Financial assistance is available to purchase a new or used automobile to accommodate a veteran with certain disabilities that resulted from an injury or disease incurred or aggravated during active military service. The grant may also be paid if disabilities are a result of medical treatment, examination, vocational rehabilitation, or compensated work therapy provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

The original intent of the VA Auto Grant Program, which was established in 1946, was to cover the full cost of a vehicle, then about $1,600. The auto allowance has also been indexed, which means that the amount of the grant will adjust for inflation each year.

The Veterans Administration will provide a one-time payment of no more than $21,488.29 toward the purchase of a new or used automobile. The grant is paid directly to the seller for the total price of the automobile. You must have approval from the VA before purchasing the vehicle.

In order to qualify for this benefit, you must have one of the following disabilities as a result of injury or disease incurred or aggravated during active service:

- Severe burn injuries
- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)
- Loss, or permanent loss of use, of one or both feet
- Loss, or permanent loss of use, of one or both hands, or
- Permanent impairment of vision in both eyes with a
- Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with corrective-glasses
- Or central visual acuity of more than 20/200 if there is a field defect I
- Which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest
- Diameter of visual field has an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees in the better eye.

You can apply for the automobile and/or the special adaptive equipment grant by completing VA Form 21-4502, Application for Automobile or Other Conveyance and Adaptive Equipment, and submitting it to your local VA regional office. If you qualify for this benefit and it has been granted by your local VA Regional Office, you will receive a certificate representing the grant amount from the VA to take with you for your purchase.
## Mission Statement
The Paralyzed Veterans of America, Buckeye Chapter strives to improve the quality of life of honorably discharged veterans who have spinal cord injury, dysfunction or illness including but not limited to multiple sclerosis and ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease) through advocacy, medical research, sports and recreation, education and communication.

## DISCLAIMER
The Buckeye Banner is a publication of the Buckeye Chapter, 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. The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of BPVA, its Officers, Board Members, the Editor or production staff.

Rev 8/2019

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### BPVA Officers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Holly Koester</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hollyk@buckeyepva.org">hollyk@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Douglas Beckley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dougb@buckeyepva.org">dougb@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Paul Sonye</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pauls@buckeyepva.org">pauls@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Carl Harris</td>
<td><a href="mailto:carlh@buckeyepva.org">carlh@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
</tr>
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### Board of Directors
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>Scott Law</td>
<td><a href="mailto:scottl@buckeyepva.org">scottl@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>Josh Maley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:joshm@buckeyepva.org">joshm@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>Milton Young</td>
<td><a href="mailto:miltony@buckeyepva.org">miltony@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
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### National Director
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Douglas Beckley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dougb@buckeyepva.org">dougb@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
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### Executive Director
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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharon Moster</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sharonm@buckeyepva.org">sharonm@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
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### Government Relations Director
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Douglas Beckley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dougb@buckeyepva.org">dougb@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
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### Membership Director
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carl Harris</td>
<td><a href="mailto:carlh@buckeyepva.org">carlh@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
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### Sports Director
<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scott Law</td>
<td><a href="mailto:scottl@buckeyepva.org">scottl@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
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### Volunteer Coordinator
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Josh Maley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:joshm@buckeyepva.org">joshm@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
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</table>

### Senior Benefits Advocate
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aaron Stevens</td>
<td><a href="mailto:aarons@pva.org">aarons@pva.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Yaskowiak</td>
<td><a href="mailto:michaely@pva.org">michaely@pva.org</a></td>
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</table>

### Chapter Hospital Liaison Officers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHL-Cleveland</td>
<td>Milton Young</td>
<td><a href="mailto:miltony@buckeyepva.org">miltony@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHL-Columbus</td>
<td>Douglas Beckley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dougb@buckeyepva.org">dougb@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHL-Dayton</td>
<td>Dale Spiller</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dawgromad@aol.com">dawgromad@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHL-Cincinnati</td>
<td>Sylvester Cooper</td>
<td><a href="mailto:miltony@buckeyepva.org">miltony@buckeyepva.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Nathan Collins Sr.

James Mulroy

---

We’re on TWITTER!

BPVA is trying to increase our followers on Twitter.

Please follow us and spread the word!

