

# ROLL WITH US

JANUARY - FEBRUARY - MARCH 2024

## University of Wisconsin System Campuses Expand Disabled Parking Privileges



WE DID IT BILL, NOW YOU'RE A LAW!!!!!! Thank you for your tireless advocacy and support of no-nonsense legislation! On December 6, 2023, Assembly Bill 49 was published, now allowing handicap-accessible parking for no extra cost at all University of Wisconsin (UW) System campuses. After receiving a complaint concerning the extra fee UW-Milwaukee required to park in their accessible parking spots on Voter Voice, PVA-WI National Director and Government Relations Director Scott Griffith contacted

Wisconsin state legislators to stop this illogical law throughout all UW System campuses.

Now, an additional UW-Accessible permit is not required to park in UW-Disabled spaces and other spaces reserved for disabled drivers (with a 30-minute or higher time limit) on UW System campuses. We would also like to give a special thank you to Rep. William Penterman and Senator Patrick Testin for the passing of this bill.

Assembly Bill 49 has been in the works since 2020, and we are excited that it began with PVA-WI's Voter Voice! Voter Voice allows you to act on vital issues affecting Veterans with spinal cord injury/disease and people with disabilities. With Voter Voice, you can message U.S. Representatives and Senators about your topic of choice. You can access Voter Voice through the PVA Action Center on our website or by scanning the QR code above. Voter Voice is open to all U.S. citizens. You, too, can take action and make a change with PVA-WI Voter Voice!

Scan to join  
Voter Voice



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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear PVA-WI Community,

I hope this message finds you well and filled with the same excitement and gratitude that I have in my heart as I step into my new role as the President of the Board for Paralyzed Veterans of America - Wisconsin (PVA-WI). It's an honor to introduce myself to you, and I am thrilled to be a part of this incredible community.

As some of you may already know, I have had the privilege of serving as the Vice President on our board for the past year. During that time, I have witnessed the dedication and passion of our members and the remarkable achievements we've accomplished together. Now, as your new Board President, I am committed to continuing the incredible work that we've begun.

Let's take a moment to celebrate the milestones we achieved together in the past year:

1) Caregiver Respite Program: We made significant strides in supporting our caregivers, providing them with essential respite services, and acknowledging their invaluable contributions to our veterans' lives.

2) Increasing Membership: Our efforts in outreach and engagement have led to a growth in our membership, broadening our community and giving a stronger voice to those we serve.

3) Meeting All Fiscal Year Financial Goals: Thanks to your dedication and generous support, we not only met but exceeded our financial targets, ensuring the sustainability of our programs and services.

4) Building Community Partnerships: We expanded our network of partnerships with local organizations, strengthening our ability to serve our veterans effectively.

5) National Veterans Wheelchair Games: It is with immense pride that I share that we sent a record number of novice athletes to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, showcasing the incredible talent within our community.

The highlight of this year has undoubtedly been our 2023 Annual Membership Banquet. It was a fantastic celebration of our collective achievements, a time when we all came together to cherish our successes and the bonds that unite us. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who participated, making it a night to remember.

President's report continued on page 4

## WHO WE ARE

### **Officers**

President: Todd Drazy  
Vice President/GRD: Scott Griffith  
Secretary: Gary Stott  
President Emeritus: Phil Rosenberg  
Immediate Past President: Ken Ness

### **National Director**

Scott Griffith

### **Directors**

Richard "Rick" Buth  
Peter Carrao  
Troy Kurczek  
Ken Matthews  
Michael Thomas

### **Recreation Therapy**

Erinn Kulba  
Sam Gracz

### **Staff**

Amera Schaefer: Executive Director  
Brenna Frey: Nonprofit Administrative Manager

### **National SVC Office**

Brenda Stencil  
Call: 414-902-5655

### **Rehab Counselor**

Doug Green MS, CRC

### **Office Hours**

Monday-Thursday, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM  
Friday, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
Saturday & Sunday Closed  
750 N Lincoln Memorial Drive, Suite 422  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
414-328-8910

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dear PVA-WI Members,

As the year comes to a close, we at PVA-WI would like to extend our warmest wishes to you and your loved ones for a joyous holiday season filled with warmth and happiness. In the spirit of reflection and gratitude, we invite you to take a moment to review the significant accomplishments and milestones we achieved together in 2023. Our latest annual report provides a comprehensive overview of the impact we have made, the lives we have touched, and the progress we have achieved in advancing our mission. This year has been marked by determination, dedication, and the unwavering support of our community. The ongoing support from donors, volunteers, foundations, sponsors, partners, and staff has led to positive outcomes for PVA-WI membership. Visit our website to review the 2023 Annual Report.



**CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP**  
Members: 307

**New Members:**  
Paul G. Willems, Jeffrey J. Burant, William R. Block, Timothy A. Klug, Joel A. Martin, Richard C. Douglas, Geoffrey Mumford

**Associate Members: 167**  
New: Roxanne Cliff, Anita Dodson Lesniewicz

**Final Bugle:**  
Mark Wegmet, Anthony Warren, Jr., Darren D. Teske, Gerald A. Alessandrone

**Hello PVA-WI Members,**

**A donor has donated a crypt to us located at West Lawn Memorial Park in Racine, WI.**

**If you are interested or have any questions please email [info@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:info@wisconsinpva.org) or call 414-328-8910.**

## Scholarship Opportunity

PVA-WI has a scholarship program for our members and their families. Eligibility is open to all PVA-WI members, their spouse, their children, and their grandchildren. This scholarship opportunity is not open to associate members or their dependents.

Application submission guidelines:

1. Proof of enrollment in an accredited college, university, or technical school
2. Submit an essay between 500-600 words describing how you have been impacted by a veteran living with a spinal cord injury or disease
3. Share any civic engagement activity you have performed
4. Must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or above; please submit your most recent transcript showing grades and GPA

The application is available on our website under policies; click on the policy titled PVA-WI Scholarship for Members/Dependents or scan the QR code. These applications will be reviewed year-round on the first of every month. If you have any questions, please email [aschaefer@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:aschaefer@wisconsinpva.org).

**Scan the QR code to start your scholarship application today!**



## President's Report Continued...

As we step into 2024, I am excited about the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. Together, as the PVA-WI community, we will continue to grow, evolve, and make a meaningful impact on the lives of our veterans and their families.

I encourage you all to stay engaged, share your ideas, and participate in our events and initiatives. Our strength as an organization comes from the dedication and involvement of each and every one of you.

Thank you for the trust you've placed in me as your Board President. I am eager to work alongside you all to create an even brighter future for PVA-WI. Let's continue our journey of making a difference in the lives of our veterans.

It was great to see PVA-WI members at the Annual Membership Banquet! Looking forward to seeing you at many more gatherings in the year ahead.

With warm regards,

Todd Drazy, Board President



## WDVA Secretary Visits PVA-WI



Vice President/Government Relations Director, Scott Griffith; President, Todd Drazy; WDVA Secretary, James Bond

Wisconsin Department of Veterans of Affairs Secretary, James Bond, visited with PVA-WI leadership to discuss the opportunities to collaborate and discuss challenges experienced by PVA-WI members.

## PVA-Wisconsin at Work

### SCI Halloween



PVA-WI participated in a Milwaukee VA community engagement event and resource fair, Community Engagement to Prevent Veteran Suicide, on November 2 at the Milwaukee County War Memorial.



### Veterans Afield Pheasant and Chucker Hunt



## Upcoming Events

Please visit our website [www.wisconsinpva.org](http://www.wisconsinpva.org) for more information about these events.



MS WEBINAR

TUESDAY  
23 JANUARY

TIME  
1:00 PM

**JOIN NOW**

**Topics to be Discussed:**

- Pain Management
- Clinical Trails
- MS Navigator



NATIONAL VETERANS  
WHEELCHAIR  
GAMES  
43<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL

Registration is open from Feb. 1 - April 5, 2024

JULY 25-30, 2024 • NEW ORLEANS, LA

Co-Presented by:  
VA  
PVA

#WheelchairGames

SOUTH EAST WISCONSIN VETERAN SUICIDE PREVENTION TASK FORCE  
PRESENTS

# Frost FEST

FEBRUARY 3, 2024

WAR MEMORIAL CENTER  
750 N LINCOLN MEMORIAL DR, MILWAUKEE, WI 53202

12:00 PM TO 3:00 PM

**FREE FAMILY FUN!**

FEATURING  
HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS | SCAVENGER HUNT  
VETERANS RESOURCES | VETERAN OWNED RETAIL VENDORS  
SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT | DOOR PRIZES  
AND MUCH MORE!

QR CODE

**SIGN UP ENCOURAGED AT:**  
[BIT.LY/FROSTFEST24](http://BIT.LY/FROSTFEST24)

**FREE PARKING WITH VALID MILITARY ID**  
(OR \$8.00 FOR ANY NON-MILITARY)

## 2024 PVA-WI Air Rifle Tournament

SATURDAY MARCH 8- SUNDAY MARCH 9

Practice Competition

**Registration:**  
Please visit  
<https://pva.org/adaptive-sports/air-guns>

Please stay tuned for final locations and times of events.

Check out our calendar on our website for air rifle practice dates and times:  
<https://wisconsinpva.org/events-calendar>



# Member Updates

## 2023 Women Veterans Empowerment Retreat

Board Member, Angela Walker, participated in PVA's Annual Women Veterans Empowerment Retreat. Please read about Angela's experience at the 2023 WVER below.

I am appreciative to the PVA for allowing me to attend the 2023 WVER. Thank you to the leadership team for sending me to represent PVA-WI at this great event. The conference was well attended, with 45 women representing PVA organizations from various parts of the United States. The three-day event was filled with classes on the history of Paralyzed Veterans of America, specific training in growing membership, and some extra fun activities in the evening. I learned a great deal about PVA.

Overall, the WVER was an amazing and enjoyable experience, I am looking forward to continuing my support and service to PVA-WI. I look forward to assisting our board in educating people about PVA, fundraising, and supporting membership outreach for men and women veterans in Wisconsin.

