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Volume 25, Issue 5

# PARALOG

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America



“Serving Those Who Served”

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





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## NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER

800-795-3627

Fax: 503-412-4763

## PORTLAND/Vancouver VA Primary

### Care Contact Phone Numbers

360-696-4061

503-220-8262 ext.

31665 (Portland)

800-949-1004 ext.

31665

### After Hours Number

888-233-8305

### Portland VA Contact Phone Number

503-273-5308

## RESOURCES

### ID Cards

[www.vets.gov](http://www.vets.gov)

### eVetRecords

[www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

### Vocational Rehab & Employment

[www.gibill.gov](http://www.gibill.gov)

### eBenefits

[www.benefits.va.gov](http://www.benefits.va.gov)

### Women Veterans Health Care

1-855-VA-Woman

### US Disaster Hotline

(800) 626 4959

## OPVA Mission Statement

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America (OPVA), incorporated in 1976, is a chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America. OPVA serves the needs of its Members – U.S. military veterans with spinal cord injury or disease (SCI/D) – and helps them enjoy the highest possible quality of life.

OPVA, Members, Associate Members, Family Members, Volunteers, and allied organizations work to provide leadership and advocacy in

- Improving health care and SCI/D research and education
- Protecting veterans rights and benefits
- Improving awareness of disability rights
- Offering sports and health-promotion activities
- Increasing accessibility and removing architectural barriers in Oregon, Southwest Washington, and Idaho.

A 501(c)(3) charity, OPVA relies on grants and donations from members of the public.

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Cover Photo: Red Barn at Pear Orchard in Hood River, Oregon. Courtesy of Adobe Stock

**Thank you to all our Sponsors!**



The views and opinions expressed in the Paralog are not necessarily a direct representation of the views or ideas of Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America who hereby disclaims any responsibility for opinions expressed by contributors and printed in the Paralog.

**Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America**

3700 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305

503-362-7998 • [www.oregonpva.org](http://www.oregonpva.org) • [oregonpva@oregonpva.org](mailto:oregonpva@oregonpva.org) • OPVA is a 501(c)(3), Tax ID# 93-0713

# PRESIDENT NEWS



Larry Gardner – President

So far we have had a very hot and dry summer. I hope everyone has been able to get out and enjoy it in the best possible way they can.

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America needs to increase the numbers of our membership, so I'm asking for your help to make this happen. Do you know of any veterans who have spinal cord damage, MS or ALS and they are not a member of the OPVA? They might qualify to become a member. Please have them call the office at 503-362-7998 and we would be more than happy to have them come aboard.

We are also looking for someone to step up and fill the Membership Director position, you don't have to be a member for this position and can set your own hours.

Also the Chapter's Central Oregon Ambassador has stepped down, so now we are in need of someone to be our next ambassador for Central Oregon. Again, if you would like to step up and help us with any of these positions, please call the office and we are here to help you. succeed.

**Central Oregon  
AMBASSADOR  
Needed**

September 18th is our annual Members Banquet, it will be at the Holiday Inn, in Wilsonville Oregon. So mark your calendars for an afternoon of good food, games, awards, visit with other members; and just have a good time.





The Holiday Inn has recently remodeled and has several assessable rooms available and some ADA compliant rooms. So call ahead to reserve and be sure to get a room. Please RSVP to the office 503-362-7998.



I want to remind all of our voting members that there is a recreation fund of \$250 available for you to use. It can be used for your hobbies, going out to dinner, spending a night at the coast, or anything that helps to enhance

your life. Just send in your receipts along with a paragraph of what you used it for. Then we will reimburse you up to \$250. It must be sent in to the office no later than September 25th or you will lose it.

Please read the Paralog magazine (sent out bimonthly) to stay up to date with what's going on. There are articles in there of how members have used their Rec Fund, as well.

September 11th and 12th is the PITA Nut Shoot at the Hillsboro Trap Club and is the last PITA shoot this year. Come and join us for this event, please give us a call here at the office, look forward to seeing you there!

We still have lots of fun events coming up and are always needing volunteers. So if you want to volunteer or have any questions, call us because we are here for our members and we want to help.

The advertisement has a dark blue background with a yellow diagonal stripe. At the top, the text "SHOW &amp; SHINE" is in a yellow, outlined font. Below it, "Car Show" is written in a large, red, cursive font, and "SEP 11 2021" is in a white, outlined font. In the center is a detailed illustration of a red classic muscle car with black racing stripes. In the top right corner is the PVA logo, which includes a silhouette of a person in a wheelchair and the text "PVA Paralyzed Veterans of America Oregon Chapter". In the bottom left corner is the Home Depot logo. At the bottom, the location "Home Depot 3795 Hagers Grove Rd. SE Salem, OR 97317" and the start time "Show begins at 10 AM with New Raffle Vehicle" are listed. Contact information "Information: 3700 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305 Tel: 503.362.7998 • www.oregonpva.org" is at the very bottom.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Update

Things are starting to  
POP here!!!



READ ALL ABOUT IT!!!



Tom Hurt – Executive Director

Greetings from the Chapter Office, things are really starting to POP!!!! We started off having our Graphic Designer move on to other opportunities, we wish Francisco all the best (he is still popping up at events as a volunteer). It is my pleasure to welcome Scarlett, as our newest team mate. She hit the road running (literally) we started the month off as the Sponsor of the City of Independence 4th of July Parade and Scarlett ran from end to end taking pictures for the chapter.



We actually got to have the Marion County Fair!!! This was an amazing fair this year, there was RECORD turn out of attendance, even though the fair was cut down to a 3 day event instead of four days. The people were so happy to be able to be out and about enjoying themselves. It was a bit warm; however, we kept everyone hydrated, and it made the Ice Cream taste that much better. On the last day of the fair we drew the winner for the Can Am ATV Raffle. **Congratulations to our ATV winner from Roseburg!**







We finished the month of July with a new Event for the Chapter to participate in, and that was DuneFest down in Winchester Bay just south of Reedsport. We got to meet a bunch of interesting people while spreading the mission of OPVA. It was a typical week at the Oregon Coast, one minute it was bright and sunny and the next minute the fog rolled in and the wind tried to blow our tent over. All in all, everyone enjoyed themselves.

Following the fair was the Annual OPVA Gold Cup Golf Tournament. Again Another Great Success!!!! We had over 31 Teams Golfing as well as sponsors for Every Hole on the course. I would like to Personally Thank **TJ Walker with Rooted Financial** for being Our Title Sponsor this year. Everyone had a great time playing and Supporting OPVA. If it was not for our sponsors this event would not have been as great as it was, we look forward to this event every year as a way to fund some of the programs at OPVA. We also unveiled our next ATV Raffle Rig.





August was just as busy. We started the month off with the Douglas County Fair. This year they still had us in the 4H and FFA building, however they did give us more space than we had back in 2019. As you can imagine, it made a huge difference when trying to maneuver a wheelchair around our booth. We then followed up the next week end with the Josephine County Fair in Grants Pass; again, the reception we have been receiving from the public has been amazing. Everyone is so glad to be able to be out and socialize with each other.

As I write this article we are preparing to attend the BlackBerry Festival in Sutherlin, which has turned out to be a very patriotic community with a ton of events geared toward family fun. As soon as Blackberry is in our rearview mirror, we will start the Big One and that is The Oregon State Fair in Salem. This is an Eleven Day Fair. It was greatly missed last year and we are all looking forward to the State Fair this year.

