“It sure takes a lot out of a guy to bowl the highest score at the Iowa PVA Wheelchair Awareness Bowling Event!”

Joshua Baldwin was asleep before he and his parents were out of the parking lot.

The Iowa PVA Wheelchair Awareness Bowling Event was a huge success. We had a great turn out. The Board of Directors, members, a class from Drake University, teams from Wells Fargo Veterans Outreach, Veterans Affairs groups, the Des Moines VA SCI team, the IPVA softball team, and of course friends and family of IPVA were all represented. Channel 13 (WHO) sent a crew that took video footage and IPVA Chapter President Jon Schneider was interviewed. It was a fun and challenging afternoon. Most importantly the event provided awareness of the difficulties faced by all of those who live there lives in a wheelchair. Something as simple as bowling is not so simple. Thank you to all who came out and participated. We look forward to next year’s event.
Recent Problems With The VA Health VA -
Some Things To Know Before You Judge The VA Healthcare System

As someone who has been following the recent problems and concerns with the VA Health Care System, Iowa PVA chapter members and other Iowa veterans should be proud to have great leadership and health care providers in the Central Iowa Health Care System both in Iowa City and Des Moines.

While the system of VA health care is not perfect and given our national commitment and personal debts to our veterans, it is certainly fair for the VA healthcare system to be held to the highest standards. It should however be noted that although the areas identified for improvement deserve attention, there are some things to think about before rushing to judgment regarding the performance of the VA healthcare system in its entirety.

In my view, lost in the conversation about the VA is the recognition that the VA health care system has consistently out-performed the non-VA/private sector in quality of care and patient safety. In response to some criticism in the 1990s about the VA’s quality of care, please note that with the appointment of former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi in 2000, the VA initiated a major reengineering effort. The principle components of this effort included better use of information technology, measurement and reporting of performance, and integration of services. (Please note that I had the opportunity to serve as the Regional Veterans Liaison to Secretary Principi from 2000-2004.) During this time there were many changes made in the system. Patients in the VA health care system were more likely than those treated in the non-VA/private sector to receive better care for a wide range of indicators such as cancer screening, diabetes treatment and inpatient care. This trend continues.

The VA has been an early adopter of electronic records and accountability measures. There always has been and continues to be an issue with the transition of patient health care within the Department of Defense (DOD) to health care within the VA and the transfer of patient records. The systems ultimately needs to be able to communicate. In addition, there is the issue of the backlog in disability claim processing, clinical care and safety. These are areas that are receiving substantial attention because the VA health care system is configured as a system that is continually focused on improvement.

It is not proper to evaluate the VA in isolation. For example, with respect to wait times. Any idea how the VA appointment wait times compare to the non-VA/private sector? That is not to say that the VA should not have absolute standards and seek to improve, but I would guess that the wait times elsewhere are also often quite long. And a word for those decrying the wait times that are the result of the lack of doctor appointments. The question might be “Will more resources be available to the VA to make more appointments available and would that improve the health of our veterans?” The VA is experiencing a huge influx of veterans and only a modest increase in staff. During the past 3 years, the primary care visit requirement has increased by some 50% while the number of primary care doctors has only increased by 9%. Given that resources for the VA are not unlimited, how should appointments be prioritized? These are real challenges on the VA healthcare system. We also need to remember that sometimes the long wait periods are a result of patient preference. A measure could misrepresent the quality issue if the time represents, in part, a patient deciding when he/she wants to see the doctor again. There is a need to ensure that those measures are actually patient centered.

(continued on next page)
I want to talk about our VA Medical Centers here in Iowa. We have SCI clinics in Des Moines and Iowa City. First off I need to remind you that Andrew Bernstrom is our National Service Officer and Kim Gould and I are Hospital Liaisons. We are here to help in anyway we can to make sure you get all the benefits and prosthetics you deserve.

For the most part, our VA Medical Centers in Iowa are very efficient and handle claims in a timely manner. However, once in awhile, we hear about claims from prosthetics that are delayed or situations where our veterans do not get what they are asking for and need from the VA. Recently I heard about one of our members that was trying to purchase a van and was told he had to get a companion van. I know some of you will not know what this is but in my opinion it is not the kind of van any of us would want. The companion van is lowered only in the middle of the van behind the driver/passenger area and is not lowered in the front where the driver or passenger sit. A non-service connected Veteran will most likely be the one that is told they will have to accept a companion van. You do not have to accept these companion vans. In addition to this preventing those veterans who are capable of driving to do so, I believe that there could be significant safety issues in making the Veteran sit in the backseat behind their spouse or caregiver. It would be a lot better for the spouse or caregiver to take notice if the Veteran starts choking or having any major health problem if they are sitting beside them and not in the backseat. I don’t know about the rest of you but I am an adult and I don’t want to be treated like a kid and put in the backseat.

There is one more issue I would like to address about our prosthetics in the VA. I became aware of a Veteran that needed a Hoyer lift. He waited seven months before he received it. Unfortunately, while he was waiting for the lift, one of his family members dropped him transferring him from the bed to his chair. The Veteran broke his neck and died shortly afterwards. These are things that should not happen.

If any of our members are having problems or if you know of someone that is having trouble with their prosthetics, you need to contact our National Service Officer or a Hospital Liaison. I am not saying that we can fix the problem but we will do our best to find the person that can.

National Service Officer: Andrew Bernstrom: Phone: 800-795-3602 Email: andrewbe@pva.org
Secretary for NSO: Judy Keeling Phone: 800-795-3602 Email: judyk@pva.org
Hospital Liaison: Kim Gould Phone: 515-669-8746 Email: iowapvakim@yahoo.com
Hospital Liaison: Kenny Lloyd Phone: 641-486-2564 Email: ken2000L@heartofiowa.net

This point is not to diminish the importance of wait times, but to is only to say that it can be very complicated to measure quality in this area.

