation in any of our regular programs, to not only offer a wide range of opportunities, but to support veterans in attaining a healthy lifestyle, better quality of life and new peer relationship.

#### **Veterans Fishing Tournament**

he Veterans Fishing Tournaments are open water bass tournaments for veterans or service members with a permanent physical disability, visual impairment or PTSD. Tournaments are held in May on Candlewood Lake in Danbury, CT or in September on Lake Congamond in Southwick, MA. Each veteran will be paired with an experienced angler and boat captain for a day on the water. The tournament includes all fishing equipment, a weigh-in and an awards luncheon. Prizes are awarded for the top 3 weights.

This event is organized in collaboration with the Major Steven "Roy" Andrews Fishing Outreach Program and CT Bass Nation.

https://sportsassociation.gaylord.org/veterans-fishing-tournament





#### Lake Congamond

Date: September 16, 2025 Check-in: 7 a.m. - 7:15 a.m. Fishing: 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. Weigh-In: 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Awards and Lunch: 3 p.m. - 4 p.m.



#### **Cord Word**

## **Service Officers Report Specially Adapted Housing Grant**

Hello NEPVA. Hopefully, everyone is enjoying the recent warm weather that we have been having. I wanted to follow up on last month's article about the Home Improvement Structural Alterations grant to discuss another grant that is related to housing, the Specially Adapted Housing Grant (SAH).

SAH is a grant that many of our members may be eligible for. As of May 2025, the grant is \$117,014.00 towards adapting a home to make it more accessible. Unlike the HISA grant, not every veteran is eligible for SAH in some form. This article will cover the requirements for SAH, some examples of qualifying disabilities, and how to apply.

The SAH grant money can be used by veterans to buy, build, or change/ adapt a home to make it accessible for veterans with qualifying injuries/ disorders. In order to be eligible for SAH the veteran must own the home that the SAH will go towards or that the veteran will own the home. Veteran's must also be service connected for a disability that qualifies for SAH.

If you are a veteran who is service connected for one of the above disabilities, you should be eligible for applying for SAH. SAH is applied for on a VA Form 26-4555; Application in Acquiring Specially Adapted Housing or Special Home Adaptation Grant. Once the grant is applied for and approved, you should receive contact from a VA SAH agent who will assist with the process of utilizing your SAH grant.

Since many of the members of PVA may meet the criteria of the above, I also wanted to provide some of the more common examples of veterans who should be eligible for SAH. One such example would be a veteran who is service connected for diabetes due to agent orange exposure. Due to their diabetes, they have an amputation of their left lower extremity and use a wheelchair. In this case, the veteran would be eligible for SAH as they have both loss of an extremity along with an organic disease. Another common example would be a veteran is service connected for

by Zachary T. Nuetzel National Service Officer

May 2025

#### THE FOLLOWING DISABILITIES ARE SAH ELIGIBLE

- Permanent and total disability due to the loss of loss of use of both lower extremities, such as to preclude locomotion without the aid of braces, crutches, cane, or a wheelchair.
- Permanent disability due to blindness in both eyes.
- The permanent loss or loss of use of one lower extremity together with the loss residuals of organic disease which affect the functions of balance and propulsion as to preclude locomotion without the aid of assistive devices.
- A permanent and total disability due to the loss or loss of use of one lower extremity together with the loss or loss of use of one upper extremity which so affect the functions of balance or propulsion as to preclude locomotion without assistive devices.
- A permanent and total disability due to the loss or loss of use of both upper extremities such as to preclude use of the arms at or above the elbow.
- A permanent and total disability due to full thickness or subdermal burns that have resulted in contractures with limitation of motion of two or more extremities or of at least one extremity and the trunk.
- Being diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis.

multiple sclerosis. Because of their multiple sclerosis, they have loss of use of their left foot, and loss of use of their left hand. They also require a cane and an AFO for ambulation. In this case, the veteran is eligible for SAH as they meet the criteria. Veterans who are service connected for ALS, are eligible for SAH regardless of whether or not they have loss of use.

Although this is not an all-encompassing list of examples, it is my hope that this provides a better understanding of some of the situations that may entitle a veteran to SAH. Because service connection is a requisite for SAH, not all continued on page 11

– www.pvanewengland.org

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

continued from page 10 veterans with loss of use are eligible for the grant. If you are unsure if you are eligible for SAH, believe you may be eligible for SAH, or want to learn more about Specially Adapted Housing, please contact your local Paralyzed Veterans of America National Service Officer.

#### **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: (202) 416-1075 Serving Massachusetts and Rhode Island Bldg. 248, Room 112 Augusta, ME 04330 phone: (207) 621-7394 fax: (207) 621-4829

#### **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

## **PVA** Policy Priorities

With a new Congress and a new Administration in Washington, D.C., PVA's priorities for 2025 are focused on ensuring access to the care and benefits PVA members have earned and the civil rights protections they deserve. We look forward to working with our champions to move these priorities forward throughout the year.

