Back Talk

July / August
2012

Forever In Our Hearts

Andy Simons
November 8, 1945 - August 18, 2012
A Message From The President

Jon R. Schneider

Tricare West Contract Award To United Health Care

For those of you and family who use TRICARE, the Government Accountability Office affirmed the Defense Department’s award of the TRICARE Managed Care Support contract for the West region to United Healthcare, a United Health Group (UNH) company.

United Healthcare and the Defense Department will move forward on transitioning TRICARE West beneficiaries to United Health Military and Veterans Services as the region’s Managed Care Support contractor. This transition is scheduled to occur in April 2013.

TRICARE West serves nearly 2.9 million active duty and retired military service members and their families including Iowa.

United Healthcare Military and Veterans Services will provide contract and claims processing, as well as management services. The contract includes a transition per and five one-year option for health care operations. In awarding the TRICARE West contract to United Healthcare, the Defense Department chose a private-sector partner who can take a more comprehensive approach to the TRICARE program to get the best value for beneficiaries— one that enhance the quality of health care for beneficiaries, and in doing so improves medical outcomes while at the same time controlling costs.

The company offers the full spectrum of health benefits programs for individuals, employers and Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, and contract directly with more than 650,000 physicians and care professionals and 5,000 hospitals nationwide.

I’m sure for those of you who use this program more information will be coming your way. JUST MAKING YOU AWARE!!

JRS

DISCLAIMER

Back Talk and the Iowa Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America neither endorses nor guarantees any of the products or services advertised. We are pleased that we can offer you information about products and services that are available, but we strongly urge you to investigate any company or product yourself prior to using such services or products.

Back Talk is a publication of the Iowa PVA and is meant to inform its readers of Chapter activities, legislation, and other matters of concern to veterans and/or members of the disability community. Any opinions expressed in any article is that of the author and may not reflect the beliefs or policies of the Iowa Chapter.
I traveled to Wichita Kansas again this year to participate in the Mid-America Trapshoot. When they say the wind always blows in Kansas I thought to myself they were not kidding this year. The first day we shot I didn’t think the wind was too bad but that second day was terrible. When those clay pigeons came out of the trap house I would say they were going a 100 mile an hour. They really weren’t going that fast but I could always say that is why I was missing if anyone would listen.

The first day we shot singles and doubles. I shot 87 out of a 100, which is one of my better days of shooting. When we shot doubles, I did not do very well. There were times the wind would push the pigeons down toward the ground when they came out of the trap house. I know, it sounds like I am blaming the wind again. The second day we shot yardage, which 20 yards is the yardage I shoot. I did not shoot too bad but it could have been better.

All in all, it was a fun weekend. I came in second in the Class D Singles Division. I was asked by the Wisconsin team to shoot with them because they were short a person. I agreed to shoot with them and we came in second place. The Mid-America PVA Chapter does a great job with this shoot. This year they were honoring a member who helped start the trapshoot in their Chapter that past away this last winter. Johney Atherton was a great shooter and always had fun putting this event on. He will be missed by his family and the friends.
VA Prosthetics Changes
by
Andrew Bernstrom
National Service Officer

As part of the VA’s continuous effort to ensure that our nation’s military veterans receive the quality healthcare that they deserve in the most efficient manner possible, there will soon be changes in the handling of some prosthetic items. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has implemented a directive that prosthetic items with a cost of $3000 or greater will be referred to the Network Contracting Office (NCO) in the appropriate VISN. At this time, the target date for the change to occur nationwide is mid-August 2012.

According to Greg Ulrich, Chief of Prosthetics at the Huntington, WV, VAMC the rationale for the change is to allow the NCO employees to do the market research and data analysis of the prosthetic orders. This research task had previously been the responsibility of the local prosthetics departments. Consequently, this change will relieve the local prosthetics chiefs and employees from some of the tasks that are not directly related patient services. Furthermore, this change will not alter the decision-making authority regarding the issuance of prosthetic devices. According to Mr. Ulrich, the NCO will not have the authority to deny prosthetic requests, and, as before, the decision-making ability to provide prosthetic devices still resides with the local chiefs of prosthetics. More importantly, this change is not supposed to cause delays in the receipt of prosthetic equipment.

