



Paralyzed Veterans  
of America  
Central Florida Chapter

# WHEELS IN MOTION

March 2020

***Milton,  
a WWII Veteran,  
turns 100!***

*Golf Tournament Page 4*

*Important Message Page 10*



# Come to Our Annual Spring Fling!



**Ham Burgers**

**Soft Drinks**

**Bounce Houses**

**Hot Dogs**

**Shaved Ice**

*Everything Is Free!  
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The *new* date is April 4, 2020  
It will be at the Chapter Office  
2711 S. Design Ct. Sanford FL 32773  
Time: From 11AM to 3PM

**Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Central Florida Chapter  
2711 S. Design Ct.  
Sanford, FL 32773-8120  
Phone (407) 328-7041  
Fax: (407) 328-7139**

On the cover  
**Milton L. Sowards**  
See Page 13 for more ...

Website: pvacf.org  
Email: office@pvacf.org  
Chapter Officers 2019-2021

President..... Steve Kirk  
Vice President..... Sean Gibbs  
Treasurer..... Brian Terwilliger  
Secretary..... Jimmy Green  
National Director..... Craig Enenbach  
Chapter Hospital Liaison..... Tim Wolfe

Executive Director John DeMauro

**Elected Board Members**

Craig Enenbach..... Class of 2020  
Tim Wolfe..... Class of 2020  
Dan Guppenberger..... Class of 2021  
David Rountree..... Class of 2021  
Roger Sack..... Class of 2022  
Ken Weas..... Class of 2022

National Liaison Vice President: Robert Thomas

**Appointees**

Editor..... Steve Kirk  
Membership/Vol Coordinator..... Brenda Ciccarello  
Office Manager..... Joanne Poretti

**National Service Officers:**

Earnest Hill (386) 755-3016  
David Ray (407)-631-1835

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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.*



# Paralyzed Veterans of America Central Florida

6th Annual

Jerry Dugan Memorial Charity Golf Tournament

Saturday April 25, 2020

MetroWest Golf Club Orlando



**Registration 8:00 AM Shot Gun Start 9:00 AM**

**Registration: \$125.00 per golfer (Veterans \$100)**

**Foursomes: \$440**

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For more information call 407-328-7041 or email [joannep@pvacf.org](mailto:joannep@pvacf.org)



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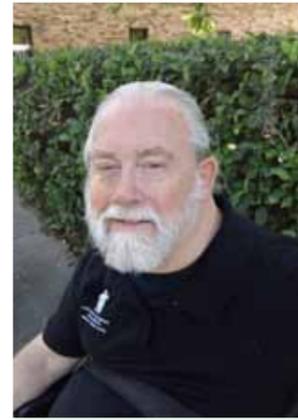


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## President



Franklin Delano Roosevelt, has a birthday in March and is often referred to by his initials FDR. He was an American politician who served as the 32nd president of the United States from 1933 until his death in 1945. He won a record four presidential elections and became a central figure in world events during the first half of the 20th century.

While the Roosevelts were vacationing at Campobello Island in August 1921, he fell ill. His main symptoms were fever; symmetric, ascending paralysis;

facial paralysis; bowel and bladder dysfunction; numbness and hyperesthesia; and a descending pattern of recovery.

Roosevelt was left permanently paralyzed from the waist down

Roosevelt convinced many people that his health was improving, which he believed to be essential prior to running for public office again. He laboriously taught himself to walk short distances while wearing iron braces on his hips and legs by swiveling his torso, supporting himself with a cane. Roosevelt was careful never to be seen using his wheelchair in public, and great care was taken to prevent any portrayal in the press that would highlight his disability. However, his disability was well known before and during his presidency and became a major part of his image. He usually appeared in public standing upright, supported on one side by an aide or one of his sons.

Beginning in 1925, Roosevelt spent most of his time in the Southern United States, at first on his houseboat, the *Laroco*.

