

WHEELS IN MOTION

AUGUST 2026

PURPLE HEART DAY August 7





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GOD, Grant me the serenity to accept the things I can not change.
Courage to change the things I can and the WISDOM to know the difference.

HAPPINESS is thinking of others first, yourself last and GOD always.
All a person is remembered for is what they did for others.

As mankind thinketh in their minds... so they are.

Adversity is Inevitable ***** Stress is OPTIONAL.

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GOD created you to be SUCCESSFUL and HAPPY.

REGRET looks back, FEAR looks around... FAITH looks UP.

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**Paralyzed Veterans of America
Central Florida Chapter
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August Board Meeting is a **Zoom** - August 13th 10:30 AM

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Mission Statement

Paralyzed Veterans of America Central Florida, is a congressionally chartered veteran's service organization that provides a platform of advocacy, education and research, communication, adaptive sports and recreation for veterans paralyzed as a result of spinal cord injury or dysfunction, in an effort to afford them with the highest quality of healthcare and life experiences.



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Each year on **August 7**, Americans observe **Purple Heart Day**, a time to recognize the courage, sacrifice, and unwavering dedication of the men and women who have been wounded or killed in service to our nation. Unlike many military decorations, the Purple Heart is not awarded for achievement or valor. It is bestowed upon those who have shed blood—or made the ultimate sacrifice—in defense of the United State. The origins of the Purple Heart date back to the Revolutionary War. On **August 7, 1782**, General George Washington established the **Badge of Military Merit**, a heart-shaped cloth insignia presented to enlisted Soldiers who demonstrated exceptional service or fidelity. Although the award fell into disuse after the Revolutionary War, its spirit endured. In 1932, on the 200th anniversary of George Washington's birth, the War Department revived the decoration as the **Purple Heart Medal**. Designed in the shape of a purple heart bearing Washington's likeness, it became the nation's oldest military decoration and still awarded to service can it be earned through competition combat-related operations under qualifying circumstances. Every Purple Heart tells a personal story—a Soldier injured or nomination. Instead, it is awarded to members of the U.S. Armed Forces who are wounded or killed as a direct result of enemy action or while serving in members.

The Purple Heart occupies a unique place among military honors. It cannot be recommended by a commander for exceptional performance, nor by an improvised explosive device, a Marine wounded during an assault, a Sailor injured aboard a warship under attack, an Airman struck while supporting combat operations, or a Coast Guardsman serving in a hostile environment. Behind each medal is a life forever changed by service to the nation. The Purple Heart represents far more than an injury sustained in battle. It symbolizes courage in the face of danger, resilience during recovery, and an enduring commitment to duty. Many recipients continue serving despite their wounds, while others spend months or years rebuilding their lives. For the families of those who receive the Purple Heart posthumously, the medal becomes a cherished reminder of a loved one's devotion to country. It stands as a lasting tribute to their sacrifice and ensures their service will never be forgotten. Each year on **August 7**, communities across America honor Purple Heart recipients through ceremonies, memorial services, flag raisings, and educational programs. Many cities and counties have been designated **Purple Heart Communities**, publicly recognizing veterans who have received this distinguished decoration. These observances offer an opportunity for citizens to thank Purple Heart recipients, support wounded veterans and their families, and remember those who gave their lives defending the freedoms we enjoy today. The freedoms Americans cherish have been secured through the courage and sacrifice of generations of service members. Purple Heart recipients remind us that liberty carries a profound cost. Their wounds—both visible and invisible—reflect a willingness to place the nation's welfare above personal safety. As President John F. Kennedy once observed, "A nation reveals itself not



