



The Wheeled Herald



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Fitness Competition-You're invited!

Patrick Reynolds, Sports Director

Mark it down, right now! The Great Plains PVA will be hosting its second ever wheelchair fitness competition. Last August, we held the inaugural competition with a great turnout and hope for even more participants this year.

Here are the details:

When: Saturday, March 23, 2013 - 10AM

Where: Great Plains PVA Fitness Center

What: A multiple-event competition to determine the fittest disabled athlete in the Omaha/Lincoln area.

Who: Any disabled person may compete.

Participants must use a manual wheelchair.

The competition will be a great way for friends and family to see what our fitness participants do on a daily basis. Our brand new equipment will be utilized (absolutely including coach Reynolds's prized Concept 2 Ski Ergometer) and the Eastern Nebraska Quad Rugby team will be holding a showcase scrimmage in the gymnasium during the fitness competition for some added entertainment. The competition will take approximately 3 hours to complete and will be an awesome time! We hope to see many participants and many spectators for this great day.

PVA Scholarship Program

National PVA will award college scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 to full-time students and \$500 to part-time students. The applicant must be either a PVA member, the spouse of a PVA member, or an unmarried child (under 24 years of age) who is dependent (as defined by the IRS) on the member for principal support. The applicant must be a citizen of the United States and accepted and enrolled as a full-time or part-time student in an accredited US college or university. Previous award recipients may apply.

Submission Process

Individuals who wish to apply for the scholarship can download the application at www.pva.org or request an application be mailed to them via phone (800) 424-8200 Ext. 776, or via e-mail christih@pva.org. Completed applications MUST be returned to PVA NO LATER THAN June 17, 2013. Late applications will not be accepted, no exceptions. In addition, any incomplete applications will not be considered.



President's Message by Randy Squier

This newsletter begins with the hope that the flu has missed your house altogether. I wish I could say the same but it knocked at mine and someone let it in. Having said that, I'm feeling much better.

The Jo Ann Veiga Memorial Nurse of the Quarter Award continues at the Omaha VA Hospital. This is an opportunity for us as a Chapter to recognize those nurses that do so much for the Veterans that are treated at the Omaha VA Hospital. This long standing award was started years ago and pays tribute to the excellence of those caregivers who are nominated by their peers and add their name to a long list of nurse's who are passionate about the care our Veterans receive.

The Chapter's Air Rifle Shooting Competition will continue as we try to bring new ideas to the table to keep our members engaged. Our efforts to challenge our members with competitions that involve skill are a good source of further camaraderie. We hope you take advantage of our efforts to bring this shooting skills competition to our membership and use it as a way to socialize as we enjoy bringing the opportunity to you. The competition will be

meticulously scored and the results reported and tabulated. I should mention, although it is a competition, the fun and the social aspect of such an event is also very important. Our hope is that the energy that comes out of this program will make it an annual event.



We will be holding a Bocce Ball shoot-out at the Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home (ENVH) in Bellevue for that group of Veterans very soon. This is once again an opportunity to spend time with an aging populous of Veterans and present another top-notch program. To solidify our commitment to the Veterans at the Bellevue ENVH we will be calling upon a number of you to help us pull it off. I know first hand that those Veterans appreciate the time we spend with them. Thanks in advance for your support. I hope this finds you all healthy and eager to get started with another busy year.

Chapter Officers

Randy Squier, President
Joe Roberts, Vice President
Vincent "Jim" Toelle, Secretary
Craig Enenbach, Treasurer

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John Scott, Director
Garret Hardy, Director

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Tamara Lawter

National Service Officer

John Gogan
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Director

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Development

Angelina Ramos
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Sports Director

Patrick Reynolds
reynolds@greatplainspva.org

Administrative Assistant

Jane Healy
Building Attendant
David Hansen

Need a Wheelchair?



Near new Invacare Solara tilting wheelchair.

Unfortunately, the prior owner has passed away and wants to donate this chair to a recipient who could make good use of it. It has lots of options and cost over \$5,000 when new. The seat is 18" square.

Contact Craig Enenbach at pva.enenbach@cox.net or 402-933-5557.

Executive Director's Report

by Mary Bushman

Congratulations to all our members who have been participating in the Chapter's weekly Air Rifle Shooting program. Watching these guys hit a less than 2-inch target from 30 feet away with such skill and accuracy has been impressive. The first 7-week session ends March 14th, but a second 7-week session will be offered in the spring. If you are interested in this free program, please contact the Chapter office at 402-398-1422. Grant funding for the Air Rifle program is awarded by U.S. Paralympics, a division of the U.S. Olympic Committee, through funding provided by Veterans Affairs. The grants are provided to facilitate the growth of Paralympic-sport programming for disabled Veterans and disabled members of the Armed Forces. Special thanks to Dr. Joleen Fixley from the Omaha VA Spinal Cord Injury Clinic for referring veterans to the program and for volunteering her time to assist with scoring during the weekly sessions.