Intrigued by the potential benefits of hydrotherapy, he established a rehabilitation center at Warm Springs, Georgia, in 1926. To create the rehabilitation center, Roosevelt assembled a staff of physical therapists and used most of his inheritance to purchase the Merriweather Inn. In 1938, Roosevelt founded the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, leading to the development of polio vaccines.

In the 1932 presidential election, Roosevelt defeated Republican President Herbert Hoover in a landslide. Roosevelt took office in the midst of the Great Depression, the worst economic crisis in United States History. During the first 100 days of the 73rd United States Congress, Roosevelt spearheaded unprecedented federal legislation and issued a profusion of executive orders that instituted the New Deal—a variety of programs designed to produce relief, recovery, and reform. He created numerous programs

to provide relief to the unemployed and farmers while seeking economic recovery with the National Recovery Administration and other programs. He also instituted major regulatory reforms related to finance, communications, and labor, and presided over the end of Prohibition. He harnessed radio to speak directly to the American people, giving 30 “fireside chat” radio addresses during his presidency and becoming the first American president to be televised. The economy having improved rapidly from 1933 to 1936, Roosevelt won a landslide reelection in 1936. His surviving programs and legislation include the Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Labor Relations Act, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Social Security, and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, which, among other things, prohibited child labor and created the right to a minimum wage.



This chair may have been used by FDR

The United States reelected FDR in 1940 for his third term, making him the only U.S. President to serve for more than two terms. With World War II looming after 1938, Roosevelt gave strong diplomatic and financial support to China, the United Kingdom and eventually the Soviet Union while the U.S. remained officially neutral. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, an event he famously called “a date which will live in infamy”, Roosevelt obtained a congressional declaration of war on Japan, and, a few days later, on Germany and Italy. Assisted by his top aide Harry Hopkins and with very strong national support, he worked closely with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Soviet

leader Joseph Stalin and Chinese Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek in leading the Allied Powers against the Axis Powers. Roosevelt supervised the mobilization of the U.S. economy to support the war effort, and implemented a Europe first strategy, making the defeat of Germany a priority over that of Japan. He also initiated the development of the world’s first atomic bomb, and worked with the other Allied leaders to lay the groundwork for the United Nations and other post-war institutions. Roosevelt won reelection in 1944, but with his physical health declining during the war years, he died in April 1945, less than three months into his fourth term. The Axis Powers surrendered to the Allies in the months following Roosevelt’s death, during the presidency of his successor, Harry S. Truman.

*Steve Kirk*



# The ReWalk Exoskeleton-Suited for Your Mission



**Retired Army Sergeant Terry Vereline crosses the finish line of the 2019 New York City Marathon after walking 26.2 miles in her ReWalk Exoskeleton. She received this device in 2014 and has used it to take nearly 1,000,000 steps in the past five years.**

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or 508.251.1154 Option 2**

## What is *Your* Mission?

Whether your goals include experiencing the proven health-related benefits of exoskeleton assisted walking, standing to hug a loved one or completing an entire marathon, ReWalk can you help you achieve them.



## Executive Director

Chapter Vice President Sean Gibbs and I will be traveling to Washington DC the first week in March. In fact, about the time you receive this publication in the mail, we will probably be sitting in one of our Congressional or Senate Representatives offices talking about one or more of the issues discussed later in this article. This is an important part of what the leadership of PVA in Washington and the leadership of our chapter do throughout the year. As advocates for you and the issues you deal with on a daily basis, we work hard at trying to get those who can make a difference to do so. It isn't easy and it can be extremely frustrating to sift through the layers of government to get to the place where something positive can be

accomplished. Often it takes years of talking about the same issue or concern before someone listens and takes action. A summary of this year's priorities are listed below. Take a look at them and give us some feed back.

*John DeMauro*



### ACCESS BOARD TO ASSESS FEASIBILITY OF WHEELCHAIR RESTRAINT SYSTEMS ON AIRCRAFT

On February 5, Senior Associate Advocacy Director, Lee Page, and Associate Executive Director, Government Relations, Heather Ansley, presented to the members of the Committee for a Study of Feasibility of Wheelchair Restraint Systems Passenger Aircraft about the boarding and deplaning experience of wheelchair users. This was the first meeting of the Committee, which was authorized by the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018.

