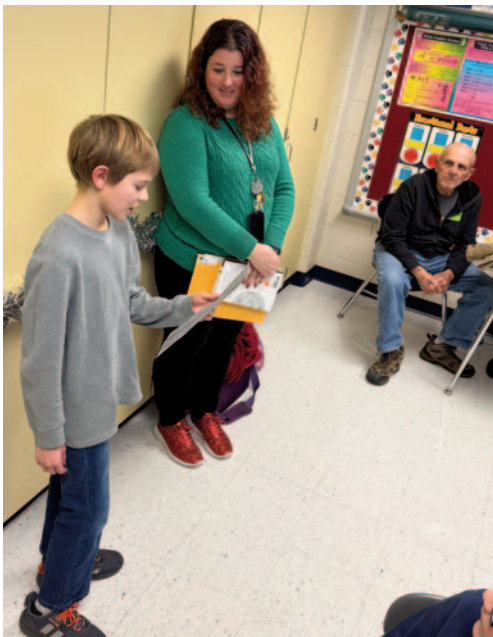




THE PARASCOPE

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE KEYSTONE CHAPTER
OF THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA
VOLUME XIV, ISSUE 1 JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2026

Students recognized in “#Barriers Still Exist” themed contest



Fifth-grader **Jake Ziegler** read his winning poem while his teacher, **Jennifer Horgan**, and his grandfather looked on in at the Claysville Elementary School in Washington County, Pa. Jake's entry topped the 5th/6th grade poem division. It was the second consecutive year that Mrs. Horgan had a winning student in the competition.

The photos above and on page 2 are of five of the six awardees in the 2025 PVA Poster and Poem Contest in Pennsylvania. One more award and prize presentation is yet to be held. Keystone PVA makes the presentations at the convenience of the students, teachers and parents who are involved.



Neyla Hawk, in third grade, and **Juno Leonardi**, in fourth grade, flank teacher Dr. **Cathy Favo** at the Tenth Street Elementary School of the Riverside School District in Oakmont, Allegheny County, Pa. Both students were recognized for their poster entries, Neyla for the best entry in the 3rd/4th grade division, and Juno for the Overall Best poster.



Michael Cobb III gave the Linton Middle School of the Penn Hills School District a winner for his Overall Best poem in the competition. He showed his award plaque with teacher **Tracy Johnson**. Penn Hills is in Allegheny County, Pa.

Keystone PVA again thanks the volunteers who carried this contest from start to finish, especially contest coordinator Lynnette Ferry and judges Alexander Wheaton and Kimber Forrester, both on the faculty of the Erie County Community College in Erie, Pennsylvania.

There is one more contest photo on the next page.

New start time for the February Membership Meeting—see page 8 and the back page

Paralyzed Veterans of America, Keystone Chapter

Chapter founded 1960

President

Mark O. Rosensteel

Vice President

Sean M. Ferry

Secretary

Peter K. Townsend Jr.

Treasurer

William D. Jakovac

Directors

Joseph A. Dunn

William D. Lightner

Chris Fidler

Tom Strang

Advocacy Director

Peter K. Townsend Jr.

Fundraising Coordinator

William D. Jakovac

Hospital Visitation Coordinator

Chris Fidler

Legislative Director

Chris Fidler

Membership Officer

Tom Strang

MS Committee Representative

Peter K. Townsend Jr.

Service Officer

Joseph A. Dunn

Sports Director

Dane R. Smith

Volunteer Coordinator

Agnes Strang

National Director

William D. Jakovac

National Service Officers

See page 8

Executive Director

Joseph W. Dornbrock

Membership and Projects Coordinator

Sely Thanasack

Bookkeeper

Nancy F. Campbell

Administrative Assistant

Pattie Lujetic

Annual independent audit
conducted by

Kimberly Y. Donovan, CPA

Poster and Poem students recognized

Continued from page 1



Karly Flickinger (center) received her award for best poem in the 7th/8th grade division from PVA Eastern Region manager **Joe Weeks** (right) at her school, E.T. Richardson Middle School in the Springfield School District in Delaware County, Pa. With Joe and Karly is **Corey Balaban**, her 8th grade teacher.

REMINDER

Four of the chapter's six Membership Meetings during the year have a new start time: 10 a.m.

They include the February, August, October and December meetings. The start times for the April and June meetings will remain at 12:45 p.m. so that President Mark Rosensteel can travel to Altoona and to North East (near Erie) Pa. See the message on page 4 regarding Membership Meeting attendance to be eligible for recreation financial support.

Shirley Wheaton (seated), a dedicated volunteer and associate member of Keystone PVA, passed away on 02 November 2025. In this photo, she is shown receiving the 2014 Volunteer of the Year award from Volunteer Coordinator **Agnes Strang**, with then-President **Jim Riemer** looking on during that year's chapter Annual Awards Banquet.



Mrs. Wheaton regularly attended chapter events for many years, and could often be found volunteering at the Heinz Campus of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System on this chapter's behalf. She was also the mother of Keystone PVA member William Wheaton. Her absence is very much felt by her chapter friends and associates.

benefits box



By PVA National Service Officer Justin Platt,
based in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania PVA Service Office

Survivors' Benefits explained

The passing of a veteran can leave families grappling with emotional and financial challenges. Fortunately, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides a range of benefits to support surviving spouses, children and even in some cases parents. These benefits honor the veterans service and help ease the burden on surviving families. Understanding these benefits will help families be prepared for the future with planning and ensuring proper documents are available. Please remember that all cases are unique if you have specific questions regarding any of these benefits discussed please contact your local National Service Officer (NSO).