The PVA is also committed to ensuring that veterans receive the highest quality care in a timely manner. At PVA, we applaud the VA anytime that it attempts to provide better services to veterans. However, as most of us know, things do not always go as planned when they are initially started. In addition, PVA has a responsible to provide concise and detailed feedback to the VA whenever there is a change that affects our clients. We have to remember that the VA needs, and often relies on, the input that it is provided by service organizations and veterans to remedy situations. Therefore, PVA is asking that veterans closely monitor the length of time it takes to receive prosthetic orders and to report instances of having to wait sixty days or longer to receive an order to their local PVA NSO or PVA Chapter.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your local NSO at 515-323-7544 or 1-800-795-3602.

Send Us Your Email Address!!!!

In an effort to enter the computer age as well as reduce our newsletter expenses, we would like to provide your newsletter electronically.

If you would like to receive your copy of Back Talk via email, please provide us with your email address. (See our contact information on Page 8.)
From the Desk of the Executive Director

Kim Gould

As I have told you before, I Love My Job!!! Some days of course are better than others, and a few weeks ago, I had a spectacular day. I was able to unite a beautiful, smart golden retriever with his forever family.

Through the grapevine (the Kenny Lloyd grapevine), I heard about a veteran in the Black Hills of South Dakota who had a dog. This veteran had found himself in a position where he could no longer take proper care of this animal and was looking for a new home for him. I contacted IPVA Board Member, Lonn Cunningham, who I knew wanted a service dog. Although the dog was not trained for service (yet), Lonn took one look at his picture and volunteered to take him in.

With a lot of help from the Executive Director of the North Central Chapter and a twelve hour car trip, I was able to unite Lonn and his family with Teddy. I pulled into the Cunningham’s driveway at about 10:30 p.m. on a Friday night with Teddy. It was a sight to see. It was literally love at first sight on both sides. I knew in an instant that this was a match made in heaven. This is a very special dog and the Cunningham’s are truly a very special family.

This particular day was Lonn’s lucky day. Not only was he getting a new family member, but he was contacted by National PVA and informed that he was one of 6 finalist in the Long Love Cars Contest. This contest is giving away a lift equipped van to 3 of the six finalists! As bad as Lonn needed a dog, he needs a van about a hundred times worse. His van is mechanically challenged shall we say and has a big hole in the floor. They had to have a piece of steel welded in to keep Lonn and the wheels of his chair from falling through.

Lonn needs your help. The top 3 vote recipients will receive a van. Voting is open from August 27 - September 7. You can vote every day. Please go to: http://www.pva.org/votenow to vote for Lonn! Please read his biography, vote every day and tell all of your friends.

Kim

WEBSITE!!!

We now have our very own website up and running. There are still some changes that need to be made and some things that need to be added, but this is a start. Check us out at: www.iapva.org
Kenneth Lloyd took second in individual during the Mid-American PVA Trap Shoot in Sedgwick, Kansas at the end of May. He joined the team from Wisconsin and they took second in the team competition.

The National Veterans Wheelchair Games took place in Richmond, Virginia on June 25th to June 30th 2012. This was the second time Richmond has hosted the games. The Iowa Chargers brought 6 Athletes to the games and brought home a total of 7 medals (5 Gold, 1 Silver and 1 Bronze). Mother Nature played havoc with everyone on the team, high temperatures during the day and severe storms at night. Other than that, the games went well (after some minor transportation issues were resolved). Kenneth Lloyd won Gold in Trap Shooting, Steven Brinkmeyer won Gold in Bowling and Silver in the Motor Rally, Michael Brady won Gold in Power Soccer and Bronze in Slalom, David Graham won Gold in Slalom and Gold In Recurve Archery, William (Bill) Kauzlarich and Lonn Cunningham also participated. All of our athletes did a great job in all of their events. I would like to thank our Coach Joe Padilla and all our other support people for a great job. Our team could not do nearly as good without you. I am sure everyone is looking forward to Tampa, Florida in 2013.

I rode my Handcycle with the Adaptive Sports Iowa Team in Ragbrai this year. We started in Sioux Center, Iowa and ended in Clinton, Iowa this year. The temperatures were brutal but, I survived and am looking forward to next year's Ragbrai. If anyone has any interest in participating next year please contact me and I can forward your information to the Team Director.