The Access Board's study has the potential to advance access to air travel for passengers who use wheelchairs. As directed by Congress, this project will assess the feasibility of equipping passenger planes with restraint systems so that passengers can remain in their wheelchairs on flights. Having to transfer out of a wheelchair makes air travel very difficult, if not impossible, for many people with disabilities.

The National Academy of Sciences' Transportation Research Board (TRB) is conducting this study. TRB has organized a committee of experts to evaluate the feasibility of in-cabin wheelchair restraint systems. The members include: experts in aircraft interiors and safety engineering, accessibility, wheelchair design and crash worthiness, airline operations, and other disciplines. Committee members will evaluate the design, engineering, and safety requirements for equipping aircraft with locking or tiedown mechanisms for non-motorized and motorized wheelchairs used as seats. If such restraint systems are found to be feasible, the committee will then assess the wheelchair restraint systems that can be used to accommodate passengers using wheelchairs through all phases of flight, from boarding to deplaning.

In his comments, Mr. Page presented a slide show of the various aisle chairs that are currently in service at airports throughout the country. He focused on the process PVA members have to endure to board an airplane. Specifically, he described being the first to board, by transferring onto an aisle chair at the bottom of a sloped jetway and relying on contract personnel to bring the passenger into the plane for transfer to an airline seat. The path of travel to the airline seat can cause further injury because the aisle is too narrow and seats are too close together. Too often the airline aisle chairs are in disrepair and airline personnel don't know how to properly assist passengers. Furthermore, passengers' wheelchairs are stowed in the cargo hold and often damaged, mishandled, or lost as a result.

A peer-reviewed report on the panel's findings will be published at the conclusion of the project and submitted to Congress. The report is expected by October 2021.





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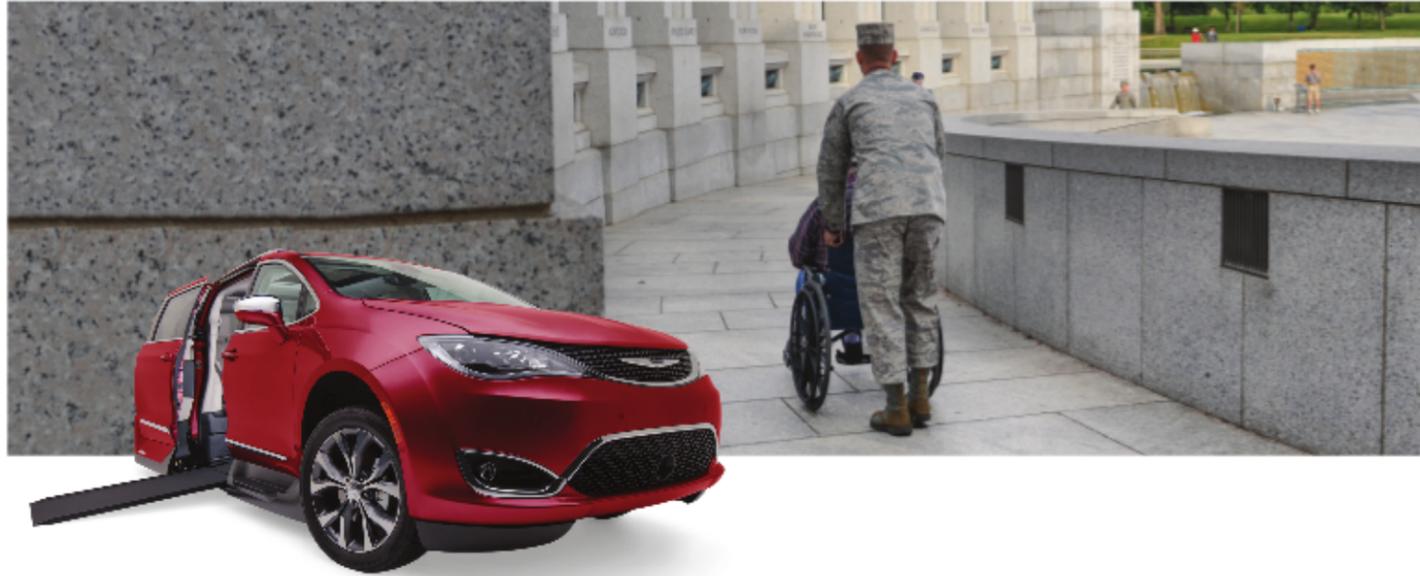
John Michael, National Service Officer at the James A. Haley Veterans Hospital, will be joining the chapter at the March 12<sup>th</sup> Board of Director's meeting, to be held at the chapter offices beginning 10:30am. If you have had or are having any issues with the hospital or with your care at the hospital, we need to know. You can either come to the meeting (please call the office and let us know so we can plan accordingly for lunch) or you can send me an email with your concerns at [johnd@pvacf.org](mailto:johnd@pvacf.org). John will be here to answer any questions you have or hear your concerns. As PVA's National Service Officer at the hospital, John is the person who can advocate on your behalf and perhaps help solve some of your issues. This is your opportunity, please make the most of it and come and join us at this important meeting.



