

MAY 2026



ISSUE #5

MOMENTUM 3.0

STRONGER TOGETHER: BUILDING COMMUNITY

May is a time of renewal, growth, and connection—and there's no better moment to celebrate the strength of our community here at the California Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America. Together, we are more than an organization—we are a network of support, resilience, and shared purpose.

The Power of Community

Every member brings a unique story, experience, and strength. When we come together, those individual journeys create something powerful—a community that uplifts, supports, and empowers one another through every challenge and every victory.

Whether it's attending meetings, participating in events, or simply checking in with a fellow member, these connections make a lasting difference. No one stands alone here.

Working Together, Making an Impact

Our chapter thrives because of the dedication of its members. From organizing events to advocating for accessibility and veteran rights, every contribution—big or small—helps move our mission forward. Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. When we work together, we create opportunities, expand resources, and strengthen our voice as a community.

Celebrating Small Wins

Progress doesn't always come in big moments—it's often found in the small victories. A new connection made. A resource shared. A member supported. These everyday wins build a stronger, more connected chapter.

This month, take a moment to recognize those wins—both your own and those of others around you.



“UNITY IS STRENGTH... WHEN THERE IS TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION, WONDERFUL THINGS CAN BE ACHIEVED.” — MATTIE STEPANEK

Get Involved This May

- There are many ways to stay engaged and connected:
- Attend upcoming chapter meetings and events
- Volunteer or support a local activity
- Reach out and welcome new members
- Share ideas that can help grow our chapter



Your voice and presence matter, and your involvement helps shape the future of our community.

Moving Forward—Together

As we move through May, let's continue to build a community rooted in respect, support, and shared purpose. Together, we are stronger. Together, we make a difference.

Let's keep showing up—for ourselves and for each other.

May is ALS Awareness Month

It is a call to action as the ALS community advocates on Capitol Hill for increased funding of ALS research toward treatments and a cure. It is also a time to recognize Paralyzed Veterans of America's commitment to secure benefits and treatments for Veterans with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. ALS is a neurological disease that causes degeneration of nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord leading to muscle weakness, atrophy, and loss of function. ALS ultimately robs a person of the ability to walk, talk, eat, and breathe.

Considering the damage ALS can do, it is essential to spread awareness so that veterans can be treated as early as possible. Though there currently is no cure, early detection and expert clinical care can provide optimal quality of life through a total body and wholistic management of symptoms.

Early symptoms of ALS may include:

- difficulty swallowing
- cramping
- stiffness of affected muscles
- muscle weakness affecting an arm or a leg
- slurred speech

As the disease progresses, most people lose their ability to walk or use their arms and hands. They also lose the ability to talk and swallow food. ALS varies considerably among Veterans regarding onset and rate of progression. The Institute of Medicine reported that U.S. military Veterans appear to have an increased risk of developing ALS. Experts recommend additional research to further assess the relationship between ALS and military service, and to determine what factors of military service may cause the disease



Message from the PVACC President

This newsletter theme is stronger together, I had to reflect on that, and many thoughts ran through my head, from my military days, my recent participation at the 2026 Winter Sports Clinic and the chapter environment. All three had/have issues/problems that couldn't/can't been/be solved by someone alone.

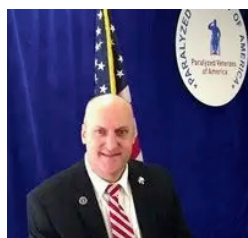
My military experience involved a vendor issue that grounded all F-16s worldwide and required aircraft maintenance personnel to come together diagnose the problem, plan a fix and do it ASAP! We worked 12-hour shifts (24hr coverage) 7 days a week for 3 months straight, but all aircraft were fixed and war ready.

The Winter Sports Clinic had a lack of snow issue and right up to the start chaos ensued and rumors of cancellation, but coaches, veterans and volunteers came together and figured out a plan to move everything (skiing) higher. Moving up higher meant taking two different gondolas, but the plan worked and it was one of the best clinics I have ever been to, proving doubters wrong and doing it together was awesome!

Chapter environment, I don't have a snappy example or story to address what its going to take to put the chapter back on track, but it is going to take all of us. Let me show how I envision the chapter's parts/players/stakeholders, members, chapter employees, volunteers, leadership, partners, vendors, donors. All of these range from veterans, civilians, corporate, government, non profit etc. The bottom line is all these moving and integral parts will need to be defined, organized and put down a unified path as much as possible to serve you the members and put forward programs that create opportunities for hopefully all the membership and their ability to join events/programs. (Health, availability and schedules will determine participation)

I started this article by writing stronger together with a military and winter sports example, my suggestion to how we do it at the Long Beach VA is this, put the chapter on a strong foundation financially and with basic functioning programs. (Expand programs when and if capable) collaborate with SCI Unit leadership and employees when and where appropriate. (Let SCI/D leadership lead and be flexible to their guidance/terms) Listen to members needs and ideas to determine priorities/programs/budgets. (Listen to the loudest to the quietest, great and unique ideas come from everywhere) Creating a positive and uplifting atmosphere will draw great vendors, volunteers and donors. (People want to be apart of great things and places)

Lastly, look within yourself and ask can I improve someone's life except mine, how/what can I do to play an integral part, do I have the patience and determination to help the chapter members rebuild this chapter and create a positive place for all, can I work and do it together with others? If you answered yes or even maybe, then we can all make the chapter environment "STRONGER TOGETHER"!