**ADAPTIVE WORKS 3RD ANNUAL FISHING JAMBOREE**  
Dedicated to the memory of Roger Ducommun

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2024**

**SIGN UP AT THE TAVERN**  
8601 E. Wind Lake Road  
Muskego, WI 53150

**PURCHASE OF RAFFLE TICKET ENTERS YOU INTO FISHING CONTEST AND \$1,000 WORTH OF MONEY DRAWINGS**

**SPONSORED BY**  
summit

**PROCEEDS BENEFIT**  
Adaptive Works LLC

**ADAPTIVE WORKS MISSION**  
ADAPTING WORK ENVIRONMENTS FOR PHYSICALLY DISABLED INDIVIDUALS.  
PRESENTING DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE QUALITY OF LIFE.

**FACEBOOK -- ADAPTIVEWORKS.LLC**  
**EMAIL -- ASK@ADAPTIVEWORKS.ORG**  
**A VETERAN CENTRIC COMPANY**

**RAFFLES/DRAWINGS**  
MEAT ALL DAY 50/50 & BASKET MONEY 5:30 PM  
\$30 FOR LARGEST & \$20 FOR 2ND PLACE  
BASS PAN FISH WALLEYE NORTHERN  
WEIGH-IN 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM



If you are interested in going, please email Jacob at [ask@adaptiveworks.org](mailto:ask@adaptiveworks.org) for details and to reserve an action track chair. Lunch and tackle will be supplied.

**Barron County's 1st "Rolls, Strolls, & S'mores Veterans and Families"**  
This October 2023 fall colors event was hosted by Blue Hills Sportsmen's Club (BHSC) with Access Ability Wisconsin (AAW)

Attendees including of all abilities were able to enjoy a beautiful fall afternoon exploring the BHSC 160-acre trails, enjoying nature, and making memories.

"The availability of AAW all-terrain outdoor wheelchairs (OWCs) gives anyone with mobility challenges the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors at their leisure - giving them freedom, independence and dignity. These chairs really do make *Outdoors Access 4 All!*"  
Lloyd Fredrickson, long time BHSC member



For the first time, Fredrickson took to the club trails fully enjoying the opportunity to explore like he never had before that day.

Mr. Fowler, a veteran, and his spouse enjoyed several hours strolling on the trails together and the bonfire as both used AAW OWCs hosted at BHSC.



Working together on "Outdoors Access 4 All!"  
BLUE HILLS SPORTSMEN'S CLUB Access Ability Wisconsin

Mark your calendars for this FREE fall event: "S'mores Fun with Veterans & Their Families"  
Saturday, October 12, 2024  
Be sure to join us!



To explore Barron and surrounding counties, check out AAW Regional Network Partner, Blue Hills Sportsmen's Club:  
• [https://locations.accessabilitywi.org/Map/BlueHillsSC\\_RiceLakeBarron](https://locations.accessabilitywi.org/Map/BlueHillsSC_RiceLakeBarron)  
For more information on access in the outdoors, see [www.AccessAbilityWI.org](http://www.AccessAbilityWI.org)

# National Service Officer Report

## VA Home Loans - Struggling with Mortgage Payments

By Brenda Stencil, NSO

Many servicemembers, veterans, and eligible surviving spouses become homeowners through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) home loans program. Homeownership provides a place to grow your wealth, enjoy greater freedom and to call your home, your own. However, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted veterans with a mortgage loan guaranteed or insured by the VA. The pandemic left many veterans with reduced income or unemployment finding themselves among the thousands who couldn't keep up with their mortgage payments. Over the past year, the VA has been able to help more than 145,000 veterans and their families retain their homes and avoid foreclosure. But more veterans still remain out there struggling to make their payments.

The VA continues to press upon the issues surrounding the effects of the pandemic on home loans. Recently, the VA released official guidance to mortgage servicers calling to pause foreclosures of VA-guaranteed loans for 6 months, through May 31, 2024. It is expected that any foreclosures that have been filed since November 17, 2023, will be put on hold, along with any other in-process or upcoming foreclosures on VA-backed loans. The foreclosure process will be paused for these veterans through May 31, 2024, giving the VA additional time to help these veterans find solutions to stay in their homes.

During the pandemic, the VA established home retention options including COVID 19–Refund Modification, COVID forbearance, and loan deferment. Some borrowers may have benefited from these options; however, due to our nation's higher interest rates, one retention option such as the COVID forbearance, is less likely to be considered a good financial decision today. In addition to pausing foreclosures of VA-guaranteed loans through May 31, 2024, the VA is also extending the COVID-19 Refund Modification through May 31, 2024. The COVID-19 Refund Modification program allows more veterans to get a zero-interest, deferred-payment loan to maintain affordable monthly payments.

The VA is initiating a new home retention program for borrowers and VA-guaranteed loans that are facing foreclosure, and do not qualify for a traditional loss mitigation option called VA Servicing Purchase (VASP). Through VASP, VA will purchase defaulted VA loans from mortgage servicers, modify the loans, and then place them in a VA-owned portfolio as direct loans. The goal of this program is for the VA to work with veterans experiencing severe financial hardship to adjust their loans – and their monthly payments – so they can keep their homes.

