

# ROLL WITH US

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2025

## Team Wisconsin Triumphs at the 44th Annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games!

**MINNEAPOLIS, MN — July 17-22, 2025** — In a powerful display of determination, sportsmanship, and unity, 26 proud members of the **Paralyzed Veterans of America-Wisconsin Chapter (PVA-WI)** journeyed north to the Land of 10,000 Lakes to represent Team Wisconsin at the 44th Annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG). The week-long event was more than a competition—it was a celebration of resilience, camaraderie, and the unbreakable spirit of America’s veterans.



NATIONAL VETERANS  
**WHEELCHAIR  
GAMES**



Co-hosted by **Paralyzed Veterans of America** and the **Department of Veterans Affairs**, the NVWG is the largest adaptive sports and rehabilitation event in the United States for military veterans with disabilities. This year, 537 veterans from every branch and era of service competed in over 20 adaptive sports, ranging from wheelchair rugby and swimming to basketball and air rifle.

But beyond the medals and matches, the Games offered something deeper: a chance to reconnect, to heal, and to inspire. *Article continued on next page.*

 **Veterans  
Crisis Line**  
 **Military  
Crisis Line**  
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

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## Cover Story Continued

### A Moment That Moved Us All

Among the many unforgettable stories from this year's Games was one shared by Army veteran and 9-time NVWG athlete Ervin Mulkey, who first attended the Games in 2016 with his then 12-year-old son. Since that first experience, his son has joined him at every NVWG, becoming part of the tradition and the journey. That inaugural trip left a lasting impact on both of them. Mulkey recalls,



*"On the ride home, my son and I were talking about the entire experience, and I asked him if he had enjoyed himself. He looked at me and said, 'Dad, even if I wouldn't have enjoyed myself, the trip was worth it.' I asked him what he meant by that, and he said with tears in his eyes, 'Because I finally got my dad back!'"*

This powerful moment captures the heart of the Games—restoring hope, finding connection, and redefining possibilities.



### 2025 NVWG Medal Count

Team Wisconsin brought home an impressive 51 medals!

- 27 Gold
- 13 Silver
- 11 Bronze

WAY TO GO, WISCONSIN!!!! Your dedication, perseverance, and team spirit made us all proud!

### Congratulating Our 2025 Team Wisconsin Athletes

Alan Lewis, Angela Walker, Arron Powless, Bill Fenton, Bruce Jensen, Derrick Trentin, Ervin Mulkey, Frank Smith, Frank Wozniak, Harold Hack, Howard Luxner, Jerry Howell, Jess Wagner, Joe Kendall, Marvin Bailey, Mason Symons, Michael Larson, Nicole Santos, Noah Currier, Pete Carrao, Randy Riek, Rickey Riley, Ricky Wicklund, Rodney Johnson, Terrence Green, and TJ Martin.

### Thank You to Our Sponsor, the New Glarus Brewing Company

We would like to give a special thank you to the New Glarus Brewing Company, whose generous support helped make Team Wisconsin's journey to the Games possible. Your commitment to veterans and adaptive sports is deeply appreciated.



As we look forward to the 45th Annual NVWG in Detroit, PVA-WI remains committed to empowering veterans through adaptive sports and recreation, advocacy, and community. Until next year—keep training, keep inspiring, and keep showing the world what Team Wisconsin is made of. **Enjoy photos from this event on pages 5 and 6.**



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

PVA-WI Community,

What an incredible year 2025 has been for our PVA-WI community! As I reflect back to write this message, I'm filled with pride on everything we've accomplished together and excited for what lies ahead in 2026.

Our recent Annual Membership Banquet exceeded all expectations, bringing together so many passionate advocates and dedicated supporters. The energy in the room was infectious, and we all had such a grand shared experience celebrating the 250th anniversary of the armed forces!

Your continued confidence in my leadership deeply humbles me as we embark on this new chapter together. Serving as your President remains one of my greatest privileges, and I'm committed to ensuring PVA-WI continues to be a powerful force for positive change in our community.

This past year has shown us that the true strength of our organization lies not just in our programs, but in the connections we forge with one another. From the inspiring stories shared at our gathering to the collaborative spirit I witnessed in every conversation, it's clear that PVA-WI is more than an organization—we're a movement united by purpose and driven by hope. Our programs represent our commitment to innovation while staying true to our core mission of advocacy and support. I encourage each of you to stay engaged as these exciting developments unfold.

As we close out this year and look toward tomorrow, may you find moments of peace and joy with those who matter most to you. Thank you for being the heart and soul of what makes PVA-WI extraordinary.