One of the primary benefits available that provide financial support is Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). This is a tax-free monthly benefit that is available to surviving spouses, children or parents if the veteran passed away from a service-connected condition, while on active duty or under certain conditions related to toxic exposures which have been expanded on by the PACT act. DIC payments are a fixed monthly amount, adjusted annually, to provide ongoing stability for families with additional amounts possible for those needing aid and attendance. While DIC is not income based for spouses and children, it is for parents.

For low-income survivors whose veterans passing was not service related the VA offers Survivors Pension which provides another layer of support. This benefit is for un-remarried spouses or unmarried children of wartime veterans. Eligibility for this program does have income limits, however certain expenses like medical expenses can be used to reduce countable income.

As for education, to ensure surviving families can pursue higher learning goals the VA has two programs for family members. The Dependents Educational Assistance (DEA) program is available for children and spouses of veterans who passed from a service-connected condition or for families of a veteran that has been permanently disabled. Additionally, there is the Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry scholarship offers up to 3 years of Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits for survivors of veterans who passed away while on active duty any time after 9/11/2001.

Healthcare assistance for the family of veterans totally disabled veterans is available through the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the VA (CHAMPVA), which reimburses medical expenses for eligible participants. This program is available to the family of a totally disabled veteran and surviving families if the veteran passed away from a service-connected condition.

To assist in honoring your veteran's legacy the VA provides most veterans families with a burial flag, headstone or marker, presidential memorial certificate and a partial reimbursement for burial costs, with a higher amount if the passing was service related.

To apply for these benefits proper documentation will be required, these documents should be kept in a safe place that your spouse knows about. The critical documents needed for survivor benefits are the veterans DD-214, marriage or birth certificates, the veteran's death certificate and funeral expense receipts. While may apply directly online at VA.gov it is advised to contact your local NSO for assistance with your claim. It is advisable to report the pass of a veteran promptly to the VA at 1-800-827-1000 to avoid overpayments and initiate other benefits such as the month of death payment.

Sports and Recreation Report Dane Smith, Sports Director

Fishing and hunting reports are by Tom Strang, Associate Sports Director. The bowling results are from Bill Jakovac. Dane and Mark Rosensteel coordinate the chapter's participation in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. Mark also reports on shooting sports. David Gifford submits information on handcycling.

Air Rifle Clinic and Competition returns in March at new location



After a one year layoff, the Air Rifle Clinic and Competition will return in March at the North Side Sportsmen's Association facility in the North Hills of Pittsburgh on Saturday, 21 March, and Sunday, 22 March. The event is expected to run from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day. The rest of the details, including contact information for clinic coordinator Chad Evans, are on the flyer on the next page.

Reminder: Recreation support predicated on Membership Meeting attendance

Chapter sponsorship for financial support for members to participate in sporting and recreation events dependent on members attending chapter Membership Meetings:

“Life members who request chapter sponsorship to cover the costs of attending an organized recreational event shall have attended, in person or by audio and/or video device, no fewer than 50 percent of the Keystone Chapter Membership Meetings in the 12 months (365 days) prior to the date of the sponsorship request. Examples of events are the National Veterans

Wheelchair Games, the Buckeye Games, handcycling, bowling, billiards, fishing, handcycling, shooting, and similar clinics and competitions. This qualification is in addition to any other eligibility requirement, such as earning Health and Recreation Points.”

The Health and Recreation Points system (see page 6), which was suspended at the onset of the pandemic in 2020, has not been reinstated. This attendance rule is in effect, and applies to all financial recreation support for members, not just the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

Bowling league invites members to join them in Erie in February

Keystone Paralyzed Veterans' bowlers invite other members to join them in Erie for the 22nd Annual Hometown Heroes Bowling Tournament on Sunday, 22 February 2026. Contact President Mark or Treasurer Bill (numbers at the bottom of the page) if you wish to join.

You can bowl at any bowling emporium any time of the year. Except for the Hometown Heroes event and the kickoff competition that the league has held the day after the Annual Awards Banquet, the league is virtual. Bowlers bowl at their own nearby alley, then send a copy of

the printout of their scores, along with receipts, to the chapter office, along with a request to be reimbursed for up to three games a week. A Life member can also get reimbursed for the games of one attendant who is with them when they bowl. Results are published in every issue of The Parascope (below).

Routine bowling does not require advance authorization from the chapter for reimbursement, but members do need to attend Membership Meetings—see the recently enacted rule above.

2025-26 season Keystone PVA bowling scores



Reported as of December 2025.
Bowling year: 01 Oct - 30 Sept

	High Game	High Series	High Average	Strikes	Spares	Games	Average
Sean Ferry	199	530	176	15	49	9	162
Bill Jackson	180	410	136	6	10	3	136
Bill Jakovac	164	403	134	17	21	12	107
Jorden Jones	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
John Kellner	189	504	168	81	170	43	144
Mark Rosensteel	194	552	184	47	123	24	162

Life members can bowl anytime and the chapter will reimburse up to three games per week!
Contact Mark Rosensteel (724-875-1086) or Bill Jakovac (412-916-9261) or the office for details.

ADAPTIVE AIR RIFLE CLINIC AND COMPETITION



Instructional Clinic:
March 21, 2026
Equipment and lunch provided.

Competition:
March 22, 2026
Air rifle 3-position competition.
No fee. Awards and lunch provided.

**BEGINNERS
WELCOME!**

Reserve your spot
today, contact:

Chad Evans
412-822-2123
chad.evans2@va.gov

North Side Sportsmen's Association
325 Mount Pleasant Road | Warrendale, PA 15086

Sponsored by
Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America

Funded in part by VA. Opinions, findings and conclusions of the Paralyzed Veterans of America and other partner organizations do not necessarily reflect those of VA. VA does not expressly or impliedly prefer, sanction, or endorse any outside entity, to include the Paralyzed Veterans of America.

