

# ROLL WITH US

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER - DECEMBER, 2023

## PVA-WI Competes at the 42nd Annual National Veteran Wheelchair Games 2023!

This past July, Veterans from across the United States traveled to Portland, Oregon, to compete in the 42nd Annual National Veteran Wheelchair Games (NVWG)! Proudly co-sponsored by PVA and the Department of Veteran Affairs, 400 Veterans participated in NVWG 2023, a substantial increase from the previous 300 participants competing in last year's games! Additionally, we are excited to announce that women are growing their presence at the games, with 51 women athletes competing at NVWG 2023!

On July 4-9, 2023, Veterans competed for medals in over 20 events, including but not limited to air pistol, air rifle, archery, basketball, powerlifting, boccia, bowling, cycling, disc golf, and swimming. NVWG 2023 also offered atHOME events, allowing Veterans who could not travel to Portland to participate and compete.



Team Wisconsin brought home a spectacular 31 medals: 21 gold, 8 silver, and 2 bronze! WAY TO GO, WISCONSIN! We want to congratulate all the following athletes who participated and proudly represented Team Wisconsin: LeToi Adams, Terrence Green, Scott Griffith, Randall Riek, Ken Ness, Rickey Riley, Phil Rosenburg, Gary Stott, Derrick Trentin, Angela Walker, Michael Zvara, Timothy Martin, Ricky Wicklund, Jerry Howell, Howard Luxner, Carlton Garrett, Jim Jacobi, Ervin Mulkey, and Marvin Bailey. *This story is continued on page 4.*



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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear PVA-WI Community,

I hope this message finds you well and filled with the same excitement and gratitude that I have in my heart as I step into my new role as the President of the Board for Paralyzed Veterans of America - Wisconsin (PVA-WI). It's an honor to introduce myself to you, and I am thrilled to be a part of this incredible community.

As some of you may already know, I have had the privilege of serving as the Vice President on our board for the past year. During that time, I have witnessed the dedication and passion of our members and the remarkable achievements we've accomplished together. Now, as your new Board President, I am committed to continuing the incredible work that we've begun.

Let's take a moment to celebrate the milestones we achieved together in the past year:

- 1) Caregiver Respite Program: We made significant strides in supporting our caregivers, providing them with essential respite services, and acknowledging their invaluable contributions to our veterans' lives.
- 2) Increasing Membership: Our efforts in outreach and engagement have led to a growth in our membership, broadening our community and giving a stronger voice to those we serve.
- 3) Meeting All Fiscal Year Financial Goals: Thanks to your dedication and generous support, we not only met but exceeded our financial targets, ensuring the sustainability of our programs and services.
- 4) Building Community Partnerships: We expanded our network of partnerships with local organizations, strengthening our ability to serve our veterans effectively.

### Wisconsin (PVA-WI)

#### Officers

President: Todd Drazy  
Vice President: Scott Griffith  
Secretary: Gary Stott  
Treasurer/GRD: Scott Griffith  
President Emeritus: Phil Rosenberg  
Immediate Past President: Ken Ness

#### National Director

Scott Griffith

#### Directors

Richard "Rick" Buth  
Peter Carrao  
Troy Kurczek  
Ken Matthews  
Michael Thomas  
Derrick Trentin

#### Recreation Therapy

Erinn Kulba  
Sam Gracz

### WHO WE ARE

#### Staff

Amera Schaefer: Executive Director  
Brenna Frey: Nonprofit Administrative Manager

#### National SVC Office

Brenda Stencil  
Call: 414-902-5655

#### Rehab Counselor

Doug Green MS, CRC

#### Office Hours

Monday-Thursday, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM  
Friday, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
Saturday & Sunday Closed  
750 N Lincoln Memorial Drive, Suite 422  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
414-328-8910

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dear PVA-WI Members,

I hope this message finds you well and still basking in the glow of the fantastic evening we shared at the 2023 Annual Membership Banquet. It was a remarkable celebration of our community, our achievements, and the incredible spirit that binds us together. The banquet was truly a night to remember, filled with laughter, heartfelt conversations, and a shared sense of purpose. It was a privilege to see old friends reconnect and new friendships form as we celebrated our collective successes and looked ahead to a brighter future. But our journey of making a difference in the lives of our veterans doesn't end there. We have some exciting events lined up that I invite you all to participate in. On Veterans Day, November 11th, we are partnering with Texas Roadhouse in New Berlin for a special fundraiser. Not only will it be an opportunity to enjoy great food, but also a chance to show your support for our cause. A portion of the proceeds will go directly towards our programs and services, ensuring we can continue making a positive impact on the lives of our veterans. Stay tuned for more exciting events in the coming months!

Please do not hesitate to reach out and contact the office with any questions or concerns at 414-328-8910.

### CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

Members: 303

New Members: Billy G. Lynk, Keena E. Avery, James F. Neibauer, Einar Olsen, Robert J. Moliere, Jr., Willie Lyons, III, Richard A. Holloway, Lindsey Parker, Doug Harris, John E. Knutson, John C. Kosel, Michael P. Kruzel, Doug Harris, John C. Kosel, John E. Knutson, Harry G. Helfrich, Kenneth N. Chase, Stephen J. Emt, Dale E. Ahrens, Clifford H. Jennerman, Lorianne Brown, Anthony Warren, Jr., Willie D. Harmon

Associate Members: 171

Final Bugle:

James L. Weber, Scot A. Singerhouse, Judi A. Innis, Thomas R. Reaster, Michael C. Jensen, Michael J. Corrao, Keith Kieren, Harvey Smilowitz

Hello PVA-WI Members,

A donor has donated a crypt to us located at West Lawn Memorial Park in Racine, WI.

If you are interested or have any questions please email [info@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:info@wisconsinpva.org) or call the office at 414-328-8910.

Final Bugle:

## Scholarship Opportunity

PVA-WI has a scholarship program for our members and their family. Eligibility is open to all PVA-WI members, their spouse, their children, and their grandchildren. This scholarship opportunity is not open to associate members or their dependents.

Application submission guidelines:

1. Proof of enrollment in an accredited college, university, or technical school
2. Submit an essay between 500-600 words describing how you have been impacted by a veteran living with a spinal cord injury or disease
3. Share any civic engagement activity you have performed
4. Must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or above, please submit your most recent transcript showing grades and GPA

The application is available on our website under policies; click on the policy titled PVA-WI Scholarship for Members/Dependents or scan QR below. These applications will be reviewed year-round on the first of every month. If you have any questions, please email [aschaefer@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:aschaefer@wisconsinpva.org).



## President's Report Continued...

5) National Veterans Wheelchair Games: It is with immense pride that I share that we sent a record number of novice athletes to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, showcasing the incredible talent within our community.

The highlight of this year has undoubtedly been our 2023 Annual Membership Banquet. It was a fantastic celebration of our collective achievements, a time when we all came together to cherish our successes and the bonds that unite us. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who participated, making it a night to remember. If you missed it, don't worry! We look forward to welcoming you at our next banquet as we continue to build these unforgettable moments together.

As we step into 2024, I am excited about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. Together, as the PVA-WI community, we will continue to grow, evolve, and make a meaningful impact on the lives of our veterans and their families.

I encourage you all to stay engaged, share your ideas, and participate in our events and initiatives. Our strength as an organization comes from the dedication and involvement of each and every one of you.

Thank you for the trust you've placed in me as your Board President. I am eager to work alongside you all to create an even brighter future for PVA-WI. Let's continue our journey of making a difference in the lives of our veterans.

It was great to see PVA-WI members at the Annual Membership Banquet! Looking forward to seeing you at many more gatherings in the year ahead.

With warm regards,  
Todd Drazy, Board President



## NVWG cover story continued...

Hardworking athletes represent Team Wisconsin, and their dedication does not go unnoticed. A spotlight was placed on PVA-WI members Marvin Bailey and Ervin Mulkey at NVWG this year. The VA Portland Health Care System wrote the following Facebook posts about Marvin Bailey and Ervin Mulkey:

"Ervin Mulkey has been participating in National Veterans Wheelchair Games for at least eight years, maybe more. His coach says, 'he will talk anyone's ear off regarding the power of participating in sports.' #Adaptivesports has changed Ervin's life for the better. Ervin wants that great feeling for others so he often advocates for other Veterans to join the competition. The photo shows Ervin concentrating on Air Rifle, but he also competed in #discgolf #Boccia, #TableTennis, #Archery, #Cornhole, and #Softball. Congratulations on your Silver and Bronze medals at the 42nd Annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Portland, Oregon Ervin!"

"Marvin Bailey is a novice athlete at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games this year. He's one of the many Milwaukee VA Medical Center Veterans who traveled to Portland, Oregon and wore really fun cow-themed costumes. Marvin is jumping into #Sports4Vets in 2023 and recently completed The Golden Age Games where he competed for the first time in that event.

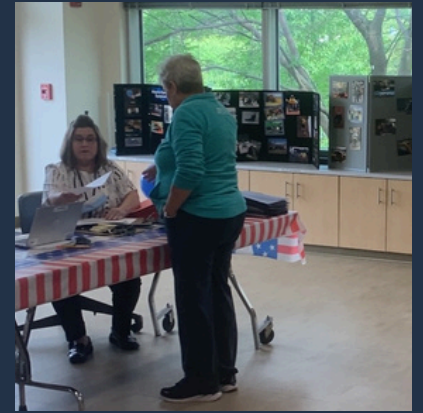
Marvin's coach calls him "such a cool guy," who "takes everything in and puts an optimistic spin on it, in spite of the challenges he lives with every day. He finds a way to do whatever he wants and is willing to try anything new. Way to go Marvin! We are very proud of you!"