Regarding the recent issues in the media and the reaction to finding and addressing problems. An old school approach is to assign accountability and produce punishments. A more contemporary and effective approach would be to understand the recent problem and embrace the opportunity to improve and strengthen the system. Let’s not throw the VA healthcare system under the bus! Certainly, anyone who engages in illegal or unethical behavior should be removed, but the general approach should be to react constructively and engage in developing solutions to ensure a higher level of future performance.

There are certainly areas to improve within the VA as with all health care systems. If you have had any recent experience with any health care system you know there remain far too many glitches in any system and too little attention is paid to things that matter most to patients.

The VA healthcare system has to improve ...and WILL FOR OUR NATION’S VETERAN HEROES!

JRS
The 2014 advocacy legislation training seminar was held in Washington DC, March 9 through 14. Approximately 70 representatives from PVA chapters across the country attended to learn about current and future issues facing both disabled veterans as well as other members of the disabled community. Bev and I were pleased to be able to attend representing the Iowa Chapter.

The four day conference provided opportunities to hear from PVA staff and members of federal agencies and independent organizations about issues important to us. Advocacy topics ranged from airline access issues and long term services for those with disabilities to discussions about the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Legislative issues included updates on changes to the VA prosthetics process as well as current legislation being considered on veteran’s issues. We also had an opportunity to interact with a congressional panel of staff members representing the House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs. Lastly, the training portion of the seminar wrapped up with presentations from PVA’s Architecture, Medical Services and Communications Departments.

March 12, PVA National President Bill Lawson presented PVA’s Annual Testimony to a joint session of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs. President Lawson highlighted several concerns facing veterans, in particular, those with catastrophic disabilities. These included Congresses’ failure to once again pass a budget that funded the Department of Veterans Affairs and that veterans would have been even more severely impacted had veterans’ health care not had advance appropriations which shielded the VA health care system from partisan wrangling and political gridlock. President Lawson went on to praise efforts by House Committee Chairman Miller and Senate Committee Chairman Sanders to expand advance appropriations to all VA programs. President Lawson also addressed ongoing problems with VA’s prosthetics programs that are hampering the VA ability to quickly deliver much-needed devices that are critically needed by disabled veterans. Finally, he emphasized the need for Congress to expand the Comprehensive Caregiver Assistance program to all veterans. Currently the program is only for post-9/11 veterans.

Following the Annual Testimony, we spread out across Capitol Hill for meetings with our Senators and Representatives as well as staff. We met with Veteran’s affairs staffers for Senators Harkin and Grassley due to a Senate vote being conducted at that time. We were able to actually meet with Congressman Latham and Loebshack. We talked with staff for Congressman King and dropped off our points papers with Congressman Braley’s staff. During these meetings, we were able to address many of the issues that had been presented during the previous seminar days. Overall, it was a very successful and informative week it was like being in the middle of a civics lesson. Very interesting and eye-opening.

We had scheduled time to visit Vietnam Memorial, but the cold weather prevented that from happening. Instead we toured the capital. Thanks for allowing us to represent you, our fellow PVA members.

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.

Thank you.
From the Desk of the Executive Director

Kim Gould

As I reported in my article in the November/December issue of this newsletter, I was contacted by a representative of Rebuilding Together Greater Des Moines. Rebuilding Together Greater Des Moines is a nonprofit organization that provides critical repairs to make homes safe and healthy for low-income homeowners who are unable to afford the repairs themselves. They are also willing to consider adaptive housing projects such as ramps, bathroom modifications, etc. The representative we visited with stated they work with Home Depot to assist with those types of projects. Priority is given to people who cannot help themselves physically or financially. These individuals or families are typically seniors, disabled, veterans or low income. For 2014 they targeted funding to assist veterans! On May 3 they helped one of our members, Blair Legg, with some much needed home repairs.

Three years ago, Blair (a paralyzed Vietnam veteran) was working on a second-story roof when he fell, breaking his neck and paralyzing him from the shoulders down. His wife, Becky Legg, has been by his side through every struggle. "It's been very challenging. I've had a lot of training through the VA to bring him home, to take care of him," she said.

One of Blair Legg's biggest challenges is getting around in a wheelchair in his century-old two-story home on the northwest corner of Des Moines. "We transformed the dining room into his bedroom and the VA altered our house to make it handicap accessible," Becky Legg said.

On May 3, 16 volunteers from the Rebuilding Together organization made dozens of renovations, building new stairs and restoring a ceiling. "My bed has fallen through so all (of) the ceiling has been showering down on him," Becky Legg said. They also added a new kitchen drain that had been broken since November, and rewired electrical work that hadn't been updated since the 1930s. "Since we've lived here we've lost all the overhead lights except two," Becky Legg said. Volunteer Marc Black said his fellow volunteers have felt pure joy as they gave up the weekend to help. "It's just awesome to see the looks on people's faces when we complete a project like this. They have a sense of appreciation that we came out here to donate that time to better their life situations," Black said. The Leggs said they can't believe the transformation happened in just one day. "(We are) very grateful. Like I said, this is just such a blessing and it's really cool to watch everything pull together this quickly. It would have taken me months to do," Becky Legg said.

The Greater Des Moines Rebuilding Day has repaired more than 1,700 houses in the past 19 years, adding more than $8 million to the market value of Des Moines homes.

Kim

iGive Shopping Donation Program

Iowa PVA recently became part of the iGive online shopping program. As friends and supporters of Iowa PVA, this is an easy and inexpensive (free) way to support our programs and causes.