@Buckeyepva
This time of year many of us take time or we should take the time to reflect on our many blessings. We remember the challenges, successes and trials we faced, the loved ones we surround ourselves with and look forward to the new goals we hope to reach and challenges we face with the support of family and loved ones.

I look back at the Buckeye Chapter, PVA’s accomplishments in 2019, putting on a fun All You Can Eat fundraiser; sent three Buckeye Wheelchair Teams to the DAV Winter Sports Clinic; hosted our 7th and largest Buckeye Wheelchair Games; sent one of the largest teams to the National Veteran Wheelchair Games in Louisville, KY; BPVA held a successful Billiards tournament; and had our largest attended Golf outing. Although Sharon, our Executive Director was short a person in the office, we fulfilled Emergency Assistance, Travel Assistance. Holiday Food Gift Card requests and had a memorable Caregiver Day in Cleveland. The Buckeye BOD lost a board member and added 2 new members. We lost a dedicated volunteer we all miss.

I’m sure we are all looking ahead to the coming year! We are already working on funding the Buckeye Wheelchair Winter Sports Team and organizing the Buckeye Wheelchair Games. With your assistance and participation in chapter activities we can accomplish so many things. We try to post positive stories about our members competing and accomplishing astonishing things to inspire and motivate others to reach for their dreams. However, we want our stories to reflect you, our readers and members. We realize some of you battle every day just to be able to get out of bed or wheeling through a store or just going to get the mail may be your marathon. Good days or bad days I just remind myself that we live in our great Country - USA, and are blessed to have friends and family. This includes the Buckeye PVA family. Thank you for your service and commitment to fellow veterans. I will close 2019 by wishing you and those you hold dear a happy and safe holiday season.
**Executive Director Report**

by Sharon Moster  
Executive Director

Let me say I hate the darkness of winter. I don’t mind the cold so much. But with the light of every day I am reminded what a great year we have had at the Buckeye Chapter. As President Holly noted there was so much good in 2019. Everything from the largest attendance at the All You Can Eat; same for the Buckeye Wheelchair Games and the Golf outing. We sent one of the largest teams to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. Thinking back we were there to serve so many of you.

We also had sadness reach the Chapter. A number of members passed away this year. We mourn them.

And we lost one of our most devoted volunteers. Patty Harris served the Chapter for more than 10 years. We will miss her dearly.

From everything our Board is planning it looks like much bigger opportunities for 2020. I am grateful for the chance to serve you again next year.

Stay warm.

Sharon  
sharonm@buckeyepva.org  
(800) 248-2548.

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**Sports Directors’ Report**

by Scott Law  
Sports Director

As we say goodbye to 2019 and welcome 2020 we say “See ya next year” and “So long Fall”, now all we have to look forward to is Winter. The roughly 35 participants in the 2020 Winter Sports Clinic to be held in Snowmass Village on March 29th-April 3rd are doing just that. Have fun and safe travels!

The Buckeye Chapter of the PVA was proud to present the 2019 Buckeye PVA Cup Wheelchair Basketball Tournament held at the University of Akron Nov 2nd & 3rd. It was a spectacular success with teams from all over the country gathering to compete in the two day tournament, farthest team travel was from California.

Congratulations to all the teams, athletes and coaches for their participation and success! Special thanks goes out to Tim Fox, President of the NWBA and to Will Waller, CEO of the NWBA for helping to make this years’ tournament such a huge success. We look forward to next year.

Finally, we could have not pulled this off without all of the volunteers that devoted their time and energy to make this an event that we hope to be able to be involved in for years to come. THANK YOU!

Save the dates for the 2020 Buckeye Wheelchair Games. April 16th registration, 17th &18th competition and 19th checkout for those that will be traveling.

We will be participating in a new Air Rifle program from National PVA, this will be a “Postal” program meaning we will receive targets by mail and will have events for participants to shoot and then they will be mailed back to National to be scored. More information will be coming soon.

Don’t forget to reference your latest PN magazine to see what events are available to you for the upcoming months. The list from National PVA is also included here in the Banner. (Remember you have the ISP available to you).
In closing, we at the Buckeye PVA want to wish you a wonderful Holiday Season and a very Happy New Year!
See ya next year,
Scott Law
Buckeye PVA Sports Director.