DAVID ZURFLUH
PRESIDENT



Looking Ahead Together: Building a Stronger Future for Our Chapter

To our California Chapter members,

We want to provide an important update regarding chapter funding and participation opportunities for the upcoming year.

At this time, the California Chapter will not be funding participation for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games or any other sponsorship at the chapter level this year. This decision was not made lightly. As a team we are continues reviewing the chapter's financial status, it has become clear that significantly more funds have been going out than coming in.

In addition, grant funding from PVA National has been suspend and hopefully we will see those funds soon, and we must increase fundraising and donations to help sustain and grow our programs moving forward.

The board is currently working diligently to stabilize the chapter financially while also planning for a stronger future. Our goal for next year is to pass a responsible budget that expands opportunities for all members while remaining fiscally sound.

One of the initiatives being developed is a fair and diverse point system that would allow members to earn participation opportunities through volunteering and chapter involvement. The hope is to create increased access to programs and events such as:

- Sports and recreational activities
- Social events
- Winter Sports Clinic
- National Veterans Wheelchair Games

This system is inspired by successful models used in other chapters, where volunteering and member participation help determine funding eligibility for annual events.

We understand this news may be disappointing, but we also believe there is light at the end of this process. With patience, teamwork, and continued member support, we can build a stronger, more sustainable California Chapter for everyone.

Thank you for your understanding, dedication, and continued support of our mission and one another.

Together, we move forward.

HAPPY Mother's Day

“Still, I Rise—Stronger Than Ever”

This May, we honor the strength of women who live with spinal cord injuries—not just for what you’ve been through, but for how you continue to rise.

A spinal cord injury changes the body, but it does not define the spirit. It may alter movement, sensation, and daily life—but it cannot take away your courage, your voice, or your purpose. Spinal cord injury affects how the brain and body communicate, yet your strength goes far beyond physical ability.

To every woman walking this journey:
You are not limited—you are evolving.
You are not broken—you are rebuilding.

You are not alone—you are part of a powerful community.



Celebrating Our May HEROES!

This month, we proudly celebrate the birthdays of our members here at the California Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America.

May your birthday be filled with joy, appreciation, and the recognition you truly deserve. Each of you brings strength, resilience, and heart to our community, and we are grateful to have you as part of our family.

As you celebrate another year, we wish you continued health, happiness, and success in all that you do. May this new chapter bring new opportunities, meaningful moments, and plenty of reasons to smile.

Thank you for being an important part of our community—today, we celebrate YOU! 🎂 🎈

Happy Birthday and best wishes for a wonderful year ahead!

EVENTS DURING THE MONTH OF APRIL
AND
EVENTS THAT ARE TAKING PLACE IN MAY



VA |  **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**
Veterans Health Administration
VA Long Beach Healthcare System

Adaptive Sports Expo

Friday May 15, 2026
10:00 am to 2:00 pm
Athletic Field

 **PVA**
Paralyzed Veterans of America
California Chapter

Who participates?

- Veterans
- Family
- Athletes
- Caregivers
- Non-profit Organizations
- Community Supporters
- Rehabilitation Professionals

WHAT IS IT?

A full day exposition allowing for participation and exploration in a wide variety of adaptive sports to increase awareness and accessibility of local adaptive sports programs

WHY ATTEND?

- Connect directly with community resources
- Enhance community integration, independent living skills, and quality of life
- Have fun!

FAQ

- No cost
- No pre-registration
- Open to all
- Come ready to participate!

CONTACT US

 www.va.gov/long-beach |  VHALONSCIO outreach |  5901 E. 7th Street
Long Beach, CA 90803



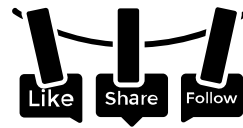
HYDBYCHAPTER MEMBER'S MEETING



JUNE 25, 2026.
@ 11:30 AM

LOCATION: BUILDING 150
RM- U-200
LUNCH PROVIDED

CONTACT PLATFORMS



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PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA
CALIFORNIA CHAPTER



WWW.PVACC.ORG

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



We're calling on compassionate community members to join us in making a difference for our veterans at the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Center in Long Beach. Your time and support can bring comfort, companionship, and encouragement to those who have served our nation. Whether it's lending a hand with daily activities, sharing stories, or simply being present, your involvement helps create a stronger, more caring community. Come be part of something meaningful—because our veterans deserve the very best.

If your interested email info@pvacc.org and put in the subject line: Volunteer

MEMBERS NEWS



Dear Members,

To stay connected and receive updates from PVA-California, please ensure your contact information is current.

Email info@pvacc.org or call 562-826-5713 to update your records. Keeping your information up to date helps us provide you with timely news, programs, and benefits.

Thank you,
PVA -California Chapter





California Chapter

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QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:



Do you have a question, concern, or need assistance with anything? Our team is here to help! Please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We want to make sure you stay informed, supported, and connected with all the latest news and updates.

"WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK! 🗣️"



WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE DONE DIFFERENTLY WITHIN OUR CHAPTER? ARE THERE PROGRAMS, EVENTS, OR RESOURCES YOU'D LIKE MORE OF? YOUR SUGGESTIONS HELP US GROW AND BETTER SERVE OUR MEMBERS—LET US KNOW!

Interim Board of Directors for PVA- California Chapter

- David Zurfluh - President
- Anne Robinson - National Vice President
- Marcus Murray - National Vice President
- Tom Wheaton - National Treasurer
- Anita Graves - Office Manager