## PVA-Wisconsin at Work

### Zablocki VA Spinal Cord Injury Center Nurse Recruitment Event

Vice President & Treasurer Scott Griffith supported VA SCI staff to inform prospective nurses on the benefits of working at the VA SCI Center



### Ellenbecker Investment Group Veterans Appreciation Event

Board President Todd Drazy and Executive Director Amera Schaefer attended this great event! There were over 20 local veteran service organizations and over 300 people in attendance! a



### Pulaski Marching Band Check Presentation

PVA-WI is supporting the Pulaski Marching Band, a local high school marching band in Brown County's trip to the Rose Bowl Parade! Each year, this marching band plays for PVA-WI members at the National Trap Shoot event.



## Annual Membership Meeting & Chapter Awards

PVA-WI's Annual Membership Meeting was held on Sunday, September 17, at Roma Lodge in Racine. The Annual Membership Meeting was an extraordinary gathering, bringing our community together in a spirit of camaraderie and shared purpose. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated supporters, Generac, Gruber Law Offices, and the Waterstone Bank Foundation, for their unwavering commitment to our veterans. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our veterans! Their support enables us to make a real difference in the lives of those who have served our nation.

During the meeting, our raffles and online auction provided not only exciting prizes but also vital funds to support our programs. The swearing-in of our new board members marked an important moment as we welcomed fresh perspectives and renewed dedication to our mission.

Lastly, perusing through the banquet photos allowed us to relive the joyous memories and connections made that night and take some time to look through the next couple of pages. Together, we are forging a stronger, more vibrant PVA-WI community.

PVA-WI's Annual Chapter Awards were given to the following individuals:

- Donald G. "Don" Schmidt Sportsman Award - Mak Nong
- Ron Falkner Award: Justin Plesnik
- Patricia A. "Patty" Wiseman PVA-WI Volunteer of the Year award: Linda Faria
- President's Award: Julie Kronenburg
- PVA-WI Corporate Patriot Award: Property Loss Specialists (PLC)



**President's Award: Julie Kronenburg**



**Ron Falkner Award: Justin Plesnik**





## AMVETS POST 911 9-PIN BOWLING BENEFIT

Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup> 2023

Towne & Country Lanes, Burlington

Registration at 11:00 Bowling at 12:00

Silent Auction & Raffles

All proceeds benefit

*Wisconsin Paralyzed Veterans /*

*Vets Roll / Battle Ground 22 Foundation*

Lane reservations are recommended

Contact Towne & Country Lanes at 763-7333

For more information contact:

Gail Bishop 262-210-2939



## BEYOND GLORY

a play  
by STEPHEN LANG

based on the book by LARRY SMITH with  
additional material by  
Kent Masterson Brown & Michael Duncan  
Directed by Michael Duncan

NOVEMBER 4 – 5, 2023 – ST JOHN'S NORTHWESTERN ACADEMIES  
Delafield, Wisconsin – DeKoven, Welles Dining Hall

*Nine Medal of Honor recipients from WWII, Korean, Vietnam and the Civil War tell  
their stories of courage with passion and heart-wrenching honesty.*

- Production will pay tribute to the special heroes of our country and those who have served or continue to serve our country.
- Performances will present a premiere version with a special tribute to Delafield's ALONZO CUSHING in a new scene performed by permission of the playwright.
- Nine accomplished actors from Wisconsin will be featured.
- A "talk back" with the cast and director will follow each performance.
- Donations for this event will go to provide tickets to veterans who attend the event.
- Public performances will be held at 4:30 & 7:30 pm, Nov. 4 and 2:00 pm, Nov. 5.
- Tickets for the event will be available online or at the door. More information will be available at [sjnacademies.org](http://sjnacademies.org) by the end of August.
- SINA is a 501 (c) 3 tax exempt organization.

For more information about tickets/donating/supporting **BEYOND GLORY** contact  
Joe Sevenz, Community Relations Officer, St. John's Northwestern Academies.  
262-646-7216 / [jsevenz@sjnacademies.org](mailto:jsevenz@sjnacademies.org)



**PVA**  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Wisconsin Chapter

YOU'RE INVITED TO OUR  
**HOLIDAY  
LUNCHEON**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

Time: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM  
Where: SCI Building 144, Room 171

Please join us for good food, good times, and great comradery!  
PVA - WI proudly salutes the men and women of the  
Milwaukee VA, SCI Staff.

Staff members are encouraged to purchase an item from the  
Fisher House Milwaukee Wish List.  
Meals, Beverages and Desert provided by PVA-WI.