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

The Keystone PVA Board of Directors, Fiscal Year 2025



The **2025 Board of Directors** included these paralyzed veterans pictured here.

*Left: President **Mark Rosensteel**.*

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

*Bottom row, left to right: **Chris Fidler**, **Bill Lightner**, **Tom Strang** and **Peter Townsend**.*

Contact information for the 2026 Board of Directors

To provide for easy communication with members of the Board, the current (FY 2026) 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 814-490-0474

Peter K. Townsend Jr., Secretary
Meshoppen, Pennsylvania
phone 570-833-5623

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

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 2025

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

Butler VAMC
John Kellner, representative

Erie VAMC
John Larese, representative
Rexford Nichols, deputy
Sean Ferry, deputy

Lebanon VAMC
Chris Fidler, representative

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

I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the fiscal year 2025, reflecting the progress and achievements of our chapter. As president, it is gratifying to report on our endeavors in advocating for the health care and healthy activity of all veterans, especially paralyzed veterans, whose military service was devoted to preserving the freedoms we cherish. Here are highlights from the year beginning on 01 October 2024 and ending 30 September 2025:

Outreach Activities

- ▶ We accepted invitations from around Pennsylvania to staff exhibit tables at public events promoting health care and veterans' interests to hundreds of visitors, face-to-face.
- ▶ We continued the production and delivery of "Easter" bags of personal needs items to fellow hospitalized veterans across various VA medical facilities in Pennsylvania, including Altoona, Butler, Erie, Lebanon, and Pittsburgh, and including the Commonwealth's Southwestern Veterans Center in Pittsburgh.
- ▶ Our members rolled in parades in Lawrenceville in Pittsburgh on Memorial Day and in Latrobe on Independence Day.

Legislation and Advocacy

Our collaboration with the National PVA in promoting important legislation has benefited veterans who have spinal cord injury or disease (SCI/D) and has positively impacted the larger disabled community. PVA leads the charge in partnership with other organizations to improve and maintain veterans' health care and to develop support for accessibility and caregivers.

Sports and Recreation

- ▶ Several of our members traveled to Ohio to compete in the Buckeye Wheelchair Games.
- ▶ We hosted two successful bass tournaments in Youghiogheny Lake and West Brownsville, fostering a sense of camaraderie and achievement among participants.

- ▶ With the introduction of a portable lift to make it easier for disabled anglers to get into the bass boats, tournaments are much better for both anglers and volunteers.
- ▶ In July, eight members traveled to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Minneapolis, Minnesota, successfully competing and winning in several athletic event categories.
- ▶ Our annual Kennywood Park picnic also took place in July for about 75 members and their families. It allows us time to catch up with our members and their families that we do not get to see on a regular basis.

Annual Banquet

The October annual banquet was the fourth in-person banquet since the pandemic, and without significant Covid-19 restrictions was a more comfortable event. As usual, new directors for the Board were elected and sworn in for their three-year terms, strengthening our leadership.

Veterans Day activities

Our members rolled in Veterans Day Parades in Erie and Pittsburgh, joining our larger community of veterans, marching down these cities' major boulevards, accepting the recognition of the public that turned out to watch. Many of our members participated in other activities in their own regions of Pennsylvania on and around 11 November.

I extend my gratitude to all members for their unwavering support, dedication, and enthusiasm through the year. Together, we have overcome obstacles and achieved significant milestones.

We expect more challenges to the welfare of veterans in 2026, but with growing momentum and the commitment and involvement of our members and volunteers, PVA and the Keystone Chapter will continue to work for our member veterans and the many people who benefit from our efforts every day.



Keystone PVA's wheelchair athlete team met with the leadership of the Pennsylvania Senate for a recognition ceremony at the Capitol in Harrisburg in March 2025.

Treasurer's Report; Fundraising Report Bill Jakovac

Treasurer's report

Keystone PVA's Fiscal Year 2025 records and practices were inspected by Kimberly Y. Donovan, CPA. The auditor's opinion letter is located on page AR-8, followed by statement of activities and financial position.

I am responsible for the funds of the chapter, but our financial recording and reporting security is based on having four people involved with overlapping responsibilities: the treasurer, the president, the bookkeeper, and the executive director. All are involved in the financial accounting process in significant ways. All are encouraged and empowered to call attention to and investigate anything that seems amiss.

Though separately incorporated from the national Paralyzed Veterans of America, the national office rightly requires (as part of its financial support) that each chapter arranges for an annual independent audit, plus reports on programs and fundraising that the chapter does. The national PVA office of the chief financial officer has always been accessible, responsive and helpful.

In April 2025, PVA Chief Financial Officer Cheryl Topping visited the chapter to review financial operations. She provided valuable advice and perspective on how the chapter can improve its finances and adapt to changing technologies.

An important part of our financial process is to acknowledge donations. Our thank-you letters, personally signed by the president and me, also serve as a record of donations for the donor's tax records, since all donations to support Keystone PVA programs are federal income tax-deductible for those who itemize.

Investments include certificates of deposit, money market funds, and equities. Most of our equity investments are managed by Robert W. Baird & Co., which acquired Pittsburgh-based Hefren-Tillotson in late 2022. Baird's approach to financial advice and planning is reasonably conservative, which is compatible with the chapter's needs. The Farrell Group, a division of Baird, meets with our Board of Directors annually to review our investment status and strategy.

Fundraising report

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 percentage of the gross sales. The American Thrift Center continues to increase the number of its red collection boxes located in high visibility areas in southwestern Pennsylvania and increasingly northward. The chapter name and/or the national/chapter logo appear on all four sides of the boxes. American Thrift also provides replacement household items and clothing within its inventory for Keystone members who have suffered a catastrophic loss. They also provide a 50% discount to Keystone PVA members. The American Thrift Center is owned and operated by James V. Zeik, whom we thank for his commitment to the support of paralyzed veterans.