I recently took over as the Chapters Sports Director. I created a new email for Sports related information, if you would like to be added to the email list, please email me your basic information and events you may be interested in to: iowapvasports@yahoo.com. If you do not have email, contact Kim at the office and give her your information I will be happy to send you information by mail or call you with information on upcoming events.

Everyone had a wonderful time at the Iowa State Fair Veterans Parade on August 13, 2012.
**BUTT STORY CONTINUED**

First of all I would like to commend Kim on her original story a couple of months ago. It was not fiction it happened to us. When I say us I mean us, a pressure sore does not just happen to the individual with the sore on his or her butt, and it will affect both of your lives for the rest of your life.

I have been confined to a wheelchair for 43 years and never had any problems with sores, just a couple of minor ones that we took care of at home. I had worked full time all of those years with the only pressure relief being several transfers a day from chair to chair and bathroom transfers.

In the summer of 2011, we had been in Colorado for a week and turned around and went to Arkansas for two weeks. A bad hotel bathroom and one bad transfer and all hell broke loose. What seemed like just a small scrape eventually turned into a full blown stage four sore. As soon as we got home we went right to the Des Moines VA, were seen right away and they sent us home with some supplies to try to heal the wound at home. While in Des Moines we also discovered that my cushion had gone flat. After a couple of days we realized this sore was beyond home care and we went back to the VA and they concurred. I stayed in the hospital that night and for the next 6 months. I was in the main hospital for a couple of days and then moved to the new Community Living Center. I figured a week or so and I would be back to my normal routine. The wound care team worked with me trying to get me healed up, but in 2 or 3 weeks they started to talk about the SCI Center in Minneapolis. I did not want to go. Finely we consented to going to Minneapolis with 6 weeks already gone. (This was not the fault of the Des Moines VA in anyway. The Minneapolis SCI Center was suggested early on and we did not want to go with winter coming). They transported me up there laying on my side in an ambulance.

Upon arrival, the first day I saw more Doctors and Nurses about more aspects of health care than I ever imagined existed. We soon were told that I would have to have flap surgery. For those of you that do not know what that is, for a wound on your butt they cut the area around the wound away. Then they cut from there down to above the calf of your knee, cut out a piece of muscle and skin and without detaching it from you pull that up to sew into the hole on your butt (probably a 16 inch incision). Immediately after surgery you are put into a Clinitron Bed. This is a bed with about 6 inches of fine sand like material and has a big blower that suspends the sand so you kind of float on top of it. It is also used for burn patients. You get to spend the next 3 weeks lying in this bed on your side with no movement. You don’t even get to raise your arm above your head as that pulls on your back side, and oh I forgot to mention this bed is a constant 93 degrees. Then you get in a regular hospital bed where you can elevate the head up to 30 degrees for 15 minutes 3 times a day. You get to increase this 15 minutes each day till you get up to 2 hours. Then you start the bolster which is just a large block they put under your lower leg to bend your hips. You start with 15 minutes 3 times a day and increase every 3 days till you get up to 2 hours. After that you get to sit up for 15 minutes 3 times a day and every 3 days you get another 15 minutes till you get up to 2 hours. **No exceptions.** At this point you are about ready to go home, (if you have all your equipment in place). If you do not have a wheelchair that tilts you will probably get one before you go home, as you will have to tilt 2 minutes every 15 minutes.

We are now 8 months post-surgery and all is going good. We cannot say enough good things about the doctors and nurses in Minneapolis. They are all great. The nurses have time to take care of your needs, and the doctor will see you every day.

Some of you may think “yeah well that will never happen to me”. I probably was one on them, but believe me it can happen to the best of us. If any of you are facing an ordeal like this and would like to visit you can contact us at 712-249-4908.

In closing just a few things to remember, make sure you have a good cushion and get it mapped every 2 to 3 months and, **TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR BUTT.**

Larry & Mary Lou Phillips
CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

9/3 - IPVA Office Closed for Labor Day Holiday  
9/5 - Des Moines VAVS Meeting - 9:30 a.m. - River Place  
9/10 - 9/14 National TEE Tournament in Iowa City  
9/13 - Bingo at the Des Moines VA CLC - 6:30 p.m.  
9/27 - IPVA Board of Directors Meeting - 1:00 p.m. - IPVA Office  
10/3 - Des Moines VA Health Fair - 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
10/12 - IPVA Annual Dinner and Awards Banquet - Ramada Inn
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The warm, dry weather in these parts persists. Yesterday, I saw two maple trees fighting over a dog.

