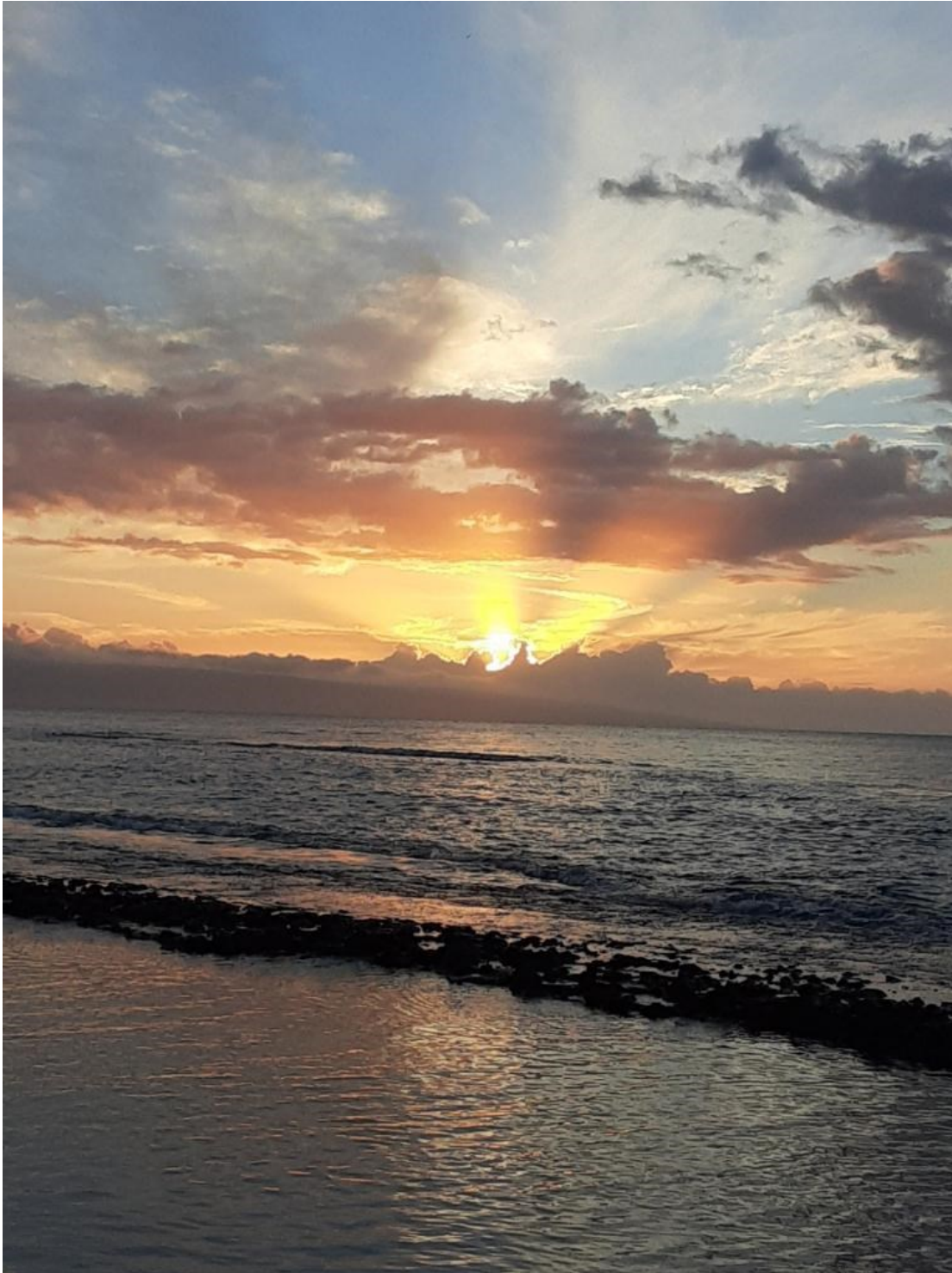




Northwest Chapter



# 2020 Annual Report

*Sunset on 2020*

# President's Message



**I**t is the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Northwest Chapter's (NWPVA) pleasure to present to you our Annual Report for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2019 and ending September 30, 2020. As in past years, this year's budget and annual report was produced by the NWPVA Board of Directors, an independent CPA, Executive Director, and Office Manager which helped guide us throughout the year. Although we experienced a shift due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the NWPVA maintains exploring new partnership sources through grants or donations, that way we continue to strive towards our mission of advocating for our members' health care, programs, and civil rights. This year we continued to advocate for our members' access to health care by opening a COVID Care Unit within the Seattle VA Center. We came forward with funds to support the pre-building of the COVID Care Unit before even federal or state funding was set up, while still focusing on our main Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Unit in Seattle, Spoke Units throughout Washington, Alaska, and Montana, as well as our Rim Units at the State run Veterans Homes.