A little bit of house cleaning; we are almost out of iPads I believe we have one left for a member that has not received one and it will help you stay connected with Family and doctor appointments; as well as, be entertained.

If you have not received your Election Ballot, check your mail. They were sent out on 8/13/21. So, if you have it please fill it out and get it back to the Chapter office ASAP. If you did NOT receive a members Ballot, let the office know right away. If you have a heart for veterans and would like to help with the Leadership of the Chapter by all means write your name in on the ballot, and send it in.



DON'T FORGET the members Banquet is right around the corner, September 18th at the Holiday Inn, in Wilsonville. Be sure to RSVP with your meal choice, for you and your guest, we are looking forward to having some fun with you at the banquet this year. There are special rates at the hotel if you are staying overnight, you just need to call the hotel and get your reservation.

The banner has a blue background with a red scalloped border. The word 'Fun' is in a large, yellow, cursive font, followed by 'MAKES A COMEBACK' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. Below this, the dates '8/27 to 9/6' are written in yellow on a dark blue background. The website 'oregonstatefair.org' is in white at the bottom right. On the left, there is a logo for 'The OREGON STATE FAIR' with a horse and rider icon, and a logo for 'PVA Paralyzed Veterans of America Oregon Chapter'.





# Save the Date

Members Banquet 2021

\*

September 18th  
Holiday Inn - Wilsonville

**Don't forget to RSVP!!!**



# iPad to Get Connected



- Stay up to date, get connected with virtual activities/events
- You must have Wi-Fi available
- Fill out **questionnaire on back** and return to Chapter office

Donated by Oregon Spinal Cord Injury Connection (OSCIC) and Oregon Health Authority (OHA)  
**Available at no cost to voting members**



Limited Quantities - Complete the form below and return it to the Chapter to be eligible for consideration of one of the iPads. **This offer is Open to OPVA Voting Members ONLY!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the space below to describe how you would be able to utilize a Wi-Fi iPad tablet to **Enhance** your life. These tablets are Wi-Fi ONLY so you will NEED to have Wi-Fi capabilities.

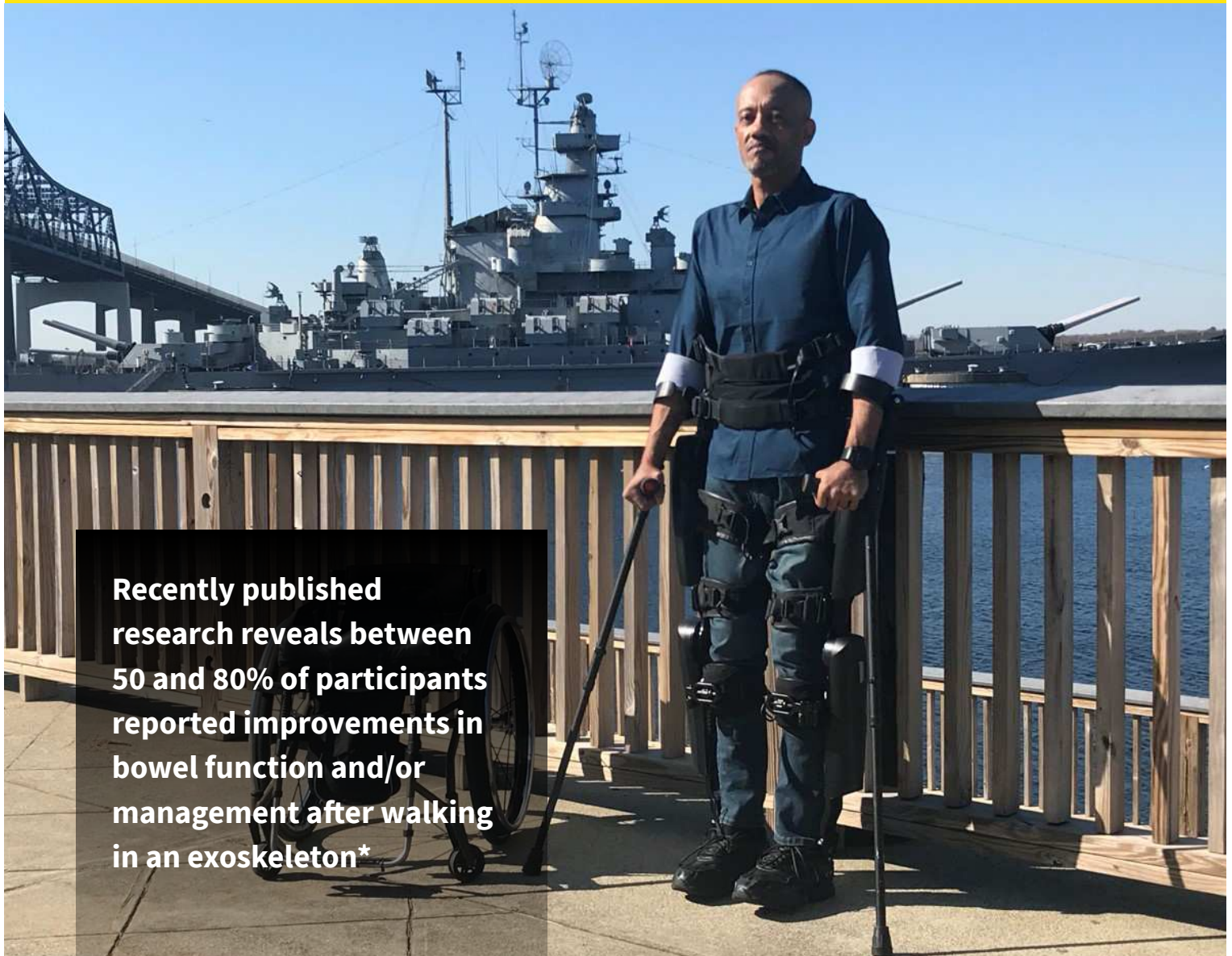
\_\_\_\_\_  
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**Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America**  
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## Want To Improve Your Bowel Function?



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

# We proudly support Oregon PVA



If you have a **service-connected disability**, you may qualify for VA funding assistance for wheelchair accessible vehicles or driving modifications. If your current vehicle is more than two years old, you may even qualify for a brand new conversion. If you are a non-service connected Veteran, you also may be eligible for benefits towards mobility solutions.

## Portland East

12905 NE Airport Way

Local: 503-564-7155

## Portland West

4347 NW Yeon Ave

Local: 503-243-2940



**We're here to help!**

**Call today to schedule a test drive, either at your home or at our facility...we can come to you!**



*Proud Supporters of the*



Oregon Chapter





Oregon Chapter

# Members Banquet at Holiday Inn (Wilsonville)

**Save the Date**  
**September 18, 2021**  
**Please RSVP By:**  
**September 10, 2021**

**Members Banquet**  
Check In 1pm  
Social Time 1-3pm  
Dinner Served at 3pm

**Address:**  
25425 SW 95th Ave  
Wilsonville, OR 97070

**Hotel Reservations**  
Call 877-207-9083  
\*Ask for OPVA  
Special Rate\*

**Meal Entree Choices:**  
\*Lemon Herb Halibut (GF)  
\*Flat Iron Steak  
\*Vegetable Kabobs (GF/DF)

All meals served with a  
dinner salad, rolls, and your  
choice of dessert

For more information visit  
[www.oregonpva.org](http://www.oregonpva.org)  
call: 503-362-7998  
email: [oregonpva@oregonpva.org](mailto:oregonpva@oregonpva.org)



# VICE PRESIDENT ARTICLE

**HEAR MY PLEA!**

**WE NEED  
YOU YOU & YOU**



Bill Gray—National Director

The Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America chapter is in GREAT need of a Membership Director and a MS Liaison. We all have the same amount of time in the day. Are you bored and want to get up and going?