1. Log in to iGive.com and create a free iGive account. You simply create a login in and password and designate Paralyzed Veterans of America - Iowa Chapter as your cause. By simply creating this account, $5 is donated to us automatically.

2. After your account is created, any online shopping you do from over 1000 participating stores generates a donation to our organization (%). The only catch is that you must log in to iGive and then choose the store you wish to order from.

Please visit the iGive website. You will see that almost every store you can think of is listed as options for your online shopping needs.

Thank you for your continued support.
U.S. Senator Richard Burr’s Open Letter to Veterans

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, U.S. Senator Richard Burr (R-NC), Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, released the following open letter to America’s veterans:

May 23, 2014

To the Nation’s Veterans,

Over the course of the last few weeks, there has been a great deal of media coverage—rightly so—of the still-unfolding story coming out of the Department of Veterans Affairs regarding secret wait lists and other problems related to appointment scheduling at VA facilities. Last week, the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs heard from Secretary Shinseki, representatives of some of the Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), and others.

While a great deal of the media coverage of the hearing has focused on what Secretary Shinseki said, and didn't say, much less has been seen of the testimony of the VSOs that testified. I wanted to take a brief moment to comment on that testimony.

First and foremost, I must recognize and commend the American Legion, National Commander Dan Dellinger, and the American Legion team for taking a principled stand, before the hearing and during it, and calling for leadership change at the VA. It is clear that the Legion has been listening to its membership about the challenges they face in gaining access to care, and has reached the conclusion that "enough is enough" and the status quo is indefensible. The Legion's membership has much to be proud of with the organization they support.

Regrettably, the Legion was alone among the VSOs that testified in taking such a stand. It became clear at the hearing that most of the other VSOs attending appear to be more interested in defending the status quo within VA, protecting their relationships within the agency, and securing their access to the Secretary and his inner circle. But to what end? What use is their access to senior VA staff, up to and including the Secretary, if they do not use their unprecedented access to a Cabinet Secretary to secure timely access to care for their membership? What hope is there for change within the VA if those closest to the agency don't use that proximity for the good of veterans across our country?

I believe the national and local commanders of every VSO have the interests of their members at heart, and take seriously their commitment to their members and their organization. Unfortunately, I no longer believe that to be the case within the Washington executive staff of the VSOs that testified. Last week’s hearing made it clear to me that the staff has ignored the constant VA problems expressed by their members and is more interested in their own livelihoods and Washington connections than they are to the needs of their own members.

I fear that change within the VA will not be possible unless and until these organizations also reconsider their role as well as the nature of their relationship with VA.

Sincerely,

Richard Burr
United States Senator
Dear Senator Burr:

On behalf of Paralyzed Veterans of America (Paralyzed Veterans) and its members, I write to express our deepest disappointment with the actions that you took leading into the Memorial Day weekend. Your “open” letter to all veterans clearly displays why the vast majority of the American public puts no faith in their elected officials to do what is right for this country. You truly should be ashamed for being so bold as to challenge veterans’ service organizations (VSO) and the veterans who represent our organizations on a weekend when we clearly know more about what the holiday represents than you do. Your attitude and actions reflect great discredit upon the United States Senate and every member of Congress should be embarrassed by your “open” letter. Only a politician would be so bold as to believe he or she knows better what veterans want and need than actual veterans themselves. You clearly represent the worst of politics in this country.

Perhaps you should be reminded of just how much you support veterans and their families in this country. Given the opportunity to support legislation that would remove all of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) budget from the partisan bickering and political gridlock, of which you are an active participant, that has completely crippled the appropriations process, you opposed that legislation. Given the opportunity to support legislation that would ensure all generations of veterans, not just Post-9/11 era veterans, have access to the Comprehensive Caregiver Assistance program administered by the VA, you chose to oppose that legislation. Given the opportunity to support legislation that would provide reproductive assistance to veterans whose catastrophic disabilities rendered them unable to have children, you chose to oppose that legislation. Given the opportunity to ensure that the VA has fully sufficient resources to establish adequate capacity and properly meet the health care demands of veterans, you have chosen to send them out into the private health care marketplace that cares more about the bottom dollar than the health and well-being of those men and women. Senator, your continued efforts to simply “fix” the VA’s problem by privatizing health care shows that you are more interested in diminishing the VA health care system and promoting your political interests.

Paralyzed Veterans, and our counterparts in the VSO community, are particularly offended by your comments about the testimony provided by our professionals (all of whom are actually veterans and members of their respective organizations) during the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs hearing held on May 15, 2014. Perhaps you should have shared with all veterans in your “open” letter that you cared so much about their health care that you were not actually present during the testimony that the VSO representatives provided and you did not ask a single question to gauge our recommendations about how to fix the problems the VA health care system is facing. To the credit of your colleagues on the Committee, every other member actually took the time to engage with the VSO panel and ask pointed and substantive questions.

Your actions in remembrance of Memorial Day clearly show why the vast majority of the American public believes that the U.S. Congress is out of touch. Rest assured, you do not speak for or represent the interests of Paralyzed Veterans’ members—veterans with spinal cord injury or dysfunction—or any other VSO. We would be happy to meet with you at anytime and discuss real solutions to address the problems facing the VA.

We stand ready to ensure that veterans get the best quality health care and benefits that they have earned. Do you?