We also receive donations through "ammo" donation boxes placed in various locations where customers can deposit their change.

We are a participant in the United Way of Allegheny County and appreciate the support of donors through that program.

In Fiscal Year 2025, The Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America received no funding from local, state, or federal governments. Charities are sometimes criticized for spending money on fundraising. To reach potential donors to ask for their support, money must be spent, or an active, willing and capable corps of volunteers must be recruited, trained, and engaged. Always be suspicious when you are told that "no or few funds were spent for fundraising." Except in rare cases where very few very large sums of money from few sources are committed to a project or cause, a lot of people willing to support a cause must be contacted at some significant cost. Then there are the costs of follow-up, accounting, reporting and other compliances. There is no free lunch.

We are 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 starting on page AR-6.

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.

Sharing & Caring, etc.

Keystone PVA is one of 20 organizations of the Sharing & Caring Committee; I represent the chapter on it. Sharing & Caring helps hospitalized veterans. For two days following Labor Day, we took 250 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.

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.

National PVA Board of Directors

The Paralyzed Veterans of America is governed by a Board of Directors (BOD) and an eight-member Executive Committee. Each of the 33 chapters elects a member to represent them on this board as a National Director. The officers are elected annually by the BOD. Together, we set the direction, policies, and programs of PVA. Our actions must always be in the best interests of the PVA.

PVA holds three BOD meetings each year. These meetings always include reports from national elected officers and staff department heads. These set the stage for discussion and votes on business resolutions concerning programs, policies, and funding of PVA.

The Fall BOD meeting was held in Orlando, Florida. The midwinter BOD meeting was held by teleconference.

At the Annual Convention, PVA meets to elect national officers, acknowledge organizations and people for their work for and support of paralyzed veterans, and to discuss/vote on resolutions that concern the operations of PVA. The FY25 convention was held in Austin, Texas, in May 2025, in which I participated by Zoom.

Hospital Visitation and Service report Chris Fidler, Site Leader Coordinator

Keystone PVA maintains good relationships with six VA medical centers, especially their 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 periodically 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

Paralyzed Veterans of America National Service Officers (NSOs)

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.

National Service Office—Western Pennsylvania

Justin Platt, National Service Officer

Marissa Sabatucci, Administrative Assistant

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

Though our primary mission is to serve veterans with spinal cord injuries and diseases, we assist veterans in each of the following categories: members (M), those eligible for membership (ME), survivors, and nonmembers (NM). M/ME and survivors of these veterans are considering our "target" clients. In 2025, we have added 45 new clients. 23 of these of these are target clients. As a result of the claims we filed, our clients have been granted 3.8 million dollars in total monetary benefits; 90% of the awarded money went to M/MEs. Additional benefits of VA Healthcare, medical and mobility equipment, etc. are not reflected in this number but have saved our veterans monetarily and aided them in maintaining an independent lifestyle.

In October 2025, National Service Officer (NSO), Christopher Custer transferred to the Pittsburgh Service Office from the Richmond VA Medical Center. After tying up loose ends in Richmond, Chris officially began working on the Pittsburgh workload at the start of 2026. Our office can be reached at 412-395-6255 or by emailing our office at MarissaS@pva.org, ChrisC@PVA.org or JustinP@PVA.org.

National Service Office—Eastern Pennsylvania

Joseph Weeks, North East Area Manager

Violet Graham, Senior Administrative Assistant

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

Joseph Weeks (North East Area Manager) and Violet Graham (Senior Administrative Assistant) provide assistance and advocate for any Veteran that may reach out to our office. Our primary mission is to advocate for Veterans who have a spinal cord injury or spinal cord disease. The Veterans we assist are comprised of members (M), those eligible for membership (ME), survivors, and nonmembers (NM).

In 2025, the PVA office in Philadelphia added 67 new clients, 60 of them are eligible for membership. As a result of the claims we filed, the office secured 10.5 million dollars in monetary benefits for our clients; 96 percent of the money awarded 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 2.8 percent
- Specially Adapted Housing (SAH) - \$126,526
- Special Housing Adaptations (SHA)-\$ 25,350
- Automobile Grant-\$27,074.99
- Single Clothing Allowance – \$ 1053.19

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

Members who have passed on to the Eternity Chapter

- FY 2025 : 01 October 2024 to 30 September 2025**
All towns of residence are in Pennsylvania except where noted
- Merle B. Waller of Pittsburgh, Army veteran and four-month member, on 19 October 2024
- David Kutz of Carlisle, Air Force veteran and seven-month member, on 19 October 2024
- Dominic Dorazio of Houston, Air Force veteran and 24-year member, on 02 November 24
- Alex G. Dipko of Portage, Army veteran and 23-year member, on 13 November 2024
- Keith W. Gilcrist of Harrisburg, Navy veteran and 32-year member, on 04 December 2024
- Stephen P. Roth of Conneaut Lake, Air Force veteran and 23-year member, on 13 December 2024
- Aaron Hawn of Oakdale, Air Force veteran and five-month member, on 31 January 2025
- Donnie L. Hillegas of Duncansville, Air Force veteran and eight-month member, on 21 June 2025
- Yasseen Bey of Erie, Air Force veteran and three-year member, on 21 June 2025
- Vincent J. Maxwell of Windber, Army veteran and 10-month member, on 06 August 2025
- Marvin Brozell of Lake City, Air Force veteran and 11-month member on, 27 August 2025
- Joseph J. Jarvis of Lower Burrell, Army veteran and 24-year member, on 09 September 2025

The following passings prior to FY2025 were reported during the last year:

- John P. Feltovich of Pittsburgh, Army veteran and three-year member on, 15 July 2019
- Max S. Jackowski of Bethel, Army veteran and 28-year member, on 29 August 2023
- David Ray Kopka of Sarver, Army veteran and 33-year member on, 30 August 2024
- Jon M. Schnaars, Monroe Township, New Jersey, Navy veteran and two-year member, on 05 September 2023
- Robert Cinciripini of Braddock, Associate and 24-year member, on 28 September 2024

Membership as of 30 September 2025	
Life members, service connected	164
Life members, non-service connected	<u>92</u>
Total life members:	256
Associate members, annual	16
Associate members, lifetime	<u>70</u>
Total associate members:	86

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.