2019 Buckeye Cup
Resolution Outcomes

19-N-1 Anita Bloom Veterans Committee Included in PVA Publications
Passed Consent Agenda

19-N-2 Modify Speedy Award Selection Process BOD may go into Executive Session to discuss Nominees
Passed

19-N-3(S) Revisions to PVA Investment Policy establish better investment strategies and communicate those
to the portfolio Advisors
Passed

19-N-4 Altering the Composition and Function of the PVA Finance Committee changing to seven members
and PVA ED and CFO will become advisors
Passed

19-N-5 Membership Meeting Requirements for Chapters to hold Quarterly Membership meetings
Failed

19-N-6 Outside Membership Serving on Chapter BOD non members to serve on the Chapter BOD
Failed

19-N-7 At Large Membership Assignments to Chapters
Pulled by the Maker

19-N-8 Modify Proof of Citizenship Requirements for PVA Membership separate the member application
from the certification application. Amended to do away with voter registration card as proof of citizenship.
Passed as Amended

19-N-9 Member Documentation accepting DD-214 showing citizenship status as proof of citizenship
Passed Consent Agenda

19-N-10 Announcement Date for PVA Poster and Essay Contest to be sent to Chapters by April 30 of each
year
Passed Consent Agenda

19-N-11 Retention and Transfer of Membership Application Documents
Pulled by the Maker

19-N-12 Update to PVA Publication Policy updated distribution guidance
Passed Consent Agenda

19-N-13(S) Membership Demographics Report request for membership demographics to be supplied to chapters, but it already exist on the corporate portal
Failed

Continued on pg. 7
19-N-14 Enhanced PVA Logo wanted the PVA Logo changed to encompass women and those who can still ambulate.
Failed

In addition to hearing reports from National and Executive Committees and National Staff the BOD were informed that two PVA Members had their membership suspended for filing false expense reports. These members had travel paid by an outside entity and then submitted for reimbursement from PVA.

**REPRESENTING BPVA**

**CLEVELAND COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN**

Milton Young

**DAYTON COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN**

Bill Nolte  
Dwayne Ezell
Automobile & Adaptive Equipment Program

Continued from pg. 1

Additionally, the VA will pay for adaptive equipment, or for repair, replacement, and reinstallation of automobile equipment required because of disability. A veteran who qualifies for the automobile allowance also qualifies for adaptive equipment. Payments for adaptive equipment may be made multiple times during the Veteran's life, but will not exceed two vehicles in a four-year period.

The term adaptive equipment includes, but is not limited to:

- power steering
- power brakes
- power window lifts
- power seats, and– special equipment necessary to assist the eligible person into and out of the automobile or other conveyance.

A formal claim on a VA Form 10-1394, Application for Adaptive Equipment – Motor Vehicle, is required if the Veteran is applying for adaptive equipment only.

If you have any questions regarding eligibility, need assistance in filing for the grant, or you would like to personally speak with someone about this program, please feel free to contact your local PVA National Service Officer.

Women Veterans Call Center

Women Veterans Call Center 855-829-6636 voice or text questions about Women’s Health Care in the VA. Also PVA National has an e-mail for Women’s Health Care questions pvawomen@pva.org
We Proudly Support the
Paralyzed Veterans of America
BUCKEYE CHAPTER

Improving the Lives of Those Who Have Protected Ours

PRESTON Superstore
13600 W. Center Street
Burton, OH 44021
440-834-9700

PRESTONSUPERSTORE.COM
From Paul Mann.

Hello Buckeye PVA,
I recently returned from Chicago which I attended the Bear Brawl Rugby Tournament. This was my first tournament as a rostered member of the Oscar Mike Team. We don't do well because we were separated into two teams. And there were very competitive teams. But I learned a lot because I was coached by Team Canada's coach David Willsie so the record doesn't really show how much I learned.

From Terry Clark.

Dear Buckeye PVA,
I recently had the chance to go on an Honor Flight as a Vietnam Veteran. The photo of me below has Arlington cemetery in the background. I'm sharing this picture because Buckeye PVA has been so helpful to me.

