

NORTHWEST OUTPOST

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Inside this issue:

<i>President's Column</i>	4
<i>Executive Director's Column</i>	5
<i>Volunteer Coordinator's Column</i>	6
<i>Boo In Burien</i>	10
<i>Washington Update</i>	12
<i>Events Calendar</i>	16
<i>Birthdays</i>	18



Gru & his Minions host Boo in Burien



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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.*

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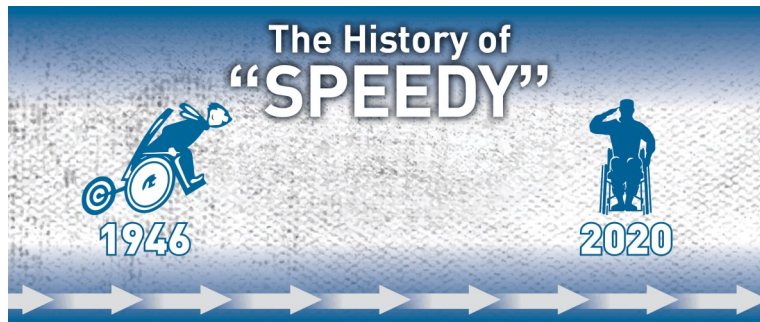
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Matthew Mickunas “The History of Speedy”



“Speedy,” Paralyzed Veterans of America’s original logo, was born in 1946 at the Birmingham VA hospital in Van Nuys, California. Wilbur Hyde, the chapter’s secretary, asked his friend Wilder A. Johnson, a patient at the hospital who was a cartoonist, to design a logo for the newly-formed organization. Johnson easily found his inspiration in U.S. Army Veteran Dick Sloviaczek, a Long Beach patient known for zipping through the halls in his chair, and a long trail of smoke from his pipe following him.



Of the logo, Johnson said:

“There is a good deal of worthwhile philosophy to be observed in the little man if one will take the time to study him carefully. First, he is happy. He is not sitting around and crying the blues about being in a wheelchair. Second, he’s got places to go and he’s in a hurry. You better get out of this guy’s way or he’ll run right over you. Third, and most important, you don’t feel sorry for him. On the contrary — you can’t help admiring his spunk. He’s symbolic of happiness, energy, drive, admiration and guts, and those are respected qualities in the paraplegic way of life.”

The official Speedy logo, was retired in 2013, it has since changed to PVA’s current logo in 2022:



Still, since 1946, Paralyzed Veterans of America has been on a mission to change lives and build brighter futures for our seriously injured heroes. We’ve had a single-minded mission “to empower our brave men and women to regain what they fought for; Their freedom and independence.” But still, Speedy has continued to roll around our organization in one fashion or another. The Speedy Award is one example; It was established in 1956, as PVA’s highest honor and remains so today. It’s bestowed annually to both Members and Non-Members in acknowledgement of outstanding accomplishments in the field of paralysis.

Brent King

Governor's Committee on Disability Issues & Employment



and Skyler King.

Congratulations to Brent King on being nominated for the Governor's Trophy. Brent's nominator lauded how he **"skies through the trees and powder at Snowmass, Colorado at the Nation's Veterans Winter Sports clinic where he mentors new spinal cord injuries every year in learning how to ski."**

We celebrate you for **sharing your skills and passion to encourage and uplift individuals with disabilities!**

Thank you for the nomination, Skip! Supporting letters were submitted by Skip Dreps, Matthew Mickunas

August 27, 2022

To: Governor's Committee on Disability and Employment Issues

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for my father, Brent King, regarding his nomination for the Washington State Governor's Disability Award. I grew up around many disabled Veterans and civilians alike who have been supported by my father's work with the Northwest Paralyzed Veterans of America. These are disabled members of our community who have had direct interactions with my father, be it through his efforts to help provide accommodating equipment to disabled persons or his willingness to assist in navigating through the ever-confusing VA medical system. He has also helped organize trap shoots, fundraisers, fishing trips, and other outdoor events for, and in support of, the disabled community.

Throughout my life, I have witnessed my father pay it forward and focus his work with the NWPVA towards helping many of the veterans who served as his support system when he was newly injured.

