



Paralyzed Veterans of America

Keystone Chapter

Annual Report FY2022

This report features the independent auditor's letter on page 11.

Much chapter activity returned to near-normal in fiscal year 2022, which ran from 01 October 2021 to 30 September 2022.

Bolstered by the Tom Landish Fund at the Pittsburgh Foundation, the annual Team Bass Tournament became twice a year, with events held in June and September.

The Bass Tournament is held with the Outcast Fishing Club and held at the marina of the American Legion Post 940 in West Brownsville, Pa., on the Monongahela River.



Paralyzed Veterans participated in Veterans Day events around Pennsylvania on 11 November 2021. Shown at left are the Keystone chapter participants in the Pittsburgh Veterans Day Parade in Downtown Pittsburgh.

Meetings via video were a necessity during the pandemic, and now have become an important convenience in getting people together across greater distances. In March 2022 Keystone PVA leadership met with staff people from the offices of members of Congress. The meeting shown at right was with Rachel Hugman (lower right) of Congressman Conor Lamb's office to advocate for important legislation to benefit veterans.



The Keystone PVA Board of Directors, Fiscal Year 2022



The 2022 Board of Directors included these paralyzed veterans pictured here.

Left: President Mark Rosensteel.

Top row, left to right: Vice President Bill Lightner, Secretary Dane Smith, Treasurer Bill Jakovac, and Joseph Dunn.

Bottom row, left to right: Sean Ferry, Chris Fidler, David Gifford, and Tom Strang.

Contact information for the 2023 Board of Directors

To provide for easy communication with members of the Board, the current (FY 2023) officers and directors are providing home telephone numbers. They ask that people respect the opportunity and first try to reach them through the Chapter office.

Mark O. Rosensteel, President
Apollo, Pennsylvania
phone 724-478-4805

Sean M. Ferry, Vice President
Erie, Pennsylvania
phone 814-790-0474

Dane R. Smith, Secretary
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
phone 412-512-6295

William D. Jakovac, Treasurer
Allison Park, Pennsylvania
phone 412-487-2422

Joseph A. Dunn
Lancaster, Pennsylvania
phone 717-575-4992

Christopher A. Fidler Sr.
Jonestown, Pennsylvania
phone 717-813-2219

David B. Gifford
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
phone 412-779-6629

William D. Lightner
Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania
phone 814-932-5269

Tom Strang
Canonsburg, Pennsylvania
phone 724-350-7955

VA Voluntary Service representatives as of 30 September 2022

James E. Van Zandt VAMC, Altoona
William D. Lightner, representative

Butler VAMC
John Kellner, representative

Erie VAMC
John Larese, representative
Rexford Nichols, deputy

Lebanon VAMC
Chris Fidler, representative
Ken Walters, deputy

VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System
Tom Strang, representative

Wilkes-Barre VAMC
Peter Townsend, representative

How do chapter members become Board members?

They get elected, each for a three-year term starting on 01 October each year. Most candidates self-nominate by submitting a candidate statement (saying why he or she wants to be a Board member), a passport-style photo of her or himself, and a letter to the chapter membership officer saying that he or she wishes to become a candidate. Submission deadline is a drop-dead 15 June of each year.

President's Report Mark O. Rosensteel

Keystone PVA's mission is not only to provide activity and benefits to our members but it also is to keep a watchful eye on the health care our veterans receive. For example, our active members in the Erie area worked with the Erie VAMC management to make sure that vacancies on the spinal cord injury (SCI) clinic team, a group of professional medical people who are vital to the specialized care needed by paralyzed veterans, remained fully staffed.

We now have representation at the Wilkes-Barre, Pa. VA Medical Center thanks to member Peter Townsend, who has volunteered his time to become a VA Voluntary Services representative there on behalf of Keystone PVA. He is also our Multiple Sclerosis representative with the PVA national organization. This gives the chapter active representation in six VA hospitals in Pennsylvania, supplementing the outstanding service of the PVA-assigned National Service Officers (see page 7).

We were able to advocate for veterans' benefits with members of Congress and their staff specialists via Zoom videoconference visits. Meeting with those legislators and staff people is important to keep legislation moving. When it is implemented, not just paralyzed vets benefit, but most of the time so do non-paralyzed veterans and disabled non-veterans. COVID-19 did not give us much of a break, so our members who usually vol-

unteered much of their time were not able to visit our fellow veterans as they normally had. But in some of the hospitals activities did become available to the veterans, with modifications, which we sponsored. Activities like bingo games and pizza parties were continued in Erie, Altoona and Lebanon VAMC. And our Project Easter Bag grew from delivery to inpatients in one VAMC to four VAMCs in FY2022. Our site leaders (see page 7) were vital in making these projects happen.