We love to hearing from members!!
Connect With What Matters

Being there makes a difference

It could be a simple trip to the mall, a ride to the movies or just a visit to a friend’s home. The little things in life can make a big difference. It’s why MobilityWorks has been helping veterans connect with who and what matters most since 1997. Veterans have unique needs so we treat each of them as individuals. First of all, we listen. Then, we work together to find the best solution.

MobilityWorks considers it a privilege to help our nation’s veterans. Every day we work with local VISNs and service organizations to make the process of securing accessible vehicles, lifts and driving equipment for veterans as easy as possible.

MobilityWorks has more than 50 locations across the country with the largest selection of accessible vehicles and adaptive solutions:

- Minivans, full-size vans and trucks
- The latest in adaptive technology
- Complete maintenance and service
- Rental vans — veterans receive a 10% discount

MobilityWorks is committed to serving you. Contact us today so we can evaluate your needs and find a solution that best fits your lifestyle.

MobilityWorks
810 Moe Drive
Akron, OH 44310
330-247-6295

USA’s largest accessible van dealer!

www.mobilityworks.com
ANNUAL AIR RIFLE & AIR PISTOL PROGRAM

Cal-Diego Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
January 27-28, 2020
San Diego Naval Base
San Diego, CA

Mid-Atlantic Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
March 4-5, 2020
Colonial Shooting Academy
Richmond, VA

Wisconsin Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament
March 21-22, 2020
Milwaukee Area Tech College
Milwaukee, WI

Buckeye Air Rifle and Pistol Tournament*
April 16-18, 2020
Spire Institute
Geneva, OH

*Buckeye Wheelchair Games

PARALYZED VETERANS BOATING/FISHING TOUR

Mid-America Bass Tournament
September 20-22, 2019
Lake Eufaula
Eufaula, OK

Vaughan Bass Tournament
October 4-6, 2019
Rend Lake
Mount Vernon, IL

Florida Gulf Coast Bass Tournament
April 3-5, 2020
Lake Harris
Tavares, FL

Kentucky-Indiana Bass Tournament
April 24-26, 2020
Lake Barkley
Kuttawa, KY

Mid-Atlantic Bass Tournament
June 5-7, 2020
James River
Richmond, VA

ANNUAL VPA/NWPA BILLIARDS TOURNAMENT SERIES

Mid-South Billiards Tournament
October 11-12, 2019
Clicks Billiards
Memphis, TN

Mid-Atlantic Billiards Tournament Chuck Willis Mem
March 20-22, 2020
Diamond Billiards
Midlothian, VA

Mid-America Billiards Tournament
April 3-5, 2020
Slick Willies Pool Hall
Oklahoma City, OK

Buckeye Billiards Tournament
June 5-6, 2020
Wickliffe Lanes
Wickliffe, OH

Mountain States Billiards Tournament
June 20-21, 2020
Widefield Corner Pocket Billiards
Fountain, CO

ANNUAL PVA/AWBA BOWLING TOURNAMENT SERIES

Great Plains Bowling Tournament
August 1-4, 2019
Thunderbowl
Council Bluffs, IA

Mid-Atlantic Bowling Tournament
September 13-15, 2019
Bowl America
Glen Allen, VA

Nevada Bowling Tournament
December 5-8, 2019
Sunset Station Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas, NV

Mid-America Bowling Tournament
April 9-12, 2020
Firelake Bowling Center
Shawnee, OK

Paralyzed Veterans of America

*Year-end Tournament

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Las Vegas, NV

Mid-America Bowling Tournament
April 9-12, 2020
Firelake Bowling Center
Shawnee, OK

Vaughan Bowling Tournament
May 21-24, 2020
Bowlero
Romeoville, IL

PARALYZED VETERANS NATIONAL SHOOTING SPORTS CIRCUIT

North Central Shooting Sports Tournament
September 6-8, 2019
Crooks Gun Club
Sioux Falls, SD

Mid-Atlantic Shooting Sports Tournament
October 25-27, 2019
Conservation Park of Virginia
Charles City, VA

Nevada Shooting Sports Tournament
March 13-15, 2020
Clark County Shooting Park
Las Vegas, NV

Cal-Diego Shooting Sports Tournament
Redlands Shooting Park
March 27-29, 2020
Redlands, CA