**Chapter President
Steve Kirk**

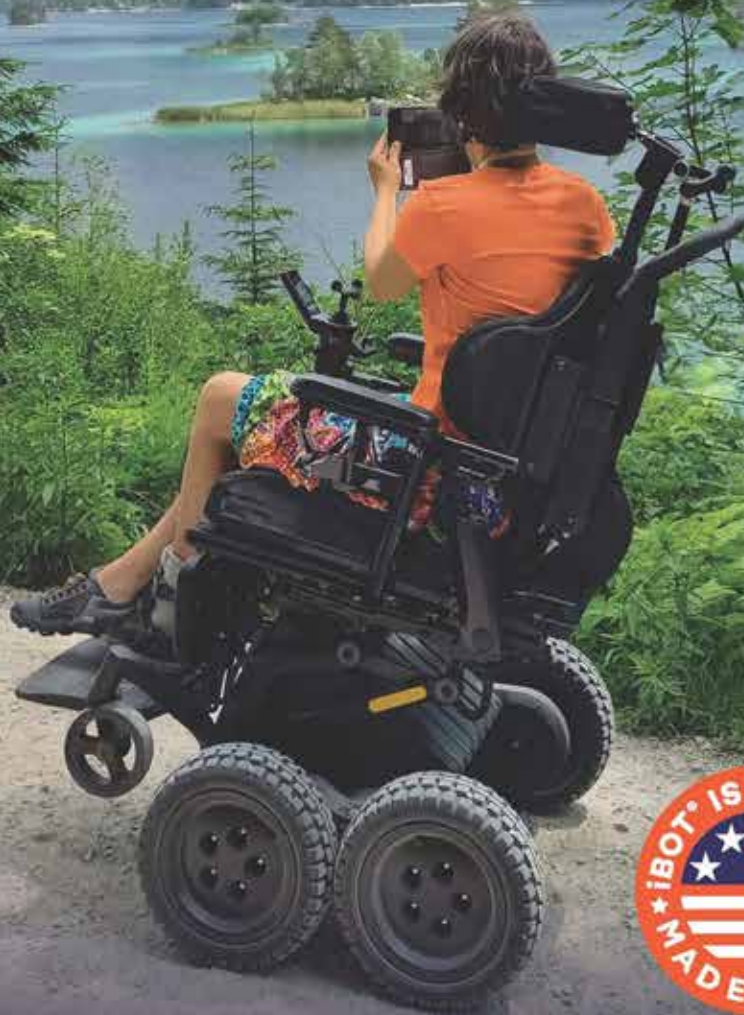


only by the men it produces but also by the men it honors." On Purple Heart Day, and throughout the year, let us honor these brave men and women not only with words of gratitude but through continued support, respect, and remembrance. Their sacrifices have helped preserve the freedoms we often take for granted, and their legacy deserves our enduring appreciation. The Purple Heart is more than a medal. It is a symbol of courage, sacrifice, and the enduring spirit of those who answered the call to serve—and who gave so much in defense of our nation. The husband of board member Amy Patterson was a recipient of this prestigious award. SGT Jeff Patterson, US 7th Marines 3rd Battalion was awarded the Purple Heart on March 11, 1991 for his personal sacrifice in combat during Desert Storm. See the photo of Jeff receiving the award.

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August is a month rich in military history and tradition. Throughout the month, Americans pause to recognize the sacrifices, achievements, and enduring legacy of the men and women who have served in the Armed Forces. From celebrating the birth of one of the nation's oldest military services to honoring those wounded in combat and commemorating the end of World War II, August offers several meaningful opportunities to reflect on the courage and commitment of our nation's defenders. The month begins by celebrating the 236th birthday of the United States Coast Guard, established on August 4, 1790, when Congress authorized the creation of the Revenue Marine at the request of Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton. As one of the nation's oldest continuous seagoing services, the Coast Guard has evolved into a multi-mission force responsible for maritime law enforcement, search and rescue, homeland security, environmental protection, and national defense. Whether saving lives during hurricanes, intercepting illegal narcotics, protecting our ports, or serving alongside the Navy during wartime, Coast Guardsmen continue to uphold the service's motto: *Semper Paratus*—"Always Ready. One of the most significant anniversaries in military history is Victory over Japan Day, observed on August 14 in the United States. On this day in 1945, Japan announced its acceptance of the Allied terms of surrender, effectively bringing World War II to an end. Because of time-zone differences, many Allied nations commemorate the event on August 15. The formal surrender ceremony took place on September 2, 1945, aboard the battleship USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. V-J Day marked the conclusion of the deadliest conflict in human history. It is an opportunity to honor the more than 16 million Americans who served during World War II and to remember the immense sacrifices made by the Greatest Generation and our Allied partners in securing freedom around the globe. On August 29, the nation recognizes the establishment of the United States Marine Corps Reserve, created in 1916. For more than a century, Marine Reservists have stood ready to reinforce active-duty Marines whenever called upon, serving with distinction in every major conflict and numerous humanitarian operations. The Reserve continues to provide highly trained Marines capable of responding quickly to national emergencies while maintaining strong ties to their civilian communities. Military anniversaries are more than dates on a calendar. They remind us of the dedication, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment demonstrated by generations of service members. They also provide an opportunity for all Americans to express appreciation to veterans, active-duty personnel, Reservists, National Guard members, military families, and the Gold Star families who have borne the burdens of service. As we observe these anniversaries throughout August, let us remember those who answered the call to serve and those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Their legacy lives on through our freedom, our gratitude, and our commitment to never forget their service to our nation. And I personally want to thank all of our PVA members who sacrificed so much in service to our country and who continue to serve through our chapter.



Executive Director
John DeMauro

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A WORD FROM OUR MEMBERS

I guess I'm like most people... When I first heard the 45th NVWG would be in Detroit City, I didn't have high expectations. Don't get me wrong, I would go to The Games no matter where they hold them but having never been there, I only had the words of others to go by so my, admittedly ignorant, opinion of Detroit was negative.

Never the less, I boarded that flight like a kid headed to Grandma's house for Christmas. Eager to see my old friends from past Games, meet new athletes and see whatever fate the competition would hold in my 30th consecutive NVWG.