Fortunately, we were still able to hold our annual Kennywood Park picnic with a decent turnout of members, families and caregivers. We were also able to hold the annual Bass Tournament, and for the first time, hold it twice! We even had some new faces in 2022 who plan to be back again. At the conclusion of the fiscal year, we returned to an in-person Annual Awards Banquet, and though we were missing a few familiar faces, it was good to be able to meet in person once more. The crowd was not as big this year as in past years but it was a welcome sight. As we move forward I look forward to seeing more of our members gathering in public once more.

So, whether through in-person visits or by using audiovisual tools, PVA and the Keystone Chapter will continue our efforts in the best interests, not only of paralyzed and non-paralyzed veterans, but the entire disabled community.



Keystone Chapter President **Mark Rosensteel** (left) presided over the first in-person Annual Awards Banquet in three years in October 2022. Also pictured (left to right) are **Bill Jakovac**, **John Kellner**, and **Sean Ferry**.

FIVE FACTS you ought to know about Paralyzed Veterans

Fact One:

Paralyzed veterans help themselves.

Our mission is to improve the quality of life of paralyzed veterans by

- Encouraging and supporting spinal cord injury and disease research;
- Improving access to health care and other veterans' benefits;
- Assisting in the expansion of opportunities in wheelchair sports and recreation; and
- Advocating for the rights of disabled people, including the reduction and elimination of barriers to accessibility and mobility.

Fact Two:

Paralyzed Veterans of America and its chapters are NOT parts of the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

We couldn't do our jobs if we were. A major part of our health care advocacy involves keeping tabs on how our fellow paralyzed veterans are being treated in VA hospitals and other medical facilities. We report, without undue influence from VA officials, about the care our members get—or sometimes don't get, and we work for better treatment.

Fact Three:

Paralyzed Veterans of America, its chapters and its partners provide strong guidance to Congress and the VA in writing the \$132.38 billion VHA budget.

In partnership with the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), PVA and its chapters biennially write the **Independent Budget** (the IB), which Congress and the VA use as their guide for writing the budget for the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). Together, we have the expertise to effectively guide the VA and assist the Congress in appropriating the right funding for veterans' care.



At the Capitol in Washington, D.C., to meet with members of Congress about veterans' issues (l.-r.): **Bill Lightner**, **Mark Rosensteel**, and **Chris Fidler**.

Keystone PVA contributes to The IB through its Hospital Visitation and Service Program, in which our own members monitor the health care of our fellow veterans and report what they see, through the chapter, and to the national PVA's national service officers (NSOs), two of whom are posted in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia and Pittsburgh—see the NSO reports on page 6). Then we personally visit our members of Congress to let them know how the taxpayers' dollars are being spent by the VA.

Fact Four:

PVA punches way above its weight class.

For a small veterans' service organization (VSO), we pack a powerful punch. Consider our dominant role in writing the Independent Budget (Fact Three): half of the IB's authors are from PVA. That budget doesn't just address the health care needs of paralyzed vets; it is a budget for ALL veterans who use the VA's medical centers and community health services.

And our advocacy to advance accessibility, mobility, and compliance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) helps the millions of Americans to live their lives more in the mainstream than ever before.

Though there are thousands of organizations in the U.S. that try to help vets, **only 38 VSOs can legally represent veterans to the VA in order to get the benefits to which the vets are entitled, and PVA is one of them.** PVA's national service officers specialize in obtaining much-deserved benefits for veterans and their survivors.

Keystone PVA is the tip of the Paralyzed Veterans' powerful spear for the veterans we serve in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Fact Five:

Keystone PVA gets no tax dollars. None.

Our chapter's small budget depends on some support from the national PVA, proceeds from the sale of goods by the American Thrift Center, and private donations.

Because Keystone PVA is a charity organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code, and because we are approved by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a charitable, nonprofit organization, your donation is tax deductible on your federal tax return if you itemize.

The tax-exempt status of Keystone PVA is only partial. The only exemptions specifically made are sales & use taxes (though not all), property tax on our small office building in Sharpsburg, Pa., near Pittsburgh, and on any surplus we might generate in a year. We pay plenty of others, and our employees pay every tax on their income that for-profit employees do.

Treasurer's, Fundraising, and National Director's Report Bill Jakovac

Treasurer's report

Keystone PVA's Fiscal Year 2022 financial records and practices were inspected by Ellwood City, Pa. based Kimberly Y. Donovan, CPA. The auditor's opinion letter is located on page 11, followed by statements of activities and financial position.

I am responsible for the funds of the chapter. QuickBooks 2018 is used to keep track of these funds.

Invoices are reviewed and initialed by the executive director for payment then filed with the bookkeeper. Every Thursday, the chapter president reviews the invoices and checks prepared to pay them via Zoom video meeting. I do the same and go to the office to sign the checks. Deposit slips for payments by check or cash are prepared by the bookkeeper and checked by me, then I make the deposit at the bank into our money market fund. As needed, the funds are transferred to our checking account.

The office manager enters the information in QuickBooks and prepares the checks. At the beginning of each month, I reconcile the bank statements. The executive director reviews the statements and insures that every check issued is accounted for.

