



Northwest Chapter

Volume XLIV Issue 4

NORTHWEST OUTPOST

April/May 2022

Inside this issue:

<i>President's Column</i>	4
<i>Vice President's Column</i>	5
<i>Women Veterans' Executive Director's Column</i>	6 8
<i>Government Relations Director's Column</i>	9
<i>PVA 2022 Legislative Priorities</i>	10
<i>Washington Update</i>	12
<i>2022 PVA Scholarship</i>	14
<i>Events Calendar</i>	16
<i>Birthdays</i>	18



Founding Fathers and Original Members of Northwest PVA: (Front to Back) Don Porter, Jack Michaels, Glenn Galbreath, Chuck Karczewski, Duane Osborn & Joe Sapienza



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NWPVA

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David Zurfluh

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Coordinator-Thomas Bungert

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Matthew Mickunas

Volunteer Coordinator-Robert Clinton

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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Matthew Mickunas 45th Anniversary



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his May is Northwest's 45th anniversary celebration. The Honorable Bruce Chapman was Washington's Secretary of State when our Northwest Chapter Founding & first Charter Board Members, Jack Michaels, John Martin, and Rodger Ingrum filled for the Northwest Chapter's Articles of Incorporation on May 23, 1977. Jack Michaels & the Northwest Chapter set off a courageous advocacy program and throughout the years have made a prominent foothold in this nation. We remember the Northwest Chapter's progress we've made together with Metro to become the first and best assessable transportation system in the country:

*In 1978, special service program approved to serve low-income seniors & persons with disabilities via subsidized taxi script, and the rural area van program.

*In 1978, Seattle Metro council commits to building a fully accessible bus fleet with wheelchair lifts. Seattle Metro was the first transit agency in the county to successfully get a lift working well enough that it could be used in service.



*In 1984 Metro and the Northwest Chapter partnered to create the "PVA Award", later renamed the "George Turner Award".

*After the 1990 signing of the ADA, in 1991, the Seattle Metro Council approves the first ADA plan which outlines how Metro will provide Paratransit Services. This program becomes Access Transportation.

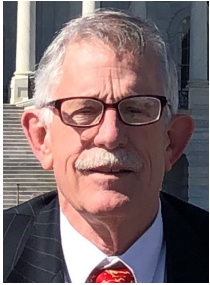
*In 1999, all busses are equipped with lifts.

*In 2002, Seattle Metro purchases the first low floor bus with ramps instead of lifts.

*In 2011, Metro introduced passive restraint with the RapidRide.



Robert Clinton



Northwest Chapter's Volunteer hours for January and February 2022, show a total of 561 hours, a substantial increase from the same two-month period in 2021, of 481. This increase is in part due to an increase in the number of our long-time members who began again to report their hours, and the addition of four members who recently became active volunteers by completing a Volunteer Activation Form (Vol Act Form) and receiving their volunteer number necessary for our chapter to receive credit for the time they spend helping our fellow Veterans. This form and any other form like the Volunteer Time Sheet (Vol Time Sheet), as well as other questions related to our chapter's volunteer program can be obtained by contacting our Volunteer Coordinator, Bob Clinton at: bclinton.va@gmail.com



2022 NWPVA Annual Awards Banquet

The 2022 PVA Annual Awards Banquet Sub Committee met for the first time on February 10, and reviewed the Committee's purpose which is, as defined by our President Matthew Mickunas, to design and deliver a Top-Notch Annual Awards Banquet that our members will be proud of, their guests, and the honorees will enjoy. The Subcommittee met again on February 26 and agreed that the 2022 PVA Annual Awards Banquet will be held on **Sunday, September 18, 2022, from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm** at a high-end restaurant in the greater Seattle area. Possible venues for the banquet were divided up amongst Subcommittee members to conduct site visits to determine suitability, including space for 50 attendees at a sit-down dinner, ease of access for our wheelchair users, sufficient disabled parking, and appetizing menus. The Subcommittee is planning to present its findings to the Board of Directors at its April meeting for a final decision.



Tracy Storms

Women Veterans' Message



I'm excited about our upcoming Northwest Chapter's 45th Anniversary celebration, I'm on the committee that's looking for a great location to have a wonderful plated dinner and enjoy some socialization. I'm also excited and anxious to meet and speak with some of our women members and supporters, so please watch for our next newsletter issue to RSVP, it will have the location and food preference to pick.