Regarding my father's impact on myself, I would consider him to be a great source of motivation in my current educational and career pursuits. I am a junior in the Kinesiology program at Washington State University and am on track to apply to physical therapy programs at other universities in the coming years. Growing up with my father, I was with him for countless trap shoots around the Pacific Northwest community. This helped me foster a passion for helping people with disabilities and act as an advocate for the disabled community. My father has also helped other allies to the disabled community by acting as a self-proclaimed "guinea pig" for different teams and clinics. He has worked closely with teams that design disabled equipment, like sit skis, power chairs, wheelchair accessories and things that

teams that design disabled equipment, like sit skis, powerchairs, wheelchair accessories, and things that I probably have not even heard about. He is often the first double amputee that an organization works with, and he is always patient in helping them learn new skills that they can use to help others with similar injuries.

Brent is more than worthy of your recognition and for the Washington State Governor's Disability Award, not just for his direct support of disabled persons, but also his impact on other advocates for the disabled community. Thank you for your consideration of my father for this award.

Respectfully,

Skyler King

Robert Clinton Volunteer News



October was another strong month for the Northwest Chapter's Volunteer program, exceeding September's total of 339 hours by 10 hours, coming in at 349! Now this may not seem like a lot, but remember all the volunteer hours put in by members of the Banquet Subcommittee in September? It was largely those whose efforts made our 45th Anniversary Awards Banquet whose last-minute efforts brought such a success.

In the last issue of Outpost, the dinner and awards presentations were well covered, but I think, staying with my theme of honoring the little guy, the "Point of the Spear," were kind of lost in the "shuffle." So, in keeping with honoring the "Point of The Spear," and as Chairman of the Banquet Committee, I want to send a shout to our new Vice President Tracy Reddick, who when Banquet Committee member Victor Tran experience last minute "car problems" and could not transport out of town VIPs from their hotel to the restaurant, as we all sat around stunned, Tracy popped right up saying, "I'll do it," true to her word, even with an already full schedule, she made it work, WAY TO GO GIRL!

They say a true hero is one who is afraid but faces those fears head on and accomplishes the mission, just like Banquet Committee member, and Master of Ceremonies Vincent Weber, thanks Vinnie! Dee Anne Cooper who, was obviously tired, but I noticed her assisting guests at the end of the evening, answering questions, and like a stewardess helping to unload her passengers, thanks! Our President Matt, not a Member of the Banquet Committee, but his assistance and guidance were invaluable, so I want to be sure the "big guy" gets recognized not only for his leadership, but for his willingness to get down into the trenches and help wherever needed. Finally, my beautiful daughter Victoria who agreed to cover for her mom and attend with me, I am a lucky guy!

Please see pages 10, 11, & 16 for more on our wonderful volunteers!



Meet Maevette Zumek

U.S. Army Veteran, Maevette Zumek, graduated high school and went into the Army in 1997 just as her dad and sisters did, after her schooling was finished at Fort Lee, VA she went to her first duty station in Freiburg, Germany in 1998. She spent two years there until health problems forced her to get out of the Army. Once out of the Army her health problem became better and she was able to get pregnant.

Once she had the baby, she started having vision problems, and walking and running began to be difficult to do. Maevette got her eyes checked by an optometrist and they found damage to the optic nerve, in which they referred her to a neurologist.

An MRI was ordered, but the doctor ordered without contrast. The lesions you get from MS made the doctor assume that she had a big mass which was described as a brain tumor. She began to feel as if she were swimming when she drove, but had to take care of a baby and home while her then husband was deployed in 2001-2002. This went on until late May 2004. She was living in South Carolina and just delivered a baby 18 May 2004. She was her new neurologist who sent her for a spinal tap. Then two weeks later, on 6 June 2004, she discovered that she had MS.

Multiple Sclerosis was a disease she had only seen affect people like Annette Funicello from the original Mickey Mouse Club and comedian Richard Pryor. The stress from the marriage was weighing heavy on her. She wanted to start doing a personal chef business with her friend, but there was no way she could have done that. It was time to leave South Carolina and move to Homestead Florida, and then onto to Washington State, all while the MS had been changing along the way.

When she got to Washington State the MS started to affect her walking. After years of mental abuse she endured at home, and the years that led up to her multiple limiting physical abilities of daily life, the MS eventually put her in a wheelchair. The abuse finally stopped once she was introduced to the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) and the National Veterans Wheelchair Games that the VA & PVA does every year. Today, Maevette Zumek, is a domestic abuse survivor that's living her best life with the help that the VA and the PVA provides. Maevette credits both the wheelchair games and the PVA for advocating for her needs and for helping her to get out of her depression and have purpose again.



Thank you for supporting Auburn's 57th annual Veterans Parade. It was a WONDERFUL day in Auburn!! The City of Auburn considers it a great honor and privilege to coordinate this event and we are thankful to have so many wonderful individuals and groups who support our efforts – thank you!