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.

Keystone PVA will reimburse Life members for many out-of-pocket costs of participating in approved, organized recreation activities, providing the member requests reimbursement at least 45 days before the activity and provides receipts and proof of participation. The chapter will also reimburse Life members for bowling, hunting and fishing licenses, fitness club and sportsmen’s club memberships with receipts and without prior approval.

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. More members make the chapter more influential.

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.

Chapter communications tools

The chapter’s surest way of reaching all of its members is the bi-monthly **newsletter, The Parascope**, sent by postal service. Most members also use **email, keystoneparavets@gmail.com**, which the chapter uses to send The Parascope to them, but the chapter also forwards much useful information, either generated by the chapter or passed along from, for examples, the VA or the Pa. Department of Military Affairs.

Videoconference tool **Zoom** has been a blessing. Implemented out of necessity during the pandemic, it now makes possible well-attended Board meetings by our directors scattered around Pennsylvania, meetings and webinars with the national PVA office, and Membership Meetings.

Our **Five Facts Flyer** and our **Annual Report** provide overviews of the PVA and chapter mission, how we accomplish it, and how we protect and advance services for paralyzed veterans.

Keystone PVA thanks you for your generosity

These people and institutions made **direct donations** to the Keystone PVA in our **fiscal year 2025 (01 October 2024 to 30 September 2025)**. 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. To find out what items American Thrift can accept, call 412-469-9663. Or place clothing and shoes in one of over 800 red boxes in Western Pennsylvania, two samples of which are shown below.

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

UNRESTRICTED DONATIONS

Anonymous

Altamira Ltd.

American Legion, Post 490, Pittsburgh

American Legion, Post 978, WeedvilleDelray Beach,
Veronica McDonough Anchors, Delray Beach, Florida

Robert E. Bowersox, Clarion

Buchtan for Pennsylvania, Carmichaels

Edward Casper, Mt. Lebanon

Baiba Clemens, Harrisburg

Donald & Phyllis Diller, Lancaster

Karen & Gary Gajdzik, Cranberry Twp, Butler County

Howard Hanna Real Estate, Belle Vernon

Eugene Klaber, Slippery Rock

James & Karen Knight, Sharpsville

Gerald Koren, Exton

John & Janis Kreutzman, Oakdale

Legion Memorial Association, White Oak

Donna MacKinley, Malvern

Linda & Michael Martin, Broomhall

Mascaro Family Trust

J. Molitorisa & K. Floyd, Pittsburgh

Mount Parnell Lions Club, Fort Loudon

North East Athletic Club, North East

Anna Ohar, Pittsburgh

Orthodox Methodist Church, Greensboro

Others First, Rick Frazier, Rochester Hills, Michigan

Mary Panza, Sharpsburg

The Pittsburgh Foundation, Pittsburgh

Ron Salomon, McDonald

Sokol Lodge #216, Pittsburgh

Norman Stitt, North Versailles

Angela Summers, Clairton

Sharon Tripodi, Hazleton

Sam & Susan Weber, Coraopolis



LOCATIONS of COUNTERTOP “AMMO” DONATION BOXES

American Fuel, Worthington

American Legion Post, Aspinwall

American Legion Post, White Oak

Beer and Beyond, Springdale

Best Feeds Garden Center, Ross Township

Castriota Metals, Pittsburgh

Dave's Country Meats, Valencia

Keystone Iron & Metal, Pittsburgh

King Lanes, Kittanning

Novotny's Grocery & Pizza, Worthington

Sharpsburg Borough Building, Sharpsburg

VFW Post 894, Natrona Heights

VFW Post 4315, Ashville

VFW Post 4843, Ford City

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In memory of Carol Helgerman

Eastern Star Chapter 356

In memory of Ron Mallonee

Linda Cooper, Saxonburg

In memory of David McCall

Joanne & John Kelly, Pittsburgh

In memory of James Riemer

Hartzell Family Trust, Butler

RESTRICTED DONATIONS

In support of the Team Bass Tournaments:

The Tom Landish Fund of the Pittsburgh Foundation

The Robert & Mary Weisbrod Foundation



A countertop “ammo” donation box, adapted from a transport box for 7.62mm ammunition.

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 Minneapolis, Minnesota in 2025) and the Buckeye Games held at the SPIRE Institute in Geneva, Ohio.

Now and then organizations such as the Pittsburgh-Allegheny County Sports and Exhibition Authority, which owns and operates major sports and events venues in Pittsburgh, generously provide tickets for games and concerts, usually for seats in luxury suites, for our members on a last-minute, first-come first-served basis.

Our members may participate in handcycling, weightlifting, swimming, trap shooting, air rifles and pistols, hunting, fishing, bowling, billiards, wheelchair rugby, basketball, scuba diving, power soccer, table tennis, slalom, boccia, and the list keeps growing. Our chapter offers a bowling league, two bass tournaments, 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 2025 we provided assistance to the Pittsburgh Steelwheelers, which conducts a wheelchair 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 2025 for non-VA service as tracked by the chapter and national PVA totaled 2,128. Twenty members and 10 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!