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced it is adopting American Cancer Society breast cancer screening guidelines that give women a choice to begin screening at age 40. A **mammogram** is one of the most effective ways to detect breast cancer early and early detection makes a big difference in a woman's chance of surviving. VA encourages all women between ages 45 and 75 to get mammograms every two years. If your health care provider recommends a mammogram outside of this age range, VA will still provide it. It is important for our women Veterans to know that they are in control of their care and the care they receive from VA is consistent with or exceeds care in the private sector," said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. "Adopting American Cancer Society standards gives Veterans further assurances that their care aligns with other health-care systems." Currently, 76 percent of women Veterans age's 40-49 receive mammograms through VA. All VA medical centers have a Women Veterans Program Manager to help women Veterans access VA benefits and health care services. To find the VA medical center nearest you, call 1-877-222-8387 or visit www.va.gov/directory/.

PVA's ties to women Veterans date back to its first meeting in 1946 with the arrival of its first female Veteran member, Anita Bloom (affectionately known as "Nita"), who fought to ensure women Veterans' healthcare needs were properly met. PVA continues Nita's legacy with the development of its Anita Bloom Committee and creation of its Women Veterans Empowerment Retreat. Northwest Women Members, please mark your calendars to attend this year's PVA "Women Veterans Empowerment Retreat". It will be held September 24th – September 27th 2022 at the JW Marriott Hill County, in San Antonio, TX. Registration opens April 1st through August 1st 2022. This retreat is an all-expenses-paid retreat (flight, hotel, meals, ect!!) that focuses on the holistic well-being of women Veterans with disabilities. This immersive and outcome-driven experience – limited to **"just 40 attendees"** – is designed to empower women to navigate the unique challenges of their everyday lives and help them flourish. Participants enjoy four days of learning and community-building in an inclusive and supportive environment. During the retreat, PVA assembles a line-up of experts and leaders who present on topics including; Whole health-mind, body, & spirit, independent living, financial security, nutrition, finding meaningful employment, accessing VA benefits, and women's health. The goal of this retreat is for women Veterans to walk away with not only new friendships and bonds, but also information and tools they need to be Unstop-PABLE at home, at work, in their community, and throughout their life.

If interested in registering for PVA's "Women Veterans Empowerment Retreat", please email pvachnw@mindspring.com and request the retreat's registration link or call (206) 241-1843 for more info.



Empowering Women Veterans

New Respiratory Presumptive Conditions for Gulf War Veterans

By: Dan Stewart



The Department of Veteran Affairs has extended the presumptive period for qualifying chronic disabilities resulting from undiagnosed illnesses in Persian Gulf War Veterans to Dec. 31, 2026. For VA benefits eligibility purposes, the Gulf War period is still in effect. This means that anyone who served on active duty from August 2, 1990, to present is considered a Gulf War Veteran. Prior to the extension, Persian Gulf War Veterans had to file a claim for disability compensation before the end of the 2021 calendar year. VA is extending the presumptive period for qualifying chronic disabilities of 10% or more to ensure benefits established by Congress are fairly administered. Certain illnesses and diseases are "presumed" by VA to be related to your military service in designated areas of Southwest Asia and may entitle you to VA disability compensation benefits. For Gulf War Veterans, these presumptive diseases include:

Medically unexplained illnesses (popularly called "Gulf War Syndrome")

Certain infectious diseases

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) diagnosed in all Veterans who had 90 days or more continuous active military service.

With scientific uncertainty remaining as to the cause and time of onset of illnesses suffered by Persian Gulf War Veterans and current research studies are inconclusive, limiting entitlement to benefits due to the expiration of the presumptive period would be premature. If an extension of the current presumptive period was not implemented, Service members whose conditions arise after Dec. 31, 2021, would be substantially disadvantaged compared to Service members whose conditions manifested at an earlier date. VA presumes certain medically unexplained illnesses are related to Gulf War service without regard to cause. These include: chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, functional gastrointestinal disorders, and undiagnosed illnesses with symptoms that may include but are not limited to: abnormal weight loss, cardiovascular disease, muscle and joint pain, headache, menstrual disorders, neurological and psychological problems, skin conditions, respiratory disorders, and sleep disturbances.