Respectfully,

Bill Lawson Homer S. Townsend, Jr.
National President Executive Director

cc: Honorable Harry Reid, Senate Majority Leader
    Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Minority Leader
    Honorable Bernie Sanders, Chairman, Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs
Gov. Branstad Signs
Home Base Iowa Act Into law

Plan will attract veterans to Iowa and match them with quality, high-paying jobs


“Our bipartisan Home Base Iowa plan will work to match veterans with high-paying careers in Iowa,” said Branstad. “These men and women have fought for our country, and acquired unique skillsets and training in the military. Now, with the Home Base Iowa plan signed into law, Iowa stands ready to welcome them to our communities and match them with the quality jobs across the state.”

The Home Base Iowa Act is one part of the overall Home Base Iowa initiative, a first-of-its-kind program developed to honor our country’s veterans by recruiting them, and active duty service members, for private-sector job opportunities in Iowa. Congressman Leonard Boswell and Casey’s CEO Bob Myers, both veterans, serve as the co-chairs of the initiative.

“As Governor Branstad and I travel across Iowa, we talk with Iowa businesses that are in need of qualified workers, “Reynolds said. “Our veterans possess the skills necessary to fill integral roles in important industries and we look forward to when they call Iowa home.”

Photos of the bill signing and a video of the gun salute can be found below by going to the State of Iowa web site and clicking on the title. The photos and video can be attributed to the Iowa Governor’s Office.


PHOTO: Gov. Branstad addresses the crowd at Camp Dodge prior to signing Home Base Iowa into law.

PHOTO: Gov. Branstad signs Home Base Iowa into law.

The Home Base Iowa Act does the following:

- Fully exempts military pensions from state income tax, putting Iowa on more equal footing with states such as Florida and Texas, and our Midwestern neighbors such as Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin. In addition, the bill fully exempts military survivor benefits from state income tax.
- Iowa’s licensing boards will adopt rules allowing credit for military training and experience in the licensing process.
- Allows private-sector companies to follow the public sector’s lead by allowing a preference in hiring and promoting veterans.
- Eliminates the special plate issuance fees charged for plates associated with military service.
- Expands eligibility for the Military Homeownership Assistance Program, which provides $5,000 in down payment and closing cost assistance. Additional funding for the program is provided in a separate appropriations bill.

BACKGROUND ON THE HOME BASE IOWA ACT


In January, Gov. Branstad made Home Base Iowa the centerpiece of his legislative plan by stating at his Condition of the State address, “This session, the centerpiece of my agenda is Home Base Iowa. It is a bipartisan jobs plan focusing on recruiting service members to Iowa and matching them with good, high paying careers. […] Our veterans have risked their lives defending our freedom. To show our gratitude, let’s make Iowa the leader in respect, support and opportunity for veterans.”

In January, the Iowa Business Council announced a goal of hiring 2,500 veterans. In March, Greene County became the first “Home Base Iowa Community.” To date, there have been over 50 Home Base Iowa Businesses statewide, with more to come.

In addition to the Home Base Iowa Act (Senate File 303), Branstad also signed Senate File 2352.

Senate File 2352 an Act relating to the additional homestead credit for certain disabled veterans and including effective date and applicability provisions.

For more information on Home Base Iowa, please visit www.HomeBaselowa.org.
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Governor Terry E. Branstad « Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, March 18, 2014
Contact: Governor’s Office, 515-281-5211

Iowa Designated All★Vet State by
U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

(DES MOINES) – Today, Iowa Governor Terry Branstad proudly announced Iowa is among three states to be designated an All★Vet State by Hiring Our Heroes, a program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. “We are honored to be named an All★Vet State and to be in such good company,” said Governor Branstad. “This designation is a true testament to our unwavering support of veterans and their families. We are dedicated to making Iowa a home for the nation’s returning heroes.”

The All★Vet States initiative was created to highlight the incredible opportunities, services, and support being offered by states to attract and hire transitioning service members and military spouses. By showcasing the benefits and opportunities important to veterans and their families, a state can help influence a transitioning service member’s decision-making process in bringing their skill sets and revenue to that state.

Michigan and Tennessee also received the All★Vet State designation.

“Iowa has worked aggressively to be a top destination for our nation’s veterans and military spouses,” said Eric Eversole, executive director of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Hiring Our Heroes program. “We are thrilled to work together through our All★Vet States initiative to help Iowa highlight the many economic and educational opportunities for the men and women who have served our country.”

This designation comes on the heels of Governor Branstad’s announcement of the creation of the Home Base Iowa program. Home Base Iowa was founded to serve as a comprehensive source for job services and information about Iowa for veterans. On March 13, Greene County was designated the state’s first Home Base Iowa Community. To date, Iowa businesses have set a goal of filling 2,900 jobs in Iowa with veterans through the Home Base Iowa initiative.

“Many thanks to the individuals guiding the Hiring Our Heroes program and their hard work in assisting veterans and their families,” said Iowa Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds. “We are so proud to be designated an All★Vet State and will continue to serve our nation’s brave servicemen and women to the fullest extent.”
TELL CONGRESS IT'S TIME TO END THE SUBMINIMUM WAGE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES!

Support H.R. 831—the Fair Wages for Workers with Disabilities Act of 2013

Under current federal law, employers are able to obtain "special wage certificates" that allow them to pay workers with disabilities less that the federal minimum wage (referred to as subminimum wage). The subminimum wage law gives employers an incentive to exploit the cheap labor provided by workers with disabilities. It also works as a disincentive to employers to prepare people with disabilities for integrated employment in the community that will pay them a competitive wage.

It is clear that with the appropriate services, training and tools, workers with disabilities can be as productive as workers without disabilities. Right now, there are employers who pay the federal minimum wage or higher to their employees with disabilities-without affecting their profitability. As a result, even individuals with significant disabilities have been able to successfully obtain employment that pays at least minimum wage if not more. H.R. 831, which creates the Fair Wages for Workers with Disabilities Act of 2013, prohibits any new special wage certificates from being issued and requires existing special wage certificates to be phased out over a three-year period (after one year for private for profit entities; after two years for public or governmental entities; and after three years for non-profit entities).