This is my first year as your Chapter President and was your Acting Chapter President the year before. I continue to believe following the NWPVA Chapter's mission, programs, and outreach advocacy will allow us to be successful for our members. I understand that our immediate community involvement in the chapter enhances our mission and I would love to continue this relationship with our community retailers & outreach centers to help grow our chapter. NWPVA is currently sponsoring members of an outreach center "Transform Burien" and we hope to spread our mission proudly through their events. With sponsoring the outreach center, our local members will be able to receive great food from giving area restaurants, seasonal needed clothing, free laundry service, and Love for those in need from some outstanding Staff and Veteran volunteers.

During the early time of COVID your NWPVA Chapter remained steadfast in advocating for reasons that are truly noteworthy. Because there were to be no set events or ceremonies; On Memorial Day, NWPVA went out and purchased large memorial wreaths to be delivered and placed on each military memorial on the Washington State Capital and one wreath to stand tall on each federal and state veteran run cemeteries. To celebrate 30 years of the ADA, NWPVA funded one of the oldest veteran's homes in Washington (1891) with WIFI throughout the skilled nursing care facility. This truly celebrated ADA with accessible WIFI communications for all 80 plus residents in their rooms. The inpatients in the SCI unit in Seattle loved us coming up to the unit once a month with gourmet pizza and making it into a social and inviting party. Because of the unit lockdown the NWPVA came up with a plan to order the gourmet pizza once a month, have it delivered at Seattle's front VA hospital door by a delivery service, which is then picked up by the Staff to serve at bedside.

The pizza is said to be piping hot and good!

There are so many individuals who are involved to make this Chapter thrive and I would like to thank the past and current NWPVA Board of Directors, members, family, and donors for all you have done over the past year. We will continue to support our members as I believe in our Annual Report reflects our diligence in achieving these goals.



*NWPVA funds WIFI for the Washington Soldiers Home-Orting*

# 2020 Accomplishments

## Fundraising

We continue to enjoy the generosity of our donors like Costco and their employees, Seattle Foundation, Absolute Mobility, Kersey, OthersFirst, and scores of individuals who make small and large donations.

Our partnership with PVA through the *G.I.V.E.* and *Wheels Helping Warriors* programs are fundraising all year long. Our success in fundraising reflects the positive difference we make in the lives of others that enable NWPVA to maintain an excellent reputation for being a good steward of donations to support our programs.

## Chapter Administration

NWPVA's Chapter Office maintains its weekday operation from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM (PST) in our own building and rent space to other organizations that share our common values, like the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Disabled Americans Have Rights Too (DAHRT). We continue to be in full compliance with federal, state and local reporting requirements and all reports are available for public inspection by request at the Chapter Office, and continue to be in Good Standing with PVA.

We are in completion of building a two lane competition air rifle range in the warehouse for our membership to practice for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

We have updated our chapter parking lot with new asphalt sealing, striping, and signage this past summer. The chapter will continue to perform general and necessary maintenance.

We also sponsor a downtown Burien merchant's Halloween *Trick or Treat (Boo In Burien!)* event that brings hundreds of children and their families to the Chapter Office to celebrate community.

## Communication

Our Chapter Newsletter, the *Northwest Outpost* is published bimonthly and printed in-house. More than 600 copies are mailed out to members, community members, donors, and other interested parties after each printing. Our newly revised website, [www.nwpva.org](http://www.nwpva.org) is another valued source of information for the public and members alike and is updated monthly. We utilize our newsletter, website, and calendar to communicate what is happening with the NWPVA to our members. The chapter has hosted board meetings monthly via Zoom for Directors and Members hospitalized or ill who cannot attend the meeting in person. Finally, our Annual Report provides transparency of our operations and we are proud to provide a copy to our community partners and donors to show them how they help us to help others.

We continue reporting the Chapter Board and General Membership meeting Minutes to provide a more complete correspondence record for the archives.

# National Service Office

**F**rom the National Service Officer's perspective, 2020 has been a trying and interesting year. No one expected to have a pandemic which would turn everything as we knew it on its ear. No one expected things would change so much in such a short period of time and from day to day. In March, we saw the Regional Office close access to the public in line with the Governor's mandate to Shelter in Place. We would start working from home trying to do business as usual, except it wasn't business as usual, we had to learn to work as an office from our homes. We had to learn new ways to communicate with our clients and with each other as an office while trying to keep up with the rapidly changes within the VA, whether it was at the Regional Office or the VA Medical Centers. We had to adjust to the times to make sure benefits continue. During all this, Maria Rigolo left her employment with PVA in June to go to work for the VA.