Here is a challenge to you all:

Will you please step up and help this chapter out? You can have a positive impact for the many veterans we are trying to serve. You are needed more now than ever before. So please here our plea. We need these positions filed, so we can do a better job for our members.

## Roseburg Members Meeting: Bowman's Pond

### Bowman's Pond Members Picnic and Fishing is Coming Up Quickly!



I want to urge everybody to come and have some fun fishing, enjoying the outdoors, and a hamburger or a hotdog. As we enjoy getting together, and swapping big fish stories or whatever. A few fishing poles will be provided. It's up to you to come and have some fun together, as veterans. There is lots of shade, benches to sit on, and paved walkway to access fishing spots.



We encourage our members to get out and enjoy the nice weather.

Who doesn't like a good picnic? Bowman's Pond is located 7 miles out of Winston. It's an easy to drive. I hope to see you there!

**September 8, 10am to 3pm**



**\*\*\*Mark Your Calendars\*\*\*  
for the Largest  
Veterans Parade  
West of the Mississippi!!!**

**Please Join Us:**

**Monday, November 11th, at 11am  
in Historic Downtown Albany, Oregon**

**Help us honor all our Veterans!**



# Recreation Fund Reimbursement

**(Members Only)**

Oregon PVA voting members are eligible to **RECEIVE \$250** each fiscal year through the Member Recreation Reimbursement Fund. It begins **October 1st** and runs through **September 30th** each year.

Include name, address, phone number, your legible receipts (photo copy is ok) and a short description of what you did to have fun with your friends and family. We like pictures too (digital pictures are best), they may make it into the Paralog.

**◆ Eating Out ◆ Movies ◆ Games ◆ Hobby Supplies ◆ Motel ◆ Sports  
◆ Event Tickets ◆ Guns ◆ Trips ◆ Vacation Expenses (lodging food, gas etc) ◆  
OPVA Events etc**

All receipts must be dated and used within this current fiscal year (10/1 - 9/30).

Mail or email to: Oregon PVA, 3700 Silverton Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305 - [oregonpva@oregonpva.org](mailto:oregonpva@oregonpva.org)  
Your request must be received in the office no later than **September 25th**. Earlier is better in case of any problems.

Please contact the office at 503-362-7998 if you have any questions or require additional information about the

**Get Paid to Have Fun!**



## **\$250 REC FUND REIMBURSEMENT**

Dear Oregon Paralyzed Veterans,  
Just want you to know how much I enjoy our Recreation Fund and how grateful and thankful I am for it. I have been able to use it in many different ways. I think the most rewarding for me is the opportunity to go fishing and being able to afford paying for a couple of my best friends to join us on our fishing and crabbing with Dockside Charters.

My buddies help me with so many things I either can't do or I will struggle doing. It's a pleasure to me to invite them on these great trips.

*Steve B.*



When the early July heat wave was scorching everything and everyone, my wife and I headed to the cool beach in Lincoln City for a mini retreat. Temperature at home was 106 but was 43 degrees cooler at the beach. Had a lovely room where I watched dogs and their humans exploring the beach and ocean; while BJ caught up on her reading. Very good meals at one of our favorite restaurants and a wonderfully relaxing time. Thank you for the Recreation Fund making this possible!

*Larry R.*



OPVA,

We had a great time over the Memorial Day Weekend. We took our trailer to the Air Strip at Santiam Jct. We went to Clear Lake, the Cinder Pit, and the Ice Caves. Picked up a bunch of trash that someone left at the Cinder Pit. Lots of good food, laughter and friends.



*Russ G.*

OPVA is starting an Air Gun Program that I am interested in. I have been a big-time powder burner in my younger years hunting deer, bear, elk, and the occasional coyote. I guess my confidence is slowly disappearing because spending a night or two on the mountain in my Jeep is not very appealing anymore. I guess roughing it is no longer in the cards.

This program will help in many ways like getting me out to practice shooting targets, using and handling a gun, being safe with it, and caring for the gun. I might do some shooting with my wife, giving her something to do since COVID-19 has required us to be cooped up or restricted in going places (doing what we WANT TO DO).

I don't want to qualify for a national shoot. I did that way back in the 11th National Games in Florida, where I earned a SILVER metal with the old air rifles OPVA had back then.

*Louie G.*



I would like to use a portion of my Rec Fund for a breakfast we took some friends to. Flashback Grill is a great place to eat, here in Springfield.



Thanks,  
Charles D.

To: OPVA

July 4&5 we managed to celebrate all good things about America. Not only did we celebrate our country's birth date, we celebrated my youngest son's birthday.

Silver Falls State Park and the Pacific were beautiful too!

Thanks so much!  
Sue H.



# Hospital Liaison Report



Mike Rosenbalm – Hospital Liaison Director  
Source VA.gov

## My HealtheVet Advanced Accounts Will Be Discontinued

My HealtheVet, VA's online patient portal, gives you access to your VA health information so you can understand and manage your VA care. Beginning in September 2021, My HealtheVet Advanced accounts will be discontinued.

If you have an Advanced account today and do not upgrade to a Premium account, your account will revert to a Basic account. If that occurs, you will lose access to the pharmacy features, including the ability to request and track your VA prescription refills.

That means... it's time to upgrade to a Premium account.

With a free Premium account, you can securely access your VA health information, 24/7.

## Using your My HealtheVet Premium account, you will be able to:

- Request VA prescription refills, track your VA medications, and access your current VA prescriptions and prescription history.
- View, download and print your VA health information, reports and images from your VA medical record.
- Send online secure messages to your VA care team to ask them non-urgent health questions; ask to renew your medications; and send updates on your condition.
- View, schedule, reschedule and cancel VA appointments.

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs





### **How to get started:**

If you are new to My HealtheVet, create an account by visiting the My HealtheVet website, selecting Register, and filling out the required fields. Make sure to check the boxes verifying that you are a VA patient and Veteran.

If you are already a user, you may have a Premium account. If you do, there will be a “P” icon next to your name.

Also, if you currently use secure messaging on My HealtheVet, you’re all set. Patients who use secure messaging already have a Premium account.

### **Three ways to upgrade to Premium level:**

If you have an Advanced account, there are three ways to upgrade to Premium level: in person, online or through a video appointment. Upgrading your account is free.

If you want to upgrade in person or through a video appointment, contact the My Healthe Vet. coordinator in your local VA facility. Ask about upgrading to a Premium account. You can locate your VA facility’s contact information through VA’s facility locator tool. To upgrade online, you’ll need to use your DS Logon Premium or ID.me secure sign-in credentials. You can learn more about the online upgrading process on the My HealtheVet blog post.

## **Now is the time to upgrade your My HealtheVet account**

With a Premium account, you’ll still be able to request refills of your VA prescriptions. You’ll also gain access to all the tools, including secure messaging, access to your VA medical record online and more.