A wide variety of symptoms can qualify a Gulf War Veteran for presumptive service-connection, Veterans who are experiencing unexplained medical issues are encouraged to file a claim.



Brent King

PGA HOPE Program Certifies 25

NW Pros



T

Three elements of the PGA of America (PGA REACH, PGA Section Foundations, and PGA Professionals) work together with local Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospitals and military installations to implement this program. Veterans that are referred to the PGA HOPE program attend a one-day introductory golf experience, after which they can participate in a six- to eight-week program, taught by PGA Professionals trained to work with Veterans with physical and emotional disabilities. After completion of the program, they receive a graduation card, offering them a range of golf-related benefits in their region. The program is open to all military Veterans, with an emphasis on serving those with physical and emotional disabilities. VA staff that work with HOPE Veterans are invited and encouraged to participate, as their involvement is beneficial to the success of the program.

On February 22nd I participated in helping train 25 PGA Pros learn how to teach adaptive golf to Disabled Veterans. The PGA Pros were from Idaho, Montana, Washington and Oregon getting certified to start programs in their local areas. It was a fun day of instruction giving these pros the tools to think outside of the box to work with a vast array of disabilities and how to adapt to each individual's needs. The entire purpose is to include every Disabled Veteran no matter the need. Some form of golf can be achieved.

This was a very rewarding day to help out on a very worthy cause. I trailered one of the chapters Paragolfers to the Lake Coeur D Alene Resort on a negative 7-degree day. It was a perfect day indoors in a large heated conference room.



David Zurfluh

PVA National's Legislation/Advocacy Seminar



Back in 1946 a founding PVA member named Fred Smead testified before a Veteran's Congressional Committee to advocate for benefits for veterans with Spinal Cord Injury and Disease, a legacy that has continued for 74 years for one week in March and includes a 2-day seminar and representatives from every PVA Chapter meeting with their State Representatives and PVA's National President testifying on members behalf to the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.





The week of March 7-12 myself and other Chapter Representatives, with guidance from Chapter President, Matthew Mickunas, participated in PVA National's Legislation/Advocacy two-day training and met with our state Congressional Representatives via Zoom due to COVID restraints and rules. We all guided our Representatives through PVA's Legislative folder (Electronic) highlighting our 12 legislative priorities, our positions on those priorities and the House/Senate Bills that would affect our members. (see page 10 for details)





We were usually given 30 min during each visit and would select 3-4 talking point priorities with our Representatives and or their Staff and give greater clarity to our position and personal examples/concerns that our members have related to PVA leadership. We were always well received and given access to follow up anytime with the Representative or Staff. I encourage all of you to listen to President Brown's testimony and follow up questions from the committee with his answers. That can be found on YouTube or the House Veterans Committee website, look for March 8th, 2022, VSOs testimony.

Though virtual was not the ideal way to do this, it did give us an opportunity to have our voice heard on a reliable platform. While I am grateful for teleconferencing and other virtual media platforms, it will for me never replace in person meetings. There is a certain synergy, passion and human element that can't be replicated virtually. I am grateful for the opportunity given to me by President Mickunas and humbled but honored to represent our chapter members!

PRIORITY BILLS

Bill#	Title	Description	Support
H.R. 5575	VA Nurse and Physician Assistant RAISE Act	Increases pay caps on nurse and physician assistant salaries to help VA attract and retain top health care talent to ensure veterans receive timely, high-quality care.	
H.R. 6823	Elizabeth Dole Home and Community Based Services for Veterans and Caregivers Act	Makes critically needed improvements to HCBS programs and services.	
		Expands and improves access to ART for service members and	

DISABILITY

H.R. 4714/ S. 2481	Disabled Access Credit Expansion Act	compliance and funding for the U.S. Department of Justice's ADA mediation program.	
H.R. 5723/ S. 3071	Social Security 2100: A Sacred Trust Act	Ensures Social Security beneficiaries will not see cuts in their benefits and makes other important improvements.	