We had 174 parade entries, comprised of just over 4,000 parade participants. We had over 15 marching bands and thousands of patriotic spectators. What a great day to be in Auburn – thank you again for your involvement and support!

**The City of Auburn will host its 58th annual Veterans Parade & Observance in 2023 on Saturday, November 11.
We hope that we can count on your support again next year.**

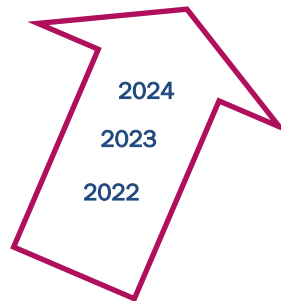
Thank you again for your involvement in this event!





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.



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Verizon Foundation
VFW
Boeing
Dorothy Waugh (Ernie's Mom)
Robert Powers
King County
Amazon
Robert Mehling



19th Year of Boo in Burien



On October 29th Boo in Burien was held. The participation was amazing and our wonderful long time volunteer's where at the chapter office to help, as they have been for 19 years. Thank you Anisa and Jessica for your participation once again. We have watched you grow from adorable little girls to beautiful young women. We would also like to thank Joe Areyano of Olympic Landscape for his very generous donation of over 1000 "full size" candy bars to give out to the crowd. Word on the streets of Burien was NWPVA was the best stop in town. A spooky good time was had by all!

Special thanks to drop by volunteers Bill Lawrence, aka Mr. Incredible and NWPVA Treasurer Aaron Hastings and his trusty companion to share in the fun. A spooky good time was had by all!







Issue 19 · Volume 30

November 18, 2022

Washington Update

Check out the PVAction Force page at pva.org to view our latest alerts and a list of key legislation and its status.

PVA Testifies at House Hearing on Improving Access to Air Travel

On November 17, the House Transportation and Infrastructure, Aviation Subcommittee held a hearing titled, “Accessible Air Travel: Addressing Challenges for Passengers with Disabilities.” The hearing featured testimony from Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI) who is retiring this year and is the sponsor for the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act (H.R. 1696). Rep. Langevin spoke of the difficulties he has encountered as a wheelchair user in air travel and the need for reform.

Heather Ansley, Associate Executive Director of Government Relations, testified on behalf of PVA. Ms. Ansley noted that the major problem with commercial air travel is that aircraft are required to have very few accessible features. She urged Congress to make systemic improvements in air travel in the next FAA Reauthorization by including the Air Carrier Access Amendments Act. She also called on Congress to include language directing appropriate agencies and administrations to take the next steps as outlined in a September 2021 report on in-cabin wheelchair restraint systems.

Other witnesses included Brian Ryks, Executive Director and CEO Metropolitan Airports Commission (Minneapolis/St. Paul) on behalf of Airports Council International—North America; Matt Scott, Paralympian, Team USA; Heather Krause, Director, Physical Infrastructure, Government Accountability Office; and Graham Keithley, Vice President and Associate General Counsel, Airlines for America.



SENATE VETERANS' COMMITTEE EXAMINES PACT ACT IMPLEMENTATION

The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act (P.L. 117-168), which expands VA health care and benefits for veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances, was signed into law in August. On November 16, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee held a hearing to learn from top VA officials about the implementation of this important legislation. Dr. Sheerif Elnahal, VA Under Secretary for Health, led the panel of VA witnesses who fielded a number of questions from Committee members about the law.

Dr. Elnahal told the Committee that VA is working quickly to implement many of the provisions of the PACT Act. He outlined three key priorities: reaching every veteran who may qualify for the new care and benefits; building capacity to meet the needs of every veteran seeking VA care; and initiating internal changes to help VA deal with these issues in the future. He said VA is putting out in-

formation about the bill through every means possible and that the Department is using all of the authorities granted by Congress to hire more people, and to bring them on board quickly. He also discussed the [new toxic exposure screening](#) for veterans, which VA recently initiated.

Another witness, Mr. Joshua Jacobs, Senior Advisor for Policy Performing the Delegable Duties of the Under Secretary for Benefits, spoke of the Department's advanced preparation for the Act's passage and ongoing efforts to hire and train more claims processors. He also detailed additional steps that the VA will be using to process claims which are being filed in record numbers.

Many of the questions that followed centered on the Department's ability to provide care for increasing numbers of veterans seeking care for their toxic exposures. Dr. Elnahal and other VA witnesses stressed that VA has aggressively implemented and is using many of the new hiring authorities granted by Congress. For example, since the bill was

passed, they have hired 700 more housekeeping aides.