The time for action is now. Contact your U.S. Representative today to urge him or her to sign-on as a cosponsor and vote "yes" on H.R 831. If your representative is already a cosponsor of the bill, please contact your representative to thank him or her for their support.

* If you know your representative's name, go to http://house.gov/representatives/ and click on the name to get his/her contact information

* If you do not know your representative's name, go to http://house.gov/ and enter your zip code under the heading "Find Your Representative"

To read full text of H.R. 831: http://beta.congress.gov/113/bills/hr831/BILLS-113hr831ih.xml

To see current sponsors of H.R. 831: http://beta.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/house
bill/831/cosponsors?q=\%22search%22%3A\%22hr831%22\%3Chttp%3A%2F%2Fbeta.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/housebill/831/cosponsors?q=\%7b%22search%22%3A%5b%22hr831%22%5d%7d

If you have any questions, please contact:

Cheryl R. Jansen
Legislative Director
Equip for Equality
cherylj2@equipforequality.org<mailto:cherylj2@equipforequality.org>
217-544-0464 ext. 6013
Operation-Engage-America

A Community Day of Support, Awareness and Education for Post Traumatic Stress

You may be familiar with our son, Daniel Somers. He was a CA Army National Guardsman who returned to civilian life from the Iraq war as so many of our warriors do, suffering from invisible wounds. For Daniel it was not only Post Traumatic Stress and Traumatic Brain Injury, but also Gulf War Syndrome. His transition to civilian life ended last June when he took his own life, unable to cope any longer with multi-system health issues. We have made it our mission to address the multiple barriers that kept Daniel from receiving the proper treatment he so desperately needed. In that process we hope to ensure that no other veteran or family suffers as ours has.

Lisa and Jeff Naslund of Galva IA know our story; it is theirs as well. Their son, U.S. Army Sgt. Dillon Naslund, completed tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. Dillon believed that, as a soldier, he needed to deal with the demons that often flashed in nightmares and cold sweat by himself. He was highly decorated, highly revered, and at a desperate crossroads when he took his life on Dec, 10, 2012 at the age of 25.

We have learned countless facts over the past ten months: Among them, PTSD is not military-specific. It affects our first responders, victims of domestic, child and sexual abuse, even some of those who've experienced natural disasters and automobile accidents. Additionally, there are thousands of people who sincerely want to help. It is estimated that there are 44,000 volunteer organizations in the United States dedicated to helping service members and their families.

So, you may ask, what is the problem? The problem is visibility. As parents of a married service member, we had no idea that there were resources for us, resources that could have helped us understand what our son went through, what he was going through and how to help him. We had no idea that we could have called the Veterans Administration and asked to speak with his mental health providers to give them a clearer picture of what changes we saw in Daniel. We had no idea that the Vet Center could have provided us insight and guidance in how to talk to him about his war experiences.

There has been much progress at the VA and DoD since Daniel last "touched" the government system that should have helped him. There is much still to be done. There are those 44,000 organizations trying to fill the many gaps. But how do you know who they are, how do you find them, how do you even know they are there for you?

We would like to start putting those organizations together with America now. We would like to engage America in the process of helping to heal our service members, our veterans and their families. As such, we have partnered with the American Legion, VFW, IAVA, Paralyzed Veterans of America and the VA to bring awareness and support to PTSD and TBI issues by educating the community regarding local resources. We have named our effort Operation Engage America (OEA). Our goal is to have a grassroots event every June, PTSD Awareness month, in as many communities across America as we can. This year's inaugural Operation Engage America will be held on June 7th in two cities: San Diego, CA and Des Moines, IA.

One day at a time,
Howard and Jean Somers

Operation Engage America Partners

Howard & Jean Somers
American Legion
San Diego VA Medical Center

Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America
Paralyzed Veterans of America

Veterans of Foreign Wars
VA Central Iowa Health Care System

Lisa & Jeff Naslund

Operation Engage America" will be held at VFW Post 9662, 1309 NE 66th Ave Des Moines, IA on June 7th, 2014 from 1:00-5:00 PM.
The event will "kick off " at 1:00pm with Retired Rep Leonard Boswell, followed by BG Steven Altman and Cpt. Dan Grinstead.
Iowa PVA Vice President Kenny Lloyd was presented with a Volunteer Service Award for his long term, distinguished and devoted volunteer service from Iowa Veterans Home Commandant Jody Tymeson.

Kenny Lloyd - IPVA Turkey Hunt
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Paralyzed Veterans of America
CALLING ALL SHOOTERS
Competition open to all shooters sitting or standing, veteran and nonveteran

Paralyzed Veterans of America
Iowa Chapter

PVA National Trapshoot Circuit
Otter Creek Sportsmans Club
Cedar Rapids, Iowa
June 27-29th 2014

Individual Awards:
Top Overall and Top Overall Wheelchair Shooter on all Target Rounds will each Receive a “Championship Award”.

Singles: 1st & 2nd Place
   Class AA, A, B, C,D
Doubles: 1st & 2nd Place
   Class AA, A, B, C,D
Handicap: 1st & 2nd
*Class: Based on recent classification*

Team Awards:
Chapter Team Awards will be presented to 1st & 2nd Place teams on all Target Rounds

Silent Partner Competition:
On Saturday and Sunday, each shooter participating in the Silent Partner registration pays $10.00. The names are placed in a hat and drawn two at a time to make a partnership of two shooters. At the conclusion of each day’s shooting, total scores by both members of each partnership will be used to determine the winner of the silent partner pot. The top four places win 50%, 25%, 15% and 10% respectively. Shooters with tie scores will divide the prize money.