For more information, please visit [www.va.gov/housing-assistance](http://www.va.gov/housing-assistance), or you may contact VA using the ServiceNow portal at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/HOMELOANS/contact.asp> or call VA Housing Assistance at 877-827-3702.

### **What if you Need Help?**

Contact your National Service Officer, Brenda Stencil at (414) 902-5655 or email [brendas@pva.org](mailto:brendas@pva.org).

### **NSO Extra**

72 Hour Notification Rule: If you need to seek immediate medical attention, you do not need to check with the VA before calling for an ambulance or going to an emergency department. Report your emergent care within 72 hours via VA's Emergency Care Reporting Portal: <https://emergencycarereporting.communitycare.va.gov> or call 844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842).





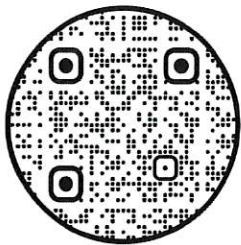
# Ekso Indego® Gets Veterans Walking Again

Eligible veterans can receive an Ekso Indego exoskeleton at NO COST!

## Ekso Indego Personal

### What is the Ekso Indego?

Ekso Indego is an FDA-cleared, powered exoskeleton worn around the waist and legs that enables individuals paralyzed from spinal cord injuries (level T3-L5) to stand and walk, offering a new level of independence.



Scan with your phone for more information on how you could receive your own Ekso Indego Personal.

### Getting Veterans with SCI Back on Their Feet

A recently revised VA policy allows Ekso Indego to be issued to qualified veterans at no cost.\*

- Regain your independence
- Improve your cardio & bone density
- Enjoy eye-level conversations again



Contact us to find out if you are eligible to receive an Ekso Indego at NO COST!

[www.eksobionics.com/request-information/](http://www.eksobionics.com/request-information/)

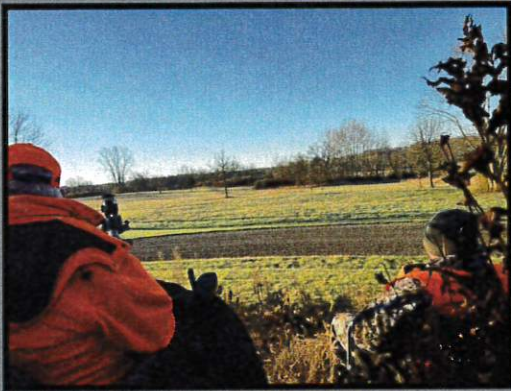
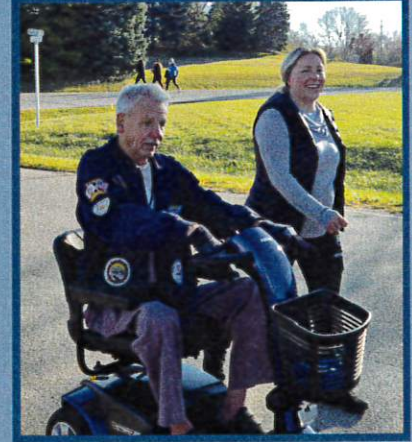
\* A screening process through the VA is required to determine eligibility for use of the Ekso Indego Personal device. For full indications for use, visit [www.eksobionics.com/indications-for-use/](http://www.eksobionics.com/indications-for-use/)



Proudly designed & assembled in the USA

# Events

## SALUTE TO SERVICE 5K RUN/WALK/ROLL ★★★★



Rickey Riley at  
Wounded Warriors  
Event



## TEXAS ROADHOUSE FUNDRAISER



We would like to give a big thank you to Kelly and all of the staff at Texas Roadhouse in New Berlin for making this event possible!



# Want To Improve **Your Bowel Function?**



**Recently published research reveals between 50 and 80% of participants reported improvements in bowel function and/or management after walking in an exoskeleton\***

**Did you know Paralyzed US Veterans May be Eligible for a ReWalk Personal Exoskeleton?**

Contact ReWalk for more Information:  
**rewalk.com/contact** or  
**508.251.1154** option 2

\*Chun A, et al. Changes in bowel function following exoskeletal-assisted walking in persons with spinal cord injury: an observational pilot study. Spinal Cord. 2020;58(4):459-466.



## Opportunities

### **ADAPTIVE CURLING AT THE WAUWATOSA CURLING CLUB**

Adaptive curling consists of pushing granite stones down a sheet of ice from a standing or sitting (wheelchair) position using a “pusher” stick. “Stick” curling allows all people, regardless of physical ability and age, to experience the excitement and fun of the sport of curling. The Adaptive Curling classes will be tailored to fit each participant's ability so that no one needs to be hesitant to register.

There is no cost, but registration is required to participate. To register, go to the Wauwatosa Curling Club website: [wauwatosacurlingclub.com](http://wauwatosacurlingclub.com). On the home page, under Adaptive “Stick” Curling, click on Read More Adaptive “Stick” Curling. You do not need to be a Wauwatosa resident to participate. Non-participants are invited to attend to observe and learn about the sport of adaptive curling. You do not need to register to watch.