With appreciation and optimism,

Todd M. Drazy

Board of Directors President/Chairman of the Board

### WHO WE ARE

#### **Officers**

President: Todd Drazy  
Vice President/COO: Scott Griffith  
Secretary: Gary Stott  
Gov. Relations Dir: Christina Baurichter  
Immediate Past President: Ken Ness

#### **National Director**

Scott Griffith

#### **Directors**

Richard "Rick" Buth  
Troy Kurczek  
Michael Thomas  
Angela Walker

#### **Recreation Therapy**

Erinn Brulla  
Sam Doughty

#### **Staff**

Brenna Frey: Advancement & Engagement Coordinator

#### **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

## PVA-WI STAFF REPORT

Dear PVA-WI Members & Supporters,

We are incredibly grateful for the overwhelming response to our 2025 Annual Membership Banquet. The enthusiasm and engagement from all who joined us—whether through attendance, sponsorship, or volunteer support—truly made this year's event exceptional.

As fall approaches and the leaves change color, our support personnel have also changed. Our Executive Director, Ms. Amera Schaefer, has accepted a new position outside of our organization. We wish her well in her new endeavor and thank her for her time with us. Mr. Griffith is serving as the interim COO, and Brenna continues to serve as our Advancement & Engagement Coordinator. Our office team is always here to assist you. Please feel free to contact us with any ideas, feedback, or questions you may have.

May this holiday season bring you joy, peace, and cherished moments with family and friends.

With sincere appreciation,  
PVA-WI Staff

### CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

#### Members: 311

NEW: Richard J. Dennis, Skyler Correia, Albert J. Ebert,  
Delong Blunt, Moises G. Nazario

#### Associate Members: 197

NEW: Joseph J. Stout, Megan H. Stout, David Wittlinger, Norman  
Roberson, Vicki Dennis

#### Final Bugle:

Darrell E. Ness, Jr., Donald J. Sullivan, James R. Punke, Mark B.  
Young, William J. Baumgardt, Michael R. Freund, Bruce M. Selan,  
Robert Friskey, John C. Wilson, David J. Speth

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 (414)  
328-8910.

Scan the QR  
code to start  
your  
scholarship  
application  
today!



## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY



PVA-WI has a scholarship program for our members and their families. 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. Billing statement for the upcoming school year that includes the amount owed
3. Submit an essay between 500-600 words describing how you have been impacted by a veteran living with a spinal cord injury or disease.
4. Share any civic engagement activity you have performed.
5. 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 the QR code. These applications will be reviewed year-round on the first of every month. If you have any questions, please email [info@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:info@wisconsinpva.org).






## Upcoming Events



Please visit our website [www.wisconsinpva.org](http://www.wisconsinpva.org) for more events and information!  
New events are continuously added!



**JOIN THE MOVEMENT  
TO CURE ALS.**



**JOIN THE  
PVA-WI TEAM**

**1.3 Miles**

**WALK TO DEFEAT  
ALS  
THE ALS ASSOCIATION**

**Sunday, October 5, 2025  
8:30am - 12:00pm  
Greenfield Park  
2028 S 124<sup>th</sup> st.  
West Allis, WI 53227**

Visit the link below, click Join Our Team, and follow the registration instructions.  
<https://bit.ly/42Lgsd1>

**SAVE THE DATE  
NOVEMBER 11, 2025**



**TEXAS  
ROADHOUSE**



**PVA**  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Wisconsin Chapter

**FUNDRAISER**

**Texas Roadhouse New Berlin  
15425 Rock Ridge Rd, New Berlin, WI 53151  
11:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

**PVA**  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Wisconsin Chapter

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



**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10**

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

Please join us for good food, good times, and great camaraderie! 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.

**PVA**  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Sports & Recreation



**PVA WHEELCHAIR  
PICKLEBALL  
INVITATIONAL**

**April 25-26, 2026  
Midwest Orthopedic Specialty  
Hospital Performance Center  
7095 South Ballpark Drive, Franklin, WI 53132**

Register individually or with a partner.

For More Info, Contact:  
Katelynn Johnson • [KatelynnJ@PVA.org](mailto:KatelynnJ@PVA.org)