Ammunition Policy:
Enterants receiving ammunition as part of the entry package must use that ammunition in this competition, or forfeit it to the chapter with no refunds. All ammunition used in the competition must be ATA legal ammunition. Absolutely no reloaded ammunition may be used for competition. Any participant found using reloaded ammunition will forfeit his or her entry.

Directions:

Airport to Hotel:

Turn Right onto Wright Brothers Blvd SW
Turn Left and take ramp onto I-380 N toward Waterloo
Take exit #24A toward Collins Rd.
Turn right
Merge onto Collins Rd. NE

Hotel to Shooting Range:

From the Host Hotel and other hotels located on Collins Parkway.
From Collins Rd Westbound
Turn Right onto Edgewood Rd NE
At the T Intersection, Turn Left onto Blairs Ferry Rd NE.
Go 1.1 Miles
Turn Right onto Milburn Rd NE. Go Appx. 2 miles.
Entrance to Otter Creek is on Left. An event sign will be posted.

Other hotels along Collins Rd: use same directions

Questions:
For any questions, please contact the Chapter SportsDirector David Graham at (660) 868-0097.
Registration:
Please make checks payable to Iowa PVA and mail it along with this Registration Form to:
Iowa Chapter PVA
3703 1/2 Douglas Ave. Des Moines, Iowa 50310.

Name:
Address:
City/State:
Zip:
Telephone #:
Email:

PVA Member
Chapter
Wheelchair Shooter
Chapter Team

What are your Averages and Handicap Yardage?

Singles
Doubles
YDG

Please bring ATA/PITA cards with you.

Squad/Position Requests:

—

1)
2)
3)
4)
5)

I will need:

Shotgun:

Yes

No

Pouch:

Yes

No

Earplugs:

Yes

No

I plan to attend Friday’s Welcome Dinner.

Entry Fee (includes one Banquet ticket) $185

Total number of Extra Banquet Tickets ___x$30____

Number of Extra Lunch Tickets            ___x$10____

Number of Extra Breakfast Tickets        ___x$5____

Calcutta

Singles Silent Partner                                     $10____

Handicap Silent Partner                                 $10____

Total                                                              $______

General Information:
The Paralyzed Veterans of America Iowa Chapter
Trapshoot Competition will take place at the Otter
Creek Sportsman’s Club June 27th thru June 29th
2014. The $185 entry fee covers the cost of 300
targets and shells (100 Singles, 50 doubles and
100 Handicap), 2 lunches (served at the gun club),
2 breakfasts and 1 ticket for the Awards Banquet
(additional lunch tickets may be purchased for
$30 each). Additional punch tickets for $10 each.

Accommodations:
3703 1/2 Douglas Ave. Des Moines, Iowa 50310.

Please make checks payable to Iowa PVA and mail it
along with this Registration Form.

Schedule of Events:
The Chapter will provide transportation from the
hotel to the gun club on a first come basis. If you
request of buggy, please arrive in the gun club,
and transportation will be required to sign a “waiver and
release of liability” before entering the gun club.

Expense

Participation Request—Indicate Below:

Must I bring my PITA cards with me?

Singles

Double

Yes

No

What are your Averages and Handicap Yardage?

PVA Member

Chapter

Wheelchair Shooter

Chapter Team

General Information:

Contact:

Address:

Name:

Schedule of Events:

Friday, June 27th, 2014

11 a.m. — 5 p.m. Monday Welcome Reception at the
Sportsman’s Club

6 p.m.—7 p.m. Monday Welcome Reception at the
Sportsman’s Club

9 a.m. — 5 p.m. Practice at gun club (additional
practice

9 a.m. — 5 p.m. Tuesday Welcome Reception at the
Sportsman’s Club

6 p.m.—7 p.m. Tuesday Welcome Reception at the
Sportsman’s Club

9 a.m. — 5 p.m. Practice at gun club (additional
practice

Saturday, June 28th, 2014

7 a.m. — 12 p.m. early bird registration at the
Sportsman’s Club

9 a.m. — 5 p.m. Practice at gun club (additional
practice

Sunday, June 29th, 2014

8 a.m. — 9 a.m. Practice at gun club

9 a.m. — 5 p.m. Practice at gun club (additional
practice

2 p.m. — 4 p.m. Practice at gun club (additional
practice

7 p.m. — midnight Practice at gun club

9 a.m. — 5 p.m. Welcome Reception at the
Sportsman’s Club

6 p.m.—7 p.m. Welcome Reception at the
Sportsman’s Club

9 a.m. — 5 p.m. Practice at gun club (additional
practice

General Information:

Competitions only.

transportation will be made for
competitions, rebounds will be made for
ammunition in cases. It must be used during the
competition. Additional shooting tickets may be purchased for
100 Handicaps by 2 shooters (extra cost of $100)
additional shooting tickets for $5 each. If
additional shooting tickets are purchased, they
may be used during the competition. A calmer
and additional punching tickets for $10 each.

The Chapter will provide transportation from the
hotel to the gun club on a first come basis. If you
request of buggy, please arrive in the gun club,
and transportation will be required to sign a “waiver and
release of liability” before entering the gun club.

Iowa Chapter PVA
3703 1/2 Douglas Ave. Des Moines, Iowa 50310.

Please make checks payable to Iowa PVA and mail it
along with this Registration Form.
COMPLIMENTARY PRINCIPAL CHARITY CLASSIC SKYBOX TICKETS FOR MILITARY

HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE MILITARY INCLUDE:

• Complimentary admission on Friday, May 30; Saturday, May 31 and Sunday, June 1 for active duty, retired, and Reserve military along with their dependents. Simply show a valid ID card at the entrance gate.