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**NOVEMBER 11, 2023**

**TEXAS**  
**ROADHOUSE**

**PVA**  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Wisconsin Chapter

**FUNDRAISER**

Texas Roadhouse New Berlin  
15425 Rock Ridge Rd, New Berlin, WI 53151

### Overview of Additional Benefits for Dependency

By Brenda Stencil, NSO

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) may pay additional disability compensation to a veteran for dependent(s) if the veteran's service-connected (SC) disability rating is at least 30%

#### **Who qualifies as a dependent?**

- Spouse (same-sex and common-law marriages)
- Minor children (biological and/or stepchild): under age 18
- School children (biological and/or stepchild): between the ages of 18 and 23 and attending an accredited educational institution
- Legally adopted children
- Parent(s): includes a biological parent, an adoptive parent, and a foster parent
- Seriously disabled (helpless) child

**Note:** Military spouses. If both the veteran and spouse have a combined disability rating of at least 30%, additional disability compensation can be received for each other and for their children.

#### **How do I add my dependents to my award?**

A quick and efficient way to add dependents became available in 2011, an online program called eBenefits ([www.eBenefits.va.gov](http://www.eBenefits.va.gov)). However, VA recently uncovered a technical issue with VA.gov, impacting an estimated 56,000 veterans. Veterans who filed a claim requesting to update the status of their dependents were not successfully processed by VA.gov. This error resulted in delayed actions in adding or removing dependents and overall may have increased or decreased monthly benefits. VA is identifying the exact number of impacted veterans and directly contacting them by mail. The VA is implementing a fix to the problem to ensure this doesn't happen again.

#### **Can I file a claim for dependents via mail?**

Yes, the following forms are required to submit a claim for dependents:

- If claiming a dependent, submit a completed VA Form 21-686c, Application Request to Add and/or Remove Dependents.
- If claiming a child in school between the ages of 18 and 23; also submit a completed VA form 21-674, Request for Approval of School Attendance.

*This article is continued on page 25*



# 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
- ✓ Improve your cardio & bone density
- ✓ Enjoy eye-level conversations again



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



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**Phone: 844-846-3346**

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



## Congrats to Team Wisconsin!



**1st Place Team Award  
at PVA North Central Trap shoot!**

## Veterans Afield Hunting Events



**Please reach out to Pat Horvath if interested in participating:  
P: 414-304-5022    E:navy6@wi.rr.com**



## Thank You's

*Good Morning,*

*I just wanted to thank you both [Scott and Amera] and the other volunteers for putting the banquet together. Once again, you all did a great job setting it up and running the event. I want to give you all a BRAVO!!!*

*Pat Hovath, Veterans Affair*

*I recently attended the North Central PVA trap shoot in South Dakota made possible by your efforts and financial support for other members and myself. I wish to thank each of you personally. I had a very good time and enjoyed meeting other Veterans.*

*I was fortunate enough to be selected to be one of the members of Team Wisconsin and helped to take home first place.*

*Thank you.*

*Dale Nelson*

*Amera,*

*I wanted to take the time to thank PVA-WI and the donor of the tickets for the wonderful time we had at the Green Bay Packers game! I can't thank you all enough for this experience.*

*Tim Martin*



*Dear Amera and Linda,*


*On behalf of the Milwaukee VA Fisher House, we thank you for coming on August 23, 2023, to provide a home-cooked meal to the families staying with us. We appreciate the support and contribution in making this house a "home away from home" for all families who came to stay. Your donation demonstrates your concern for America's heroes and their families.*

*Thank you again.*

*The Milwaukee VA Fisher House*



# Want To Improve **Your Bowel Function?**



**Recently published research reveals between 50 and 80% of participants reported improvements in bowel function and/or management after walking in an exoskeleton\***

**Did you know Paralyzed US Veterans May be Eligible for a ReWalk Personal Exoskeleton?**

Contact ReWalk for more Information:

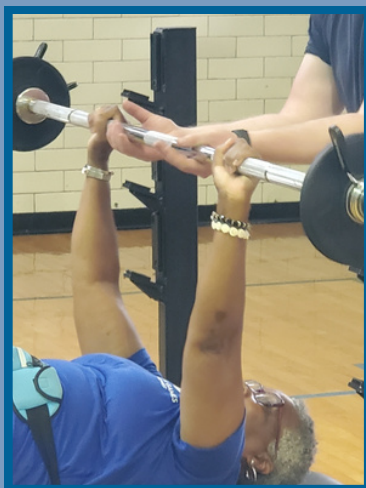
**[rewalk.com/contact](https://rewalk.com/contact) or 508.251.1154 option 2**

\*Chun A, et al. Changes in bowel function following exoskeletal-assisted walking in persons with spinal cord injury: an observational pilot study. Spinal Cord. 2020;58(4):459-466.



# Valor Games Midwest

PVA-WI associate member Cecily Roland participated in the Valor Games Midwest this past August. We want to congratulate her for winning 2 gold medals in table tennis and archery and 4 silver medals in rowing, discus, shot put, and bench press!