As such, our productivity numbers declined significantly compared to 2019. We were able to take in more new power of attorneys (POAs) than we took in 2019. However, the total number of clients we represented only declined by 10 to 1035 total POAs due to death and clients electing to go elsewhere for representation. We conducted less client contacts as we were not seeing veterans at their bedside or in clinic. We had to rely on phone calls or correspondence to keep in contact with our clients. We were able to conduct 142 outpatient interviews as we transitioned from in-person or face to face clinic appointments to participating in VA Video Connect (VVC) appointments with the veterans and the VA clinicians. We were able to file over 500 claims resulting in a little over \$4.6 million dollars being awarded by the VA. This is a significant decline from the previous 2 years, it is still pretty good numbers especially considering we were again short 1 NSO in the Service SCI/D Office for the last part of the year and now having to cover that office as well. Jerrell has stepped up and been attending meetings with the SCI/D leadership and the Chapter. We continue to attend the ALS Clinics at the American Lake and Seattle campuses, even if they are now VVC appointments. We are still wanting to increase our presence at the MS Clinics and are looking at other ways to increase our outreach efforts and opportunities in 2021.

If 2020 has shown us anything, it is that we are flexible in adapting to whatever is thrown at us to get the job done and more importantly, we are resilient as we continue to fight for the benefits so many of you are entitled to. We are looking forward to challenges 2021 will bring and being more productive than previously as the offices continue to come together supporting each other while representing the best interests of our clientele, the Chapter and the National Organization.

## Outreach

**T**he Chapter continues to enjoy an active partnership with VA Puget Sound Healthcare System (VAPSHCS) and the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA). We work with our PVA Service Officers to improve spinal cord injury and disease care at VA Puget Sound Seattle and American lake campuses. They have a scheduled monthly meeting with the Spinal Cord Injury Director to raise issues and concerns from our members.

We continue to support requests for funding for equipment and education as well as providing pizza once a month to the SCI unit. Our catered Holiday Party at the Spinal Cord Injury Unit and Annual Picnic were put on hold this year thanks to COVID19. These activities are always a success and we hope to continue them in 2021. We also provide the source of inspiration that keeps the Spinal Cord Injury Unit motivated: Coffee!

Our Outreach program extends to WDVA's nursing homes where we have a volunteer that is an active advocate for disabled recreation to include fly fishing and various activities.





## Sports & Recreation

Our membership continues to be involved in many sports and recreation opportunities throughout the Northwest. We are involved in adaptive golf, curling, hunting, fishing, hand cycling, sled hockey, kayaking, weight lifting, scuba, indoor adaptive climbing and wheelchair basketball.

Unfortunately, due to COVID19 the National Veterans Winter Sports Clinic and National Veterans Wheelchair Games were both canceled. We hope they both happen in 2021! National PVA provided many sports and activities on-line utilizing the Zoom meeting platform and they are still ongoing to date.

# Membership

**M**embership continues to be stable. We have 179 service connected members and 203 non -service connected members, for a total of 379 members. We will continue to increase our membership through our outreach and service programs.

We remember the passing of one of NWPVA's distinguished members, Tom Knoppi was a long time member and past Sports Director. We will miss him as we will remember all of our members who are no longer with us.



*Tom Knoppi  
1937-2020*

# Advocacy / Legislation

**W**e again sent a fine delegation team of Chapter members to PVA's Advocacy/Legislation Seminar in Washington DC. They spend a week fine tuning their presentations to our Washington, Idaho, Alaska and Montana congressional delegations. They put a lot of miles and hours traveling the Hill between the House and the Senate appointments. Our delegation, together with PVA and all the other chapters and veterans service organizations that contribute to the Independent Budget (IB). The goal is to have enough funds each year to keep the VA functioning well to care for Veterans.

- Strengthen and Improve the VA Health Care System.
- Strengthen VA Benefits for Catastrophically Disabled Veterans and their Surviving Dependents.
- Strengthen and Protect the Systems and Civil Rights that Support People with Disabilities.

Our delegation was welcomed by everyone they met with and generally gratified by the level of understanding and support during their meetings.