[PVA.org/Sports](http://PVA.org/Sports)  ParalyzedVeterans   PVA194

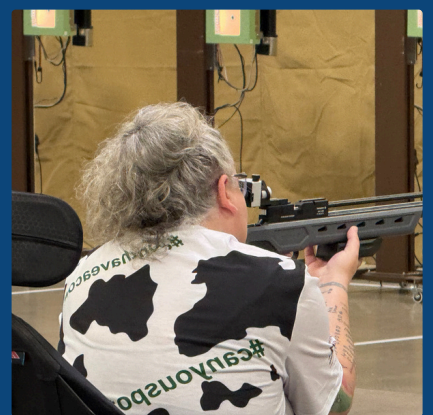
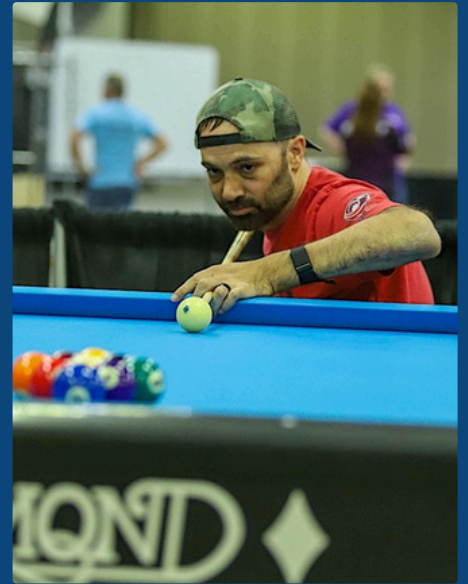




# NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES









## PVA-WI at Work



**Rickey Riley visits the New Glarus Brewing Company, Team Wisconsin's NVWG sponsor.**



**Team Wisconsin - North Central Trapshoot, Sioux, SD**  
Back row (left to right) – Dave David, Steve Wagner, Sean Nelson  
Front row – Ken Buchholz (in orange), Dale Nelson (in white)

The North Central Trapshoot brought together teams from Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa, with Wisconsin proudly taking 1st place and Minnesota earning 2nd.

Individual honors included:

- Dave David – High SCI Shooter
- Dale Nelson – 2nd Place in Singles

**Congratulations to all the shooters for their outstanding performance and teamwork!**



**Brenna Frey hosted a PVA-WI resource table at the Military & Veterans Family Day Expo at the Milwaukee County Zoo.**

## PVA Advocacy/Legislation Seminar

From June 10–12, 2025, **Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)** hosted its 2nd annual Advocacy/Legislation Seminar in Washington, D.C., with over 150 members, chapter leaders, and staff in attendance. Participants met with more than 300 congressional offices to advocate for key issues impacting veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D).

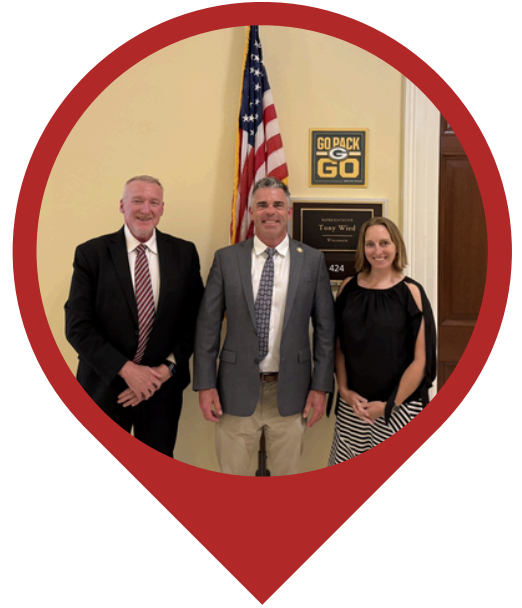
Top priorities included:

- Preserving the VA's SCI/D System of Care
- Increasing disability access within VA facilities
- Improving access to housing and vehicle modifications

A major milestone was the announcement that PVA's petition to protect the SCI/D system has reached nearly **3,500** signatures, showing strong grassroots support.

Special thanks to PVA-WI's **Mr. Scott Griffith** and incoming Gov. Relations Director **Ms. Christina Baurichter**, who visited all nine Wisconsin congressional offices to ensure our state's veterans were well represented.

Members are encouraged to stay active through [PVAAction Force](#), PVA's grassroots advocacy platform, and [PVA-WI's Call to Action Center](#). Thanks to everyone who helped make this year's seminar a success—we look forward to continuing our work to support veterans and their families.



## Congratulations: Scholarship Recipients

### PVA-WI Family Scholarship Recipients

- Caitlin McGuire
  - Daughter of Toby McGuire
- Brady Trentin
  - Son of Derrick Trentin

### Virginia “Bea” Root & Kathy Welter Research and Education Endowment Scholarship Recipients

- Alexis Dubak
- Tranika Washington

PVA-WI wishes you the best of luck in your studies and thanks you for the opportunity to support your future endeavors!