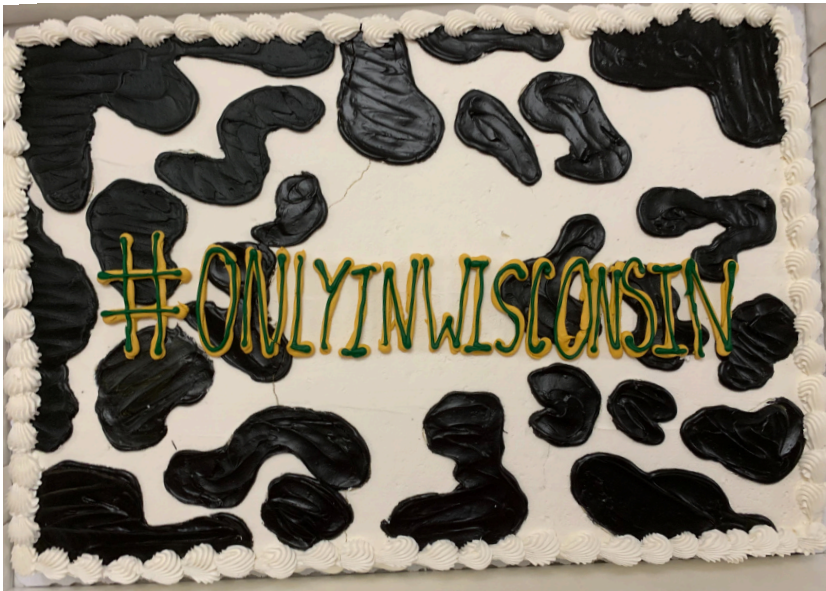
PVA-WI members Terrence Green and John Wild participate in a football tournament! Wish them the best of luck as they travel to Las Vegas for the next football tournament!



**11th Annual Fisher House Golf Outing**  
PVA-WI board member Troy Kurczek and team took first place for Veteran participants!



## 2023 Annual Membership Banquet





## Events & Opportunities



### 2023 Veterans Day Poster and Poem Contest

Paralyzed Veterans of America Wisconsin Chapter is pleased to announce the 2023 Veterans Day Poster and Poem Contest. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for children to creatively express gratitude for our nation's heroes in their own imaginative way.

The theme for this year's contest is: *"#TravelWithDignity."* Drawing from personal experiences with a Veteran, or from stories or lessons learned in school or through media, students should draw a poster or write a poem that relates to the theme and show or tell why today's airplanes should be more accessible and safer for Veterans and others who use wheelchairs. *Posters must include the visual/image of a wheelchair and poems must reference the importance of a wheelchair.*

Winners will be awarded of each category will receive an Amazon gift card.

The poster contest is open to students in first through fourth grades.

The poem contest is open to students in fifth through eighth grades.

Public, private, and home-schooled students living in the United States in first through eighth grades are eligible to enter. Civic organizations, scout troops and religious organizations that work with children may also submit entries.

**All entries for the Veterans Day Poster and Poem Contest must be received via email or standard mail by Friday, October 20, 2023, at 5:00 PM.**

Visit our website for  
more submission  
guidelines:

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

Or scan QR  
code below:



# NATO Phonetic Alphabet Word Search

J O Q K O R H S V Y N P C E Q O S O P I J R B U Z  
 O L F M J I O I U I K D Y L I M A W B U P H S T B  
 K O S C E N X M L U C E Q H G J N W Q B X O Q U U  
 E W Y F Q U Q R E V N T Q P L O G C G F Z T Q T G  
 U D Q G U E B Q A O B I O S Y I S Q H M D E S J H  
 X T Z J E Z A P F Y Z X F R S K W S H I X L W N P  
 V A Y C B D Z Y T A B O W O L V Y W C D C B R S Z  
 S N X G E X A A B Z A N W R R P I R P D H N D V B  
 J G U W C O N N L E Y W C X B M D W T H A E X D J  
 K O N A B R E K Q P T P C C M W Z T U X R B O E M  
 Q E S E D H F E T U H A V I B A A R X F L A A S M  
 N N N Q Y C X E K M S A S B C Q N U W U I U Z I I  
 S C O I D X Y E F K P I P L Q E C I H I E I U E I  
 N I A V K W S E H O N A K E N J X N I X I Y L R P  
 E J J E E H K K C N X X P G F J H D S W X Q U R C  
 D T O U C M Y A I X O T F A T J V I K M H R J A T  
 T O O S L H B W J L R W R J L C R A E L Z I I D P  
 Q V G S A I O E K U O T V O Q A Y A Y L D Z P N V  
 W P M X C O E R R A C U Z K T M O C L Z E L N T E  
 Q F I G K A X T A E H O Z K W M H F S K L V C V A  
 G J K L H O R C Y T N K T C M X Z V V Q T Q H I D  
 I O E Y B P B Q D L E O T U E H X Y G N A E O Y J  
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 J S J F S J Z K K P E N P C C Y H T Q F O R M I E  
 Q I D Q X Y T Q V E J F L I K I L Z C W G I U E B