Lone Star Shooting Sports Tournament
Descoto Gun Club
Dates TBD
Waxahachie, TX

Vaughan Shooting Sports Tournament
June 5-7, 2020
St. Charles Sportsman Club
Elburn, IL

Iowa Shooting Sports Tournament
June 12-14, 2020
Otter Creek Sportsman Club
Cedar Rapids, IA

Wisconsin Shooting Sports Tournament
June 26-28, 2020
Brown County Sportsman Club
Green Bay, WI

*Year-end Tournament

BOCCIA

PVA National Boccia Tournament
October 22-26, 2019
The Pavilion at Lamay
St. Louis, MO

Bayou Boccia Tournament
November 8-9, 2019
Harrison County Shelter
Gulfport, MS

Buckeye Boccia Tournament*
April 16-18, 2020
Spire Institute
Geneva, OH

Mid-Atlantic Boccia Tournament
May 6-8, 2020
Fort Monroe at
Community Center
Hampton, VA

Vaughan Boccia Tournament
June 26-28, 2020
Fountain View Recreation Center
Carol Stream, IL

*Buckeye Wheelchair Games

HANDCYCLING RACING

PVAR Hi Performance Off Road Camp
August 17-26, 2019
Crested Butte, CO

Off Road Handcycling Championships
August 23-25, 2019
Crested Butte, CO

Off-Road Fall Expo
October 4-6, 2019
Chesterfield, VA

Army Ten Miler
October 13, 2019
Washington, D.C.

CODE OF HONOR QUAD RUGBY INVITATIONAL

Dates TBD
Location TBD

NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES

For more information, visit: pva.org/sports
Thank you!

At the closing of this year, the Buckeye PVA would like to thank all of our Sponsors, Donors, Volunteers, and our Members.

Best wishes for a Happy New Year!

Paralyzed Veterans of America
Buckeye Chapter
Member Birthdays - December, January, February

Ken Debelak 12/5/1949  Dennis Brostek 1/14/1947  Tyrone Wilson 2/14/1961
Earl Hicks 12/7/1949  Michael Enos 1/17/1956  Fred Motzko 2/15/1950
Donald Pressly 12/7/1954  Daniel Ohar 1/18/1949  Dale McNamara 2/15/1960
Holly Koester 12/10/1959  David Bailey 1/19/1948  Chris Rennegarbe 2/19/1943
Janet Suszynski 12/12/1944  Loren Collins 1/20/1963  Margaret Morefield 2/19/1965
Kenneth Hoke 12/14/1959  Mark Riddle 1/20/1969  Rogelio Trevino 2/21/1942
Richard Chavers 12/14/1972  Phil Farris 1/21/1954  Ralph Roberts III 2/21/1942
Lawrence Wheeler 12/19/1944  Carl Pierson 1/21/1969  Timothy Logan 2/24/1965
Steven Franko 12/26/1961  Isaac Young 1/30/1950
Christopher Johnson 2/26/1984  William Kerns 1/30/1951
Nathan Swenson II 12/27/1960  Jeffrey Hamilton 1/30/1963
William Butler 12/28/1948  George Hohlakis 1/31/1950
Ronald Kennedy 12/30/1941  Robert Gray 1/31/1975
Desiree Douglas 12/31/1960  Patrick Glass 2/2/1964
Thomas Arnold 1/1/1940  Paul Turner 2/2/1965
Howard Gemperline II 1/7/1948  James Philson 2/6/1938
Lucy Works 1/8/1957  Ronald Wood 2/7/1961
David Nau 1/9/1950  Artie Sias 2/8/1947
Gary Waldfogel 1/9/1969  Carl Vinson Jr. 2/10/1930
Wayne Blount 1/10/1950  Roger Tackett 2/10/1946
Mark Mix 1/11/1971  Terry Denlinger 2/11/1948
Harry Forrester 1/13/1946  Steven Thacker 2/11/1952
Donald Young 1/13/1955  Kelly Knox 2/12/1963
Buckeye PVA Events

ALL YOU CAN EAT MARCH, 2020
BUCKEYE WHEELCHAIR GAMES APRIL 16-19, 2020
BUCKEYE BILLIARDS JUNE 5 - 6, 2020
NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES JULY 3 - 8, 2020

Buckeye PVA Board Meetings (First Quarter 2020)
January 16, 2020 at the Chapter Office
February 20, 2020 at the Chapter Office
March 19, 2020 at the Chapter Office

Greater Cincinnati including Dayton, Donate Today

Greater Cincinnati including Dayton, give G.I.V.E. a try and support veterans through a donation. Through the Paralyzed Veterans of America's G.I.V.E. (Goods Inspiring Veterans Everywhere) clothing donation program, service never goes out of style.

