

MOMENTUM 3.0



Moving Forward Together Celebrating Strength, Service, and Community

As the warmth of August reminds us of the strength and resilience within our community, we take this opportunity to reflect on the importance of connection, courage, and continuing to move forward together.

August is a month filled with opportunities to celebrate our veterans, recognize the dedication of our members and volunteers, and strengthen the relationships that make our community so special. Every conversation, every event, and every act of support helps build a stronger future for veterans with spinal cord injury and dysfunction.

This month, we celebrate the power of teamwork and the impact we can make when we come together. From participating in chapter activities and community events to supporting advocacy efforts, each of us plays an important role in carrying our mission forward.

August also serves as a reminder that progress is made one step at a time. Through challenges and changes, our members continue to demonstrate determination, independence, and perseverance. These qualities inspire us every day and remind us why our mission remains so important.

As we look toward the months ahead, we encourage everyone to stay involved, share their ideas, and continue building connections within our PVACC family. Together, we will continue creating opportunities, supporting one another, and ensuring that no veteran faces their journey alone.

Thank you to our members, volunteers, partners, and supporters for being part of this mission. Your commitment and dedication help us continue Moving Forward Together.





Message from the PVACC President



Final Preparation

This month, I decided to go against the newsletter's theme and talk about a third-rail topic nobody wants to think or talk about: what will happen after I die? The irony of it is that there is not much for you to do because others will need to tend to your needs, last wishes, last rites, and the legal journey when you die. During the last six months I have seen members and friends pass away with no wills, life insurance, medical directives, burial rites, or plans. In the aftermath, family members were left to pick up the pieces and sort through paperwork, honor the loved one, and journey through laws and legal protocol, which can be overwhelming. I have also talked with family and friends of mine who have had close near-death experiences and, if they died, lacked life insurance, wills, medical directives, funeral/burial services or plans. The reasons (excuses) for not having wills, insurance, medical directives, or plans have been numerous and sounded plausible, or people just put off and forgot, but the results will be the same: someone will have to take responsibility for you in an awkward and chaotic situation with usually no precedent and little to no knowledge of how to do it.....

Like many other people, I found a spouse to grow old with, but early into our journey we didn't want either of us stuck with any burdens when we die or burden loved ones should we die at the same time. We both got life insurance, wills, medical directives, burial rites, and plans after we die. I can honestly say, having these plans gives you peace of mind and focus to better enjoy your remaining days left to live.

To all of you who do not have insurance (to cover anticipated expenses, amount up to you if necessary), wills, medical directives, funeral/burial services or plans, consider doing so ASAP! The burden lifted from yourself, and others will be greatly appreciated, and the peace of mind after preparations for after death have been taken care of will bring you calm. Hopefully, when you make your final preparations, the fear of death will lessen, you will sleep better, and loved ones will appreciate your thoughtfulness when you pass and the structured transition that will happen afterwards.

To paraphrase my ancestor Benjamin Franklin (Mom's side), there are only two things certain in this world.....Death and Taxes!



DAVID ZURFLUH
PRESIDENT



NEW VA BURIAL BENEFIT OUTREACH MATERIALS FOR VETERAN FAMILIES

When a Veteran or their spouse passes away, families often need to make important arrangements quickly, and they look to trusted professionals for guidance. You can help Veterans and their families understand their VA burial benefits and confidently navigate the process.

Knowing what benefits may be available and the steps to access them can help make that process easier. The National Cemetery Administration (NCA) helps families navigate both the burial and memorial benefits Veterans have earned and the process for requesting them.

Resources for Industry Professionals

We've added new resources at cem.va.gov/industry to help you learn more about the burial and memorial benefits available to Veterans and their families:

- New Video: Honor Forever: A Guide for Families at Time of Need
- New flyer: VLM: Families Honoring Veterans
- New information sheet: What Veteran Families Can Expect at a VA National Cemetery
- Digital poster: VLM for Families
- Retractable banners: 1. VA Burial and Memorial Benefits and 2. VLM for Families

Additional resources include:

- Flyer: Planning and Scheduling a Burial at a VA National Cemetery
- Guide: A Guide to Your VA Burial and Memorial Benefits
- Information sheet: Planning with Confidence: Understanding the Costs of Burial

Visit: www.cem.va.gov/industry/#schedule-burial.





Message from our National Service Officer

As veterans always seek to acquire benefits and/or attempt to increase benefits they already have, sometimes they fall victim and become the perfect target for scammers. Scammers have grown their ingenuity on how they device and plan out their mastermind to send their next target a scam utilizing a text, email, phone calls or even snail mail. There's plenty of ways you can catch a scam sent to your phone and often times it may be a bit more difficult distinguishing what's a real notification opposed to a fake one.