November

Charlie

Whiskey

Papa

Foxtrot

Uniform

Yankee

Lima

Victor

Juliet

Sierra

Kilo

Oscar

Quebec

Tango

Golf

Romeo

Alpha

Hotel

Echo

India

Delta

Beta

Zulu

Mike

XRay



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(1-833-346-4268)  
@mobiusmobility

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

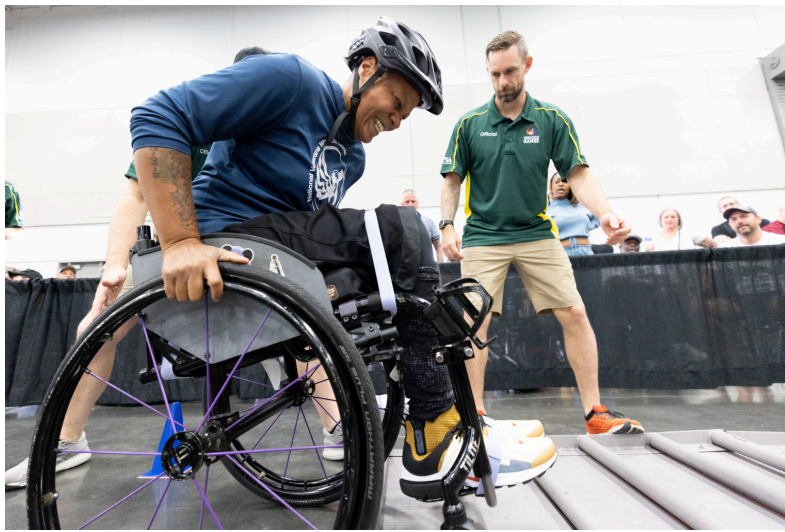
f iBOT® by Mobius Mobility

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

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# 42ND ANNUAL NATIONAL VETERAN WHEELCHAIR GAMES











**WE BRING THE VAN TO YOU!**

**SAFE. CONVENIENT. TRUSTED.**

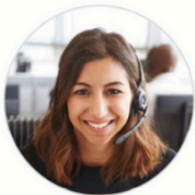


**For nearly 50 years Rollx Vans has been providing Veterans Nationwide the safest most convenient way to purchase a wheelchair accessible vehicle.**

**We take great pride in serving those who served our country.**



**SEARCH INVENTORY  
SHOP ONLINE  
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TO ASSIST YOU**



**FREE DELIVERY  
TOUCHLESS  
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100% SATISFACTION  
GUARANTEE!**

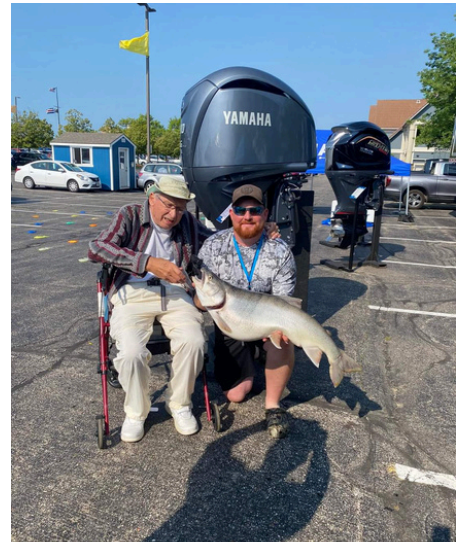
**Veterans get up to \$3000 off the purchase of your Rollx Van!  
Call 800-956-6668 or visit us at [rollxvans.com](http://rollxvans.com)**



# SALMON-A-RAMA

On July 18th, 2023, 42 PVA members set sail on the beautiful waters of Lake Michigan to participate in Salmon-A-Rama. Proudly hosted by Reefpoint Marina in Racine, PVA members boarded 10 charter boats occupied by volunteers and healthcare professionals in hopes of catching the big ones! PVA members caught over 75 fish and received rewards based on the type of fish caught and its weight. In addition, Salmon-A-Rama Unlimited had a team of volunteers to clean and prepare the fish filets for participants to bring home and provided smoked salmon. PVA members also enjoyed a 3-course lunch at the Reefpoint Marina Brewhouse. Thank you to the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation for supporting the event!

Above all, we want to give a big thank you to the Racine Fire Department and Reefpoint Marina boat captains for assisting our veterans in boarding the charter boats. With you, this event took place. We couldn't have asked for better weather and look forward to participating in Salmon-A-Rama next year. This was our third year participating, and we look forward to expanding this program!





## Attention Caregivers

Caregivers,

Providing the support that a significant other, family member, or friend needs is a very loving and fulfilling experience. However, it's important to acknowledge that throughout this experience, you, too, need support. Caring for a Veteran with a spinal cord injury or disease, such as MS or ALS, is a unique journey, although you are not alone along the way. Please visit PVA-WI's newly released webpage for caregivers, *Caregivers...you are heroes too!*

This webpage can be found on our website,

<https://wisconsinpva.org/caregivers>, and will consist of specialized resources

- supporting caregiving for Veterans, caregiving for individuals with ALS, and
- caregiving for individuals with MS. Remember, prioritizing all areas of your
- health is essential!