Advocacy and Government Relations

PVA conducts an Advocacy/Legislation Seminar annually in Arlington, Virginia. The Seminar provides an up-to-date refresher on current legislation and rule making. The Seminar is followed by two days of visits to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., for members of PVA chapters across the United States to meet with members of Congress and their staff people to emphasize how proposed legislation or rule making will affect veterans, and not just paralyzed veterans, and not just veterans.

An advisory body to the Pa. Department of Veterans Affairs called the State Veterans Commission includes three chapter Life members: Constance Snively and Board members Chris Fidler and Joe Dunn. Their participation ensures that the voices of paralyzed veterans are heard on the Commonwealth level. The Commission usually meets monthly.



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 2025 audit. The following opinion letter, Statement of Activities, and Statement of Financial Position are the highlights of the results of the FY 2025 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, 2025, 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, 2025, 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
December 29, 2025

KEYSTONE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

For the Year Ended September 30, 2025

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
<u>Operating Activities</u>			
National PVA Contributions	\$ 153,104	\$ -	\$ 153,104
Thrift Shop Fundraising, net	109,940	-	109,940
General Contributions	31,685	-	31,685
Pittsburgh Foundation Grants	11,532	2,218	13,750
Kennywood Picnic Donations	295	-	295
Banquet Donations	3,079	-	3,079
Membership dues	75	-	75
Newsletter Advertising	-	-	-
Ammo box donations	2,046	-	2,046
Shooting and Fishing Programs	-	5,000	5,000
Total support and revenue before releases	311,756	7,218	318,974
Net assets released from restrictions	12,747	(12,747)	-
Total revenue and support	324,503	(5,529)	318,974
<u>Expenses</u>			
Program services:			
Membership and benefits	150,684	-	150,684
Public affairs	163,240	-	163,240
Research	10,192	-	10,192
Total program services	324,116	-	324,116
Support services:			
General and administration	76,114	-	76,114
Fundraising	12,850	-	12,850
Total support services	88,964	-	88,964
Total expenses	413,080	-	413,080
Change in net assets from operating activities	(88,577)	(5,529)	(94,106)
<u>Nonoperating Activities</u>			
Interest income	28,574	-	28,574
Investment return, net	118,111	-	118,111
Change in net assets from nonoperating activities	146,685	-	146,685
Change in net assets	58,108	(5,529)	52,579
<u>Net Assets</u>			
Net Assets, Beginning	2,239,691	12,243	2,251,934
Net Assets, Ending	\$ 2,297,799	\$ 6,714	\$ 2,304,513

KEYSTONE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
For the Year Ended September 30, 2025

Assets	
Cash and equivalents	\$ 262,676
Certificates of deposit	451,423
Fundraising receivable	6,856
Prepaid expenses	<u>9,895</u>
Current assets	730,850
Investments, at fair value	1,408,045
Property and equipment:	
Building and improvements	381,569
Equipment and furniture	15,171
Vehicle	84,008
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(282,262)</u>
Property and equipment, net	198,486
Total assets	<u>\$ 2,337,381</u>
Liabilities and net assets	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ <u>32,868</u>
Total current liabilities	32,868
Net assets	
Without donor restrictions	2,297,799
With donor restrictions	<u>6,714</u>
Total net assets	<u>2,304,513</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 2,337,381</u>

Administration and staff report

The main purpose of the chapter staff is to provide professional, dedicated management and support for the leadership, which is made up of members, the paralyzed veterans themselves, who volunteer their time. That support is mostly administrative work and facilities maintenance, plus filling in for members when they aren't available. Keystone PVA staffs its office in the Borough of Sharpsburg, Pa., 40 hours a week, every week of the year except for holidays.

Over the years, what used to be a large number of incoming phone calls has been transformed into a sometimes overwhelming number of email messages. Even after weeding out the "spam," the number of email messages is difficult to handle with the small staff. However, requests for veterans' benefits are quickly referred to PVA's outstanding national service officers; offers of donations of goods are handled either through referral to the American Thrift Center or by offering to pass the donation offers to our members

via bulk email.

The current office staffing consists of Executive Director Joe Dornbrock, Membership and Projects Coordinator Sely Thanasack, Bookkeeper Nancy Campbell, and Administrative Assistant Pattie Lujetic. Sely is full time and has been on the staff since May 2025. Pattie is part time since December 2024.

Staff also supports outreach exhibits, in which we provide literature, displays and promotional items for events such as "veterans expos" and "health fairs." Our active chapter members staff these events, in which they engage with dozens or even hundreds of members of the public, explaining the mission of the Paralyzed Veterans and sharing their own personal stories. Rather than conduct expensive fundraising events, the chapter promotes the PVA mission one person at a time. The staff supports many promotional opportunities.

Keystone Chapter Health and Recreation Points System

This “Points” system has been suspended until further notice, but members are strongly encouraged to engage in the listed activities.

Please note, in bold face below, the new rule requiring attendance at Membership Meetings for chapter financial support.