#### **DATES FOR THE 2023-2024 SEASON**

- 🎯 Saturday, November 25, 2023
- 🎯 Saturday, December 16, 2023
- 🎯 Saturday, February 3, 2024
- 🎯 Saturday, February 24, 2024



All events are from 10:45 AM to 12:30 PM. Participants are invited to stay for a tradition called “Broomstacking,” where curlers and observers socialize – snacks and beverages will be provided.

#### **CONTACT US**

The Wauwatosa Curling Club has an active adaptive curling program designed to accommodate all physical and developmental ability and vision levels. To learn more and to find out how you or your organization can get involved, email [adaptive@wauwatosacurlingclub.com](mailto:adaptive@wauwatosacurlingclub.com)

The WCC is an all-volunteer club located at 7300 W, Chestnut St. in the Muellner Bldg. at Hart Park, behind the football stadium.

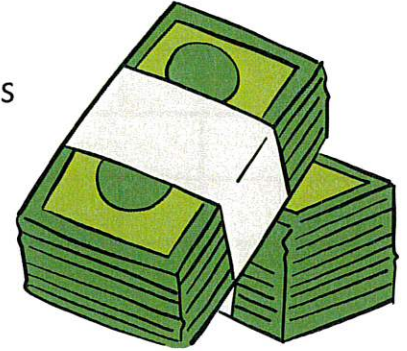
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## Announcements

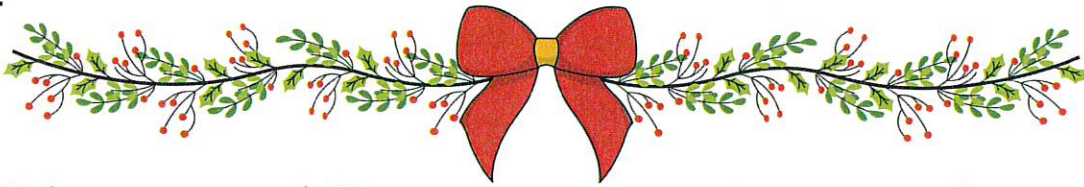
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### 2024 COLA ANNOUNCED FOR VETERANS AND SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

The Social Security Administration (SSA) announced on October 12, 2023, that those receiving Social Security benefits will receive a **3.2% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) starting in 2024**. Although this increase may seem low compared to 2022 and 2023, it's still above the average of 2.6% for the prior 20 years.



In addition, VA disability checks will also be increasing in 2024. VA disability checks will go up about \$5.31 per month for those with a 10% rating and \$115.90 for those rated at 100% who don't have dependents. To see your 2024 VA disability pay rates, visit <https://www.military.com/benefits/veterans-health-care/va-disability-pay-rates.html>.