Your generous donations of clothes, small appliances, and gently used household goods help improve the lives of severely injured veterans and strengthens the fabric of our community. Plus, your donations are tax deductible – a receipt will be issued upon pickup/drop off.

In Ohio, this service is only available in the Greater Cincinnati/Dayton area, but is expanding to different locations. Stay tuned for an area near you!

To donate, call (314) 416-1300 or visit the website for more information: www.pva.org/ways-to-give/give/give-clothing
Vehicle & Adaptive Driving Equipment

Columbus Mobility can help you through the V.A. grant process, whether you are service connected or non-service connected, with both the automobile grant and vehicle modification grant. If you can’t come to us, we make house calls!

SPECIAL OFFER FOR VETERANS:
Up to $3,000.00 off the purchase of a new wheelchair accessible van or Honda Pilot from VMI

Handicap Accessible Vans For Rent
Mention this ad for 10% off

Call Today • 1-614-825-8996
6330 Proprietors Road • Worthington, Ohio 43085
www.columbusmobility.com

Any van purchased we will make a $250.00 donation to the P.V.A. Buckeye Chapter!
LIFESPAN RESPITE CARE REAUTHORIZATION

On October 31, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions unanimously approved S. 995, the Lifespan Respite Care Program Reauthorization Act originally introduced by Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI). The bill reauthorizes the program for another five years for $50 million ($10 million annually through Fiscal Year 2024) and requires a report from the Department of Health and Human Services to Congress by October 1, 2023. The measure goes next to the full Senate for a vote. Earlier in the summer, the House passed identical legislation, moving reauthorization of the respite care program one step closer to completion.

HOUSE APPROVES EDUCATION BILLS

Recently, the House approved a pair of education-related veterans bills: H.R. 4625, the Protect the GI Bill Act, which increases transparency and accountability among educational programs that receive VA funding; and H.R. 4162, the GI Bill Planning Act, which would eventually end the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB). Both bills have been received by the Senate where they await further action.

H.R. 4625 ensures that schools receiving GI Bill funding inform prospective students of key items, including the cost of attendance, how much their benefits cover, and student outcomes. It also empowers State Approving Agencies to flag or suspend new enrollments to schools that violate these requirements. H.R. 4625 also aligns the definitions of an eligible child in VA and the Department of Defense (DoD) for the purpose of education benefit transfers and bans schools from misrepresenting themselves while marketing, recruiting, and enrolling students. Currently, DoD includes wards and foster children while VA does not. The second bill, H.R. 4162, gives new enlistees six months instead of two weeks to decide whether to pay $1,200 or opt-out of the MGIB benefit. It also ends new enrollments in the MGIB by October 2029.

HOUSE PASSES COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE TO AID WOMEN VETERANS

The House recently approved H.R. 3224, the Deborah Sampson Act, which addresses inequities and barriers that women veterans face when accessing VA care and benefits. H.R. 3224 is named after a Revolutionary War veteran, Deborah Sampson Gannett, who served in the Continental Army from 1782-1783 and was awarded a full military pension for her military service after years of petitioning Congress.

The measure encompasses 16 bills and reflects years of work and negotiation among stakeholders. The bills and a brief description of each are available here: https://juliabrownley.house.gov/brownleys-deborah-sampson-act-passes-house/.

As a result of PVA’s advocacy, the legislation includes a requirement for VA to report on an annual basis an assessment of wheelchair accessibility of VA women’s health centers. This assessment will include the accessibility of each kind of treatment provided at the center, including mammography. Continued on pg. 18
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It will also address all other relevant factors, including door sizes, hoists, and equipment. PVA made this recommendation in response to concerns raised by PVA’s women veterans committee regarding specific accessibility barriers at these clinics.