**Thank You For  
Your Service**

AAA is Proud to Support  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Central Florida

# 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 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.

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## Milton L. Sowards

Milton L. Sowards, is one of the few surviving World War II Army Veterans (1942-1945). He was born on March 25, 1920 and is the father of Paralyzed Veterans of America Central Florida Chapter Membership and Volunteer Coordinator Brenda Ciccarello. Milton was delivered by a midwife at home and was the second of six children born to Emzy and Ruth Sowards who lived in Interlaken, New York. The president at the time was Calvin Coolidge, but Milton's favorite president was Teddy Roosevelt. There have been 15 presidents since his birth.

Milton's time in the military included a tour in Nova Scotia and a tour in Greenland. When he returned home, he continued his trade as a carpenter and helped build the Jefferson Memorial in Washington DC.



In 1956 he met "the love of his life" Juanita and married her the following year. They spent 64 splendid years together before she passed in 2018.

It wasn't long, after his time in the military, before Milton joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He became very active and ultimately became the County Council Commander. He is life member and still visits the DeLand, Florida VFW Post 2380 as often as he can.

Milton has participated in many of the PVACF activities and is considered a true friend of the chapter. He enjoys coming to chapter events and it is an honor for us to have him as our guest, when he does come.

Despite some hearing loss, from old age, Milton gets along great and is looking forward to see what 2020 will bring.

**Happy 100<sup>th</sup> birthday Milton!**





# NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES

40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY



# JULY 3-8, 2020

Portland, OR • [WheelchairGames.org](http://WheelchairGames.org)

Co-Presented by:



VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



Paralyzed Veterans of America



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## Governor DeSantis and FDVA Executive Director Burgess Highlight First Year in Office to Support Veterans

**TALLAHASSEE** – Gov. Ron DeSantis and officials from the Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs (FDVA) are pointing to a string of policies and initiatives that are providing critical support to the state’s 1.5 million veterans. Gov. Ron DeSantis said: “It’s been a fast-paced and meaningful first year. As a Navy veteran who served in Iraq, our state’s 1.5 million veterans will always have my unwavering support, along with all Floridians. With FDVA Executive Director Danny Burgess’ leadership, we will continue to ensure that veterans and their families in our great state have access to meaningful benefits, support and mental health services.” First Lady Casey DeSantis said: “We are working with Florida’s veteran community to help connect them with vital mental health counseling and services. It’s a long-term partnership that I’m pleased to have the support and engagement from FDVA Executive Director Danny Burgess. We are a military family and take great pride in honoring veterans when we travel the Sunshine State.” Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs Executive Director Danny Burgess said: “I’m proud of Governor Ron DeSantis and First Lady Casey DeSantis, our Cabinet and legislature in supporting FDVA and the 1.5 million veterans of our state. The Sunshine State offers unique benefits such as in-state tuition rates for veterans and their families using the Post-9/11 GI Bill, several layers of property tax exemptions, expanded veterans’ preference, and extensive benefits, licensure and fee waivers for many activities and occupations. Together, we will continue to ensure Florida leads the charge as the most veteran-friendly state in the nation.”