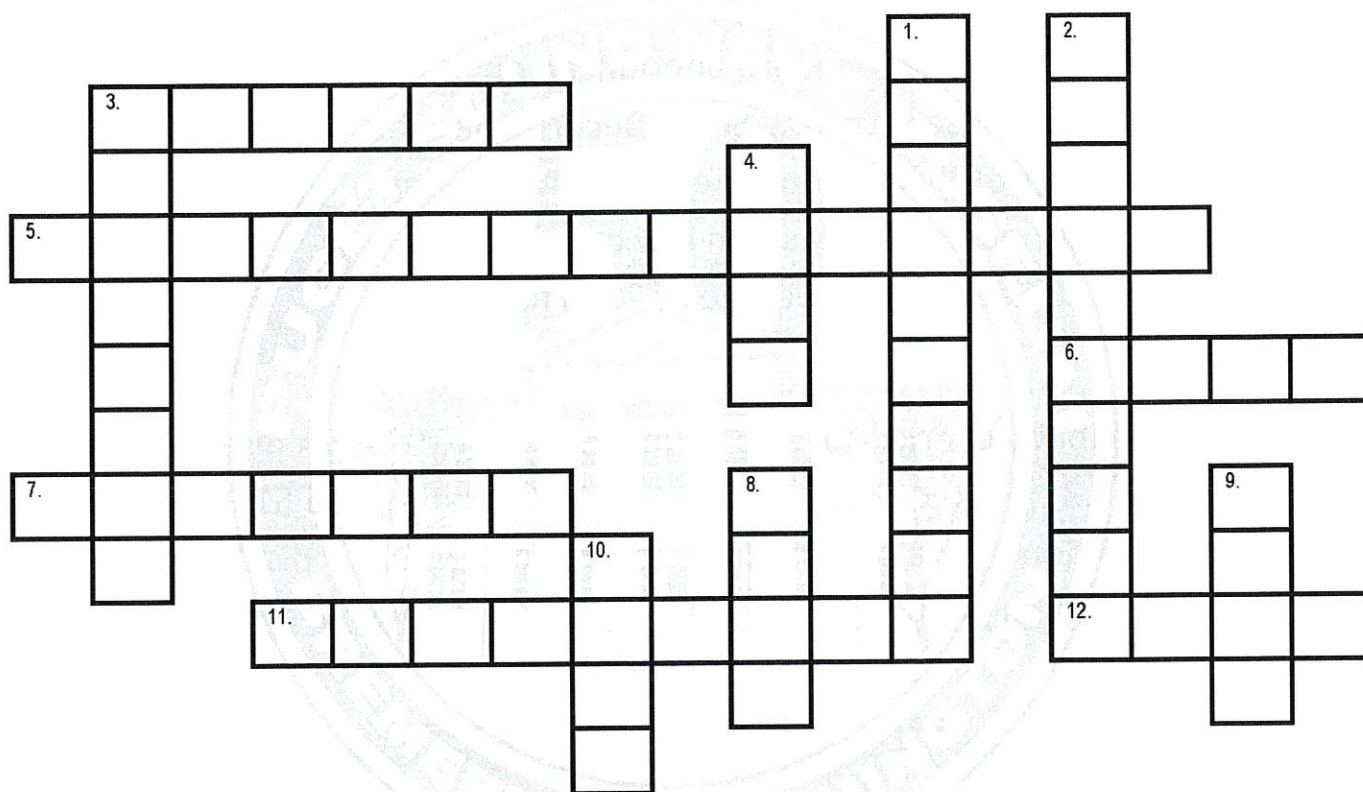


## *25 Days of Christmas Raffle Winners*

December 1: Joel Maerder  
December 2: Paul Kriewaldt  
December 3: Brian Zapata  
December 4: Les Ivy  
December 5: Stan Ditto  
December 6: Anthony White  
December 7: Rick Buth  
December 8: Dan Rueter  
December 9: Rashawn Lewis  
December 10: Kevin Pope  
December 11: Mollie Hills  
December 12: Ron Horner  
December 13: Michael J. Dailey

December 14: Dale Nelson  
December 15: Chuck Nelson  
December 16: Kathleen Duchac  
December 17: Jeremy Luckey  
December 18: Doug Szymuszkiewicz  
December 19: Kevin Pope  
December 20: Joshua Griffith  
December 21: Kelly Clingaman  
December 22: Dan Vanderhoef  
December 23: Mike Fischer  
December 24: Jeff Kruesel  
December 25: Les Ivy

## Activity



### ACROSS

3. A person who works on a ship, a member of a ship's crew.
5. A floating airbase used, among other things, to launch, land, and move military planes.
6. The Movement of a ship of boat.
7. An area used for building and repairing ships that can flooded to float the ship in and out, and drained of water while working.
11. A ship designed to move underwater.
12. Places (often a pier) where ships can load, unload, and park.

### DOWN

1. Somebody who is learning a skill by working closely with a master of the craft.
2. A series of waterways and inlets of the Pacific Ocean reaching to Olympia, WA.
3. A place where ships are built and repaired.
4. A permanent military complex or group of buildings.
8. A large, sea-going vessel or boat.
9. The floors of a boat or ship.
10. A branch of a country's military dealing with ships, boats and the equipment and people they carry.



See answers at the end of page 19

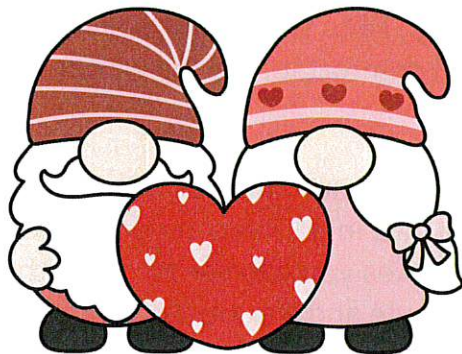


# Membership Entertainment Policy

## PVA Members make sure you use this benefit!

Treat your spouse, a friend, or your caregiver to a movie, dinner, concert, or any other form of entertainment. This benefit can be used on Valentine's Day, a birthday, or any other day of the week! You are entitled to this reimbursement two times per year.

**All you need to do is GO HAVE SOME FUN and send in your receipt to the chapter!**



Membership entertainment benefits are available to regular members who meet certain criteria. If you are a member in good standing you can request financial assistance to attend an entertainment event. Through this program, we are encouraging members to get out in their communities and be involved. You can request a \$100 stipend bi-annually to attend an event of your choosing [i.e., dinner, movie, concert, sports event, etc.].

To participate in this program, you must submit a written request for the funds, with an explanation of how they will be used [i.e., transportation, attendants, tickets, etc.] 30 days prior to the event. Upon review and approval of the membership committee, a check [not to exceed \$100.00] will be issued. After attending the event you must submit all receipts associated with your outing, return any unused funds, and submit a short report of the event you attended. A picture of you and how you used the funds would be appreciated as well. These items must be submitted within 30 days of the outing. Feel free to use the form below.

Entertainment forms also appear on our website, [www.wisconsinpva.org](http://www.wisconsinpva.org) and they are available by contacting the PVA WI Chapter Office at 414-328-8910.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Requested \$ \_\_\_\_\_

How funds will be used \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby pledge to deliver all receipts to the PVA-WI Chapter office within 30 days of the completion of the event. I understand if I do not complete this requirement, I will not be eligible for future financial assistance from the PVA-WI Chapter until I complete the requirements, submit them, and I am approved.

Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### Winter Clothing Tips for Wheelchair Users

The end of winter is near; however, the cold is not yet gone! Being a wheelchair user in the winter brings on extra challenges, although Bliss Welch offers some tips to *Life with Quantum* on how she manages to dress warmly and comfortably in the winter as a wheelchair user.

#### Hats and Scarves

About 10% of your body heat escapes through your head. That said, you'll be amazed at how much warmer you feel when you wear a hat! In addition, if you have short hair leaving your neck exposed, there are a variety of scarves you can use to cover that bare skin up. Hats and scarves are a great way to add a sense of style and warmth to your outfits!

#### Different Types of Sleeves

You might find sweaters, hoodies, bell sleeves, three-quarter sleeves, cuffed sleeves, and ruffled sleeves in your closet. However, the extra material in thick sweaters, bell, and ruffle sleeves can create large, uncomfortable bulges of material in the arms of jackets and cardigans. Three-quarter-length sleeves expose the skin of your forearms. What are you supposed to do? Do not bother finding a new wardrobe...add fingerless arm warmers! They're like socks but for the arms instead of the feet and are available in various lengths, fabrics, and colors!

#### Try a Poncho

Coats and jackets are great for keeping the upper body warm. Despite that, Welch consistently felt that the range of motion in her arms was restricted when wearing a coat or jacket. Instead, she transitioned to wearing ponchos and wraps that she could enjoy in several different fabrics, colors, and styles. Layers are another great way to keep warm, but they can also restrict movement. Welch states, "To keep my clothing from being too bulky, I pair a sleeveless dress with a cardigan. If I must go outdoors, I add a poncho and still maintain good range of motion in my arms."

#### Gloves and Handwarmers

Consider a pair of gloves if you will be out in the cold for a long time. Like many items mentioned above, gloves come in various colors, lengths, and fabrics. Also, many gloves now come with several touchscreen fingers, so your gloves do not have to come off to use your cell phone. Plus, some gloves are heated with a USB plug. Welch says she never has to worry about her hands getting cold, thanks to the standard USB charger on her Stretto Power Wheelchair! She also discovered rechargeable hand warmers several years ago. Welch says, "The hand warmers are lightweight with an oval design that fits in the palm of your hand. These small hand warmers have several heat settings and double as a charger. Be careful though! Some hand warmers can get as hot as 130 degrees on the highest setting." For more information about this article, please visit: <https://life.quantumrehab.com/2022/01/25/great-winter-clothing-tips-for-wheelchair-users/>





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## Operation Rebound Program

# OPERATION REBOUND - FRONTLINE TO FINISH LINE

The Operation Rebound® program presented by the Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF) strengthens the mental and physical well-being of members of the U.S. armed forces, active military personnel, as well as U.S. law enforcement officers, firefighters and paramedics with permanent physical injuries, by providing them opportunities to use sports and fitness to re-integrate into our communities and by empowering them through sports.

Through Operation Rebound specific grant requests and sport clinics, CAF is there to support our service members from Frontline to Finish line.

-  Open to active duty, veterans of all eras, and first responders.
-  Individual grants fund adaptive sports equipment, training, and competition expenses across all 50 states and over 100 different sports.
-  Grantees can participate in any adaptive sport or recreational activity at the time and place of their choosing.
-  Adaptive sports clinics provide opportunities to learn, push the limits, and connect with a powerful and supportive community.
-  Focus on integrating athletes into sporting activities, including athletes with and without physical disabilities.

CAF's 2023 Grant Distribution included 434 grants valued at \$657,000 for Operation Rebound athletes. Over 50% were first time grant recipients and 46 were Purple Heart recipients.

**The article continues onto the next page...**



## Operation Rebound Program

### Operation Rebound - Frontline to Finish Line Article continued...

#### ELIGIBILITY

Challenged Athletes who are honorably discharged members of the U.S. armed forces, active military personnel, as well as U.S. law enforcement officers, firefighters, and paramedics are eligible to apply for the Operation Rebound grant. Proof of service and medical verification of disability is required.

#### GRANT REQUEST OPTIONS

Applicants may request one of the following grant types:



Equipment Grant



Sports Expenses Grant

#### APPLICATION WINDOW

The Operation Rebound Grant Application is open year-round!

[APPLY NOW](#)

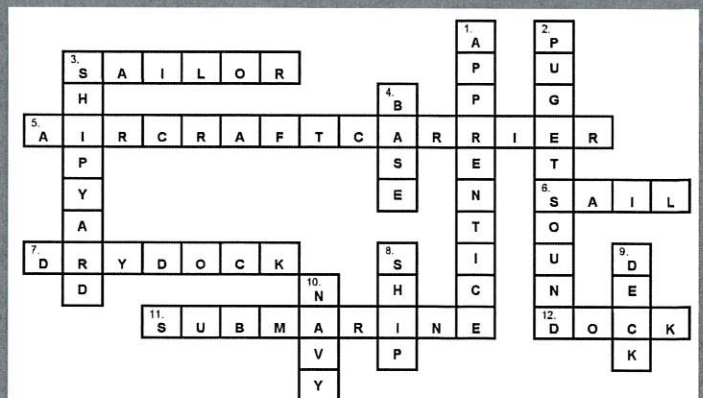
[READ FAQ'S](#)