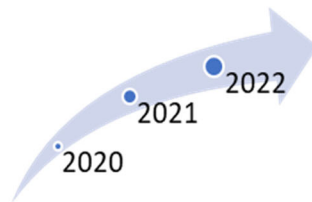
#PushingAccessForward

PVA 2022 Legislative Priorities |



We Salute You!

A special thank you to all our donors who continue to make the programs at Paralyzed Veterans of America, Northwest Chapter thrive and grow stronger.



The Seattle Foundation
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Mobility Roadside Assistance
Ability Center
Schwab Charitable Fund
TCC Version
Benevity
Frontstream
Employee Giving Program (KCEGP)
Morgan Stanley
The Blackbaud Giving Fund
Others First
Charities Aid Foundation of America
Olympic Landscape

Z-Man Trust
Jeannette Postnikoff Trust
Henry Baird
COSTCO
Target
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
Verizon Foundation
VFW
Boeing
Dorothy Waugh (Ernie's Mom)
Robert Powers
King County
Amazon





Issue #5 · Volume #30

March 18, 2022

FUNDING AGREEMENT BOOSTS SPENDING ON DISABILITY PROGRAMS

The funding agreement recently signed by President Biden also contained numerous provisions of interest to the disability community, including significant investments in health care, employment, and housing programs. Elements of those agency budgets are highlighted below. In addition, the budget saw a return of earmarks. In a list of projects under congressionally directed spending, the Reno, Nevada received \$1.056 million for American with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades in city parks.

Labor-Health and Human Services - Education and Related Agencies -

The bill provides a total of \$108.3 billion for Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, an increase of \$11.3 billion above the fiscal year (FY) 2021 enacted level. Of this amount, the bill includes:

- \$2.9 billion for Workforce In-

novation and Opportunity Act State Grants;

- \$235 million for Registered Apprenticeships;
- \$399 million for Home and Community-Based Supportive Services;
- \$60.5 million for the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program;
- \$25 million to implement the Accelerating Access to Critical Therapies for ALS Act;
- \$6.5 billion for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA);
- \$2.3 billion for the Administration for Community Living (ACL), including:
 - ◇ \$967 million for Senior Nutrition programs;
 - ◇ \$399 million for Home and Community-Based Supportive Services;
 - ◇ \$205 million for Family and Native American Caregivers

Services;

- ◇ \$36 million for Grants for Native Americans; and
- ◇ \$8.1 million for the Lifespan Respite Program.

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies

- the FY 2022 Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies funding bill provides funding of \$81 billion, an increase of \$6.4 billion – more than eight percent – above 2021. This includes a discretionary increase of \$4 billion for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and \$1.6 billion for the Department of Transportation. The agreement takes into account that funding appropriated in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that will be used to bring Amtrak-served stations into compliance with the ADA. Agencies within this account will receive:

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

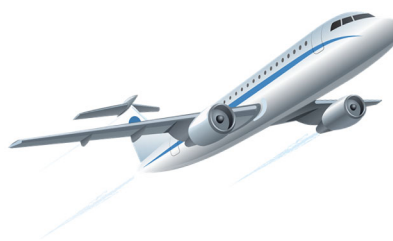
- \$11 billion in funding for new affordable housing, critical health, safety, and maintenance improvements to ensure the safety and quality of public and low-income housing, and community development activities, including:
 - ◇ \$360 million to construct over 4,000 new affordable housing units for seniors and persons with disabilities and
 - ◇ \$1.5 billion in direct funding to states and local governments through the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, and significantly increases investments in distressed neighborhoods through the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative program.
- \$13.9 billion for Project-based Rental Assistance to continue to house more than 1.2 million very low and low-income households nationwide. An additional \$1 billion is provided for Housing for the Elderly to build approximately 2,200 new affordable housing units for low-income seniors and \$352 million for Housing for Persons with Disabilities to construct approximately 1,800 new affordable housing units for persons with disabilities;
- A combined \$55 million for the HUD/VA Supportive Housing for Homeless Veterans and Native American Veterans programs; and
- \$85 million for increased enforcement of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.

VA Releases Air Recommendations

On March 14, VA released its recommendations to the Asset and Infrastructure Review (AIR) Commission to modernize and realign the VA health care system. The AIR Commission was authorized by the VA MISSION Act, which was signed into law in 2018. PVA National President Charles Brown released a statement noting our “grave concerns” with VA’s recommendations that some of VA’s spinal cord injury and disorder (SCI/D) system of care centers be closed or consolidated. Mr. Brown further stated that, “We need to understand the data providing the justification for these recommendations as there are many unmet specialized needs for veterans with SCI/D, particularly inpatient long-term care.”