Committee members were especially concerned with VA's efforts to get the word out about the law and veterans' potential eligibility for new benefits or services. Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) asked about VA's efforts to inform younger women veterans of the necessity to be screened for breast cancer and Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-NH) inquired how VA is coordinating with the Defense Department to ensure that service members are aware of the PACT Act as they leave the military. Dr. Elnahal noted breast cancer is a type of "reproductive cancer" potentially covered by the Act. Also, VA is using multiple media platforms to reach women veterans and active duty servicemembers alike in addition to the Transition Assistance Program for the latter group. Some lawmakers also expressed concern with various organizations taking advantage of the Camp Lejeune Act which was a provision of the larger PACT Act.

HOUSE TAKES ACTION ON CLOTHING ALLOWANCE LEGISLATION

The House is preparing to vote on H.R. 4772, the Mark O'Brien VA Clothing Allowance Improvement Act. This important legislation would make clothing allowance payments automatic until the VA determines the veteran is no longer eligible to receive the benefit. If the legislation passes the House, it will then go to the Senate for further consideration. The Senate companion bill to this legislation is S. 2513, the Brian Neuman VA Clothing Allowance Improvement Act. Please contact your senators about this legislation.

PVA SUBMITS COMMENTS ON ACCESSIBILITY OF SSTMS AND SELF-SERVICE KIOSKS

The U.S. Access Board, the agency charged with setting standards for disability accessibility guidelines, issued an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) for accessibility requirements of self-service transaction machines (SSTMs) and self-service kiosks. The requirements would cover built-in SSTMs and kiosks at grocery stores, drug stores, restaurants, health care provider offices, and other establishments that provide public services. The ANPRM comment period ended on November 21.

PVA submitted comments urging the Board to expand the definition of the devices covered under the standards; ensure that people with disabilities can access the devices with the same independence and privacy as those without disabilities; and require government agencies only use fully accessible devices. PVA's comments also recommended that SSTMs and self-service kiosks accept contactless payment methods and described how inaccessible devices impact individuals with disabilities. After the Board re-

views all comments submitted, the agency may choose to issue an NPRM and proceed with the rulemaking process. If an NPRM is issued, interested parties will have the opportunity to submit comments. If promulgated, the Board's final rule will set minimum accessibility standards for SSTMs and self-service kiosks, but such standards must be adopted by the U.S. Department of Justice to be enforceable for state and local governments and public accommodations.

WOMEN VETERANS TASK FORCE MEETS TO DISCUSS OVERSIGHT OF DEBORAH SAMPSON ACT PROVISIONS

On November 17, the House Women Veterans Task Force met to discuss implementation of several provisions within the Deborah Sampson Act. These sections were passed in early 2021 as part of the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans' Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 (P.L. 116-315). They address inequities experienced by women veterans in accessing VA health care and benefits.

Much of the conversation centered on portions of the law that established pilot programs to gauge the feasibility of providing childcare and assist survivors of intimate partner violence. Another section that was discussed would help eliminate harassment and assault throughout the VA.

Rep. Julia Brownley (D-CA), Chair of the House Veterans' Affairs, Health Subcommittee, led the roundtable. She was joined by Rep. Lois Frankel (D-FL) and Rep. Nancy Mace (R-SC). Staff from the VA and many other congressional offices participated as well.

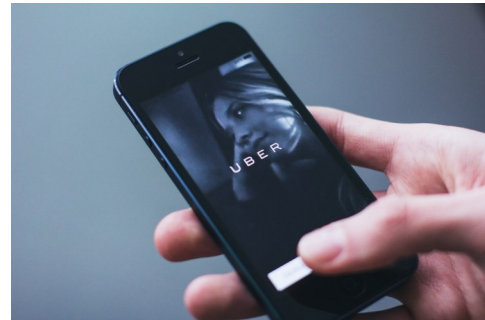
While providing childcare for veterans at VA facilities is still in its early stages of implementation, the offices for Assault and Harassment Prevention and the Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program are making great strides to increase outreach and engagement throughout the VA.

UBER SENDS NOTIFICATIONS VIA APP AND EMAIL FOR WAIT TIME FEE REFUNDS

In response to a settlement agreement with the Department of Justice (DOJ), Uber is crediting more than 65,000 eligible riders with disabilities double the amount of wait time fees charged. Uber sent emails and app notifications to eligible riders. Eligible riders should review their emails and Uber app in the “Uber hub” section to check whether they received a notification that they are eligible for ride credits or, in some cases, money payments.