Even though three of the four chapter corporate officers and the executive director can sign the checks, my signature is always on the first line unless there is an immediate need and I am unavailable. If the office computer used for financial matters crashes, I have the information backed up on my home computer and on flash drives.

Investments include certificates of deposit, money market funds, and equities. Most of our equity investments are managed by Hefren-Tillotson (now R.W. Baird & Company) with a reasonably conservative approach. Our account managers within Baird, The Farrell Group, meet with our Board of Directors every year.

Fundraising report

In FY2022 we received an extraordinary gift of \$250,000 from a Navy veteran's bequest. Benjamin F. Jackson willed the amount to Keystone Paralyzed Veterans, and did the same for local veterans' support group Sharing & Caring, through his attorney Harold A. English. The chapter added to the gift and established an "agency account" at the Pittsburgh Foundation, which will provide a new stream of revenue for the chapter indefinitely.

The chapter also benefits from an account established at the Pittsburgh Foundation by Tom Landish, who regularly participates in the (now twice-a-year) Bass Tournament as a boat captain. That account is dedicated to providing a substantial amount of support for the tournament.

We are again very pleased to recognize many individuals, foundations, and other veterans service organizations who have provided support for the Keystone chapter's paralyzed veterans; please see the donors report that starts on page 9. It is not our policy to comprehensively list the amounts donated, but in all cases, we appreciate each dollar donated, whether small or, in some cases, remarkably large.

Longtime partner American Thrift Center, whose store is in West Mifflin, Pa., collects donated second-hand clothing and household items for resale, and the chapter receives a commission from the gross sales. The American Thrift Center continued to increase the number of its collection boxes located in high visibility areas in southwestern Pennsylvania, now well beyond only Allegheny County. The chapter name appears on all four sides of the boxes. American Thrift also provides replacement household items and clothing within its inventory for Keystone PVA members who have suffered a catastrophic loss. American Thrift Center provides a 50% discount to Keystone PVA members. We are pleased to recognize American Thrift Center owner and manager Jim Zeik, whose partnership with us serves veterans every day.

The chapter continues to operate a countertop donation program called Project Ammo Box. These boxes, which are modified and decorated ammunition boxes, collect donations from the public in commercial and institutional locations. We are grateful to the locations that have granted us space on their business counters and to their very generous customers:

- American Fuel, Worthington
- Beer and Beyond, Springdale
- Best Feeds, Ross Township
- Castriota Metal, Pittsburgh
- Dave's Country Meats, Valencia
- Keystone Iron and Metal, Pittsburgh
- Novotny's Grocery & Pizza, South Buffalo Township
- Sharpsburg Borough Building, Sharpsburg
- Thomas Toth, DMD, Ross Township

The chapter has many "ammo box" donation containers that it can still place in any locations that can accept them.

The chapter is required by agreement with Paralyzed Veterans of America, Inc., to provide specific services to paralyzed veterans within a generally-agreed-upon service region. In consideration for performing these services, PVA makes a substantial annual grant to the chapter in monthly installments.

In FY 2022 the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America received no funding from local, state, or federal governments.

Established a few years ago, Project Ammo Box provides some additional income through donations made by the public in private businesses and organizations. Created in 2014 by associate member Tim Knoebel. The donation boxes have the name of the chapter on the front, contact information for the chapter on the side, and a slot for bills and coins on the top. The chapter is always eager to have members who will "adopt" a box or two for placement in a local business or organization, will keep track of it, and swap it out and return it to the office when full or near full.

Keystone PVA is most grateful to all of its donors. They allow us to focus more on our mission to serve veterans, less on the time needed to raise funds for it.

(Continued on page 13)

PROGRAM REPORTS

Membership Tom Strang, Membership Officer

Military veterans who have a spinal cord injury or spinal cord disease, and who were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions, are welcome to join the Paralyzed Veterans of America free of charge.

Based usually on geography, usually on proximity to a chapter office, applicants for membership also choose a nearby chapter to join. Different chapters offer additional benefits to members, depending on available resources and the interests of the members.

Direct benefits of membership include hospital liaison for in-patients and out-patients, representation to the Department of Veterans Affairs (the “VA”), discounted or no-charge recreational activities, and participation in the operation and governance of the organization. Membership programs are listed in detail in every issue of the chapter newsletter, The Parascope. All members receive The Parascope six times a year, and receive a copy of PN magazine from the national PVA each month.

Indirect benefits of membership, which may be more important to a member in the long run, include the work of the PVA and the Keystone PVA in advocacy, legislative affairs, and support for research. The more members the chapter has, the more influential it can be on members’ behalf.

It is important for current members to keep the chapter informed of changes to addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers to keep in touch. And, as always, Keystone PVA’s membership lists will not be shared outside the PVA.

Keystone PVA also offers associate memberships to individuals who do not have a spinal cord injury or disease. The dues for associate membership are \$25.00 per year. Lifetime associate membership is available for a one-time fee of \$250.00.