Although VA’s recommendations have been released, the AIR Commission has not yet been confirmed by the Senate. Earlier in March, President Biden announced his nomination of PVA Executive Director Carl Blake to the Commission. The Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee will be holding a confirmation hearing for nominees in the coming weeks.

Once the AIR Commission members have been confirmed, they will review VA’s recommendations. As part of the review process, the Commission will hold public hearings, visit VA facilities, meet with employees and VA partners – and, most important, listen to veterans – to help them assess VA’s recommendations. The Commission will then forward their recommendations, with any changes deemed necessary, to the President, who will determine whether or not to submit those recommendations to Congress. If the President submits them, Congress can then accept those recommendations by inaction or reject them by passing a joint resolution of disapproval. If approved, VA must begin implementing them within three years.





The 2022 PVA scholarship application period is now open! Please visit www.pva.org/scholarship for additional information and to access the online application.



WE WANT TO INVEST IN YOU!

Supporting Education for our Members and their Families

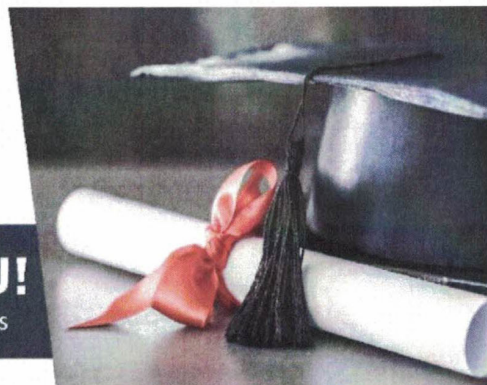
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM NOW ACCEPTING APPLICANTS

Paralyzed Veterans Educational Scholarship Program assists members and their immediate family members by providing scholarship funds to help with a post-secondary education. We will award scholarships in the amount of **\$2,500 to full-time students** and **\$1,000 to part-time students** for an academic year.

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS ARE:

- A Paralyzed Veterans' member, spouse of a member, or an unmarried child (under 24 years of age) who is dependent (as defined by the IRS) upon the member for principal support
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Application Deadline May 15, 2022.

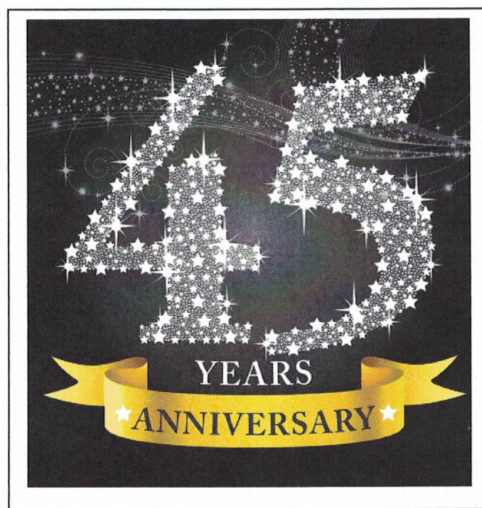
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Paralyzed Veterans of America

Northwest Chapter

PRESENTS THE NORTHWEST PVA



AWARDS BANQUET

SEPT 18, 2022 @ 5:00 PM

GREATER SEATTLE AREA

LOCATION; TO BE ANOUNCED

DINNER, ENTERTAINMENT, & AWARDS

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



13th BOD/General Membership Meeting
1:00 PM

17th Easter Sunday

24th Administrative Professionals Day

May

8th Mothers Day

21st Armed Forces Day

25th BOD/General Membership Meeting
1:00 PM

30th Memorial Day



Members Missing in Action

Does anyone have any information on these Members below??
They are due to be dropped from the PVA National & Chapter Membership Rosters' if we can't find them due to undeliverable mail and incorrect phone & email. Please contact the Northwest PVA office at (206) 241-1843 if you are able to help. Please mail, call, or email us too if you change your phone, address, or email; Please let us know today.