# Military Birthday Word Search

I	B	H	S	A	R	T	M	A	R	I	N	E	S	E
M	T	I	E	S	N	E	F	E	D	D	A	C	P	T
C	T	F	R	E	E	D	O	M	D	R	R	O	R	N
A	D	O	V	T	G	T	D	D	V	A	E	U	A	E
T	E	C	I	A	H	U	N	S	V	U	T	R	S	M
T	M	I	C	N	S	D	M	A	T	G	E	A	P	T
S	E	Y	E	S	L	D	A	I	R	L	V	G	A	I
I	D	S	E	S	A	N	A	Y	E	A	A	E	C	M
L	E	R	N	F	A	E	V	N	H	N	P	N	E	M
N	I	I	I	D	Y	I	N	A	O	O	A	O	F	O
E	R	M	R	V	A	R	L	U	N	I	T	I	O	C
I	O	I	A	D	U	T	Y	O	O	T	R	S	R	N
S	I	N	M	I	G	N	N	P	R	A	I	S	C	A
N	A	I	D	R	A	U	G	H	O	N	O	I	E	I
T	I	A	I	U	N	I	F	O	R	M	T	M	N	C

Navy  
Sailor  
Service  
Enlist  
Patriot

Marines  
Marine  
Mission  
Veteran  
Duty

Space Force  
Guardian  
Freedom  
Uniform  
Courage

National Guard  
Honor  
Defense  
Commitment  
Birthday

Find answers on page 20







# VALOR GAMES-SE

featuring PVA-WI member Lisa Scott



# GOLDEN AGE GAMES

featuring PVA-WI member Cecily  
Roland



## PVA-WI Sports and Entertainment Reimbursements

### PVA-WI Reimbursement Programs: Supporting Member Participation in Sports and Entertainment

*PVA-WI is committed to helping its members stay active, engaged, and connected. Through its Adaptive Sports and Entertainment Reimbursement Programs, PVA-WI offers financial support to encourage participation in recreational, competitive, and community-based activities.*

*These programs are designed to offset—not fully cover—the costs of participation, and all reimbursements are subject to available Chapter funds.*

#### Adaptive Sports & Recreation Reimbursement

##### Who's Eligible?

- **Members:** Up to **5 events per fiscal year** (Oct 1 – Sept 30), with a maximum of **\$1,500 per event**.
- **Associate Members:** Up to **5 events**, with a maximum of **\$500 per event**.
- **Caregivers:** VA-approved caregivers may receive a **\$300 stipend per event** for medically necessary assistance.

##### Eligible Expenses

- Registration and entry fees
  - PVA-WI events on the Trap Shoot Circuit are not reimbursable.
- Banquet or award ceremony fees
- Annual membership fees for governing/sponsoring organizations
- Travel-related expenses (see Travel Policy)

##### How to Apply

###### 1. Submit a Financial Request Form

- Describe how the funds will be used.
- Send the form at least **30 days before the event** to Brenna at [bfrey@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:bfrey@wisconsinpva.org).
- You'll receive approval via email as soon as possible.
- By submitting the form, you agree to all terms of PVA-WI's adaptive sports and recreation policies and procedures.

###### 2. After the Event

- Submit an **Expense Report** with itemized receipts and banking information for direct deposit **within 30 days** of the event's end.
- No additional items can be added after submission.



[Financial Request Form](#)



[Expense Report](#)

### 3. Reimbursement Timeline

- Reimbursements are processed within 30 days of receiving complete documentation.
- PVA-WI cannot expedite this timeline.

### 4. Where to Get Forms

- Forms are available on the Chapter website under “Our Organization” → “Forms”.
- You can also request them by emailing [bfrey@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:bfrey@wisconsinpva.org) or calling the Chapter office.

### Documentation Requirements

- Itemized receipts, canceled checks, credit card statements, or invoices.
- Banking info for ACH deposit (or a \$2 fee for paper checks).
- Lost receipts cannot be reimbursed.

### Share Your Experience

- As consideration for PVA-WI providing sports reimbursement, participants agree to provide the Chapter with **photographs** of the participant from the event attended.
- If a “team” is attending a sporting event, all participants agree that a team leader will designate a mutually convenient date/time/place for a team photo. It is expected that all members of the team will participate in this team photo.
- Participants agree that PVA-WI may utilize any photos for publicity, promotional and/or informational purposes and may be displayed in the Chapter’s newsletter, on its website, on Facebook, etc.
- A **short-written report** for each event attended should be submitted to the Chapter **within 15 days** after the event has concluded. If an individual is attending as part of a team, one person on the team may be selected to write and submit the report. These reports may be published in the Chapter’s newsletters and placed on its Facebook page.