Membership as of 30 September 2022	
Life members, service connected	130
Life members, non-service connected	<u>103</u>
Total life members:	233
Associate members, annual	18
Associate members, lifetime	<u>66</u>
Total associate members:	84
TOTAL CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP:	317

Members who have passed on to the Eternity Chapter

FY 2022 : 01 October 2021 to 30 September 2022

All towns of residence are in Pennsylvania except where noted

- Stanley D. Adams, State College, Navy veteran and 20 year member, on 02 October 2021
- Kenneth A. Barkhurst, Upper St. Clair, Navy veteran and a one year member, on 11 October 2021
- James E. Riemer, Butler, Navy veteran and 27-year member, on 12 October 2021
- Donald E. Paden, Steubenville, Ohio, Navy veteran and 15 year member, on 17 October 2021
- Frederick P. Abercrombie, New Kensington, Air Force veteran and a one year member, on 01 November 2021
- William J. Shaw, Pittsburgh, Army veteran and 23 year member, on 16 December 2021
- Alex J. Skupnick, Smithfield, Army veteran and nine year member, on 21 January 2022
- Stephen R. Flintosh, Bethlehem, Army veteran and two year member, on 27 January 2022
- Dennis Naugle, Altoona, Air Force veteran and 28 year member, on 27 February 2022
- James W. Gray, West Mifflin, Coast Guard veteran and nine year member, on 15 May 2022
- Nathan Dozier, New York, New York, Army veteran and 39 year member, on 20 June 2022
- William R. Lint, Derry, Army veteran and 25 year member, on 25 July 2022
- Peter N. Cramer, West Seneca, New York, Navy veteran and 39 year member, 07 September 2022

The following passings prior to FY2022 were reported during the last year:

- Jeffrey P. Whitman, Selinsgrove, Army veteran and 26 year member, on 15 September 2020
- Michael C. Filer of Grove City, Army veteran and two year member, on 28 December 2020
- Doris J. Merrill of Phoenixville, Navy veteran and 37 year member, on 29 April 2021
- William H. Johnson of Lexington, Kentucky, Army veteran and 15 year member, on 06 August 2021
- Carl M. LaRose of Butler, Army veteran and 26 year member, on 19 August 2021

We regret that sometimes we only learn of a member’s passing sometime after the event.

Hospital Visitation and Service report

In January 2022, Keystone PVA converted the former Chapter Hospital Liaison program into its own Hospital Visitation and Service program, which continues to stay involved with VA medical centers, especially spinal cord injury (SCI) clinics, and other medical facilities, with an eye to insuring the best possible medical care for paralyzed veterans. Observations and concerns are passed along into the lines of authority that the chapter has, through the PVA's National Service Officers (NSOs) and through the Board of Directors, and through the National Director, to the national PVA office.

Also, our members maintain cordial relationships with VA staff so as to be helpful at appropriate times. They encourage the chapter to provide inpatient recreation support, such as funds for bingo prizes, and "Project Easter Bag," which provides inpatients with personal use items that are not provided by the VA.

Keystone PVA's "point people" at each VA medical center are known as "site leaders," who are also usually the chapter's VA Voluntary Service representatives. They, the NSOs assigned to Pennsylvania service offices, and the chapter leadership meet quarterly to share information and concerns and to decide if special coordinated action or communication is necessary for any issues that may arise. This enhances the chapter's ability to keep everyone "in the loop."

Site Leaders

Altoona: Bill Lightner, 814-932-5269, wlightner@gmail.com

Butler: John Kellner, 724-664-7016, lightning_rod5@hotmail.com

Erie: John Larese, 814-602-5417, ljohnlarese@aol.com, and Rex Nichols, 814-664-9013, rnichols12@verizon.net

Lebanon: Chris Fidler, 717-813-2219, teamfidler@aol.com

Pittsburgh: Contact the chapter office, 412-781-2474, keystoneparavets@comcast.net

Wilkes-Barre: Peter Townsend, 570-833-5623 (h) or 570-240-3493 (c), pktownsend@hotmail.com

National Service Officers (NSOs)

are direct employees of the national Paralyzed Veterans of America with offices in 61 American cities from which they serve members, especially in resolving claims, assisting with members' VA benefits, and monitoring health care. To be represented by an NSO for many of these services, a member needs to formally give the NSO the member's power of attorney. Contact the appropriate NSO closest to the member's residence.

National Service Office—Western Pennsylvania

Brent Madison, National Service Officer II

Marissa Sabatucci, Secretary

Paralyzed Veterans of America

1000 Liberty Ave., Rm. 1602, **Pittsburgh** PA 15222

800-795-3629 office, toll free

412-395-6255 office, local

Fax: 412-395-6266

National Service Office—Eastern Pennsylvania

Joseph Weeks, Senior National Service Officer

Violet Graham, Senior Secretary

Paralyzed Veterans of America

5000 Wissahickon Avenue, **Philadelphia** PA 19144

800-795-3628 office, toll free

215-381-3057 office, local

Fax: 215-381-3468

During calendar year 2022, the Pittsburgh office added 29 new clients, 23 of whom are eligible for membership or already members. As a result of the claims we filed, our clients have been granted 6.4 million dollars total in monetary benefits; 90.6% of the awarded money went to M/MEs. Additional benefits of VA Healthcare, medical and mobility equipment and home and vehicle modifications is not reflected in this number but has saved our veterans monetarily and aided them in maintaining an independent lifestyle.