Get more information

To learn more, visit the My HealtheVet website, watch the My HealtheVet Premium video, or contact your VA facility’s My HealtheVet coordinator

(Source: <https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/90996/healthevet-advanced-accounts-will-discontinued>)

## **Specially Adapted Housing Changes Help Seriously Disabled Veterans**

Did you know that there’s more to the VA home loan than just the loan guaranty? In fact, the program has additional help for Veterans with serious, service-connected disabilities. One of those programs is the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) program. SAH grants assistance to the most seriously disabled service members and Veterans to pay for life-changing and independence enhancing modifications and adaptations to their homes and residences. New changes to the laws that govern the administration of the SAH program offer an even greater opportunity for VA to fund these adaptations. SAH grants are allocated by VA to very seriously disabled Veterans or service members who meet narrow eligibility criteria for funding to adapt their homes to accommodate their special needs.

There are three adapted housing grant types: Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant, the Special Housing Adaptation (SHA) grant, and Temporary Residence Adaptation (TRA). Each grant type has different criteria for determining eligibility for the grant award. Eligibility criteria for these grants can be found here.

In August 2020, Public Law 116-154, the “Ryan Kules and Paul Benne Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019” was enacted. This law makes significant changes to the SAH grant program and enhances access to important funding for Veterans with serious and very specific service-connected disabilities.

### **Changes to the SAH program under PL 116-154 include:**

- Veterans rated with a service-connected blindness disability – without a loss, or loss of use of a lower extremity – are now eligible for the SAH grant. Statute now reflects that all SAH-qualifying disabilities must be permanent. These changes became effective August 8, 2020.
- The lifetime grant usage is no longer limited to three uses for each individual. Eligible service members and Veterans are now able to use the grant a total of six times.
- and that is especially true for those who can benefit from the SAH program.



VA is authorized to approve up to 120 grants per year, an increase from the previous statutory limit of 30 per fiscal year for Veterans and service members who experienced the loss or loss of use of one

lower extremity after September 11, 2001.

- The aggregate limit amount for the SAH grant has been raised to \$100,896, and the SHA grant has been increased to \$20,215. VA encourages all Veterans, as well as those who know of seriously disabled Veterans who may meet eligibility criteria for these specialized grants, to become familiar with the SAH grant program. VA is here to serve those who have served our country,

Key takeaways from the passage and signing of The Ryan Kules and Paul Benne Specially Adaptive Housing Improvement Act of 2019 (PL 116-154): <https://benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/homeloans/SAHFactsheet.pdf>

For more information about the Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) grant program at VA, visit: <https://www.va.gov/housing-assistance/disability-housing-grants/>.

For more information about the VA Home Loan Program, visit <https://www.va.gov/housing-assistance/home-loans/>. <https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/84813/specially-adapted-housing-changes-help-seriously-disabled-veterans/>





**Voting Members FREE! All others \$65**  
**Dates & Boarding Times**

- Sep 23th - 6:30 AM

**5 Hour Trip - Lingcod & Rockfish**

270 Coast Guard Dr. Depoe Bay, OR 97341 • (541) 765-2545



Fishing and shell license required, may be purchased at Dockside Charters. Complementary coffee is provided.  
Bring your own lunch, snack or drinks. Face mask required.

Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America. 3700 Silverton Rd. NE Salem, OR 97305 • (503) 362-7889 • [www.oregonpva.org](http://www.oregonpva.org)



# OPVA GOLD CUP



Paralyzed Veterans of America

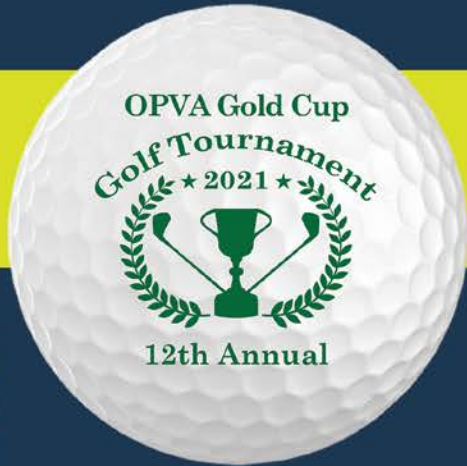
Oregon Chapter



155 McNary Estates Dr N  
Keizer, OR 97303

# GOLF TOURNAMENT





**THANK YOU TO ALL  
OUR SPONSORS!!!**





# SPORTS

## Corner

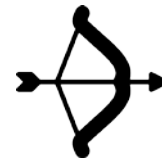


Guliet Bob Mahler's Companion

Bob Mahler – Sports Director  
OPVA's leadership Coordinators are building a stronger, efficient, and more varied Sports & Recreation program. Please peruse the following information.

These are OPVA's active Sports Coordinators:

- **Air Pisto/Rifle:**  
Dustin Simmons
- **Bowling:**  
Grant Buehler
- **Table Tennis:**  
Bob Mahler
- **Trapshooting:**  
Larry Gardner



OPVA's proposed sports and are in need of Coordinators for Archery and Bocce Ball.

Please call OPVA at 503-362-7998 to inquire about applying for a Sorts Coordinator job.

Thank you.







## AIR RIFLE/AIR PISTOL

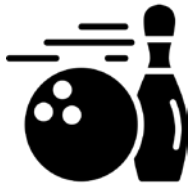
*DUSTIN SIMMONS*



Hello Shooters,

Not much to report this month and I take full responsibility for it. I am currently dealing with a medical issue and should be back at it within a month. The final measurements needed are based on a worst-case circumstance shooter.

Once these measurements are complete, I am quite confident that we will begin our open house and shooting by Fall or sooner. Again, I apologize for any delay this may have caused any of our members.



## BOWLING

*GRANT BUEHLER*



As I am writing this, bowling is still happening. Are bowling alleys open, the answer is “yes”. Some are open more than others, but they are still open. What I’ve seen from my bowling friends from around the country is that the AWBA (American Wheelchair Bowling Association), a bowling organization that I am associated with had their second tournament of 2021 in Council Bluffs, Iowa. I heard it was a successful tournament. Since that has also taken place, I am going to continue on with our bowling program. I’m determined to make it a successful one too. As you may or may not have known, I launched

our league over a year ago. It’s true, I’ve struggled & fought through the pandemic by having to suspend & then re-starting our program due to COVID. Believe me, it wasn’t something I wanted to do, but forced to for our members health & safety concerns. I’ve been asked “how is the bowling program going?” My answer was always the same “still suspended because of the alleys are still closed because Coronavirus. I’d love to see you all out there bowling at an alley of your choice. I believe that “we” can push through & have much success with our programs together.



*Adventure is calling  
Join Now!*



I loved it when I came into the office a couple months ago. I had 2 bowling registration forms sitting on my desk that were filled out for the next bowling season. I'd love to see more interest from you, the members. Also, I forgot to mention in my last article, your family members can also join our bowling league. To me, it means that there is interest out there from our members. Our next season will be our Fall Season, that will be starting October 1, 2021 & go through December 31, 2021. I look forward to receiving your bowling scores.

I believe that “we” can push through & have much success with our programs together. The bowling alleys (or in my terms that I am used to, “houses”) in Oregon have been open to the idea of optional mask wearing. Personally, I'll do whatever it takes to do what I want to do. I've started to exercise more. I'm starting to get the muscle in my shoulders, back to where I can roll a 12-pound bowling ball down the lane with ease.

I love it when we all can get along and support each other in the different programs that the OPVA has to offer. As always, I'm just a call away for any thoughts, questions and suggestions. Don't hesitate to shoot me an email at [oregonpva@oregonpva.org](mailto:oregonpva@oregonpva.org) or call the office 503-362-7998.

Anyways, I am very glad to see a light at the end of the tunnel. We are all healthy and alive. now let's get back to bowling!



I miss you all & so look forward to the Member Banquet in September 2021. This is a new beginning & it will be stronger than ever!