### Travel Policy

- **Lodging:** Lodging will be reimbursed at the rate of the contracted hotel; should the participant choose to stay at a different hotel, they will be reimbursed for up to the contracted hotel.
  - The number of lodging nights includes one day prior to the event and the days of the event. Lodging will not be approved outside of these boundaries.
  - Lodging reimbursements exclude incidental charges (food, drinks, hotel restaurants).
- **Airfare:** Reimbursement will be based on the most economical one-stop coach airfare. Standard class only, PVA-WI will not reimburse the cost of first-class tickets.
  - Luggage reimbursement: Limited to carrier fees from airlines that do not offer free baggage and items being transported for events (wheelchairs, guns, golf clubs, lacrosse equipment, etc.)

**Article continued on next page.**



## PVA-WI Sports and Entertainment Reimbursements Continued

- **Driving:** Participants driving to an event will be reimbursed at the IRS rate per mile for round-trip mileage using the most direct route determined by Google Maps.
  - Reimbursement will not include trips taken back and forth during the event.
  - The amount reimbursed must be \$50.00 or more.
  - Do not submit gas receipts.
  - The mileage rate is updated annually in January based on IRS guidelines.
- **Meals:** A per diem will be paid for meals each day, unless meals are covered through a meal card or provided by the event.
  - That rate will be determined for the city/county in which the event will be held, as published by the following website: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>
  - The first and last day of travel will be reimbursed at 75% of the full per diem rate.

### **Entertainment Reimbursement Program**

*PVA-WI encourages full members in good standing to stay socially active by participating in community-based entertainment events such as concerts, movies, dinners, or sporting events. This program offers financial support to help make those experiences more accessible.*

### **Eligibility & Limits**

- Available to **full members** in good standing.
- Members may request reimbursement for up to **2 entertainment events per fiscal year**.
- Maximum reimbursement is **\$100 per event**.
- Each request must be for a single event—funds cannot be split across multiple outings.

### **How to Apply**

#### **1. Submit a Financial Request Form**

- Describe how the funds will be used (e.g., dinner, concert, sports event).
- Send the form at least **30 days before the event** to Brenna at [bfrey@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:bfrey@wisconsinpva.org).
- You'll receive approval via email as soon as possible.
- By submitting the form, you agree to all terms of PVA-WI's adaptive sports policies and procedures.

#### **2. After the Event**

- Submit an **Expense Report** with itemized receipts and banking information for direct deposit **within 30 days** of the event's end.
- No additional items can be added after submission.

### **Reimbursement Timeline & Where to Get Forms**

Please follow the same process for sports reimbursements on the previous page.



# **KUNES MOBILITY VETERAN PROGRAM**

*For Veterans who need a traditional, non-modified vehicle!*

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DEALS FOR  
VETS**



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OTHER  
VETERANS**

**BECAUSE EVERYONE DESERVES A CHOICE**

**KUNESMOBILITY.COM**

KUNES CDJR OF STERLING  
3200 E LINCOLNWAY, STERLING, IL 61081  
815.380.6298

KUNES FORD OF ANTIOCH  
104 ROUTE 173, ANTIOCH, IL 60002  
847.200.5387

### Tips for Staying Warm in Winter with MS

“Brrrr! Ice, snow and wind can wreak havoc on MS symptoms. But fear not, Antoinette has some top tips to chase the chills away this winter.

Although some people with MS struggle with the heat, I love it! I thrive in the summer and can do much more than I can in the winter. For me, the cold and damp are the enemy.

As with everything, years of experience have taught me a few tips for coping better in the cold weather. Now, I can enjoy being outside again and get on with life. Maybe these tips might even help you too.

I love being barefoot. I spend most of my time with nothing on my feet and feel steadier when I know my feet grip the floor, rather than slippery socks. Trust me, I can slip with the best of them!



But, when my feet get cold, my legs can seize up. Sadly, I can no longer get to those feet because I don't have any flexibility (cutting my toenails is a constant worry)."

Read the full article at <https://mstrust.org.uk/news/stories/my-tips-staying-warm-winter-ms>

### Baby, It's Cold Outside!



"When it comes to cold weather and ALS, 53-year-old Pati Milewski, of Olympia, WA, likens her experience to that of "a house with no thermostat."

Although inability to regulate body temperature isn't recognized as a classic symptom of ALS, decreased mobility limits the ability to stay warm by being active.

Simply feeling cold is only part of the problem. "Cold weather exaggerates the problems that come with ALS. It increases the effects, making stiffness worse and weakness more intense," says Daryl Thorson, 72, of Brandon, SD. Thorson received an ALS diagnosis in 2005.

To keep shiver-inducing temperatures from getting the best of you, check out the following tips, including — and especially — the nitty gritty details."