In April 2016, Uber began charging customers wait time fees if the rider was unable to board the vehicle within two minutes. A lawsuit, filed in November 2021, alleged Uber violated the Americans with Disabilities Act by discriminating against people with disabilities for failing to modify its policy for individuals, who because of their disability, may need additional time to board the vehicle. In the DOJ settlement, Uber agreed to refund eligible riders and provide wait time fee waivers for future trips.

For the next two years, Uber will waive wait time fees for riders with disabilities who self-certify that they, or someone with whom they frequently travel, needs additional time to board a vehicle. Riders must fill out a waiver on the Uber app or online. Riders who do not fill out the waiver, but are charged wait time fees, can request a refund within 30 days. Information about the waivers is available on Uber’s website.



PVA SUBMITS COMMENTS ON MINIMUM SEAT DIMENSIONS ON AIRPLANES

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT), issued a Request for Comments on minimum seat dimensions of passenger seats on airplanes. The request sought comments on the minimum width, length, pitch or legroom, and other necessary dimensions for safety during airplane evacuations. Airplane seat widths and pitches have significantly decreased over the decades. Some airlines have seat widths as small as 16.5-inches and pitches as short as 28-inches. Although FAA conducted evacuation simulations in preparation of the request, the simulations excluded people with mobility disabilities and did not include older adults. Evacuation procedures for individuals with disabilities have not been updated since 1977.

VA submitted comments explaining that small seat widths and pitches and narrow aisle widths cause safety issues for the evacuation of individuals with disabilities and older adults. The Air Carrier Access Act and DOT Airline Passengers with Disabilities Bill of Rights outline the fundamental rights of passengers with disabilities, including the right to be treated with dignity and respect. PVA contended that failure to consider the safety of people with disabilities fails to recognize these rights. The comment period ended on November 1, 2022.



December

7th Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

21st Winter Begins

25th Christmas Day



January

1st New Years Day

13th National Guard Birthday

17th Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

20th BOD/General Membership Meeting
11:30 AM-Chapter Office

20th Space Force Birthday

2022 Auburn Veterans Day Parade



Front row: Boy Scout volunteers .

Back row from left: Aaron Hastings, Andrew Bechtle, Vincent Weber, Tracy Reddick, Matthew Mickunas & Dee Anne Cooper.

Auburn Veteran Day Parade

The Northwest PVA represented PVA and all VSOs in Washington State's largest parade of the year in Auburn, Washington on November 5, 2022 during the "Auburn Veterans Parade" on a beautiful sunny* morning, pictured on previous page. Both the local news and parade officials announced during the parade and the local evening newscasts, that the Northwest PVA Chapter was a major Veteran Service Organization for Veterans, and that we are major beneficiary advocates for Veterans with SCI, MS, and ALS.

Thank you to everyone that came out and participated in such an exciting and meaningful event. During the 2023 year parade, we will strive to have many more members participate & roll down the parade avenue of 1000's of patrons cheering us & everyone else on. The Northwest PVA always has been an example of strength and proud spirit during this great annual event. Thank you all.

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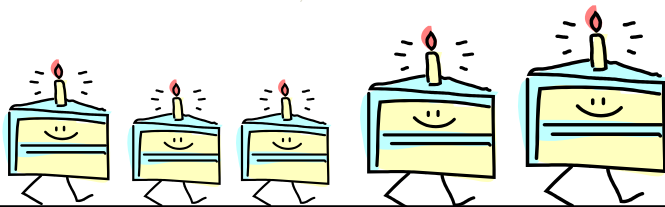
Happy Birthday!

December

Kenneth West	Chris Arrow Top Knot
Harry Parmer	Daniel Dudek
Paul Chiaravalle	Tracy Reddick
Dean Korn	Katrina Sawycky-
Craig Bollinger	Moreland
Roger VanBurien	Jesse Rodriquez
Tim Gardipee	Christopher Dotur
Gregory Choiniere	Jonathan Whitlow
Terry McManus	Ross Ries
Sheri Pedersen	Jack Dalbey
Bruce Bagwell	

January

Delta Yada	Donald Hansen
James Luco	Yasmean Stewart
John Bartle	Warren Collver
Richard Megenity	Anthony Lansing
Richard Collier	Sylvester Tucker
Keith Clark	Charles Gorr
Leonard Wagner	David Lockett
Donald Waddell	Susan Hicks
Rod Smith	Keith Sekora
Gregory Schilieve	Kevin Mays
Lawrence Muckley	James Prince
Michael Partridge	Anthony Davis
Barrie Muller	Hermes Rodriquez



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.

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