### Forward March Initiative:

- On March 29, Governor DeSantis and FDVA announced *Forward March*, an initiative which aims to unite the combined energy and resources of Florida’s state agencies, veterans’ service organizations, private partners and local communities. *Forward March* is the start of an ongoing effort to determine best practices and ensure the state of Florida sets the national standard for veteran services and support.
- The initiative kicked off at the University of South Florida, with regional meetings held during the summer of 2019 in Pensacola, Jacksonville, West Palm Beach, Ocala, Miami, Port Canaveral and Sarasota. Participants engaged in a series of breakout sessions focusing on topics such as Community Services, Mental Health and Wellness, Benefits and Assistance, Transition and Legal Services and Veterans’ Treatment Courts. With the feedback gathered from the regional meetings, FDVA is identifying where Florida needs to reinforce best practices, reduce redundancies and implement solutions to fill gaps.

### GI LAW – Lawyers Assisting Warriors:

- On April 18, Governor DeSantis announced the Governor’s Initiative on Lawyers Assisting Warriors (GI LAW), an initiative to leverage the talent of

Florida’s leading law firms to provide pro bono services to military members. Florida’s men and women in uniform will receive free legal counsel in a variety of civil matters, including actions in local courts.

- GI LAW began accepting pro bono legal services requests from active duty service members in May 2019, and to date, seven statewide law firms have provided free legal representation to more than 60 service members.

### Mental Health:

- On June 26, Governor DeSantis signed CS/CS/HB 501: Alternative Treatment Options for Veterans. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Mel Ponder and Sen. Tom Wright, creates a \$200,000 pilot program focused on treating post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injuries in veterans using alternative therapies. It expands available therapies for eligible veterans to include accelerated resolution therapy, equine therapy, music therapy, service animal training therapy and hyperbaric oxygen therapy at registered facilities.
- On Aug. 20, FDVA Executive Director Danny Burgess met with First Lady Casey DeSantis in Tampa to discuss suicide prevention and enhancing care coordination to veterans and military families. FDVA then partnered with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VISN 8) and Crisis Center of Tampa Bay to highlight the state’s veteran suicide prevention efforts during Florida Veteran Suicide Prevention Week, Sept. 8-14. A joint editorial was released statewide by FDVA Executive Director Burgess, VISN 8 Network Director Dr. Miguel H. LaPuz and Clara Reynolds, President and CEO of the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay.
- The Florida Veterans Support Line, 1-844-MyFLVet (693-5838), continues to provide confidential emotional support and connection to community resources 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The line, supported by FDVA and its suicide prevention partners, is available to all veterans in Florida.
- On Aug. 26, Governor DeSantis joined the Cohen Veterans Network to celebrate the opening of the Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinic at Aspire Health Partners. The clinic will provide additional support to Florida veterans who are suffering from mental health and post-traumatic stress issues, so they can live purposeful lives despite their critical wounds.
- On Veterans Day, Governor DeSantis and FDVA Executive Director Burgess joined Lee Health, the largest healthcare system in Southwest Florida, and Home Base Southwest Florida, a Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital Program, to announce a partnership offering mental health services for veterans and military families who call Southwest Florida home – at no cost.

### Career and Job Opportunities:

- Governor DeSantis announced that CareerSource Central Florida, CareerSource Flagler Volusia and CareerSource Polk were being awarded Veterans’ Performance Incentive Awards for their diligent work of providing employment and training opportunities to thousands of veterans.