When the Chapter applied for the Olympic Opportunity Grant, it requested funding for 2 very different programs to serve two unique populations. The first program to be implemented was the Air Rifle Shooting program currently underway. The second program is a Boccia Ball program the Chapter will host monthly at the Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home beginning March 25th. The Boccia Ball program was specially designed for the Home's residents to encourage physical activity and socialization. PVA staff will work with the residents one morning a month from March through August to practice their Boccia skills. In September, the residents will compete in a Boccia Ball tournament as part of the annual PVA Veterans Games hosted by PVA at the Home.

On another note, I would like to thank Bill and Jackie Seibert and Heartland Mobility for sponsoring the Chapter's annual Wine & Roses fundraiser. Proceeds from the event benefit the Virginia and Tom Pierce Memorial Scholarship Fund administered by the PVA Ladies Auxiliary. This year's event was held on February 17th at WineStyles. Thank you to all the PVA members and friends who supported Wine & Roses 2013.



Fee Basis/Non-VA Healthcare Claims

By John Gogan, PVA National Service Officer

Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) National Service Office in Lincoln has been advised of a change in the VA software program used to process the Non-VA Healthcare claims, formerly known as FEE BASIS claims. The representative will no longer receive a copy of any denied claim. The VA indicated this would be a temporary interruption in service which may last as long as nine months.

During this time period, it is very important that veterans contact the National Service Office in Lincoln to advise the NSO of any denial of services and the reason why the VA states that they denied the Non-VA Healthcare claim. The VA denial letters can be very confusing and they provide little detail about the health care that was provided. The NSO may provide clarification about the decision.

When emergency room care is used and the VA denies payment, please call your PVA National Service Office. The PVA representative will discuss whether or not it would be appropriate to file a Notice of Disagreement to that decision or to re-develop the history for the health care and to resubmit to the VA for payment. When the VA is provided an explanation as to why you had to seek immediate health-care or go to an emergency room; frequently, the VA will reverse their denial.

Please contact the PVA National Service Office or NSO when you receive a denial, that way we can confirm that the decision made by the VA was appropriate.

If you have any concerns, questions, or comments, please contact the PVA National Service Officer John E. Gogan, (402) 420-4017, or Paralyzed Veterans of America, 3800 Village Drive, PO Box 85816, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501-5816.

PVA Advocacy & Legislation Seminar: Priorities for 2013

By Amanda Vazquez, Government Relations Director

The first week of March brought PVA members and advocates to Washington DC for PVA's annual Advocacy & Legislation Seminar. The seminar consisted of two-days discussing legislative and advocacy issues and another two days on Capitol Hill to present our top legislative priorities to our Congressional delegates.

The first two days, we welcomed guest speakers including a representative from TSA's Wounded Warrior Program, Congressional staffers representing the Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committees, and National PVA staff from various departments including Architecture, Medical Services, Advocacy, Government Relations, and Veterans Benefits.

Every year, PVA prioritizes current issues that are most important to its members and the disability community as a whole. This year, there are ten issues on which PVA is focusing its efforts. I've highlighted the top three below:



**Senate & House
VA Committees Panel**

1. Timely Delivery of Prosthetic Devices

A change has been implemented within the VA Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS) that requires purchases of prosthetic devices \$3,000 and higher to be made by a prosthetics and surgical products contracting center within the VA Office of Acquisition and Logistics. This change has caused delays in delivery of the needed prosthetic devices, diminished quality service delivery, and prolonged hospital stays for veterans. VA is not communicating effectively with veterans and stakeholders in the veteran community to fully understand the negative impact of these changes. Delays in the procurements of these prosthetic devices - which include wheelchairs and artificial limbs - are more costly for the government, in terms of unnecessary extended hospital stays while waiting for the needed equipment, and veterans, in terms of lost independence and quality of life.

2. Inclusion of Reproductive Services in VA Health Care

Currently, the VA does not provide health care benefits to veterans who have service-connected injuries - such as a spinal cord injury - that prevents conception of a child. Including these benefits would ensure that veterans who have sustained these injuries can afford to seek medical reproductive services to pursue their desire to have children. For many veterans, the cost of reproductive services sought in the private sector is too high and prohibits them from the chance to have a family. Veterans who have a loss of reproductive ability as a result of a service-connected injury should have access to these medical advancements so they may have the option of having a family.

3. Opposition to Social Security COLA Cuts

As the nation continues to discuss the deficit and debt reduction challenges, many policymakers want to rein in spending on federal benefit programs. Proposals to switch to a different formula to calculate the cost-of-living adjustments - or "Chained CPI" - for Social Security would also apply to VA benefits, civilian pensions and military retirement pay, ultimately resulting in lower compensation each year. What is commonly forgotten, is that Social Security did not add to the federal deficit, and should therefore be left out of the discussion altogether.