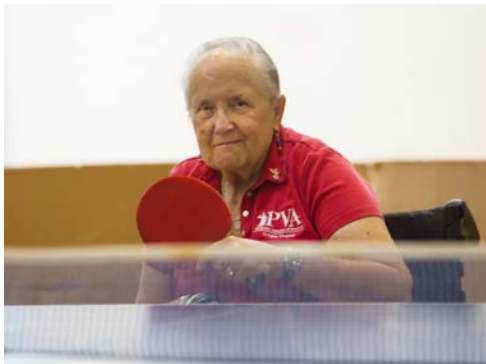




## TABLE TENNIS

BOB MAHLER

All OPVA members, family members and children are welcome to play at the Salem Table Tennis Club (STTC). The STTC is hosted by the Salvation Army's Kroc Center, three days a week. It is wheelchair accessible. We meet Tuesday and Thursdays night at 6:30pm and Saturdays at 12:30pm. The Kroc address is: 1865 Bill Frey Dr. NE, Salem, OR. We play indoors and it's a great way to escape the Summer heat or the Fall rain!



On July 24th, we had our Table Tennis' Open House at the Kroc Center. Thank you to everyone who came out and joined us! Also, a special thank you to Randal and the Beaverton Tennis Club for joining the fun! Randal did a great job coaching our beginner and advanced players. He was very patient and informative. We learned a lot and improved our skills. Everyone had a great time. We hope you can join us soon.



## TRAP SHOOT

LARRY GARDNER

2021 has been a very slow year for getting our sports programs moving forward, due to COVID and the weather.

The trap clubs have down sized their schedules for PITA Shoots so our team has been very limited for shooting this year. The Oregon Chapter did put on a Fun Shoot, June 26th, in Albany. It went very well, for being so hot that day. The next PITA Shoot will be Sept 11th-12th, at the Hillsboro Trap Club. This will be the last one for the season. Then we will go to winter multiplex shoots; usually the first weekend of each month.



We are in the process of planning a fundraiser shoot for May 2022. We will keep you updated when we get it finalized. We are looking for new members that want to join our trap team. No experience is necessary. We will help get you started, even if you don't have a gun. Please call us at the office, if you have any questions. We are looking forward, and keeping our fingers crossed for a better year in 2022.



# SOUTHERN OR AMBASSADOR REPORT



By Dennis Hooper – Southern Oregon Ambassador

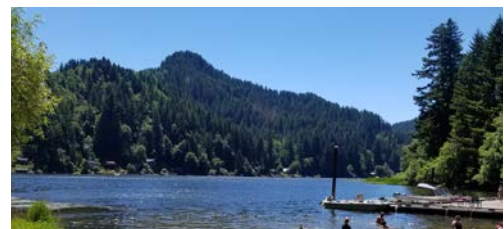


I hope all of you are keeping cool this Summer. It has been a challenge to find a cool outdoor activity during the heat. Where else to go, in June, when one needs relief but nearby Loon Lake?

This little gem is located a few miles off of Highway 138 and about 15 miles east of Reed-sport, in Douglas County. It is a pleasant drive that follows the Umpqua River. Now this is not a large lake by any means, so be prepared for crowds during summer months. With our boat in tow, we rented a slip and then checked into the lodge. The lodge is basically a motel. The rooms are a little difficult to access as most of them have a least two small steps.

Our room was clean, modern and very comfortable.

There are no stores in the area, so bring what ever grub you need. There is a little deli in the lodge, but not long hours. The scenery is fantastic! Nestled amongst the mountains of the coastal range at about 390 feet, one can understand why this place is so popular. We got on the water and did a little fishing. The water was a wonderful color. We then spent the afternoon kayaking all around the lake. The water was splendid and we took a dip or two at the beach near the marina. I was glad to see the area was fairly level.







The folks that run Loon Lake are nice and knowledgeable, but can be difficult to get a hold of. The prices of goods and services are not as competitive as some larger resorts. This place is a bit out of the way, so unless you want to drive to a store or gas station, one must pay for the convenience. One doesn't have to pay for the stars and the beauty offered by this serene lake. You might not be able to take the natural smells with you, but the memories garnered from Loon Lake will last you a lifetime. It doesn't hurt to use your Recreation Fund to visit this lake either.

Another day, we took one of the trails near the campground and explored the thickly wooded retreats. My new Freewheel attachment worked great. We got to places way more easily. The trail offered some good views of the lake. In the evening, we did some more fishing. The fishing in June was not too bad here. Although, it was crowded it was very quiet after 10pm. Anyone thinking about visiting Loon Lake should do their research. Parking, especially with a boat trailer, can be a challenge.



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# IDAHO AMBASSADOR REPORT

## CALL ME!

I miss you.



By Donald Wyatt – Idaho Ambassador

This Summer has been hot. I think we can all agree on that, so I will attribute the 100 degree temperature for the lack of interest in a membership picnic in the park. We didn't have a picnic in the park, though I paid for the shelter reservation more than a month prior. So, I had a picnic at home. Cathy and I had a great time. We had hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, baked beans, and I even had a beer.

I think had a Cathy lemonade. We missed you!

We will try again later for a membership meeting, so if anyone has a suggestion, PLEASE feel free to let me know. 208-484-3537

I hope everyone is well. It seems this COVID thing will never end. Be safe and healthy, and remember, I'm here if you need some help with things.

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS NEWS



Larry J Ricklefs – Government Relations

The summer of 2021 is a mirror image of flashbacks and devastation on a grand scale, of the Summer of 2020. We would like to put behind us like a bad dream. While this summer is draining vast finite resources, I dare say PVA remains at the helm of veteran priorities looking out for you, our cherished veteran heroes. PVA and the local Oregon chapter closely monitor VA funding

legislation, despite many hands in the dollar cookie jar eager to fund anything and everything under the sun. Our interest favors program effectiveness, that is measured in billions of dollars, requiring Congressional approval, before its' benefit is passed down to the deserving veteran. Final figures are in flux right now, being hammered into something palatable to both major political assemblies. In the end our commitment to serving SCI/SCD veterans continues.





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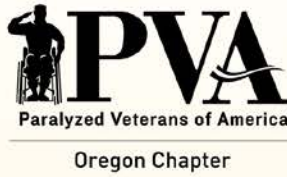




# HAPPY Birthday

Steven Herron	9/1	JohnSiemssen	9/28
Charles Abernathy	9/2	Kristy McNulty	9/29
George Weathers	9/2	Naomia Gardner	9/29
Gregory Pearce	9/3	Charles Demoss	10/4
Michael Angerinos	9/3	JuliePollard	10/4
Susanne Doppke	9/3	David Holt	10/5
Henry "Evan" Burroughs	9/4	TomWeare	10/9
Samuel Learn	9/5	Travis Nelson	10/9
William Smith	9/5	Michael Johnson	10/10
Darrel Von	9/5	Bradley Barton	10/11
Donald Boss	9/6	Albert Wagoner	10/15
James Bender	9/10	Matthew Denny	10/18
Michelle Beech	9/11	Jerry Ryan	10/19
Colin Dye	9/13	Barbra Townsend	10/19
Grant Buehler	9/13	Gilbert Arendt	10/20
BradGardner	9/14	Shawn Kellar	10/20
William Kincaid	9/15	Albert Bocanegra	10/21
JoyNelson	9/15	Linda Adams	10/24
Carlton Herron	9/18	Kathy Palominos	10/25
CaraOverstreet	9/20	Keith Wingfield	10/26
MartinCampos	9/21	Jerome Brewer	10/26
Jennifer Binder	9/22	MikeJarvis	10/29
LisaHurt	9/24	Dennis Hooper	10/27
Kenneth Townsend	9/25	Stephanie Hartzell	10/28
Andrea Harris	9/25	Wayne Howell	10/28
Jeffry Watkins	9/26	Larry VonSchell	10/29
Larry Rilling	9/26	Steven Murphy	10/29
Michael Bigsby	9/27	Mike Rosenbalm	10/30
Charles Montague	9/28	John Jabson	10/30





Thank you to our sponsors  
for making this year's  
Trapshoot Fundraiser a success!