One thing for certain, whenever dealing with Veteran Service Organizations (VSO's) whether you're being assisted by PVA or another VSO, you shouldn't be charged for filing for benefits. This is an article provided by the BCP Staff that helps deter veterans and their families fall victim to these scammers.

Scammers know that applying for veterans benefits is at the top of the to-do list when you're getting ready to leave the military. That's why they pretend to be with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and offer to help you apply for benefits if you pay them — even though it's free to apply with the VA. So if you're applying for veterans benefits, get the help you need while avoiding scams.

Here's how....

First, know how the scam works: You get an unexpected call, text, email, or message on social media from someone who says they're reaching out about your veterans benefits. They might claim to work for the VA or say they're "approved" by the VA. (But, really, they're not.) They offer to help you do things like apply for benefits you're "missing," get you a 100% disability rating, or speed up the claims process — all for a fee.

Those are all scams. The VA will never charge you to apply for benefits. Accredited representatives and recognized Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) won't charge you either, but scammers will. A few things to remember:

- Never pay to apply. Whether you apply online or in person at a VA Regional Office, the VA will help you gather and develop evidence to support your initial claim for VA benefits — for free.
- Apply directly to the VA. Only the VA can determine your eligibility and award benefits. Anything else is a scam. Only scammers guarantee you'll get benefits or offer to help you skip the line. Not even accredited representatives can do that.



Message from our National Service Officer

According to a 2025 survey by AARP Research, 39 percent of veterans had been solicited by someone claiming to represent the VA or another government agency. Another 28 percent believed their veteran status made them a target. More than a quarter said they had lost money to fraud, most losing over \$500.

To combat issues like these, the VA joined eight federal partners in August 2024 to launch VSAFE.gov, which came with a companion hotline at 1-833-38V-SAFE. Veterans can also file a report at reportfraud.ftc.gov.

The memo said that the VA will never charge veterans to apply for benefits, so if someone suggests a payment is needed, this is a major red flag for a scam.

It added that veterans who want to apply for benefits should do so directly with the VA and that working with a VA-accredited representative will ensure a person claiming to help a veteran is actually approved by the VA. "Only the VA can determine your eligibility and award benefits," the memo said. "Anything else is a scam."

In another memo, also published on Monday, the agency said that talking about scams helps people avoid them and that staying informed about different potential scams will defend them against them.



JOSE REYNOSO
LONG BEACH
PVA NSOC

2026 PVA Educational Scholarship Recipients



The PVA Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2026 PVA Educational Scholarship Program. Six exceptional individuals have each been awarded a \$2,500 scholarship in recognition of their academic achievement, dedication, and hard work.

We encourage each chapter to recognize these outstanding recipients by featuring them in your chapter newsletter and congratulating them on this well-deserved accomplishment.

Thank you for helping us honor their hard work and dedication.

2026 Full-Time Scholarship Recipients – \$2,500 Each

Ayden Lusk University of Texas at Tyler Son of David Lusk – Lone Star Chapter

Lucille Mackay Sewanee: The University of the South Daughter of Patricia Mackay – Southeastern Chapter

Mark Douglass Jackson State University Member – Kentucky-Indiana Chapter

****Romee Stephens University of Southern California Member – California Chapter****

Ryan Poland Brigham Young University Member – Mountain States Chapter

Skye Newsome Eastern Kentucky University Daughter of Brian Newsome – Kentucky-Indiana Chapter



CONGRATULATIONS!

ROME STEPHENS UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA MEMBER
CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

A woman with curly blonde hair, wearing a blue patterned top and light blue pants, stands next to a man in a wheelchair. The man is wearing glasses, a dark jacket, and blue shorts. They are both smiling and holding a large, colorful plaid blanket. The setting appears to be an office or a meeting room, with a desk, a computer monitor, and some papers visible in the background.



SARAH LABRADA (ARMY)



Paralyzed Veterans of America - California Chapter was invited to play a game on the new court, and Shaun Castle is the Chief Operating Officer of Paralyzed Veterans of America, will be the special Guest Speaker.



Mayor Karen Bass cordially invites you to join in a celebration of the history and sport of Wheelchair Basketball and the milestone of being Two Years out from the Opening Ceremony of Los Angeles' 2028 Paralympic Games.