*U.S. Capital*



*Jenny & Robert Clinton outside  
the U.S. Capital during the  
Advocacy/Legislation Seminar*



## Financial Statement

<u>Assets</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 76,561	\$ 23,392
Short-Term Investments: Bonds & Money Market	402,849	396,546
Supplies Inventory	1,537	1,537
Property & Equipment-Net of Depreciation	226,578	234,355
Total Assets	<u>\$ 707,525</u>	<u>\$ 655,830</u>
<u>Liabilities and Net Assets</u>		
<u>Liabilities</u>		
Accounts Payable	-	-
Funds Held in Trust	1,165	6,165
Payroll Tax Liabilities	(434)	155
Rent Deposits	<u>1,650</u>	<u>1,650</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>2,381</u>	<u>7,970</u>
<u>Net Assets</u>		
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	<u>705,144</u>	<u>647,860</u>
Total Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	<u>705,144</u>	<u>647,860</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 707,525</u>	<u>\$ 655,830</u>
<u>Unrestricted Net Assets</u>		
<u>Support</u>		
Contributions	\$ 202,293	\$ 212,484
Investment Income	6,308	7,324
PVA Grant	144,551	142,290
Lease Income	10,980	14,130
Fund Raising-Newsletter Advertising	-	200
Total Unrestricted Support	364,132	376,428
<u>Expenses</u>		
<u>Program Services</u>		
Membership and Benefits	97,808	98,307
Public Affairs	90,941	111,392
Geo. B. Turner Research & Education	<u>53,363</u>	<u>59,631</u>
Total Program Services	<u>242,112</u>	<u>269,330</u>
<u>Support Services</u>		
General & Administrative	37,804	35,103
Fund Raising	<u>26,896</u>	<u>23,661</u>
Total Support Services	<u>64,736</u>	<u>58,764</u>
Total Expenses	<u>306,848</u>	<u>328,094</u>
(Decrease) Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets Without Donor Restriction	57,284	48,334
Net Assets Without Donor Restriction-Beginning	<u>647,860</u>	<u>599,526</u>
Net Assets Without Donor Restriction-Ending	<u>\$ 705,144</u>	<u>\$ 647,860</u>



### **Senior National Service Officer**

**Michael Killen**

Henry M. Jackson Federal Bldg.  
915 Second Avenue  
Room 1054  
Seattle, WA 98174  
206-341-8210  
800-795-3576

### **Veterans' Health & Benefits Specialist**

**Jerrell Briscoe**

206-768-5415 (VA Hospital)  
206-220-6136 (Fax)

## **NWPVA Officers FY 2020**

Acting President-Matthew Mickunas  
Vice President-Matthew Mickunas  
Secretary-Weldon Lee  
Treasurer-Aaron Hastings  
Past President-Thomas Bungert  
National Director-Michael Partridge

## **NWPVA Board of Directors**

Joe Sapienza,  
Russ Norris, Terry Chenoweth,  
Michael Partridge, Andrew Bechtle,  
Fred Margiotta, Robert Clinton, &  
George Vermeff

## **NWPVA Appointees**

Sports Director-Russ Norris  
Fundraising Chairman-  
Brent King  
Membership Officer & Advocacy  
Director -Tom Bungert  
Legislative Director-  
Michael Partridge  
Volunteer Coordinator-  
Robert Clinton  
WDVA Liaison-  
Matthew Mickunas  
Outpost Editor-Lisa Lawrence

## **Staff**

Executive Director-Brent King  
Office Manager-Lisa Lawrence

## **Our Mission**

*The Paralyzed Veterans of America, a congressionally chartered veterans service organization founded in 1946, has developed a unique expertise on a wide variety of issues involving the special needs of our members-veterans of the armed forces who have experienced spinal cord injury or dysfunction.*

*PVA will use that expertise to be the leading advocate for:*

- Quality health care for our members,
- Research and education addressing spinal cord injury and dysfunction,
- Benefits available as a result of our members' military service,
- Civil rights and opportunities which maximize the independence of our members.

*To enable PVA to continue to honor this commitment, we must recruit and retain members who have the experience, energy, dedication, and passion necessary to manage the organization and ensure adequate resources to sustain the programs essential for PVA to achieve its mission.*

*The Northwest Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America (NWPVA) a member chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America accomplishes it's mission by coordinated efforts through programs that:*

- Provide opportunities for health promotion, recreation, employment, sports and recreation, service and camaraderie for paralyzed veterans;
- Elevate society's information level about the attitudinal, physical and legal barriers that confront persons with disabilities in order to influence the removal of those barriers;
- Advocate for and monitor the delivery of high quality and appropriate health care benefits and service;
- Cooperate with and seek the support of other groups and individuals that share NWPVA's objective;
- Educate the public with the current and ongoing needs and current and past contributions of America's veterans.

## **Northwest Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America**

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