## UPDATE: Annual Clothing Allowance

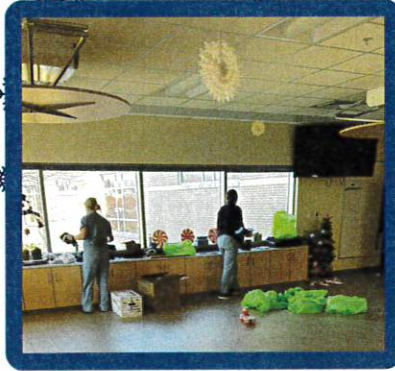
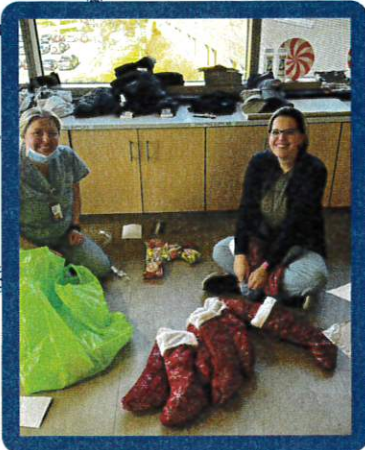
VA is continuing to work on implementing Public Law 117-328 – a change to the annual clothing allowance becoming an annual continuous/recurring payment until the veteran elects to no longer receive such payments or until the VA determines the veteran is no longer eligible for such payments.

If you received a clothing allowance payment in 2022, you will receive the same number of clothing allowances in 2023 and thereafter. Veterans will no longer be required to submit applications.

The Veterans Benefits Administration and the Veterans Health Administration continue collaborating on implementing this law.



## PVA-WI Holiday Party



PVA-WI hosted its annual holiday party on Wednesday, December 13. Due to COVID precautions and policy; the holiday meal was restricted to staff and inpatients. We would like to thank Prime Minister Catering for providing the individually packaged meals and the Spinal Cord Injury Center staff for handing out gifts to the inpatients for the holidays. PVA-WI would also like to thank Kohl's Department store staff for including us in their Holiday Gift Drive and the Kohl's Veteran BRG Group for providing Foley bags.



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## We Want Your Feedback!



### 1. Caregiver Registration Form

If you have a caregiver, please complete PVA-WI's Caregiver Registration Form for your caregiver, or have your caregiver complete this form. You can do so by scanning the QR code, or visiting:  
<https://forms.office.com/r/XLhLnMpc41?origin=lprLink>.

### 2. Member Satisfaction Survey

Please complete the PVA-WI Member Satisfaction Survey. You can do so by scanning the QR code or visiting:

<https://forms.office.com/r/EFxRFvOqfB?origin=lprLink>



## Supporting PVA-WI

PVA-WI has a variety of ways that individuals, groups or companies can show their support. Please review the multiple opportunities to continue to support the PVA-WI mission and our work.

If you have any questions please email [info@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:info@wisconsinpva.org) or call the office at 414-328-8910.



### Employee Matching

Does your employer have a matching gift program? Please check with your employer's human resources department for details. PVA-WI is happy to provide any other information your company may have to satisfy the requirements.



### Donor-Advised Funds

Using a charitable giving account is another powerful way to put your charitable dollars to work. This method eliminates capital gains on donated stocks. Use the DAF donation tool at [wisconsinpva.org/be-our-hero-and-make-difference-today](http://wisconsinpva.org/be-our-hero-and-make-difference-today).



### Legacy Society

Join our Legacy Society by making a bequest or other estate gift to assure the sustainability of our organization. Visit [www.wisconsinpva.org/planned-giving](http://www.wisconsinpva.org/planned-giving)



### Stock Donations

You can donate appreciated stocks, bonds, or mutual funds, which upon transfer, would be tax deductible. Please consult your financial advisor and submit questions to [info@wisconsinpva.org](mailto:info@wisconsinpva.org)



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## SPINAL CORD INJURY SERVICE INFORMATION

These resources are available statewide, to all qualified Wisconsin residents.  
Please call 414-384-2000 or 888-469-6616 and the extension listed below for services.

Department / Office	Extension	Department / Office	Extension
General information	41288	Prosthetics	42608
Triage	45845	Recreation Therapy	41256/41245/41258
SCI Clinical Appointments	41230	VA Van Travel	42057
Physical Therapy	41126	Patient Advocate	42604
Occupational Therapy	41126	National Service	414-902-5655
Badger Team (Social Worker)	41841	Packer Team (Social Worker)	42244
Pharmacy	42083	Packer & Badger RN	41236
Admissions ER	41885/41886		

### Wisconsin VAMC

Iron Mountain	Debra Pate	906-774-3300 ext. 31378
Madison	Heather Rehm	608-256-1901 ext. 18095
Tomah	Kristin Holloway	608-372-3971 ext. 61548

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