We applaud the House for advancing this important legislation. You can view a section-by-section summary of it [here](#). In the coming months, we will be working with their Senate counterparts to incorporate additional provisions in their version that help meet the needs of catastrophically disabled women veterans.

**Disabled Veteran DoD Shopping Initiative**

A provision in the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act allows the Department of Defense to expand commissary; military exchange; and morale, welfare, and recreation retail privileges on stateside military installations to certain veterans and their caregivers. Beginning January 1, 2020, all service-connected disabled veterans, Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war (POW), and individuals approved and designated as the primary family caregivers of eligible veterans under VA’s Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers can use commissaries; exchanges; and morale, welfare and recreation retail facilities, in-person and online. Please note that veterans and their caregivers must have specific credentials in order to enter an installation. For more information regarding these privileges and access to military installations, please visit [https://www.militaryonesource.mil/products#!/detail/780](https://www.militaryonesource.mil/products#!/detail/780).

**U.S. Justice Department Settles with Public Accommodations to Protect the Rights of Veterans Who Use Service Dogs**

The Justice Department announced two settlement agreements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to protect and advance equal access for veterans with disabilities who use service dogs. One agreement is with Deerfield Inn & Suites, in Gadsden, Alabama. The second agreement is with the Landmark Hotel Group in Virginia Beach, Virginia, which manages the Holiday Inn Express in Hampton, Virginia. These matters were investigated and resolved in furtherance of the Department’s commitment to ensuring that our veterans enjoy equal access to public accommodations, such as restaurants, hotels, and shops.

The ADA generally requires public accommodations to provide access to individuals with disabilities who use service animals, including those who use service dogs for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or anxiety. Yet, in public accommodations across the country, individuals with disabilities are frequently barred from entering with a service animal.

The Deerfield Inn & Suites agreement resolves allegations that, after driving many hours, a veteran arrived at the Deerfield Inn & Suites at 4:00 am. When the desk clerk learned that the veteran was accompanied by her service dog, the desk clerk refused to honor the reservation, insisting that no dogs were permitted in the hotel. Despite numerous attempts by the veteran to explain that the dog was not a pet, but a highly trained animal required for disabilities she acquired in the service of our country, the clerk would not allow the veteran to stay at the hotel. As a result, and given the late hour, the veteran ended up sleeping in her car in the parking lot of a church. Similarly, the complaint underlying the Landmark Hotel agreement alleged that, at the Holiday Inn Express managed by the Landmark Hotel Group, the desk clerk refused to honor a reservation by a veteran because he would not provide documentation that the dog with him was a service dog. The veteran informed the clerk that it was unlawful to ask for documents to establish that a dog is a service animal, but the desk clerk...
informed him that such documentation was corporate policy. The veteran then requested to speak to the hotel manager, who confirmed that it was the hotel’s policy to require such documentary proof. The veteran was forced to find another hotel.

Under the ADA, public accommodations generally must make modifications to their policies, practices or procedures – such as a no-pet policy – to permit the use of a service animal by a person with a disability. A service dog generally may go wherever the public is allowed to go, and a public accommodation may not require documentation about the service dog.

Under these agreements, both entities will adopt and implement a service dog policy; provide training on the service dog policy to employees and managers; post the service dog policy at their facilities and in their advertising; and pay money damages to the two veterans. All entities cooperated with the Department throughout the investigations.

**OLDER AMERICANS ACT REAUTHORIZATION**

On September 18, the House Committee on Education and Labor considered H.R. 4334, the Dignity in Aging Act of 2019, to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (OAA). The bill authorizes funding increases across all OAA programs. Key provisions related to family caregiving include:

- Extension of the authorization for the RAISE family caregivers act by one-year, until 2022;
- Clarification that family caregivers include adult family caregivers for individuals of any age with Alzheimer's, and that individuals of any age with Alzheimer's may be served by the State Long-term Care Ombudsman Program;
- Elimination of the cap on Title III-E National Family Caregiver Support Program funds that can be allocated toward older relative caregivers (currently at 10 percent);
- Extension of the authorization period of the Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act by one year.
- Incorporation of H.R. 3782, the Supporting Family Caregivers Act, to authorize use of caregiver assessments.

The full House has not yet scheduled a floor vote on the bill. In the Senate, staff continue to work on the bill, including resolution of disagreements.