As our staff is very new, NSO II Brent Madison and Secretary Marissa Sabatucci starting in May 2022 and September 2022 respectively, much credit goes to many members of the East Region Benefits Department for continuing to serve our clients remotely during transitional periods. Now fully staffed, our office can be reached at 412-395-6255 or by emailing our administrative staff at MarissaS@pva.org.

The Philadelphia Service Office provides assistance to any Veteran who requests it. Our clientele is comprised of members (M), those eligible for membership (ME), survivors, and nonmembers (NM).

We have added 69 new clients, 57 of them are eligible for membership. As a result of the claims we filed, we secured 6.2 million dollars in monetary benefits for our clients; 91 percent of the awarded money went to M/MEs.

This figure does not account for the monetary value we have saved our clients by ensuring VA provides them with quality & timely health care, needed durable medical equipment, and home/vehicle modifications allowing them to maintain an independent lifestyle.

Annual Benefits Increase: The following benefits and grants have increased since my last report. Here are the 2022-2023 valuations.

- Compensation increased by 8.7 percent
- Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) - \$109,986.00
- Special Housing Adaptations (SHA)-\$22,036.00
- Automobile Grant-\$24,115.12
- Single Clothing Allowance – \$ 968.52

If you have questions about your eligibility for these benefits, please contact us and we would be happy to explain the criteria to you. Feel free to contact our office.

Program reports, continued

Sports & Recreation

Dane R. Smith, Sports & Recreation Director

The mission of the Keystone PVA Sports and Recreation Program is to improve the quality of life of paralyzed veterans and other persons with disabilities. This is achieved by assisting with expansion of both the quality and quantity of opportunities in sports and recreation, especially with those activities which enhance lifetime health and fitness.

We have a program for members to use our sports and recreation travel fund to attend regional and national sports and recreation events, such as the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (held in Tempe, Arizona in 2022) and the Buckeye Games held at the SPIRE Institute in Geneva, Ohio.

During the pandemic, the Health and Recreation Points program listed in each issue of the chapter newsletter, *The Parascope*, was suspended. All advance requests for chapter support for participation in organized sports events were considered without regard to earned "points."

Our members may participate in track, field, road racing, weightlifting, swimming, trap shooting, air guns, hunting, fishing, hand cycling, bowling, billiards, quad rugby, basketball, scuba diving, power soccer, table tennis, slalom, bocce, and the list keeps growing. Our chapter offers a bowling league, a bass tournament, hunting, and our Kennywood Park picnic. The chapter will reimburse members for regular hunting and fishing licenses.

We have opened up more opportunities by working closer with the disabled groups in our area. In 2022 we provided assistance to the Pittsburgh Steelwheelers, which conducts a quad rugby tournament and a 5K walk/run/roll race. We also reminded our members of the opportunities at the national level in bass fishing, bowling, billiards, trap shooting and hand cycle racing.

The chapter especially encourages participation in:

Bowling ... Several members of Keystone PVA participate in bowling. Our chapter reimburses members for up to three games per week; we report scores in our newsletter and present prizes to the highest scorers at the Annual Awards Banquet.

Team Bass Tournament ... takes place twice a year, in June and September, on the Monongahela River at the marina of American Legion Post 940 in West Brownsville. Paralyzed veterans and boat captains compete in a day-long competition that concludes with prizes and a picnic.

Kennywood Park Picnic ... is a one-day event for members, their families and friends each summer. The chapter sponsors admission and dinner for our group. The event enables our members to enjoy the sights and sounds of an amusement park and share camaraderie with others. Many members bring children and grandchildren.

National Veterans Wheelchair Games ... are held in the summer in a different U. S. city each year. If a member is interested and can be cleared medically, the chapter will pick up the costs of travel to and from the event and for lodging there for the athlete and an attendant for up to seven days.



Volunteers

Agnes Strang
Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteer hours for the 12 month period ending 30 September 2022 for non-VA service as tracked by the chapter and national PVA totaled 1,858. Twenty-four members and volunteers contributed these hours in service.

The volunteers of Keystone PVA deserve a special thanks for their precious time and energy given with the aim of helping our veterans, and help they do. All volunteer time must be received in the Keystone PVA office by the 7th of each month so it can be submitted to the National PVA office in a timely manner.

Several of our volunteers have served with Keystone PVA many years. We continue to serve because of our commitment to our veterans. Volunteers are rewarded by the smiles, tears, and many warm hands we hold at the VA medical centers and nursing homes when they are open. On behalf of the Board of Directors and Members, thank you for your time given to help others. We value your time and encourage our members' family, friends, and neighbors to also become involved by giving some time to help our veterans.