• Complimentary tickets for veterans are available through the veteran tickets foundation. Visit www.vettix.org to obtain your free tickets.

• Access to the Patriots’ Outpost (Friday-Sunday) a complimentary hospitality venue for military with a prime view of the 18th green as well as complimentary snacks and drinks. The Patriots’ Outpost is sponsored by American Equity Investment Life Insurance Company, Casey’s General Stores, Home Base Iowa, Lockton and Ryan Companies.

• Sunday will be recognized as Military Appreciation Day with a special ceremony to honor our military on the 18th green during the trophy presentation.

For additional information on the Patriots’ Outpost and Military Appreciation Day please visit principalcharityclassic.com

ALL AMENITIES COURTESY OF:
### CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/4</td>
<td>Disability Partners meeting at the United Way Office - 9:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/4</td>
<td>Des Moines VAVS Meeting at IPVA Office - 9:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/7-6/14</td>
<td>Castaway Disabilities Fishing Event in Ely, MN.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/10</td>
<td>Iowa Veterans Council Meeting at the Iowa Veterans Home - 1:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/12</td>
<td>Bingo at the Des Moines VA CLC - 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/19</td>
<td>Iowa PVA Board of Directors Meeting at the IPVA Office - 11:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/20</td>
<td>Parkinson’s Conference at the Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/27</td>
<td>National PVA Pistol Shoot in Cedar Rapids, IA (See page 18).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/27-6/29</td>
<td>National PVA Year End Trapshoot in Cedar Rapids, IA (See pages 16-17).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/30</td>
<td>Quarterly SCI/D Team Meeting at the Iowa City VA - 9:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/4</td>
<td>Iowa PVA Office Closed in Observance of the Independence Day Holiday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/10</td>
<td>Bingo at the Des Moines VA CLC - 6:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/18</td>
<td>Deadline for Ordering Fair Tickets (See page 28).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/24</td>
<td>Iowa PVA Board of Directors Meeting at the IPVA Office - 11:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/2</td>
<td>Iowa PVA Golf Event (See pages 24-25).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/11</td>
<td>Veterans Day Parade at the Iowa State Fair (See page 28).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/12-8/17</td>
<td>National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Philadelphia, PA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Contact Us:

**Iowa PVA**  
3703 1/2 Douglas Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50310  
515-277-4782  
888-909-4782  
515-277-8165—Fax  
iowapva1@yahoo.com  
iowapvakim@yahoo.com  
iowapvajaz@yahoo.com  

**Paralyzed Veterans of America Iowa Chapter**
The Nation’s Leader
Offering more than 250 new and used vehicles in stock

Find your ride. Live your life. Experience the Rollx Vans difference

- Chrysler Town & Country, Dodge Grand Caravan, Ford Econoline, Honda Odyssey and Volkswagen Routan
- Entire inventory and pricing listed online – www.rollxvans.com
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- Industry’s first to offer OnStar® FMV technology
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- Meets or exceeds all NHTSA safety standards

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Find out more about Your Ride at www.rollxvans.com.
Follow us on: facebook • twitter • linkedin • youtube ™
Prosthetics Delay Report Form

Responsible PVA Service Office: __________________________ Date: ________

Last Name: ______________________ First Name: ______________________ MI: _____

SSN: ____________________________ Age: ____ PVA Member: Yes ☐ No ☐

Description of disabling condition that necessitates reliance on prosthetics, including the date of injury:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Are you service-connected: Yes ☐ No ☐

Item/Device/Equipment ordered:
________________________________________________________________________

Date Ordered: __________

Prescribing Clinician/Therapist: ________________________________

VA Medical Center: _______________________________

Veteran Integrated Service Network (1-23): __________

Order delayed more than 30 days: ☐ Denied: ☐

Reasons given for decision:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Impact of delay/denial:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Fax the completed form to (202) 416-7754 or email to prosthetics@pva.org
Weekly and Ongoing Programs Sponsored by Adaptive Sports Iowa

Adaptive Sports Iowa is built around the concept of providing consistent opportunities to be active. We are able to achieve this by organizing a number of weekly and monthly program throughout the year.

Wheelchair Basketball
We host wheelchair basketball every Thursday evening at First Family Church in Ankeny, IA. The games are not officiated and are relaxed, giving players a chance to improve and enjoy themselves while getting some exercise. We also have 12 Top End Transformer All Sport wheelchairs on site for use.

- Thursday Evening
- 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
First Family Church, 317 SE Magazine Rd. Ankeny, IA

Youth Sports Club
Organized in collaboration with our friends at Courage League Sports, this youth program is designed to fun, social, and active. Similar to a "PE style" class we play games and have fun.

- Thursday Evenings
- 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Courage League Sports, 4405 121st St. Urbandale, IA

Power Soccer
Power Soccer is the first competitive team sport designed and developed specifically for power wheelchair users. These participants include persons with quadriplegia, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, head trauma, stroke, spinal cord injury and other disabilities. Power Soccer combines the skill of the wheelchair user with the speed and power of the chair itself, to participate in an extremely challenging game similar to soccer.

- Tuesday Evenings
- 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Valley Community Center, 4444 Fuller Rd. West Des Moines, IA

Group Cycling Riders
An opportunity for the novice to seasoned cyclists our weekly group rides take place on the popular Raccoon River Trail.

- Tuesday Evenings
- Depart trailhead at 5:30 pm
Waukee Trailhead located at the intersection of Hickman Rd. and 10th street on the west side of Waukee.