Read the full article at <https://www.mda.org/alsn/article/baby-its-cold-outside>

*Happy Veteran's Day*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

11 / 11 / 2025



## PVA-WI Membership Banquet

**PVA-WI's Annual Membership Banquet** was held on Sunday, September 14 at the Roma Lodge in Racine, bringing our community together in a spirit of camaraderie and shared purpose.

With over **115 raffle baskets** and **more than 40 online auction items**, attendees had plenty of opportunities to participate, win exciting prizes, and contribute to the vital programs that serve our veterans. These efforts raised essential funds that help us continue our mission of advocacy, support, and empowerment.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our major sponsors — **Waterstone Bank Foundation**, **Generac Foundation**, and **Permobil Foundation** — for their unwavering commitment to our veterans. Their leadership and generosity set the tone for a successful and impactful event.

We also sincerely thank the many **organizations and individual donors** whose contributions helped make the banquet possible. Your support is instrumental in helping us serve those who have served our nation.

A heartfelt **thank you to our dedicated volunteers** — your time, energy, and behind-the-scenes efforts ensured the evening ran smoothly and was a memorable experience for all. This event simply wouldn't have been possible without you.

Together, we are building a stronger, more vibrant PVA-WI community. Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our mission and the veterans we serve.



### PVA-WI's 2025 Chapter Award Winners



- **Donald G. "Don" Schmidt Sportsman Award:**  
*Victoria Buncheck*
- **Ron Falkner Award:**  
*Gary Welter*
- **Patricia A. "Patty" Wiseman Volunteer Award:**  
*Holly Lauer*
- **President's Award:**  
*Brenda Stencil (pictured bottom right)*
- **Inaugural NVWG Spirit of the Games Award:**  
*Jerry Howell (pictured top right)*



### **Multiple Sclerosis – A VA Service-Connected Condition**

By: Brenda Stencil, Senior National Service Officer

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, autoimmune disease affecting the central nervous system. Characterized by inflammation and demyelination of nerve fibers, MS can lead to a wide range of symptoms, impacting physical function, cognitive abilities, and emotional well-being. Once diagnosed, MS stays with you for life, but treatments and specialists can help veterans to manage the condition and its symptoms.

#### **Signs and Symptoms**

The most common initial symptoms of MS are often related to vision, like optic neuritis (blurred or double vision, eye pain) or sensory changes, such as numbness or tingling in the limbs or face. Other frequent early signs include fatigue, muscle weakness, or problems with balance and coordination, but MS symptoms can vary greatly from person to person. There are numerous signs and symptoms of MS that range in severity and chronicity, some of the more uncommon symptoms can include tremors, headaches, seizures, and speech difficulties.

#### **Service Connection for MS**

**In Service or Presumptive within 7 Years:** The VA recognizes MS as a presumptive condition within seven years of service. For example, if a veteran separated from the Marines in 2010 and was diagnosed with MS in 2016, the veteran can submit a claim because he/she was diagnosed within the 7-year requirement. The VA automatically assumes MS is connected to a veteran's military service, eliminating the need to prove the service connection. This does not automatically guarantee service connection; the VA will still conduct a thorough review of the veteran's medical records and service history. However, this presumption significantly increases the chance of successful claim.

**After 7 Years:** If a veteran is diagnosed with multiple sclerosis after seven years following his/her separation from the military, the presumptive period no longer applies. However, a veteran may still become service-connected for multiple sclerosis. Symptoms often occur years before a diagnosis is made. Neurologic symptoms occurring within seven years of discharge, regardless of date of diagnosis, can be used to support service-connection for MS. It is likely a veteran will need to get an opinion from a medical professional regarding how the symptoms for which the veteran received treatment are related to his/her current diagnosis of MS.

**Individual Unemployability:** Individual Unemployability (IU), or Total Disability based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU), is a VA benefit allowing veterans to receive the 100% disability compensation rate if their service-connected disabilities prevent them from maintaining substantially gainful employment, even if their overall disability rating is less than 100%. For example, a veteran's disability compensation rate is 80% for MS. If the veteran is granted IU because his/her disabilities cause an inability to work, the VA could continue the veteran's rate at 80% and the veteran would be paid at the 100% rate.