- *Jeffery D, Sparks
- *Daniel C. Underwood
- *Wallace Carlson
- *Ranulf Muir
- *Charles Salley
- *Lenora Stern
- *Steven Hathon



With the great amount of information flow the chapter receives by email, we encourage every member to have at least one email per membership family for contact. When you have an email address on record, your Northwest Chapter has the ability to keep you informed & updated on special events, activities, and important membership information. Please take a moment to find a simple email partner like Gmail, Yahoo Mail, or others. Once you sign up, please send us a simple email with your name & phone number so that we are able to update our records at pvachnw@mindspring.com.



Andrew Bechtie

NORTHWEST PVA IS MISSING SEVERAL WORKING EMAILS WITH YOUR ESSENTIAL INFO AND NEEDS YOUR HELP PROVIDING IT!!!! OUT OF **OVER 600 REGISTERED** WITH THE NORTHWEST PVA CHAPTER, WE ONLY HAVE APPROXIMANTLY **250 EMAILS ON FILE**. TIMES ARE CHANGING AND WITH THE INFLUX OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR OUR GENERAL MEMBERS, ASSOCIATE MEMBERS, AND OUR INPORTANT SUPPORTERS, WE MUST HAVE AN AVENUE TO SHARE INFORMATION IN LIEU OF A BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER! OUR NEWSLETTER IS GREAT INFO, BUT SOME INFORMATION WE HAVE OR NEED TO SHARE CANNOT WAIT UNTIL THE NEXT ISSUE IS SENT OUT! PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR WORKING EMAIL ADDRESS & ESSENTIAL INFO BY SENDING US A MESSAGE TO:

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Place: **Northwest Paralyzed Veterans of America** when you search for a charity.

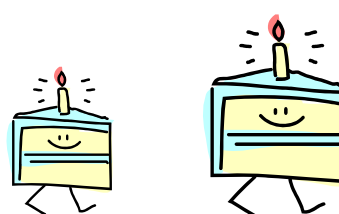
Happy Birthday!

April

Wallace Carlson	Steven Johnson
Guy Hankins	William Goss
Francis Rawson	Sharon Stepp
Douglas Keil	Daniel Underwood
Francis Entrup	Clayton Thornburg
Joseph Barnes	Steven Stiens
Jeanette Moen	Douglas Struchen
Michael Belfield	Jeffery Sparks
David Frymire	Jennifer Roney
Robert Russell	Christine Messmer
Michael Green	Lonnie Williams
David Meek	Steven Hathon
William English	Richard Dube
William Travis	Daniel Crim
Raymond Hendrickson	Casey Pooler
John Woods	Jay Mills
Lynn Peterson	Anisa Lawrence
Robert Brush	

May

David Rapella	Anthony King
Ronald Young	Stephen Alonge
Robert Pressley	Matthew West
Ludger Mallebranche	Jeanne Farrell
Clyde Lentz	Mark Hale
William McIntyre	Timothy Weber
John Miller	Douglas Harsh
Richard Edlund	Joseph Borsky
Jerome Mischel	Mark Crim
Theodore Fossos	Brad Shepherd
Robert Rupp	Alex Schied
Mike O'Neill	David Zurfluh
Carl Casey	Stephen Pratt
Charles Spencer	Kelly Arneson
Steven Tucker	Gregory Heimann
Robert Cockrell	Bryan Dornon
Anthony Hadlett	Sheri Wills
Suzan Carpenter	Jeremy Daniels
Mary Dregg	Michael Merrill
Bradley Skramstad	Brandon Powell



**Paralyzed Veterans
of America**

Vehicle Donation Program

Paralyzed Veterans of America has been on a mission to change lives and build brighter futures for our seriously injured heroes—to empower these brave men and women build brighter futures for our seriously injured heroes—to empower these brave men and women with what they need to achieve the things they fought for: freedom and independence. They returned to a grateful nation, but also to a world with few solutions to challenges they faced. They made a decision not just to live, but to live with dignity as contributors to society. They created Paralyzed Veterans of America, an organization dedicated to veterans service, medical research and civil rights for people with disabilities.

Have an old car taking up space in your driveway? Donate it to Paralyzed Veterans of America! Call us: 877-900-8387. <https://pva.careeasy.org/HOME.html>



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