I'm very happy to say that I was pleasantly surprised by Detroit City. The hotel and convention center were less than half a mile apart but I was amazed at how close the attractions were. We pushed from the hotel to Comerica Park to see the Detroit Tigers take on the Oakland A's. They also have an above the road tram called The People Mover that would take you around the downtown area on a loop with about 10 stops along the way which included our hotel and the convention center with many good eateries along the way. Right next to our hotel was the tunnel to Canada. Those of us who brought our passports, caught a bus that took us under the Detroit River, through customs and into Canada for lunch and some great pics of the Detroit skyline from the Windsor river front.

The location turned out to be top 5 all time, for me. (Out of 30, that is high praise). However, it wasn't just about the fun, the competition was tough, as always. I have my individual competitions that I love like archery, discus and javelin but it's the team sports that keep me coming back year after year. Softball consists of 8 teams and about 15 players per team. Basketball consists of 8 teams and about 12 players per team. Plenty of opportunity to meet new friends. Pickleball and cornhole, on the other hand, give you the option to pick your own teammate or be matched up with another single player. All together, there are about 23 sports available and you can have a maximum of 8 on your schedule.

If you live in Central Florida and have ever wanted to try the National Veteran's Wheelchair Games, 2027 is the year of no excuses... Orlando will host the 46th Games from July 14-19, 2027. Go to our website: PVACF.org for information on eligibility for funding.

--- JIMMY GREEN





2026 Wheelchair Games





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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- National provided a detailed update on the Take Care of America's Veterans Act (TCAVA), a 554-page omnibus package combining 62 pieces of legislation, which remains stalled due to pay-for disputes and lack of sufficient votes in both chambers.
- The Major Richard Starr Act faces multiple obstacles: the discharge petition is 5 votes short (213 of 218 needed), the House NDAA amendment failed in the Rules Committee, and a Senate NDAA amendment attempt by Ranking Member Blumenthal is pending.
- PVA's official position opposes using VA rating schedule reductions (sleep apnea/tinnitus) to fund the Major Richard Starr Act, as it is a DoD obligation, not a VA one.
- The STAND Act drew significant congressional interest at a recent House Veterans Affairs Health Subcommittee hearing; VA expressed opposition but agreed to meet with the subcommittee chairwoman.
- A Happy Hour focused on mentorship and follow-up is scheduled for July 22nd at 4 p.m. ET.
- Officer nominations for the ACGRD are open through August 1st.
- Current treasury balance stands at \$18,264.99, pending reduction for seminar grants.
- Next meeting is scheduled for August 3rd, 2026.



**Government
Relations
Tim Wolfe**

CHALLENGES

- The Take Care of America's Veterans Act (TCAVA) is stalled due to deep disagreements over the pay-for mechanism (sleep apnea/tinnitus rating schedule reductions), fragmentation within the veteran service organization community, insufficient votes in both the House and Senate, and limited legislative days before the August recess.
- The Major Richard Starr Act faces multiple blocked pathways: the discharge petition is 5 votes short, the House NDAA amendment failed in the Rules Committee, and the Senate NDAA amendment attempt is pending but uncertain.
- The House floor is frozen pending resolution of the SAVE Act, preventing any legislation from advancing.
- The Toxic Exposure Fund's mandatory scoring status has effectively stymied new veterans' legislation by making it extremely difficult to identify appropriate offsets.
- Only 25% of VA physicians are enrolled in the electronic death registration system, undermining the effectiveness of the Veterans Burial Timeliness and Death Certificate Accountability Act.
- The tax treatment of Disabled Veterans Dignity Act payments was not addressed in TCVA due to the Ways and Means Committee's refusal to act within the available timeframe.
- VA expressed opposition to the STAND Act at the recent House subcommittee hearing, citing tracking difficulties.

August 7 is Purple Heart Day!

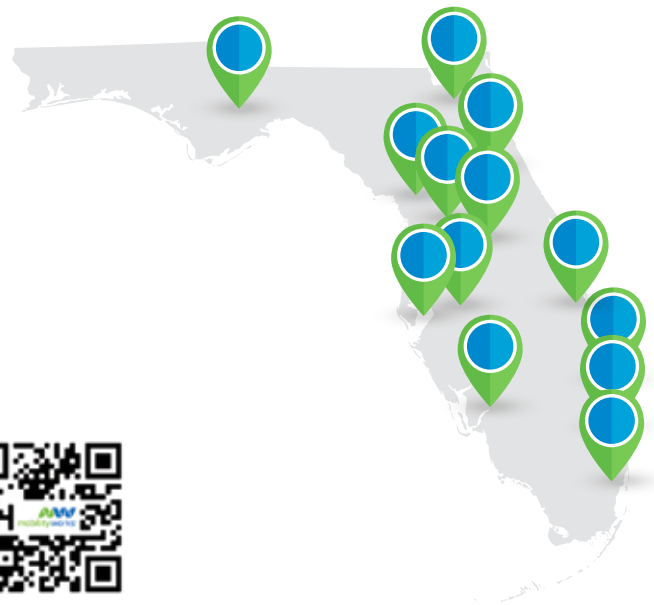
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