## UPDATE: Annual Clothing Allowance

VA is continuing to work on implementation of Public Law 117-328 – a change to the annual clothing allowance becoming an annual continuous/recurring payment until the veteran elects to no longer receive such payments or until VA determines the veteran is no longer eligible for such payments.

If you received a clothing allowance payment in 2022, you will receive the same number of clothing allowances in 2023 and thereafter. Veterans will be no longer required to submit applications.

The Veterans Benefits Administration and the Veterans Health Administration are continuing to collaborate on implementation of this law.

### NATO Phonetic Alphabet Word Search

J O Q K O R H S V Y N P C E O O S O P I J R B U Z  
O L F M J I O U I U C E Q H G J N W Q B X O Q U U  
K O S C E N X M I U C E Q H G J N W Q B X O Q U U  
E W Y F Q U Q R E V N O P L O G C G F Z T Q T G  
U D Q G U E B Q A O B S Y I S Q H M D E S J H  
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## ALS & MS Resources

*Please note that the MS Society has written this article. However, it contains information applicable to individuals with ALS or other spinal cord injury or disease.*

### **Whether you have MS or not, emotional well-being is an important component of overall wellness.**

For instance, emotions influence how you feel physically, your motivation to care for your health, how much and what you eat, how much you exercise, how you relate to other people and to the world in general, and how intensely and joyfully you engage in your chosen roles.

Like other aspects of wellness, emotional well-being can be nurtured and enhanced, even in the face of changes and challenges.

#### **Focus on the positive**

The field of positive psychology emphasizes personal growth and well-being, based on the core belief that all people want and look for happiness in their lives. Although happiness is defined in different ways, it involves focusing on your own unique goals and criteria for success and well-being.

Happiness allows us to thrive, solve the problems we confront in our lives and maintain a strong sense of hope.

#### **Stay centered**

The diagnosis of a chronic illness can be overwhelming. You will experience many emotions. Staying connected to your feelings, priorities and values can help calm emotional turmoil. Find personal meaning through spiritual practices or religious beliefs. For a secular option, access recordings of guided relaxation sessions in My MSToolkit from the University of Michigan.

#### **Manage stress**

Stress is part of everyday life. The diagnosis of MS can sometimes make the stress of daily life feel overwhelming. Many people with MS say that during stressful times, they experience more or worse symptoms. When the stress decreases, their symptoms seem less troubling or less severe. Learning to eliminate unnecessary stressors — and manage the ones that are here to stay — is essential for emotional balance. It's important to find an activity that helps you reduce stress. Some possibilities include deep breathing, meditation, individual or team sports, journaling, hobbies, time with family and friends, and traditional exercise.

#### **Practice solution-focused problem-solving**

Life's challenges and problems can mount quickly and sometimes feel too big to handle. Challenges can also be viewed as opportunities for creative problem-solving. This mindset can increase coping strategies and lead to enhanced resilience. With each success, feelings of competence, pride and self-confidence grow stronger and contribute to emotional well-being.

#### **Pay attention to your mood**

Depression, anxiety, and other mood changes are more common in people with MS than in others. This is, in part, a reaction to the challenges of a chronic illness and in part due to the changes caused by MS in the brain and the immune system. Depression is a serious yet treatable symptom of MS. It needs careful assessment and treatment, just like other MS symptoms. If, during the past 2 weeks, you have (1) often felt down, depressed, or hopeless and (2) had little interest or pleasure in doing things, it is important to seek professional help. Describe your symptoms to your healthcare provider. Get advice on locating a good provider in "What to Expect from Mental Healthcare: A Guide for People with MS."

*Please find the remainder of this article at <https://www.nationalmssociety.org/Living-Well-With-MS/Emotional-Well-Being>*



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## NSO Article Continued

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- If claiming a seriously disabled (helpless) child, also submit all, relevant, private medical treatment records pertaining to the child's pertinent disabilities. The evidence must show that the child, before his or her 18th birthday, became permanently incapable of self-support due to a mental or physical disability.
- If claiming a parent, submit a completed VA Form 21-509, Statement of Dependency of Parents. The issue of dependency is a question of whether or not a parent is financially dependent and requires consideration of the parent's assets and expenses.

### **The Veteran's responsibilities:**

Veterans must notify the VA of any changes to the status of their dependent(s) to include but not limited to: divorce, death of dependent(s), marriage of a child, parent(s) no longer financially dependent, and school attendance is discontinued.

**Note:** Separation or estrangement does not affect disability compensation awards unless 1) the spouse files a claim for apportionment or 2) the VA is paying additional compensation for stepchild(ren) whose biological or adoptive parent is the Veteran's spouse. Failure to notify the VA of life events, such as the death of a dependent, may result in an overpayment of benefits.