Governor DeSantis announced the launch of a new military-friendly travel section on VISIT FLORIDA’s website, [www.visitflorida.com/military](http://www.visitflorida.com/military). The site includes information about discounts and experiences available to military members and their families, monuments and memorials, military-related events, museums and more. \$1,500,000 was awarded to *Veterans Florida* following the 2019 Legislative Session to meet the duties and responsibilities established by the legislature for the Veterans Entrepreneur and Training Services (VETS) Business Training Grants Program. \$1,000,000 was also awarded to *Veterans Florida* for the Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS) Entrepreneurship Program. The 75th Anniversary of the GI Bill was June 22. More than 46,000 Floridians currently use GI Bill benefits to further their secondary education.

### Investment in Veterans:

- On June 26, Governor DeSantis signed CS/CS/HB 427: Honor and Remember Flag. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Tommy Gregory and Sen. Joe Gruters, allows the flying of the Honor and Remember Flag to serve as the state’s emblem of the service and sacrifice of the brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces who have given their lives in the line of duty.
- Veterans in East Pasco County will soon have access to a brand new 14,000 square foot VA clinic, replacing the existing 4,500 square foot community based outpatient clinic (CBOC). A ground breaking ceremony took place in Zephyrhills on June 7.
- Governor DeSantis joined the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Nov. 22 for the ground breaking ceremony of a new Community Based Outpatient Clinic located in St. Augustine. The Governor was joined by FDVA Executive Director Danny Burgess.
- Governor DeSantis and Executive Director Burgess attended the 2nd Annual 50th Anniversary Lapel Pinning Ceremony hosted by Collier-Lee Honor Flight to honor Vietnam veterans. During the event, 50th Anniversary Pins authorized by the U.S. Congress were distributed.
- Governor DeSantis and First Lady DeSantis dedicated the Purple Heart Memorial at Tallahassee National Cemetery, Aug. 7.
- Governor DeSantis announced Sept. 9 the selection of Henry “Hank” James Thomas to the Florida Civil Rights Hall of Fame. Thomas, of Jacksonville, served in the U.S. Army from 1963-1966 where he earned six combat medals, including the Purple Heart. He was active in the civil rights movement and one of

the original thirteen Freedom Riders, as well as a committed Freedom Fighter.

- Governor DeSantis joined the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) to announce that Florida has been designated an Age-Friendly State, making Florida the fourth state in the nation to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. The Sunshine State has more than 789,000 veterans 65 years of age or older.
- FDVA printed and distributed 200,000 copies of the 2019 edition of the Florida Veterans’ Benefits Guide, courtesy of a grant from the *Florida Veterans Foundation*. To connect with veterans renewing their driver license, the guides have for the first time been distributed to Tax Collectors Offices and the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.

### State Veterans’ Homes:

- The FDVA budget resulting from the 2019 Florida Legislative Session was signed into law by Governor DeSantis and supports the daily operations of Florida’s six state-run veterans’ nursing homes and one assisted living facility. The facilities provide essential services and care to veterans throughout Florida.
- The Florida Health Care Association (FHCA) recognized four state veterans’ homes for earning a 2019 Silver – Achievement in Quality Award from the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living. They are the Alexander Ninger State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Pembroke Pines, Baldomero Lopez State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Land O’ Lakes, Emory L. Bennett State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Daytona Beach and Robert H. Jenkins Jr. Veterans’ Domiciliary Home in Lake City.
- Barbara Klein, a health care professional at the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Port Charlotte, was named the FHCA 2019 Long Term Care Rising Star in Nursing Award winner.

### Gov. Ron DeSantis’ Bolder, Brighter, Better Future Budget:

- The governor’s proposed budget for FY 2020-2021 invests \$18.2 million for the completion of the Ardie R. Copas State Veterans’ Nursing Home in St. Lucie County and the Lake Baldwin State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Orange County. The budget also invests \$6.1 million for 48 positions to complete the required staffing necessary for the Ardie R. Copas State Veterans’ Nursing Home and \$12.1 million for 40 positions to complete the required staffing and repairs necessary for the Lake Baldwin State Veterans’ Nursing Home in Orange County.
- Additionally, the budget recommends \$6.7 million for capital improvements, equipment updates and 16 additional nursing staff for Florida’s existing state veterans’ nursing homes.