Attendance at a Keystone PVA membership meeting	3 points
Attendance at a Keystone PVA membership activity, <i>e.g., Easter Bag distribution, Fish for Fun, Kennywood Picnic, Annual Awards Banquet</i>	2 points
Return SCI Survey following Annual SCI Appointment	2 points
Volunteer at a V.A. Hospital (4 hours or more)	2 points
Volunteer for Keystone PVA (4 hours or more)	2 points
Work out at V.A. or Rehab center with coach or therapist	1 point
Participate in a Keystone PVA sponsored sports or recreational activity, <i>e.g., bowling, fishing, hunting, trapshoot, etc.</i>	1 point
Sign up a regular voting member	2 points
Represent Keystone PVA at community functions, <i>e.g., Sharing and Caring, Soldiers & Sailors, United Cerebral Palsy, Veteran Support Groups</i>	2 points
Ride, walk or roll in a Veterans Day Parade	3 points

- ☛ **Members are required to attend at least half of the chapter’s Membership Meetings prior to obtaining chapter sponsorship for participation in a recreational event, such as the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. See story on page 4.**
- ☛ To receive credit for mileage, volunteer time & points, member **MUST** forward a Volunteer Expense Report to the chapter office by the close of business on the 7th day of the following month. If the office is closed on the 7th, expense vouchers are due by the close of business the next working day.
- ☛ All volunteers at the VA Medical Centers must complete volunteer training and receive a volunteer ID card. The volunteer hours **MUST** be in the name of PVA. Volunteer is responsible for forwarding the monthly VA Volunteer by Organization Report (VS26) to the chapter office by the end of the following month to receive travel expenses.

For more information on chapter programs, refer to Operations Manual Section 8, which you may request from the chapter office.

MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS

- ☛ All receipts submitted for reimbursement must be dated within the Chapter’s current fiscal year, 01 October–30 September.
- ☛ The Chapter has an annual picnic at Kennywood Amusement Park and an Annual Awards Banquet.
- ☛ Keystone PVA will reimburse voting members for their annual **resident hunting license**, with a limit of one (1) Antlerless Deer License annually. Member must send a copy of all licenses and a receipt to obtain reimbursement. The cost of a **resident fishing license** will be reimbursed. Members may also be reimbursed for their membership dues for sports club memberships.
- ☛ **Member Recreation Reimbursement Fund.** Keystone PVA will reimburse voting members up to \$100 for attending any recreational event one time during the fiscal year or until the fund is depleted. Member must send receipts within 30 days of the event to the chapter office including a short description of the outing; good photos appreciated. This benefit is intended for members who do not take advantage of reimbursements and chapter payments for hunting and fishing licenses, or participation in recreational programs such as the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.
- ☛ **Fitness club membership.** The Chapter will reimburse members quarterly for memberships in nonprofit or for-profit organizations such as the YMCA, YWCA, Planet Fitness or LA Fitness up to \$10 monthly or \$30 quarterly.
- ☛ **Weekly bowling league** available to members as a recreational activity and to practice for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG). Scores are in the newsletter and awards will be presented at the Chapter annual banquet.
- ☛ Reimbursement for hunting, shooting and fishing programs that Keystone PVA supports or sponsors.
- ☛ (Currently, this rule remains suspended.) Members that accumulate 12 points or more by attending membership meetings, attending Chapter functions, volunteering at VA medical centers, etc., qualify to participate in the Keystone PVA Sports and Recreation Program.
- ☛ All program expenses must be approved by the Keystone PVA Board of Directors.

Happy Birthdays!

February

02	Laurence Q. Pates
03	Scott W. Syphrit
06	Brianna R. Holmes
07	Marvin Vought
08	Micheleine Guerrier
	Frank Lowe
	Rexford Nichols
	Lawrence Smith
09	Mary Amaditz
10	Crystal Atherton
	Linda Berty
11	Kenneth Anderson
	Michael Sims
	Richard Townsend
	Michael Wright
12	Abbey Strang
	John Brockman Jr.
16	Kurt Feathers
	Shawn McGuigan
18	William J. Anderson Jr.
20	Thomas A. Strang
	William W. Wheaton
22	Joseph G. Jenkins
27	Frank Kenesky
28	Donald Corson
28	Suzanne M. Frye

March

03	Gerald Jordan
04	Clifford Bateson
05	Andrew Borkowski

If we missed your birthday, let us know!

Give us a ring at the chapter office,
800-775-9323,
if you spot an error.

Many happy wishes
to all our members,
associates,
and volunteers!

	William Jackson
	Stacey Jakovac
06	John McKee
09	Earl Stufflebeam
13	Gordon Geer
	Duane Woodley
14	Nevin Maurer
17	Stephen Bickle
18	Michael Brown
20	Patrick Bush
	Norman Eicher
21	Arthur W. Green Jr.
	Bill Jakovac
	Evelyn McGuire
24	Michael Crow

	William Shingler
25	Diane Polensky
26	Richard V. Herring Jr.
27	Gary Jenkins
29	Randall E. Moyer
31	John Berkavich

April

01	Robert Christman
02	Theresa Crow
03	Mona Gutshall
04	Christine Lieberman
06	Dario Diaz
07	Sandra Saffel
	Dillard Saleem
08	Frank Steck
10	Richard Mazzur
11	Albert Seidel
13	Danny Cullen
16	Kenneth Lott
17	Lynnette Ferry
21	Alicia Pastva
23	Robert Coret
	Ernest DiMeglio
	Joseph Dunn
24	Ronald Nemcik Jr.
	Carl Shenk Jr.
25	David Fry
26	Christopher Burtch
	Tara Lightner
	George Neelan
28	Allen Myers
30	Nick Gallick

PHOTO CREDITS taken or provided by: Page 2, top—E. T. Richardson Middle School; Page AR-3—Pennsylvania Senate Republican Communications.
Other photos were taken by staff or are file photos.

ADVERTISING in THE PARASCOPE

The Parascope is published bi-monthly. Deadline for submission of ad copy for the March-April issue will be 15 February.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING: The charge is \$20.00 for 15 words (each additional word is \$.35). Your name and address or phone number counts as five words. CONTACT THE OFFICE FOR PAYMENT TERMS—412-781-2474.