### **Non-Presumptive Exposure**

At present, the VA does not recognize the following types of exposure: between MS and Agent Orange, MS and radiation exposure, MS and exposure to depleted uranium, or MS and serving during the Gulf War. For more information:

[https://www.va.gov/MS/Veterans/about\\_MS/Combat\\_Related\\_Chemical\\_Exposure\\_and\\_the\\_Link\\_to\\_Multiple\\_Sclerosis\\_and\\_Other\\_Neurological\\_Diseases.asp](https://www.va.gov/MS/Veterans/about_MS/Combat_Related_Chemical_Exposure_and_the_Link_to_Multiple_Sclerosis_and_Other_Neurological_Diseases.asp)

### **VA Healthcare System Resources**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is a cornerstone of healthcare support for veterans. The VA provides comprehensive care for veterans with MS, encompassing a range of services:

- **Specialized MS Clinics:** Many VA medical centers now have dedicated MS clinics staffed by neurologists, nurses, and other healthcare professionals specializing in the condition. These clinics offer comprehensive evaluations, treatment plans, and ongoing management support. Both VAMC Madison and VAMC Milwaukee have MS Clinics. Note, VAMC Milwaukee was awarded Multiple Sclerosis Regional Specialty status in 2024, recognized for their comprehensive care and specialized treatment for MS.
- **Medication Management:** The VA plays a crucial role in ensuring access to MS medications, often managing prescriptions, and coordinating with pharmacies. The system's established infrastructure can help veterans avoid gaps in treatment.
- **Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation:** Veterans with MS can access physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy to maintain mobility, independence, and quality of life.
- **Mental Health Services:** MS can significantly impact mental well-being. The VA offers mental health services, including counseling and support groups, to address the emotional challenges associated with the diagnosis and its impact on daily life. These services are crucial in helping veterans cope with the emotional toll of the disease.

***Article continued on next page.***



## NSO Report Continued & PVA Healthcare Summit + EXPO

### The National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS)

The NMSS stands as a prominent organization dedicated to advancing MS research, providing crucial patient support, and advocating for policy changes that benefit those living with the disease. This organization offers educational resources, advocacy, support groups, webinars, and financial assistance. By collaborating with the VA and other organizations, the NMSS creates a comprehensive support system that empowers veterans to manage their condition effectively and maintain a positive quality of life.

\*\*\*All veterans with Multiple Sclerosis qualify for PVA Chapter membership\*\*\*  
You are encouraged to promote the distinctive impact and support the WI PVA Chapter provides to veterans and their families and invite them to join.

Contact your National Service Officer, Brenda Stencil, at (414) 902-5655 or email [brendas@pva.org](mailto:brendas@pva.org) for questions related to VA benefits and healthcare.

### PVA's 2025 Healthcare Summit + Expo Brings Together Experts to Advance Veteran Care

This past August, **Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA)** hosted its 13th annual Healthcare Summit + Expo in New Orleans, bringing together over 400 healthcare professionals from the VA and private sector. The four-day event featured 110 expert speakers, 60 exhibitors, and a keynote update from VA Secretary Doug Collins.

The Summit focused on advancing care for veterans with spinal cord injury and disease (SCI/D), including ALS and MS. Attendees explored the latest research, therapies, and technologies aimed at improving outcomes, independence, and quality of life.

“This Summit equips clinicians with the tools to deliver world-class care,” said PVA National President Robert Thomas.

With over 28,000 veterans with SCI and 22,000 with MS receiving VA care, and more than 1,000 diagnosed with ALS annually, the Summit plays a vital role in supporting the professionals who serve this community. Continuing education credits and interdisciplinary collaboration remain central to the event's mission.



**PVA-WI Board of Directors Election Results**  
**2025-2026**

**Mr. Todd Drazy - President**

**Mr. Scott Griffith - Vice President, Ntl. Dir., Chief Operating Officer**

**Mr. Gary Stott - Secretary**

**Mrs. Angela Walker - Board Member**

**Mr. Michael Thomas - Board Member**

**Mr. Rick Buth - Board Member**

**Mr. Troy Kurczek - Board Member**



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## Salmon-A-Rama

This past July, veterans from the Wisconsin and Vaughn Chapters came together for a day of camaraderie, calm waters, and unforgettable fishing at the annual Salmon-A-Rama. With 11 charter boats ready to launch, participants set out with high hopes—and they didn't leave disappointed.

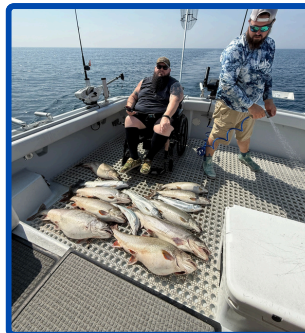
Thanks to event sponsor **CNH Industrial**, the entire experience was **completely free and fully accessible to veterans of all abilities**. Whether seasoned anglers or first-time fishers, everyone was welcomed with open arms. No experience? No problem. Charter captains took care of the casting while veterans rotated turns reeling in the catch. Each tug on the line brought smiles, cheers, and shared excitement.

The weather was picture-perfect—sunny skies and smooth waters made for ideal fishing conditions. Most boats nearly reached their catch limits, and the energy on the water was electric. After the fishing wrapped up, veterans were gifted smoked salmon packed in dry ice to take home, courtesy of **Turtle Creek Homes** and **Butcher Block Meat Market**.