Volunteers are the hallmark of our organization!



For the first time, volunteers in Erie (above), Lebanon, and Butler, Pa., fabricated and delivered "Easter Bags" with personal-use items to hospitalized veterans.

Keystone PVA thanks you for your generosity

These people and institutions made **direct donations** to the Keystone PVA in our **fiscal year 2022 (01 October 2021 to 30 September 2022)**. We thank you for your generosity in contributing to the many works that support paralyzed veterans. We publish only names and communities of residence. Monetary donations are always acceptable and are preferred due to their flexibility in providing services. Because of space limitations and appropriateness to the mission of the Keystone PVA, not all nonmonetary donations can be accepted.

We strongly suggest that those who have gently-used home furnishings, clothing and shoes donate them to the American Thrift Center, a second-hand-goods store based in the Village Shopping Center, 1806 Homeville Road, West Mifflin PA 15122. Donations and sales there benefit the Keystone Chapter. For pickup of larger items in Allegheny County, Pa., and parts of surrounding counties, call the American Thrift Center at 412-469-9663. Or place clothing and shoes in one of over 800 red boxes in Western Pennsylvania, two samples of which are pictured on the next page.

All locations are communities or postal designations in Pennsylvania unless otherwise noted.

UNRESTRICTED DONATIONS

American Legion, Earl J. Watt Post 638, Bessemer
American Legion, Post 299, Sharon
American Legion, Post 114, Vandergrift
American Legion, Post 978, Weedville
American Legion Post 351, Verona
Joan Berchok, Jefferson Hills
A. Bonavoglia & G. Wittenberg, Pittsburgh
Arlajeon Bookser, Zelienople
Raymond & Melanie Dunahay, Washington
Karen & Gary Gajdzik, Cranberry Twp, Butler Co.
George & Gail Goldberg, Warminster
Hellbender, Inc., Harmar Township
P. Impellicieri & M. Neuma, Pittsburgh
Benjamin F. Jackson Estate
Eugene Klaber, Slippery Rock
L. Krishnamoorthy Foundation, Bradenton, Florida
Paul Kusmierski, Pittsburgh
David & Michele Laurinaitis, Jamison
M. Mascaro Family Charitable Fund, Pittsburgh
D.D. Mateer Charitable Foundation, Pittsburgh
Mount Parnell Lions Club, St. Thomas
Rosalie Murrer, Pittsburgh
Anna & Douglas Ohar, Pittsburgh
Ohio Concrete Resurfacing, Inc., Bedford, Ohio
Others First, Rick Frazier, Rochester Hills, Michigan
Presbyterian Church of Pitcairn
Gustave Rieck, Pittsburgh
Cynthia Rieken, San Francisco, California
Ron Salomon, McDonald
Mary Schlichter, Birmingham, Alabama
Sharon Tripodi, Hazleton
Roy Calvin McGinnis VFW Post 7073, Parker
Sam & Susan Weber, Coraopolis
William Young, Greensburg

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In memory of Shirley Cole
First Church of God, New Bethlehem

In memory of Twila DeCarlo
Doris Davis, Uniontown
M. & C. Cohen, Eden Prairie, Minnesota
Margaret Monit, Beaver
Martha & Jim Karwoski, Beaver
Rita Dorobish, Uniontown
The Maher Family, Uniontown
Twila Hall, Uniontown

In memory of Donald Lebedda
William & Carol Tatrai, West Homestead

In memory of James E. Riemer
Hatzell Family Trust, Butler
J & J Hartzell, Butler
R & B Bachman, Butler
Woodmen of the World Lodge 008, Butler

NON-CASH DONATIONS

Gloria Atherholt, Danville
Mrs. Atherholt makes colorful, often Pittsburgh Steelers-themed crocheted throws, which are given away as door prizes at the Annual Awards Banquet.

Donations of equipment and supplies

The chapter cannot usually accept equipment or supplies. We lack the room and the expertise necessary to manage them. We know this is especially disappointing to callers who have good, working items such as wheelchairs or lightly used hospital beds. For more than one reason, it's not easy to find new homes for these and similar items.

But we offer two services. One is referral; we have a list of organizations that might be able to take and re-use some items.

The other is to send a message of the availability of items to our members and others who may, if they cannot use the items, may know someone who can.



“Red” donation boxes in the Pittsburgh Region

Most of the donation boxes that benefit the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans are red, and look like one of the two examples shown here. The smaller one at far left is newer and is painted on all sides with the “Saluting Man” logo and the words “Paralyzed Veterans” to make clear to the public who benefits from their donations. Older boxes may appear like the one at near left, but they all say Paralyzed Veterans of America, Keystone Chapter, and has the phone number of the American Thrift Center, which operates the boxes and its thrift store in West Mifflin, Pa., 412-469-9663.