Thanks for your support



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Clothe and shelter  
those in need

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.

Anything that your mind can DREAM and you BELIEVE, you can ACHIEVE.  
GOD created you to be SUCCESSFUL and HAPPY.

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

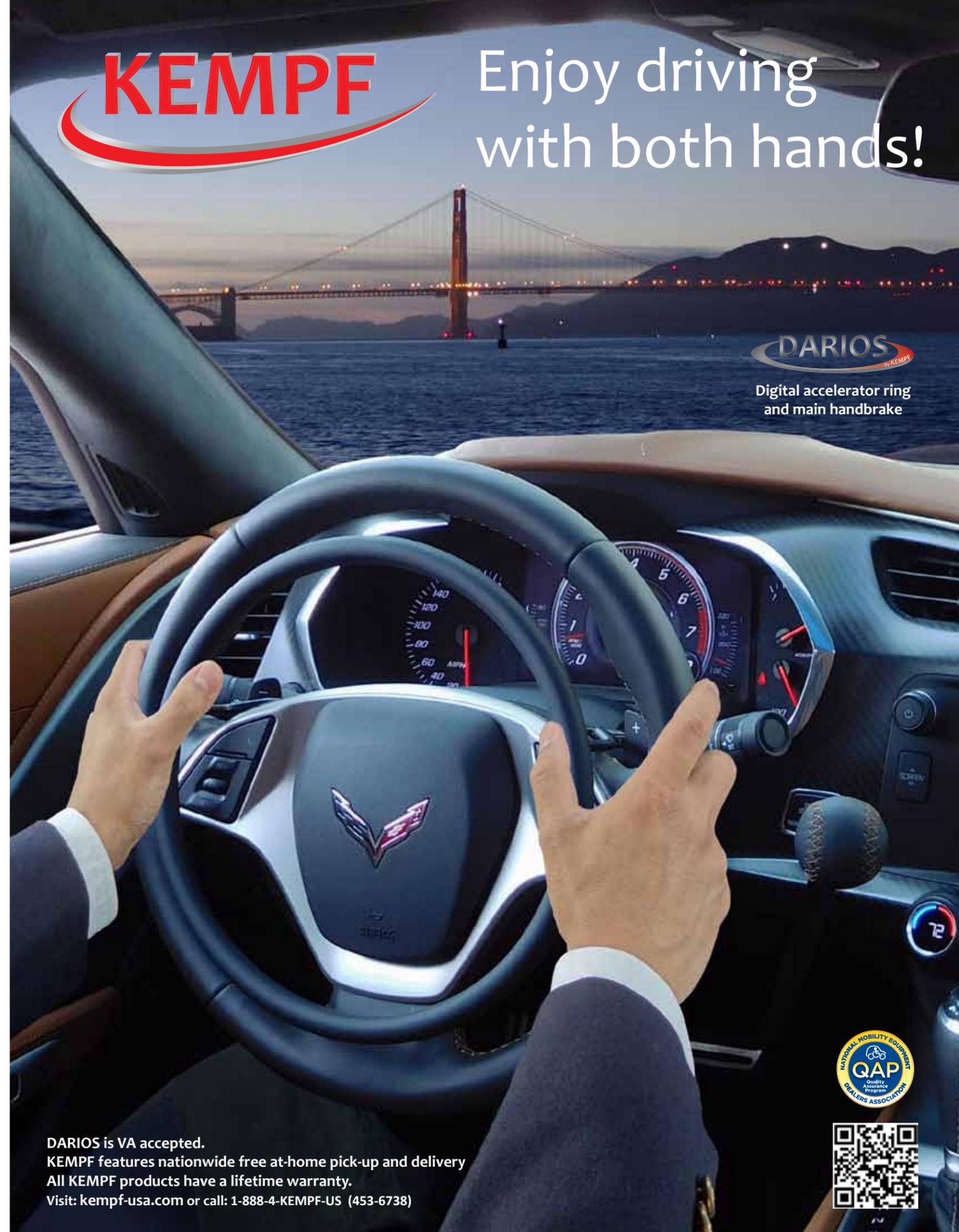
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# Enjoy driving with both hands!