#### **PVA priorities for 2025 are as follows:**

• Protect VA's Specialized Health Care Services • Increase Access to Long-Term Services and Supports for Veterans with SCI/D • Improve Veterans' Financial Security • Enhance Access to Health Care Services for Veterans with SCI/D • Defend the Freedoms of Veterans with Disabilities

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

Michael Snape, National Service Officer III Serving Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont

#### **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



# **EVENT SCHEDULE**

Puerto Rico Boccia Tournament (Year-end event)	May 2-4, 2025	San Juan, PR
Land of Lincoln Bass Tournament	May 2-4, 2025	Whittington, IL
Intro to Paracycling Camp - Stop 2	May 8-9, 2025	Salt Lake City, UT
Intro to Paracycling Camp - Stop 3	May 21-22, 2025	Milwaukee, WI
Vaughan Trapshoot Tournament	May 23-25, 2025	Elburn, IL
Texas Air Gun Tournament	May 31-Jun 1, 2025	San Antonio, TX
June 2025		
Wheelchair Basketball Camp	June 6-8, 2025	Arlington, TX
Capital Clash Bass Tournament (Year-end event)	June 13-15, 2025	La Plata, MD
Colonial Pickleball Tournament	June 14-15, 2025	Perry Point, MD
lowa Trapshoot Tournament	June 20-22, 2025	Cedar Rapids, IA
Grand Teton Outdoor Experience	June 23-27, 2025	Jackson Hole, WY
PVA Bowling Nationals - Great Plains	June 26-29, 2025	Omaha, NE

#### July 2025

National Veterans Wheelchair Games

Minneapolis, MN



**Cord Word** 

#### Washington Update continued

#### **Report on PVA's Survey About Disability-Related Barriers Encountered When Voting**

hank you to all our members who participated in PVA's survey on any disabilityrelated barriers encountered when voting in the 2024 general election. Your responses have provided PVA with important data on disability-related barriers in voting. We will use this data to create resources to educate and better support members and spread awareness of barriers to voting for people with disabilities.

The data we received showed that a majority of participants utilize mail-in voting (40.27 percent). Early polling place voting (24.83 percent) and election day in-person voting (23.49 percent) came in a close second and third. Overall, the survey shows fewer accessibility barriers were experienced when participants chose alternatives to in person voting. Over 80

percent of participants reported that they did not face any accessibility barriers. Most of the barriers participants who voted in person faced were related to lack of accessible parking, limited space to maneuver mobility devices, and inaccessible ballot boxes.

PVA provides resources on voting accessibility. To learn more about our resources, visit PVA's voting accessibility page on our website and follow us on social media.

# 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.

and their families.

#### **Priority Legislation Highlighted in Stars and Stripes**

n April 21, Stars and Stripes published an article about the Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act (H.R. 1147)/ Veterans Accessibility Act (S. 1383) that featured Anne Robinson, PVA National Vice President. This legislation would create a federal advisory committee on equal access which would focus on physical and technical barriers that veterans face at VA and in the community. It is off to a good start this Congress with bipartisan support in the House and Senate. In the Senate, the Chairman and Ranking Members of both the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee and the Senate Special Committee on Aging are the original supporters of the legislation.

If you'd like to encourage your legislators to support H.R. 1147/S. 1383, please visit PVAction Force to let them know.

MAXIM HEALTHCARE SERVICES

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

**Contact us today!** www.maximhealthcare.com



#### May 2025

#### **REMINDER:** Invitation to Participate in University of Illinois at Chicago Research Study on Air Travel and People with Disabilities

re you a person with a spinal cord injury who has expe-Lience traveling by air? If you are 18 years old or older, you are invited to take part in a University of Illinois at Chicago research study to better understand your air travel experiences, accessibility needs, and barriers to safe and accessible travel. This knowledge will be used to create recommendations for airline and airport personnel training, as well as information resources to facilitate a safe and pleasant travel experience.

(Zoom). You will be compensated \$50 for your time. If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact the research assistant for this project at accesstofly@uic.edu.



## Indego<sup>®</sup> Gets Paralyzed Veterans Walking Again

#### 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
- ✓ Eniov eve-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.

Your participation would require taking part in a 60-minute interview via phone or a teleconferencing platform

Phone: 844-846-3346 Email: support.indego@parker.com





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

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Email: info@pvanewengland.org

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



## New England Chapter



Brockton VA Pharmacy Cookout and Field Day May 31st from 10:00am-3:00pm

Summer Sports Clinic July 21st-July 25th

## Join Us at Upcoming Events

#### **Annual Chapter Golf Tournament**

Monday, August 18th South Shore Country Club in Hingham, MA 12 noon shotgun start on Dinner, drinks, and awards to follow A great day of golf!

#### **Annual Chapter Banquet & Clambake**

Sunday, August 24th Italian American War Veterans Post 45 Marlborough, MA Free for members and guests, VA and Chapter Staff, and volunteers. Under a pavilion with DJ and cash bar. Fellowship and fun for all!