REGULAR MEMBERS of Keystone PVA qualify for up to a quarter-page advertisement free of charge. Members' ads larger than a quarter-page will be half the price of the regular page. DISPLAY ADVERTISING RATES:

SIZE OF AD	One issue	Three issues	Six issues
1/8 page	\$ 20.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 90.00
1/4 page	\$ 40.00	\$100.00	\$180.00
1/2 page	\$ 80.00	\$200.00	\$360.00
Full page	\$160.00	\$400.00	\$720.00

Membership Report Tom Strang, Membership Officer

Membership Meetings will be held as “hybrid” meetings for the foreseeable future, all of which will be available via some form of video such as Zoom videoconference, and with a “primary” in-person location. Four will start at 10 a.m.; two—Altoona and Erie—will start at 12:45 p.m. to accomodate the chapter president’s travel to those locations.

In calendar year 2026, the expected dates (all Saturdays) and locations of the “in-person” part of the meetings will be:

- 14 February—chapter office, Sharpsburg
- 11 April—James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center, Altoona
- 20 June—Mellon Heritage Veterans’ Center, North East
- 08 August—Chapter office, Sharpsburg
- 10 October—Chapter office, Sharpsburg
- 12 December—Chapter office, Sharpsburg

Details for attending the first 2026 Membership Meeting, on Saturday, 14 February, are on the back page.

UNDELIVERABLES — MIAs

Have you seen or know the whereabouts of the following members? They may be dropped from the PVA Membership Roster unless we can find them. Please call us, write or e-mail the chapter office if you are able to help. Contact information for the chapter is on the back page.

**Richard L. Anderson, John H. Beitler,
John H. Conrad, James D. Evans,
Jerald R. Johnson, Donald G. King, Michael A.
Offen, and Gary Robertson**

We welcome new Life Members—

*all communities are in Pennsylvania unless noted;
military branch is where each served:*

Donald L. Meredith, Bobtown, Greene County, Navy.

Michael V. Whiteman, Erie, Erie County, Army.

And we mourn the passing of Life Members

Bob R. Criss of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, on 10 November 2025. He was a Navy veteran who had joined in June of 2025.

Richard A. Griffin of Scranton, Lackawanna County, on 16 November 2025. He was a Navy veteran and had been a member for over 25 years.

MEMBERSHIP TOTALS AS OF 20 JANUARY 2026

Service connected	158
Non-service connected	<u>97</u>
TOTAL	255
Annual Associate Members	16
Lifetime Associate Members	<u>70</u>
TOTAL	86

NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICES

for members in Pennsylvania and western and central New York State:

Western Pennsylvania: Pittsburgh, 412-395-6255

1000 Liberty Avenue, Room 1602, Pittsburgh PA 15222

Justin Platt and Christopher Custer, National Service Officers; **Marissa Sabatucci**, Administrative Assistant

Eastern Pennsylvania: Philadelphia, 215-381-3057

5000 Wissahickon Avenue, Philadelphia PA 19144

Joseph Weeks, Area Manager; **Violet Graham**, Senior Administrative Assistant

Western New York: Buffalo, 716-857-3353

130 S. Elmwood Avenue, Suite 621, Buffalo NY 14202

Matthew Wezka, National Service Officer II; **Victoria Gawne**, Administrative Assistant II

Central New York State: Syracuse, 315-425-4400, ext. 53317

800 Irving Avenue, Room C419, Syracuse NY 13210

Charles Tocci, Senior Benefits Advocate

Donated, gently-used household goods support Keystone Paralyzed Veterans



This donation box is at the Linton Middle School in Penn Hills, Allegheny County, Pa. just off Frankstown Road, which is also designated Pa. Route 380. Thanks to the Linton School and the Penn Hills School District! American Thrift Center has made the Keystone Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America the sole beneficiary of its work, donating a significant percentage of its gross revenue to the chapter. Each of its over 800 donation boxes in western Pa. is marked to show that our veterans benefit from those donations.

If you have gently-used household items you would like to donate, and they are a bit too cumbersome to take to a collection box, call American Thrift at 412-469-9663 to arrange a pickup. You can also find out what goods they can accept.

The day before the chapter's December Membership Meeting, **Chris Randby** (*seated right*) gave a preview of his company's brain-computer interface device to chapter President **Mark Rosensteel** (*seated center*) and associate member **Dwaine Crytzer** in the chapter's conference room in Sharpsburg. The minimally-invasive device gives the user the ability to actuate external devices through thought. The chapter can put interested members in touch with the company, Synchro.



AMERICAN THRIFT CENTER

Quality Pre-Owned
Merchandise

Village Shopping Center
1806 Homeville Road
West Mifflin, PA 15122

412-469-9665 or 412-469-9663

The American Thrift Center has been a professional fundraiser for Keystone PVA since 1990. Keystone PVA members are cordially invited to visit our store. Lifetime voting members: Present your PVA membership card and receive a 50% discount on all purchases.

**Also, by donating items to
the American Thrift Center
you are supporting
Keystone PVA!**



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
Sean Ferry, Rex Nichols—
Deputy Representatives

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

Wilkes-Barre VAMC

1111 East End Boulevard

Wilkes-Barre PA 18711-0030

570-824-3521

Peter Townsend—VAVS Representative



The next Keystone PVA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

will be on Saturday, 14 FEBRUARY 2026
NEW MEETING TIME: 10 a.m.

Primary site: Keystone PVA office,
1113 Main St., Sharpsburg (Pittsburgh PA 15215)

Join by Zoom videoconference.

Members who reside outside the Pittsburgh
region are invited to join online via the Zoom
link that will be emailed to members.

*(The chapter will not reimburse travel to and
from the event for attendees.)*

If attending in person PLEASE

RSVP by 06 February 2026

to **412-781-2474** or **800-775-9323**

The mission of Keystone 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.

Articles published in The Parascopes, even by officers and directors, do not necessarily reflect the views of the Keystone Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America. Keystone PVA neither endorses nor guarantees any of the products or services described or mentioned in The Parascopes.