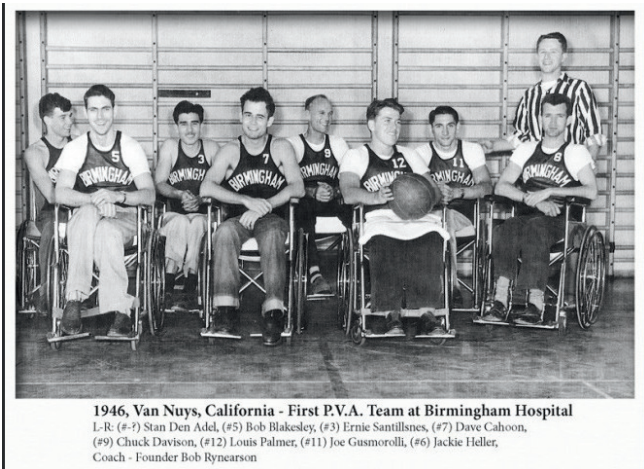


This event will highlight the site of the first-ever wheelchair basketball game, played by the world’s first wheelchair basketball team in the gymnasium at the former Birmingham General Veterans Administration Hospital (now Birmingham Community High School), in November 1946. This significant moment, in both Veterans and sports history, paved the way for wheelchair basketball and adaptive sports that we currently know, and will see in two years at the Los Angeles 2028 Paralympic Games at the DTLA Arena.

Join Mayor Karen Bass and Council Member Imelda Padilla for the unveiling of "Wheelchair Basketball Square" at the intersection of Victory Blvd/Balboa Blvd, installation of a plaque in the historic gym, and a Wheelchair Basketball Exhibition Game - all with Paralympians, Wheelchair Basketball Athletes, representatives from the Paralyzed Veterans of America, National Wheelchair Basketball Association, International Paralympic Committee, LA28, and other community organizations.

Come show your enthusiasm for making the City of Los Angeles a place where all people, including people with disabilities, can enjoy the 2028 Games, a "Games for All", and thrive long after!

Where: Birmingham Community High School, Main Gymnasium
(17000 Haynes Street, Van Nuys, California 91406)



1946, Van Nuys, California - First P.V.A. Team at Birmingham Hospital
L-R: (#1) Stan Den Adel, (#5) Bob Blakesley, (#3) Ernie Santillsnes, (#7) Dave Cahoon, (#9) Chuck Davison, (#12) Louis Palmer, (#11) Joe Gusmoroli, (#6) Jackie Heller, Coach - Founder Bob Rynearson

Recreation Event for PVA and California Chapter

★ ANNUAL ★

FISHING TRIP

★ PVA-CALIFORNIA CHAPTER ★



Paralyzed Veterans of America

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

DATE:

August 20, 2026

TIME:

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

BOAT:

Monto Carlo

LOCATION:

22nd Street Landing Fishing
141 W. 22nd Street
San Pedro, CA 90731

*Come out and enjoy
our annual fishing trip!*

FUN • FRIENDS • FISHING

★ RSVP HERE ★



★ Thank you for supporting our paralyzed veterans! ★



Scan for
More Info



PVA BILLIARDS
TOURNAMENT SERIES

2026- 2027 Schedule

Omaha, Nebraska
Great Plains Chapter
September 11-12, 2026

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Mid-America Chapter
February 26-27, 2027

Memphis, Tennessee
Mid-South Chapter
October 9-10, 2026

Midlothian, Virginia
Mid- Atlantic Chapter
March 12-13 2027

Westerville, Ohio
Buckeye Chapter
October 22-24, 2026



PVA.org/Sports



ParalyzedVeterans



PVA1946



If you are interested in joining any other committees, please let us know. We welcome your participation and value the skills, ideas, and support you bring to our chapter.

We also encourage all members to attend our upcoming meeting to stay informed and receive updates on what's new within the chapter. Your voice and involvement help us continue building a strong and connected community.

Email: info@pvacc.org

Phone: 562-826-5713



Celebrating Our 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!



HYBRID CHAPTER MEMBER'S MEETING

ZOOM

MEETING ID: 609 221 6677

Passcode: pvacc



TBA

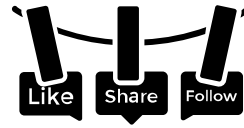
@ 11:30 AM

LOCATION: BUILDING 150

RM- U-200

LUNCH PROVIDED

CONTACT PLATFORMS



WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PVACCLB



WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/PVACCLB



WWW.TIKTOK.COM/@PVACCLB



WWW.TWITTER.COM/PVACCLB



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



5901 E. 7TH ST. BLDG. 150 R 204
LONG BEACH, CA 90822

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Long Beach, CA
Permit NO. 258

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