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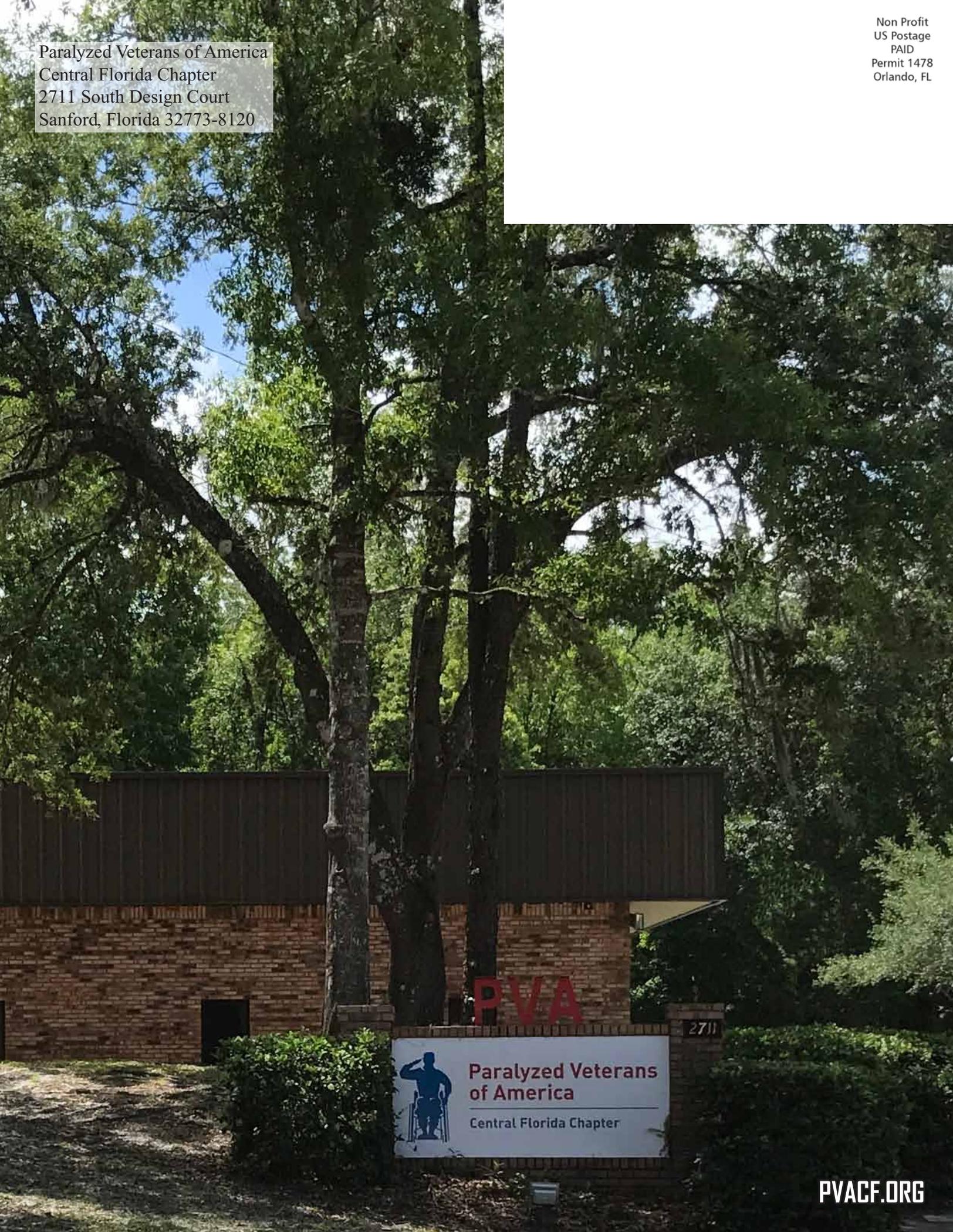


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