The other seven issues are: Improvement of Travel Benefits for Severely Disabled Veterans, Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Treaty, Improvement of the Claims Process, Transfer of the Veterans Employment and Training Service to the Department of Veterans Affairs, Opposition to HR 203: Pool SAFE Act, FY 2014 VA Budget and 2015 Advance Appropriations, and Protection of Specialized Services. If you have any questions or would like to share your personal experiences regarding any of these issues, please contact me at vazquez@greatplainspva.

Victory Riding Academy

Tony and Jodee Barnes, owners of Victory Riding Academy, are dedicated to providing a service in the heart of Omaha that has the potential to touch the lives of children and adults with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as active duty military, veterans, and first responders. Their programs, which include therapeutic riding, HorsesforHeroes riding sessions, and basic interaction with horses, are designed to accommodate a variety of needs and provide many health benefits - physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Victory Riding Academy is located at 4534 Madison Street in Omaha (near 48th and Harrison Streets). They are members of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH) International and have certified volunteers to assist with their programs.

If you are interested in learning more about these programs, you can visit their website at victoryride.org or call them at 402-512-1817.



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CHAPTER BIRTHDAYS



February



William E. Hall * Jerry S. Tharp *
Elizabeth A. Cockett * Clayborn C. Barnett *
Darwin M. Larson * Andrew C. Nelsen * Sidney S.
Rightmyer * Michael E. Moore * James M. Harrin

March

Garret C. Hardy * Thomas A. Pollock * Terry E.
Voorhies * Jerry W. Sandage * Randolph J. Squier *
Charles F. Dus * Michael S. Janik * Robert Glavser
* Russell E. Rimovsky * Sara J. Campbell * Larry
D. Burghardt * Joseph M. May * David D. Hebert *
Barbara R. Bailey * Roy L. Gray * Roger W.
Leonhardt * Ronald T. Bacon * John C. Thompson
* Rita P. Gardner * Darrell E. Albery * Marvin B.
McClaughry * Greg R. Wade * Charles (Chas) E.
Magdanz * Joseph A. Bohnenkamp

GPPVA Adapted Health & Fitness Center

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Open Gym Hours:

Monday - Friday

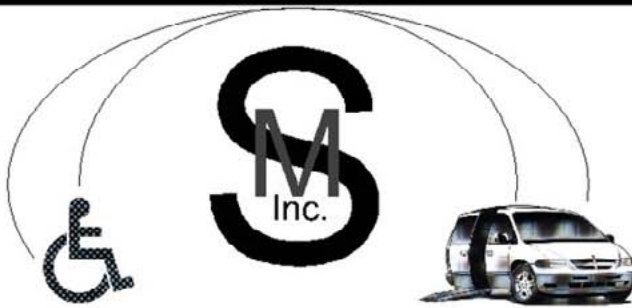
12 - 4 PM

Personal Training Times

Monday - Friday

10 - 12 PM / 4 - 6 PM

Call Pat at 402-398-1422 or email
reynolds@greatplainspva.org to schedule
an appointment or if you have any questions.



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ADA & Accessibility Concerns

If you have experienced a situation in which you believe an individual or business is not in compliance with ADA laws, and you would like assistance from Great Plains PVA, fill out this form as completely as possible.

Your Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Name of the Individual/Business that is not in compliance:

Description of the situation (including any steps you have taken to address the situation):

Date that non-compliance was realized: _____

If you have pictures or documents that could assist us with your case, please provide copies along with this form when it is returned.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Amanda Vazquez at 402-398-1422 or by email at vazquez@greatplainspva.org.

Return form:

by mail: Great Plains PVA, Attn: Amanda Vazquez, 7612 Maple St., Omaha, NE 68134;

by fax: 402-398-1424; or

by email: vazquez@greatplainspva.org



Upcoming Events

March

7th:	Air Rifle Program at PVA	4-5pm
12th:	Popcorn Sales at Omaha VA	9:30am-2:30pm
14th:	BOD Meeting at PVA General Membership Meeting Air Rifle Tournament at PVA	1pm 3pm 4-6pm
19th:	Popcorn Sales at Omaha VA	9:30-2:30pm
23rd:	GPPVA's 2nd Annual Fitness Competition	10am
25th:	Boccia Ball Program at Eastern Nebraska Veterans Home	10am
27th:	GPPVA Easter Party	6-8pm

April

PVA Awareness Month Activities TBD

2nd:	Popcorn Sales at Omaha VA	9:30-2:30pm
11th:	BOD Meeting at PVA	1pm
16th:	Popcorn Sales at Omaha VA	9:30-2:30pm
28th:	Ladies Auxiliary Scholarship Award Reception	2-3:30pm

Great Plains Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America

7612 Maple Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68134-6502



Great Plains Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) is a non-profit organization that has dedicated over 40 years to helping veterans with spinal cord injuries, as well as other individuals living with disabilities, across Nebraska, Western-Iowa, and Kansas. Great Plains PVA is dedicated to improving quality of life by providing education, promoting equal opportunities, encouraging independence, and enhancing lifetime health and fitness. PVA is at the forefront helping and advocating for the rights and benefits of veterans and all people living with disabilities.