Beyond all of that, last Sunday my wife and I attended the premier Iowa Paralyzed Veterans of America Golf Tournament. Even though my wife backed into a car in the parking lot, we had a wonderful time. Just like always, whenever we’re with our friends in wheelchairs, we have a good time. Jazz and Kim did a great job of organizing the vent. I am amazed at how much work goes into such a deal. Also, a special thanks to the folks who competed. It was very kind of them to be a part of it all.

Steven Brinkmeyer

On The Brink by Steven Brinkmeyer

Wheelchair Basketball
Starting Thursday, May 26, Adaptive Sports Iowa began hosting weekly wheelchair Basketball pickup games in Ankeny. The games are held at the First Family Church located at 317 SE Magazine Road. The facility is reserved from 6-8 p.m. every Thursday night. Adaptive Sports Iowa will have six sports chairs on site. There is no cost to participate. Come out and enjoy the fun.

VOTE FOR LONN CUNNINGHAM IN THE LONG LOVE CARS CONTEST AUGUST 27—SEPTEMBER 7
VOTE EVERY DAY AT: http://www.pva.org/votenow
Indianola Home Medical Supply L.L.C.
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SUPPORT THE IOWA PVA

The Iowa Paralyzed Veterans of America relies solely on **private donations** and receives NO government funding! Your contribution is 100% tax deductible, as we are a 501(c)(3) corporation. Support by individual donors and businesses enable us to make our services FREE to members. Please support our mission through a direct donation to:

Iowa Paralyzed Veterans of America
(Iowa PVA)
3703 1/2 Douglas Avenue
Des Moines, IA  50310

Thank you!

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**SEPTMBER**

Maury E. Rahm           September 2
Daniel D. Allsup        September 5
Cathy D. Guy            September 5
John P. Cornally        September 6
Roger L. Stroud         September 7
Rusty J. Bettcher       September 10
Lana D. Gillaspie       September 10
James L. Cooper         September 12
Scott M. Miller         September 12
Ronald D. Smith         September 13
Dean Ray Blumanhourst   September 15
Glen E. Fahrenkrug      September 15
Herbert L. Whitfield    September 16
Roy W. Ingwersen        September 19
Ruth A. Freeburg        September 20
Clark J. Wedderspoon    September 20
Michael J. Hoeger       September 24
Jim M. Boniface         September 25
Garry L. Davis          September 26
Michael C. Lumadue      September 30

**OCTOBER**

James C. Julius          October 3
Brian A. Ries            October 5
Richard D. Straw         October 5
Jimmie L. Kerr           October 11
James M. Gephart         October 12
James H. Pomeroy         October 12
Jeff W. Mullin           October 16
James J. Kelleher        October 17
Gregory J. Buckendahl    October 18
Clyde A. Hughson         October 25
Ian J. Ralston           October 26
Vernon D. Daniels        October 29
Bruce O. Franzmeier      October 30
Keith F. Dewitt          October 31
Allan J. Hamilton        October 31
Attention!

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING AND AWARDS BANQUET

The Board of Directors of the Iowa Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America would like to invite you to their Annual Dinner Meeting and Awards Banquet on Friday evening:

October 12, 2012
at the Ramada Tropics Resort & Conference Center
at I35/80 and Merle Hay Road in Des Moines, IA

4:30 p.m. Bingo
5:30 p.m. Social Hour and Music
6:30 p.m. Dinner
Awards will be presented following dinner

Please RSVP to the Iowa PVA office by Close of Business on Friday, September 21, 2012 at 515-277-4782 or iowapvakim@yahoo.com or iowapvajaz@yahoo.com

(Dress is Business Casual)

ARE YOU MOVING!!!!

Don’t forget to notify the office of your new address. If you are a PVA member, we will let National PVA and PN PARAPLEGIA NEWS know where you are moving to, so you won’t miss a single issue.
Call us at 888-909-4782.