# Trapshoot Fundraiser



# September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Labor Day	7	8 Roseburg Members Meeting	9	10	11 Show & Shine Car Show
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 Members Banquet
19	20	21	22	23 Deep Sea Fishing Trip	24	25
26	27	28	29	30 ZOOM BOD 10:00 a.m.		

 **Office Closed**



**\*Don't forget:  
The Fiscal Calendar Year  
ENDS September 30th  
and BEGINS OCT 1st!\***



# October

Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday

					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 Columbus Day	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 ZOOM BOD 10:00 a.m.	29	30
31						

## Save the Date

- |          |                          |  |
|----------|--------------------------|--|
| 8/27-9/6 | Oregon State Fair        | 10/11 Columbus Day (Office Closed)                     |
| 9/8      | Roseburg Members Meeting | 11/11 Veterans Day Parade Albany                       |
| 9/11     | Show and Shine Car Show  | 11/25-11/26 Thanksgiving<br>(Office Closed)            |
| 9/18     | Members Banquet          | 12/20-1/2 Office Closed for Christmas<br>and New Years |
| 9/23     | Deep Sea Fishing         |  |

 **Office Closed**



# Washington Update

Recent news regarding legislation and regulatory actions affecting veterans and people with disabilities.

Written and produced by Paralyzed Veterans of America - Government Relations Department

August 25, 2021

Volume 27, Number 14

**Want to Follow the Status of Priority Issues Between Updates?**  
Visit [PVA's VoterVoice Portal](#) to view our latest alerts and a list of key legislation and its status. Also, check out our latest blog about our efforts during the August Recess!

## HVAC PASSES VETERANS BILLS BEFORE THE AUGUST RECESS

In late July, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee (HVAC) approved eight veterans-related bills that would expand mental health care resources for American Indian and Alaska Native veterans, support student veterans, improve separating servicemembers' transition back into the private sector, promote economic opportunities for veterans, and study racial disparities in VA benefits. Included among the bills was H.R. 4625, the VA Caregiver Transparency Act, which PVA expressed concern with earlier this year. Specifically, we opposed language in the bill which would prohibit the Board of Veterans' Appeals from reviewing VA decisions on applications for its Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. We also expressed concern with the wording of a provision that could accelerate the start date for phase II of the program expansion. As written, VA could announce the start date on September 30, 2022, so no actual acceleration would take place. Since no logistical or operational impediments exist for VA to begin the second phase, we urged the Committee to amend the language and specify a start date as close to October 1 of this year as possible.

Regrettably, HVAC approved the bill without making any changes; so, we will continue to press our case with House leadership and the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. The HVAC

## SVAC APPROVES SEVERAL VETERANS BILLS IN JULY MARKUP

On July 28, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee (SVAC) approved 13 bills aimed at tackling veterans homelessness, improving veterans' health care, and other issues impacting veterans. The bills approved included S.887, the VA Supply Chain Resiliency Act, which could help bolster the VA supply chain. Early in the pandemic, VA was forced to limit supplies like gloves, gowns, and pads normally provided to SCI/D patients for critical procedures performed in their homes such as bowel, bladder, and wound care. This was a source of great concern when members who relied on VA to prescribe these items had to turn to the private sector to try to obtain them. The VA Supply Chain Resiliency Act could help prevent situations like this from happening again by including VA in the Department of Defense's Warstopper program.

Another bill, S. 372, the Ensuring Quality Care for Our Veterans Act, would require VA to establish a third-party process for the review of any instance in which a veteran has been treated by a VA provider later found to have a revoked license



It also requires VA to notify veterans if it is determined that an episode of care or services they received was below established levels for acceptable care. We believe this common-sense approach would help protect the health and well-being of veterans.

Finally, S. 1965, the Planning for Aging Veterans Act of 2021, would pave the way for future investments in long-term care, strengthen VA's relationship with state veterans homes, and expand the care veterans in state homes receive. Language in this bill requires VA to develop a long-term care strategy to meet the needs of veterans; clarifies VA policy to ensure catastrophically disabled veterans residing in a state home receive their medications without a copayment, as they would if they resided elsewhere; and directs VA to work with public housing authorities and local organizations to assist aging homeless veterans in accessing existing housing and supportive services. The complete list of SVAC approved bills can be found [here](#).

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## **HOUSE AND SENATE APPROVE THE FRAMEWORK FOR RECONCILIATION**

On August 10, the Senate agreed to a framework for a \$3.5 trillion-dollar reconciliation package designed to enact the President's Build Back Better agenda. The Senate budget resolution setting the stage for the reconciliation bill contains a number of instructions to various committees tasked with crafting legislation to implement the resolution. The reconciliation framework calls for VA to receive \$18 billion which would go toward badly needed upgrades to its facilities. Of that amount, \$3 billion would likely be made available immediately for minor projects or renovations with the balance going towards major construction projects like building new medical centers or replacing old ones.

Of interest to the disability community are several provisions noted in the reconciliation instructions to the Senate Finance Committee and Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP). Among the provisions Finance was asked to develop are:

- Paid Family and Medical Leave
- Affordable Care Act expansion extension and filling the Medicaid Coverage Gap
- Expanding Medicare to include dental, vision, and hearing benefits and lowering the eligibility age
- Long-term care for seniors and persons with disabilities through home and community-based services.

Provisions to be crafted by HELP include:

- Pandemic preparedness
- Workforce development and job training
- Labor enforcement and penalties

Improvements to Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which advocates have been calling for, were not explicitly identified in the budget resolution instructions. However, Finance Committee officials have indicated a desire to include modernization of these benefits as they begin working to allocate the funds under their jurisdiction. Congress can still make critically important SSI updates in the final legislation if the legislation's total cost adheres to the budget framework in the budget resolution.

Many of these provisions could benefit PVA members if a reconciliation bill is ultimately passed through the House and Senate. It took the Senate several months to reach consensus and pass the framework for the reconciliation bill, which was agreed to along party lines. The House approved a reconciliation framework on August 24 which will pave the way for consideration of a reconciliation package when Congress returns in September. Passage of a final reconciliation package will be difficult as there is still not agreement among Democrats as to the size or

composition of a final package. Also, Congress must still approve government funding for the new fiscal year by October 1 and a plan to raise the government debt limit.

## **U.S. ACCESS BOARD TO HOST PUBLIC BRIEFING ON STUDY ON THE FEASIBILITY OF WHEELCHAIR SECUREMENT SYSTEMS IN PASSENGER AIRCRAFT**

The inability to use one's wheelchair on airplanes makes air travel very difficult, if not impossible, for many people with disabilities. Among other challenges, it requires multiple transfers between boarding chairs and aircraft seats, posing injury risks. To address these challenges, the U.S. Access Board commissioned a study to assess the feasibility of equipping aircraft with securement systems so that passengers can remain in their wheelchairs on flights. The Transportation Research Board (TRB), of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, will release its final report mid-September. The Access Board will host a public briefing on the final report on September 22 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm ET. The briefing will feature a presentation by the TRB Study Committee Members, including Committee Chair Dr. Alan M. Jette, on the two-year research study that focused on the design, engineering, and safety requirements for equipping aircraft with securement wheelchairs. The event is free, but registration is required. Members of the public will be able to pose questions during the event.