Communications

The Parascope

The chapter’s newsletter, The Parascope, remains the chapter’s main tool for communicating large quantities of information to our members, associate members, and volunteers. We also send it to all PVA chapters and the national PVA, as well as allied organizations and businesses. The Parascope provides regular reports on advocacy, legislation, sports and recreation, membership, chapter events, veterans’ benefits, other issues and other items in which the readers may have an interest.

During the peak of the pandemic, much of the production of the Parascope was via email. In late 2022, the printing, labeling, and mailing was outsourced to reduce the amount of time that staff and volunteers had to do this work. All content is produced by chapter staff and members. The chapter accepts some unsolicited photos, but due to quality or appropriateness issues, not all find their ways into publication.

E-mail, keystoneparavets@gmail.com

Web site, www.kpva.org

Our web site has been in the care of webmaster and member Bill Hoffman for about two years, now and what an improvement! He maintains it, adds information routinely, and often makes improvements to its functionality. Similar to the way the printing and distribution of the newsletter is no longer an office function, Bill’s service to the chapter increases our overall ability to focus on more tasks.

Videoconferencing

Keystone PVA was among the many people and organizations around the world pushed into using computer-based videoconferencing, and Keystone PVA was no exception. Our platform of choice was Zoom, though we successfully used other organizations’ video platforms. This moved all of our Board meetings into “Zoom rooms” and most of our Membership Meeting participants gathered that way. Limited in-person meetings were held, and when they were, they involved only a few people.

But now we are able more effectively to bridge the gaps conveniently from Eric to Lebanon, from Pittsburgh to Wilkes-Barre.

The “Five Facts Flyer”

The chapter continues to produce its “Five Facts You Ought to Know About Paralyzed Veterans” flyer, of which a shorter version appears on page 4. Our experience is that the public does not know much about the Paralyzed Veterans organization, and worse several misconceptions. We have found that communicating these facts — especially the ones that we are NOT a part of the VA and DO NOT get tax funding — generates important, positive support for our veterans and their needs. Even more importantly, we communicate that paralyzed veterans **themselves** do so much of the work of the organization. This fact is a hidden gem that needs to be more assertively promoted.

Advocacy Report

The PVA conducts an Advocacy/Legislative Seminar in March of each year. In 2022, PVA conducted the seminar via Zoom, and Keystone PVA met with staff specialists from most of the Pennsylvania Congressional offices the same way. As usual, we focused on the high points of the Independent Budget, thanked the members for fully funding the Veterans Health Administration and a two-year rolling budget, and strongly recommended that Congress passes important pending legislation, especially for women’s health care, for adapted automobiles, and for caregiver support.

Keystone PVA leadership also engaged with local VA management through monthly virtual meetings. Actual in-person visitation was still limited due to coronavirus mitigation.

During FY2022 the chapter obtained the volunteer services of life member Peter Townsend, who is now the VA Voluntary Services representative and chapter site leader at the VA medical center in Wilkes-Barre. This puts at least one Keystone PVA representative in six VA medical centers in Pennsylvania. A contact list of Keystone PVA’s site leaders is on page 7.

Independent Auditor's Report and Financial Statements

The Keystone Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America (Keystone PVA) engaged Kimberly Y. Donovan, CPA, to perform its Fiscal Year 2022 audit. The following opinion letter, Statement of Activities, and Statement of Financial Position are the highlights of the results of the FY 2022 audit. To see the complete audit, including supporting notes, contact Keystone PVA.

Kimberly Y. Donovan
Certified Public Accountant

771 Davis Road
Ellwood City, PA 16117
724-674-9882 cell
kimberlydonovancpa@hotmail.com

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America, Inc.

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America, Inc. (a non-profit organization), which comprise the statements of financial position as of September 30, 2022, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

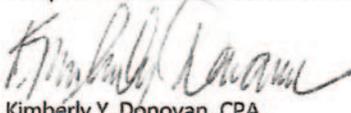
My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that I plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit includes performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, I express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America, Inc., as of September 30, 2022, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with the accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.



Kimberly Y. Donovan, CPA
Ellwood City, PA
January 10, 2023

KEYSTONE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
For the Year Ended September 30, 2022