### **How can I check if my dependents are on my award?**

You can check the details using your eBenefits account. Log into your account and check Dependents under "My Profile section." If the dependents listed are incorrect or there are no dependents listed, contact your PVA National Service Officer.

### **No one told me that!?!?**

Any dependent child under the age of 18 is eligible for additional compensation and will automatically be removed from the award when he/she turns 18. Be watchful for the VA system-generated notices of potential entitlement to benefits mailed for each child turning age 13, 16, and approximately three months before turning 18. These letters inform veterans to make plans toward educational and vocational decisions. For instance, the Age 18 Notification letter includes VA Form 21-674, Request for Approval of School Attendance, if needed to establish school attendance.

Compensation may not be terminated at age 18 if veterans notify the VA of child being enrolled and not attending school.

**Note:** Some veterans may be eligible to Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA/Chapter 35) under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 35 based on permanent and total disability status. DEA provides educational assistance to children and spouses. The VA *may not* concurrently pay additional benefits to or for a child receiving DEA.

### **VA Periodical Verification of Dependents:**

VA mails a letter including VA Form 21-0538, Mandatory Verification of Dependents to automatically selected veterans to determine if the veteran is eligible to continue receiving additional compensation. This VA Form 21-0538 identifies by name the dependents for whom the VA is currently paying additional compensation. Veterans are required to respond within 60 days and may verify the status of their dependent(s) by contacting the VA National Call Center at (800) 827-1000 or completing and returning the VA Form 21-0538 to the VA. If a veteran fails to respond, it may result in reduction or discontinuation of benefits.

### **What if I need Help?**

Contact your National Service Officer, Brenda Stencil at (414) 902-5655 or email [brendas@pva.org](mailto:brendas@pva.org)

## Election Results

Mr. Todd Drazy - President  
Mr. Scott Griffith - Vice President/National Director, Treasurer/Government Relations Director  
Mr. Gary Stott - Secretary  
Mr. Ken Matthews - Board Member  
Mr. Troy Kurczek - Board Member  
Mr. Derrick Trentin - Board Member  
Mr. Pete Carrao - Board Member  
Mr. Rick Buth - Board Member  
Mr. Michael Thomas - Board Member  
Ms. Angela Walker - Board Member  
Mr. Ken Ness - Immediate Past President  
Mr. Phillip Rosenberg - President Emeritus

## PVA-WI sponsors the United Spinal Association Southeastern WI Chapter's 33rd Wheels & Heels 5k Run/Walk/Roll





## Supporting PVA-WI

PVA-WI has a variety of ways that individuals, groups or companies can show their support. Please review the multiple opportunities to continue to support the PVA-WI mission and our work.

If you have any questions please email [info@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:info@wisconsinpva.org) or call the office at 414-328-8910.



### Employee Matching

Does your employer have a matching gift program? Please check with your employer's human resources department for details. PVA-WI is happy to provide any other information your company may have to satisfy the requirements.



### Donor-Advised Funds

Using a charitable giving account is another powerful way to put your charitable dollars to work. This method eliminates capital gains on donated stocks. Use the DAF donation tool at [wisconsinpva.org/be-our-hero-and-make-difference-today](http://wisconsinpva.org/be-our-hero-and-make-difference-today).



### Legacy Society

Join our Legacy Society by making a bequest or other estate gift to assure the sustainability of our organization. Visit [www.wisconsinpva.org/planned-giving](http://www.wisconsinpva.org/planned-giving)



### Stock Donations

You can donate appreciated stocks, bonds, or mutual funds, which upon transfer, would be tax deductible. Please consult your financial advisor and submit questions to [info@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:info@wisconsinpva.org)



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### Join VoterVoice

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### Wisconsin's Gun Shop Project & Safe Storage Program

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- Responsible Firearm Ownership
- Voluntary, Temporary Safe Storage of a Firearm



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What to do with guns when a person may be in crisis.

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# SPINAL CORD INJURY SERVICE INFORMATION

These resources are available statewide, to all qualified Wisconsin residents.

Please call 414-384-2000 or 888-469-6616 and the extension listed below for services.

Department / Office	Extension	Department / Office	Extension
General information	41288	Prosthetics	42608
Triage	45845	Recreation Therapy	41256/41245/41258
SCI Clinical Appointments	41230	VA Van Travel	42057
Physical Therapy	41126	Patient Advocate	42604
Occupational Therapy	41126	National Service	414-902-5655
Badger Team (Social Worker)	41841	Packer Team (Social Worker)	42244
Pharmacy	42083	Packer & Badger RN	41236
Admissions ER	41885/41886		

## Wisconsin VAMC

Iron Mountain	Debra Pate	906-774-3300 ext. 31378
Madison	Heather Rehm	608-256-1901 ext. 18095
Tomah	Kristin Holloway	608-372-3971 ext. 61548

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