## **VA FUNDING LEGISLATION ADVANCES**

In late July, the House approved its version of the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies (MILCON/VA) bill and in early August the Senate Appropriations Committee approved a draft of theirs. In terms of total spending, the two bills are nearly identical. The House bill provides \$279.9 billion, whereas the Senate's offers a slightly lesser amount of \$279.8 billion. The measures differ slightly in their distribution of discretionary versus mandatory spending for FY 2022 but provide identical amounts in advanced appropriations for FY 2023, including \$111.3 billion for veterans medical care and \$156.6 billion for veterans benefits.

Looking at specific funding areas of interest, both bills would provide \$1.4 billion for VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers and \$13.2 billion for mental health care. These amounts are \$200 million and \$2.9 billion more than current year levels (respectively).

Areas where the bills differ include spending on women's health where the Senate bill allocates \$820 million versus \$778.5 million for the House; and rural health initiatives where the Senate is seeking \$327 million—\$27 million more than FY 2021 and \$20 million more than the House request of \$307 million. Conversely, the House is allocating slightly higher amounts than the Senate for medical and prosthetics research (\$902 million versus \$882 million) and VA's Electronic Health Record modernization project (\$2.6 billion versus \$2.5 billion).



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Both bills would provide \$1.6 billion for major construction, \$553 million for minor construction, and \$50 million to continue funding the State Veteran Home Construction Grant program. If approved, this funding would go towards VA's highest priority projects and correct critical seismic and safety deficiencies and address other performance gaps at VA facilities to ensure that veterans can access care in modern facilities that are safe, secure, sustainable, and accessible.

Finally, both bills authorize the use of VA funds for IVF services, but the language used differs between the two chambers. This, as well as the differing amounts described above, will need to be resolved prior to passage of a final bill for the President's signature.

## **APPROPRIATIONS PROVISIONS OF INTEREST TO THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY**

Several programs of interest to the disability community received increases in the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Appropriations bills that have been considered in the House. These included:

- \$4.2 million increase for the Department of Labor's (DOL) Office of Disability Employment Policy to \$42.7 million
- \$12.96 million for the Voting Access for Individuals with Disabilities program, which is \$5,000,000 above the FY 2021 enacted level.
- \$148.2 million for the Administration on Community Living Independent Living program, of which \$28,423,000 is for the Independent Living State Grants program and \$119.8 million is for the Centers for Independent Living program. This funding level is \$32 million above the FY 2021 enacted level.
- \$3.7 billion for State Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants which is \$44.1 million above the FY 2021 enacted level.

- Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) and Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) were funded at \$23 million and \$10 million respectively. These levels are essentially the same as FY 2021.

- Similarly, the DOL Veterans Employment and Training Service Disabled Veterans Program received \$300,000 which is the same level as last year.

Given the severe impact of COVID-19 on people with disabilities, the Appropriations Committee encouraged the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to fund research on identifying inequities in health and health care for people with disabilities and to support research that develops and evaluates interventions to reduce these disparities, including approaches that focus on addressing systemic and community level barriers.

The Committee also asked the Centers on Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to "provide adequate and equal access to users of Complex Rehabilitation Technology (CRT) manual wheelchairs and accessories and to consider making that protection permanent." This direction was in response to provisions in P.L. 116-94 that were intended to assist Medicare beneficiaries with severe disabilities through improved access to specialized CRT manual wheelchairs and accessories.

The Committee further asked CMS to study appropriate alternatives for using Quality-Adjusted Life Years in determining indexes for prices and coverage for medications, treatments, and other services. The Committee expressed support for the National Council on Disability's analysis in its 2019 report, "Quality-Adjusted Life Years and the Devaluation of Life with Disability," and recognized the importance of determining alternative methodologies for establishing pricing mechanisms that are

not discriminatory to individuals with disabilities. The Committee requested a report “within 180 days of enactment on alternative methodologies, including analysis as to whether or not these alternatives themselves may be discriminatory if used incorrectly, as well as if there are different best practices which can and should be used separately for the pricing of medications and treatments versus decisions related to benefits and coverage.”

In the appropriations legislation now under development in the Senate, two provisions under Transportation are of significant interest to disability advocates:

- The All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP) would issue grants up to \$1.75 billion at a rate of 350 million per year 2022-2026 to eligible entities in financing capital projects to upgrade the accessibility of legacy rail fixed guideway public transportation systems for persons with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs, by increasing the number of existing (as of the date of enactment of this Act) stations or facilities for passenger use that meet or exceed the new construction standards of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- The Secretary of Transportation would be directed to withhold \$50,000,000 from the amount appropriated for each fiscal year for grants to assist Amtrak in financing capital projects to upgrade the accessibility of the national rail passenger transportation system by increasing the number of existing facilities that are compliant with the requirements under the ADA until the Secretary determines Amtrak’s existing facilities are in compliance with such requirements.

## NEWS OF NOTE

### • Senate Approves Infrastructure Package

On August 10, the Senate approved a \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure package which would provide funding for infrastructure projects like roads, bridges, broadband, water, and public transportation. The infrastructure package included a modified version of the PVA supported All Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP) Act which was introduced by Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL). This provision would help make existing transit stations in legacy transit and commuter rail systems more accessible for people with disabilities. The bipartisan bill is the first of a two-part plan to bolster the economy by infusing additional government funding into various projects and programs. The second part is the reconciliation bill currently under development.

### • REAADI For Disasters Act and DRMA Reintroduced

On August 5, Senator Robert Casey (D-PA) reintroduced the REAADI (Real Emergency Access for Aging and Disability Inclusion) for Disasters Act (S. 2658) and the Disaster Relief Medicaid Act (DRMA) (S. 2646). The next day, Representative James Langevin (D-RI) introduced REAADI (H.R. 4938) in the House of Representatives, while Representative Jimmy Panetta (D-CA) introduced DRMA (H.R. 4937). Both bills were introduced with bipartisan support in the House. . PVA was among over 100 organizations endorsing REAADI and DRMA. In the Senate, REAADI has been referred to the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee and DRMA is pending in Senate Finance. In the House, H.R. 4938 is pending in several committees – Transportation and Infrastructure, Education and Labor, and Energy and Commerce. H.R. 4937 was referred to the Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means Committees.



READI would create a network of twenty centers focused on training and technical assistance, as well as research, to help governments better involve and support people with disabilities and older adults during and after times of disasters. It also directs the U.S. Government Accountability Office to review the degree to which disaster funds have been spent in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and requires the U.S. Department of Justice to examine the extent to which the civil rights of people with disabilities and older adults are upheld during and after disasters.

DRMA seeks to ensure that individuals eligible for Medicaid who are forced to relocate due to a disaster are able to continue to access their Medicaid supported services. It will also help states through a limited time 100 percent federal match for displaced individuals and a 100 percent federal matching payment for medical assistance to states in disaster areas.