The day concluded with an awards ceremony and a hearty lunch provided by **Master Services Plumbing Heating and Cooling**, bringing everyone together to celebrate the success of the event and the spirit of service. Special thanks go to the **Racine Fire Department and Paramedic Team** for their expert assistance in safely transferring veterans onto the boats, **Ayalas Extreme Exteriors** for providing trophies, **Props Ahoy** for the entertainment, and to those who donated snacks and refreshments in memory of **Matt Weidman**.

We also extend our deepest gratitude to the **volunteer captains and charter crews** from Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha, whose generosity and enthusiasm made this day on the water truly unforgettable.

Events like Salmon-A-Rama remind us of the power of community, gratitude, and shared experiences. Thank you to everyone who made this day possible—and to our veterans, thank you for your service.



## Member Spotlight Series: Steve Emt

### Shining a Light on Our Community: Introducing the Member Spotlight Series

At PVA-WI, we believe that every member has a story worth sharing — stories of resilience, strength, and transformation. That's why we're proud to introduce a new feature in **ROLL WITH US**: the **Member Spotlight Series**.

We hope these spotlights will not only celebrate our members but also encourage others to get involved, stay active, and share their own stories.

**Interested in being featured in a future Member Spotlight?**

We'd love to hear from you! Please contact Brenna at [bfrey@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:bfrey@wisconsinpva.org) to learn more.

#### MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

## ***Steve Emt, Army Veteran & 2X USA Wheelchair Curling National Champion***

**Q: Can you share your journey into adaptive curling and how you became involved with USA Curling?**

**A:** In the summer of 2014, I was visiting Cape Cod, MA, when I was approached by a gentleman. He asked me, "Excuse me...are you local?" To which I replied, "No, I am not...I'm from CT, about 2.5 hours away." There was some confusion, so I finally asked him why he asked that question. His response, "I train with the Paralympic Curling Team here on the Cape and I saw you pushing up the hill back there. With your build...I can make you into a Paralympian within a year!" To which I responded..."I'm in...but what the hell is curling???" So, I literally got stalked into this sport. That gentleman's name was Tony, and he was one of the coaches. He's a HUGE mentor of mine. I tried the sport 2 weeks later and absolutely fell in love with it!



**To continue reading Steve Emt's Member Spotlight**, please visit his member profile page at <https://wisconsinpva.org/meet-our-members/steve-emt-us-army>.



## Thank You

*This has been another successful and fun season on the circuit. I can't thank you enough for providing these opportunities not only for veterans but also extending your hand to the SCI community. The benefits go a LONG way in ones physical, emotional and mental health no matter how big or small the assistance.*

*Once again a BIG THANK YOU for all that you, your staff and volunteers do!!!*

*Regards  
Bob Swanson*



*Eric Jones at National Walleye  
Championship Tour*

*Thank you and the PVA-WI for all that you do. I was able to place 19th overall, it was a very cool experience.*

*Thank You to PVA*

*On behalf of all who attended, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Paralyzed Veterans of America for hosting such a meaningful and memorable banquet. The event was not only beautifully organized, but it also highlighted the strength, resilience, and camaraderie that make the PVA community so special.*

*Your dedication to honoring veterans, supporting their families, and continuing the mission of advocacy and care does not go unnoticed. The banquet was a true reminder of the bonds we share and the sacrifices that have shaped us.*

*Thank you for the hospitality, the fellowship, and for everything you continue to do for paralyzed veterans across the country. It was an honor to be part of such a powerful afternoon.*

*With gratitude and respect,  
Toby J McGuire*



## Supporting PVA-WI

PVA-WI has a variety of ways that individuals, groups, and 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 need to satisfy the requirements.



### Donor-Advised Funds (DAF)

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 <https://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 <https://wisconsinpva.org/planned-giving>. You can also leave a legacy through QCD donations using the QCD donation tool: <https://app.lifelegacy.io/qcd?partner=pva-wi>



### 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).



### Shop for Good

You can make a meaningful difference in the lives of our hospitalized veterans by purchasing items from our [Amazon](#) or [Walmart](#) Registries.



### Join VoterVoice

Advocate for our members with their unique needs to assure that Wisconsin is accessible for all! Join our advocacy team by visiting our Call to Action Center at <https://www.votervoice.net/PVAWI/Home>

# Happy Holidays!



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These resources are available statewide to all qualified Wisconsin residents.  
Please call (414) 384-2000 or (888) 469-6614 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	NSO/Benefits - Brenda Stencil	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

Printed by Shorewood Press, 1700 E Capitol Drive, Shorewood, WI 53211

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