	<u>Without Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>With Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Operating Activities</u>			
National PVA Contributions	\$ 159,279	\$ -	\$ 159,279
Thrift Shop Fundraising, net	133,535	-	133,535
General Contributions	55,061	-	55,061
Estate Bequest	244,993	-	244,993
Kennywood Picnic Donations	530	-	530
Banquet Donations	130	-	130
Membership dues	250	-	250
Newsletter Advertising	950	-	950
Ammo box donations	3,082	-	3,082
Shooting and Fishing Programs	2,089	-	2,089
Non Cash Donation for Easter Basket Program	132	-	132
Total support and revenue before releases	<u>600,031</u>	-	<u>600,031</u>
Net assets released from restrictions	-	-	-
Total revenue and support	<u>600,031</u>	-	<u>600,031</u>
<u>Expenses</u>			
Program services:			
Membership and benefits	84,887	-	84,887
Public affairs	85,727	-	85,727
Research	6,791	-	6,791
Total program services	<u>177,405</u>	-	<u>177,405</u>
Support services:			
General and administration	68,894	-	68,894
Fundraising	9,124	-	9,124
Total support services	<u>78,018</u>	-	<u>78,018</u>
Total expenses	255,423	-	255,423
Change in net assets from operating activities	344,608	-	344,608
<u>Nonoperating Activities</u>			
Interest income	1,936	-	1,936
Pittsburgh Foundation Donation	(300,000)	-	(300,000)
Investment return, net	(200,731)	-	(200,731)
Change in net assets from nonoperating activities	<u>(498,795)</u>	-	<u>(498,795)</u>
Change in net assets	(154,187)	-	(154,187)
<u>Net Assets</u>			
Net Assets, Beginning	<u>1,908,132</u>	-	<u>1,908,132</u>
Net Assets, Ending	<u>\$ 1,753,945</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,753,945</u>

KEYSTONE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
 For the Year Ended September 30, 2022

	<u>2022</u>
Assets	
Cash and equivalents	\$ 337,847
Certificates of deposit	328,199
Fundraising receivable	13,193
Prepaid expenses	<u>5,556</u>
Current assets	684,795
Investments, at fair value	939,660
Property and equipment:	
Building and improvements	322,178
Equipment and furniture	14,096
Vehicle	84,008
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(263,227)</u>
Property and equipment, net	157,055
Total assets	<u>\$ 1,781,510</u>
Liabilities and net assets	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	<u>\$ 27,565</u>
Total current liabilities	27,565
Net assets	
Without donor restrictions	1,753,945
With donor restrictions	<u>-</u>
Total net assets	<u>1,753,945</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 1,781,510</u>

Treasurer’s, Fundraising, and National Director’s Report

(Continued from page 5)

Sharing & Caring, etc.

Keystone PVA is one of 17 organizations of the Sharing & Caring Committee; I represent the chapter on it. Sharing & Caring helps hospitalized veterans. For the four days following each Labor Day, we take 500 veterans from the area’s VA medical centers and nursing/personal care homes out on the Gateway Clipper’s *The Empress*. For three hours, these veterans are treated to a buffet lunch, entertainment, dance contests, and sightseeing on Pittsburgh’s three rivers.

National PVA Board of Directors

I represent Keystone PVA on the national PVA Board of Directors. The national Board meets in person twice a year and once a year by conference phone. The most important duty of a national director is to discuss and vote on issues of PVA business.

In other activities, I often staff an exhibit table at outreach events, and I help present awards at schools to winners and finalists of the PVA Poster and Essay Contest and recognize their teachers.

Keystone PVA’s “green” donation box is a modified ammunition can placed in several area businesses, on their counters, for generous customers to contribute. The chapter has plenty more for placement.





Paralyzed Veterans of America

Keystone Chapter

1113 Main Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15215-2407

Phone 412-781-2474 or 800-775-9323

Fax 412-781-2659

www.kpva.org

keystoneparavets@gmail.com

VA MEDICAL CENTERS

VAVS representatives serve veterans at these VA Medical Centers on behalf of the Keystone Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans.

James E. Van Zandt VAMC

2907 Pleasant Valley Boulevard

Altoona PA 16602-4377

877-626-2500

William D. Lightner—VAVS Representative

Abie Abraham VA Healthcare System

353 N. Duffy Road

Butler PA 16001

800-362-8262

John Kellner—VAVS Representative

Erie VAMC

135 E. 38th Street

Erie PA 16504-1559

800-274-8387

John Larese—VAVS Representative

Rex Nichols—Deputy Representative

Lebanon VAMC

1700 S. Lincoln Avenue

Lebanon PA 17042-7529

800-409-8771

Chris Fidler—VAVS Representative

VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

University Drive campus

University Drive C

Pittsburgh PA 15240

800-309-8398

H. John Heinz III campus

1010 Delafield Road

Pittsburgh PA 15215-1802

800-309-8398

For both campuses:

Tom Strang—VAVS Representative

Wilkes-Barre VAMC

1111 East End Boulevard

Wilkes-Barre PA 18711-0030

570-824-3521

Peter Townsend—VAVS Representative



CONNECT WITH US

The **BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** *Contact information on page 2.*

THE OFFICE: *Information is in the keystone in the top left.*

SIX MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS A YEAR

Sites, dates and times are in The Parascope and on the web site.

SIX NEWSLETTERS A YEAR

The Parascope is sent to each member, to public officials and key Department of Veterans Affairs officials, and circulated at the many VA medical centers in which we have a presence.

The mission of the Keystone Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America is

- to improve the quality of life of paralyzed veterans by
- Encouraging and supporting spinal cord injury and disease research;
- Improving access to health care and other veterans' benefits;
- Assisting in the expansion of opportunities in wheelchair sports and recreation; and
- Advocating for the rights of disabled people, including the reduction and elimination of barriers to accessibility and mobility.