Bowling Night
The second Tuesday of every month we host an evening of bowling with your friends and family. Warrior Lanes in Waukee has graciously provided their facility to us for this event.

- Second Tuesday of every month
- 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Warrior Lanes, 190 SE Laurel. Waukee, IA

Congratulations Judy Keeling PVA NSO Secretary in our Des Moines Office.
Judy was named Central Region Secretary of the year!
Judy has been with the Des Moines NSO office for several years.
This is not the first time she has received this award.
Judy is a dedicated and excellent advocate for all of our veterans.
Thank you Judy for all that you do and your service to all of your clients.
Please make Checks payable to Iowa PVA
$300.00
Entry Fee for 4 Person Team

Des Moines, IA 50310
3700 1/2 Douglas Ave.
Iowa PVA

To reserve your spot, please return this entry

Email:
Phone:
City, State, Zip:
Address:
Name:

Team Contact Person

Golf Outing Registration Form
2014 Iowa Paralyzed Veterans of America

Golf Outing
Red, White & Blue
Of America
Iowa Paralyzed Veterans

www.paralyzedveterans.org
515-993-4070
ADP, VA 50003
22927 Valley View Trail
River Valley Golf Course

**LIMITED TO THE FIRST 30 TEAMS PAID—REGISTER ASAP**
*includes 18 holes of golf, cart, prizes & meal*
ENTRY FEE: $300.00 PER 4-PERSON TEAM

6:00 P.M. - AWARD PRIZES
1:00 P.M. - TEES TIMES BEGIN
11:45 - 12:45 P.M. - CHECK-IN

River Valley Golf Course
Adel, IA
Tees Times begin @ 1:00 P.M.
4-Person Best Ball Format
Saturday, August 2, 2014
3rd Annual Golf Event Fundraiser for Iowa Paralyzed Veterans of America

Contact: [Email]
Phone: [Phone]
City, State, Zip: [City, State, Zip]
Address: [Address]
Name: [Name]

Thank you for your support of our Paralyzed Veterans to attend and participate in these special sporting events. Please support these veteran heroes.

I am unable to play golf or attend. But I wish to provide the enclosed donation to assist our Paralyzed Veterans Heroes.

Iowa Paralyzed Veterans of America is a non-profit 501©(3) Veterans Service Organization. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for those veterans who have experienced a spinal cord injury or have been diagnosed with a disease affecting the spinal cord. Providing sporting opportunities to these veterans is essential in accomplishing our goals.

The following page contains additional sponsorship opportunities. Please contact Kim Cline at 515-669-8746 or info@paralyzedveterans.org.
Attention

Elections for the Board of Directors and Officers of Iowa Paralyzed Veterans of America will be held in September for FY 2014-2015. If you are a member in good standing, would like to be considered for a position on the Board of Directors and wish to be included on the ballot, please contact Kim Gould at 515-669-8746 or email your request to iowapvakim@yahoo.com by June 30, 2014.

Per Iowa Paralyzed Veterans of America Election Policy and Procedures, ballots with be sent out to all members no later than August 15, 2014 along with a biography of all of the candidates and optional campaign letters. (Campaign letters will be limited to one page subject to appropriate editing by the Newsletter Editor and/or Election Committee Chair). Ballots must be returned by a mid-September date and counted prior to the September Board of Directors Meeting.

Wheelchair Basketball

Adaptive Sports Iowa continues to host 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.
### May

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glen A. Slate</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>James D. Fidler</td>
<td>June 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curt D. Barnes</td>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>Robert L. Marchant</td>
<td>June 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joni K. St. Pierre</td>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>Randall P. Ingram</td>
<td>June 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steven A. Ferris</td>
<td>May 13</td>
<td>Louis Grief</td>
<td>June 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tina Marie Carter</td>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>Larry W. Post</td>
<td>June 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert E. Mittan</td>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>William E. Ballensky</td>
<td>June 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald R. Santos</td>
<td>May 22</td>
<td>Kenneth E. Lloyd</td>
<td>June 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steven A. Brinkmeyer</td>
<td>May 23</td>
<td>Robert J. Abel</td>
<td>June 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenneth Erickson</td>
<td>May 23</td>
<td>Eric T. De Kraai</td>
<td>June 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl C. Wonneman</td>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>Harold E. Janssen</td>
<td>June 21</td>
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### June

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<td>Harold E. Janssen</td>
<td>June 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerry A. Spiegelhalter</td>
<td>June 22</td>
<td>Carol L. Lilienthal</td>
<td>June 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol L. Lilienthal</td>
<td>June 24</td>
<td>Bobbie D. Souer</td>
<td>June 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobbie D. Souer</td>
<td>June 27</td>
<td>Roger W. Rupp</td>
<td>June 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger W. Rupp</td>
<td>June 29</td>
<td>Bruce C. Culver</td>
<td>June 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Attention

1. Please check out our new and improved web page! Many items of interest will be posted frequently. This will bring you news about the chapter between newsletters. It is a work in progress, but you will find it very interesting and informative.

   www.iowapva.org.

2. Please provide us with your email address. We would like to provide you your newsletter and other information electronically. This will make it easier for you and less expensive for us.

### Cookbooks

The cookbooks have arrived and are going like hotcakes!!!! With every donation of at least $20.00, you will receive a free cookbook. Please send your donation directly to our office at:

**Iowa Paralyzed Veterans of America**

3703 1/2 Douglas Ave.

Des Moines, IA  50310

### Associate Membership Drive

Please consider becoming an Associate Member of Iowa Paralyzed Veterans of America. Simply contact our office and request an Associate Membership Application. Complete it and mail it with a check for $75.00 back to our office. Applicants for Associate Membership will receive a free cookbook.
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.