- **Strengthening Social Security Act Introduced in the House**

In early August, Representative Linda Sanchez (D-CA) introduced her Strengthening Social Security Act, H. R. 4921. Similar to legislation she authored in the 116th Congress, the bill would provide a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) that more accurately reflects the cost of living for seniors and those with disabilities, phases out the taxable cap on income, increases widow/ers benefits, and holds Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients harmless for any increase in benefits enacted through this bill that could threaten their access to SSI. PVA supports this legislation which is currently pending before the House Ways and Means Committee.

- **Inclusive Home Design Act Reintroduced**

On July 25, Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) reintroduced the Eleanor Smith Inclusive Home Design Act, H.R. 4695. Named after a leading champion of inclusive home design, the bill would require certain newly

constructed federally-assisted housing, including single-family homes and town houses, to contain at least one level that complies with specified minimum standards of accessibility for individuals with disabilities. PVA has endorsed H.R. 4695 which is pending in the House Financial Services Committee.

- **House Select Subcommittee Recommendations Include Improved Congressional Access for People with Disabilities**

On July 29, the House Select Committee

on the Modernization of Congress successfully passed 20 recommendations focused on increasing staff capacity, retaining a diverse workforce, professionalizing internships and fellowships, and ensuring access to Congress for people with disabilities. The set of recommendations includes four focused on disability access: ADA drop off/pick up zone, security screenings, doorway accessibility, and web site access. The recommendations mirror those included in PVA testimony before the Committee in May.

- **U.S. Department of Education Announces Debt Relief for Borrowers with a Total and Permanent Disability**

Over 323,000 borrowers who have a total and permanent disability (TPD) will receive more than \$5.8 billion in automatic student loan discharges due to a new regulation announced by the U.S. Department of Education. The change will apply to borrowers who are identified through an existing data match with the Social Security Administration (SSA). It will begin with the September quarterly match with SSA. The department has also announced that it will indefinitely extend the policy announced in March to stop asking TPD borrowers to provide information on their earnings beyond the end of the pandemic. More information is available here.

- ODEP Toolkit for Financial Security

The Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration and Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) have produced a financial toolkit for people with disabilities and others whose employment has been affected by COVID-19. The toolkit provides information for those at various stages of the employment journey from preparing for a job, starting a job, maintaining a job, to changing or losing a job, and retiring from a job.

- American Forces Travel Site Now Open to Eligible Veterans

Last month, the Department of Defense (DOD) announced honorably discharged veterans will now be able to access the American Forces Travel (AFT) website. AFT launched in 2019 as the only official joint service morale, welfare, and recreation leisure travel website exclusively for DOD patrons. Users save up to 40 percent compared to commercial travel pricing and every booking on AFT generates revenue to support critical quality-of-life programs for servicemembers and families. To access the exclusive military discount pricing on travel products, visit the AFT website. Proof of eligibility is required.

- VA Office of Inspector General Highlights Challenges in Veteran-Directed Care Program

On August 4, VA's Office of Inspector General issued a report entitled, "Opportunities Exist to Improve Management of Noninstitutional Care through the Veteran-Directed Care Program." The report highlights a number of challenges and recommendations to improve management and oversight of the program. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

- VA Offering Additional Doses of COVID-19 Vaccine for Immunocompromised Veterans  
VA has announced it will begin offering additional doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to

any veteran who is immunocompromised. If you fall into this category, please check with your medical team before scheduling an appointment. VA has created a Frequently Asked Questions fact sheet to guide veterans through the process.

## WEBINARS AND EVENTS

- VA Hosting Listening Sessions on DEI

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is conducting 55 virtual diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) listening sessions (48 of which are site specific) for veterans throughout August and September. VHA will execute listening sessions to gather feedback on the following issues:

- o Veterans' experiences and perceptions related to DEI at VA's health care facilities.
- o Ways veterans feel they can be included.
- o Barriers to effective health care for diverse veteran populations.
- o Unmet needs of diverse veteran populations.

The site-specific sessions will each include six separate sessions each focused on a different population of veterans, one of which is veterans with disabilities. To register for site-specific sessions in your area, please click [here](#). More information is also available [here](#) and [here](#).

- PVA Webinar Recordings Now Available

Two PVA Government Relations webinars are now available on [pva.org](http://pva.org).

- o July 20 webinar entitled, "Update on VA Long Term Care Programs." Please click [here](#) and scroll down to the webinar section on PVA's veteran issues webpage.

- o July 22 webinar entitled, "ADA Enforcement at the State and Local Levels."



Please click here and scroll down to the webinar section on PVA's disability rights and advocacy webpage.

- Access Board Webinar Recording on Accessible Pedestrian Trails and Shared Use Paths Now Available

If you missed the U.S. Access Board's webinar on accessible pedestrian trails and shared use paths, you can access the webinar recording and presentation materials in their archives. This webinar reviewed the differences between accessible pedestrian trails and shared use paths. Access Board Accessibility Specialists Bill Botten and Juliet Shoultz discussed the technical and scoping requirements in the Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards for newly constructed or altered pedestrian trails on federal sites, as well as the proposed supplementary provisions for shared use paths.

They also addressed some frequently asked questions and common sources of confusion concerning accessible pedestrian trails and shared use paths.



**PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA**  
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## Membership Application

An individual is eligible for membership by meeting the following criteria: (1) is a citizen of the United States; (2) was regularly enlisted, inducted or commissioned for active duty service in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard of the United States, or our allies as evidenced by other-than-dishonorable character of service documented by a verifiable DD-214 or DD-215 (entry-level separation not acceptable); (3A) was separated from the service in the Armed Forces under conditions other than dishonorable; or (3B) is on active duty or must continue to serve after the cessation of hostilities; and (4) has suffered a spinal cord injury or disease (such as MS, ALS), whether or not service connected in origin. Membership is free. **Complete and return application to the chapter of choice or by mail/email to:** Paralyzed Veterans of America Membership Department, 801 Eighteenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006; (E) members@pva.org. Providing the requested information is entirely voluntary but required for membership with Paralyzed Veterans of America.

**Chapter Name:** Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America, 3700 Silverton Rd NE, Salem, OR 97305

**First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Middle Initial:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ **Social Security Number:** \_\_\_\_\_  Male  Female

**Race/Ethnicity:**

- Asian/Pacific Islander                       African American/Descent       Hispanic/Latino
- Native American/Alaskan Native       Caucasian

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

### VETERAN STATUS INFORMATION

**Please submit the following with application:**

- DD214 showing character of discharge.
- Medical evidence of spinal cord injury or involvement (medical records or physician’s statement).

**Proof of active duty status must be verified prior to membership approval.**

**Have you been discharged under conditions that are less than honorable?**  Yes  No

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you a United States citizen?**  Yes  No

**Do you have a spinal cord injury or disease?**  Yes  No If disease, specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Is your spinal cord injury or spinal cord disease service connected?**  Yes  No

If Paralyzed Veterans of America is your accredited representative, do you permit PVA Service Officers to provide information to PVA National Membership Department relative to your membership eligibility?  Yes  No

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, that I have read and meet the qualifications and I understand that my membership could be denied or revoked if any information provided is inaccurate.

**Applicant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Witness Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



**Paralyzed Veterans  
of America**

## Membership Application

### Physician's Statement Form

\_\_\_\_\_ is a veteran who has a spinal cord injury or disease.

His/her diagnosis is:

- Paraplegia
- Quadriplegia
- Brown Sequard Syndrome
- Cauda Equina Syndrome
- ALS
- Multiple Sclerosis (involving the spinal cord)
- Transverse Myelitis
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Physician's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Physician's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Physician's Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Physician's Phone/Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed





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