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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.
We are gearing up for our Chapter elections by using a ballot where we choose who we want as our leaders. Sounds simple, but in the full scope of history it was not that easy. When the delegates to the Constitutional Convention met in 1787 to debate what form of government the United States should have, there were no contemporary democracies in Europe from which they could draw inspiration. The most democratic forms of government that any of the convention members had personally encountered were those of Native American nations. Of particular interest was the Iroquois Confederacy, which historians have argued wielded a significant influence on the U.S. Constitution. The Iroquois Confederacy dates back several centuries, to when the Great Peacemaker founded it by uniting five nations: the Mohawks, the Onondaga, the Cayuga, the Oneida and the Seneca. In around 1722, the Tuscarora nation joined the Iroquois, also known as the Haudenosaunee. Descriptions of them appear in the three-volume handbook John Adams wrote for the convention surveying different types of governments and ideas about government. It included European philosophers like John Locke and Montesquieu, whom U.S. history books have long identified as constitutional influences; but it also included the Iroquois Confederacy and other Indigenous governments, which many of the delegates knew through personal experience.

“You had the Cherokee chiefs having dinner with [Thomas] Jefferson’s father in Williamsburg, and then in the northern area of course you had this Philadelphia interaction with the Delaware and the Iroquois,” says Kirke Kickingbird, a lawyer, member of the Kiowa Tribe and coauthor with Lynn Kickingbird of Indians and the United States Constitution: A Forgotten Legacy. The Iroquois Confederacy was in no way an exact model for the U.S. Constitution. However, it provided a real-life example of some of the political concepts the framers were interested in adopting in the U.S. This stacked-government model influenced constitutional framers’ thinking, says Donald A. Grinde, Jr., a professor of transnational studies at the University of Buffalo, member of the Yamasee nation and co-author with Bruce E. Johansen of Exemplar of Liberty: Native America and the Evolution of Democracy. The constitutional framers “cite the Iroquois and other Native governments as examples of [federalism],” he says. “Marriage and divorce is taken care of right in the village; it’s not a thing that the national government or the chiefs have to do with. Each tribe might have its own issues, but the Iroquois Confederacy is about...unification through mutual defense and it conducts foreign affairs.”

The chiefs of the six nations were hereditary rulers, something the framers wanted to avoid, given their grievances with Britain’s King George III. Still, the framers “did seek to borrow aspects of Iroquois government that enabled them to present the people’s sovereignty over vast geographic expanses since they found no governments in Europe with these characteristics,” Grinde and Johansen write in Exemplar of Liberty. Hiawatha is credited in Native American tradition as the founder of the Iroquois confederacy. The fact that many of the framers looked to Native governments for inspiration didn’t stop them from viewing Native peoples as inferior. This disconnect is evident in a 1751 letter from Benjamin Franklin describing the need for the 13 colonies to form a “voluntary Union” similar to that of the Iroquois Confederacy: “It would be a very strange Thing, if six Nations of ignorant Savages should be capable of forming a Scheme for such an Union, and be able to execute it in such a Manner, as that it has subsisted Ages, and appears indissoluble; and yet that a like Union should be impracticable for ten or a Dozen English Colonies, in which it is more necessary, and must be more advantageous; and who cannot be supposed to want an equal Understanding of their Interests.” However, public awareness of this connection increased around the 1887 bicentennial marking the 200th anniversary of the Constitution. This motivated the committee’s chair, Daniel Inoue of Hawaii, to help Congress pass a 1988 resolution formally acknowledging the influence of the Iroquois Confederacy on the U.S. Constitution. In addition to this recognition, the resolution reaffirmed “the continuing government-to-government relationship between Indian tribes and the United States established in the Constitution”—an acknowledgement of the legitimacy and sovereignty of Native nations and their governments.

With all this said, please take time to send your marked ballot back to us with who you want as leaders.

Remember: Nominations must be received, in the office by email, phone call by July 31, 2021 or at the July board meeting on July 8, 2021.
NEW PROPERTY: 5 Bedroom Home on Laurelwood Court Orlando, Florida

This Independent Home is awaiting New Residents. VETERANS, Individuals on low or fixed income, limited disabilities, individuals who receive SSI are all welcome to apply for this location. Thank you!

Be blessed! Please contact Sharon @ 407-766-0111

As our chapter considers the candidates and then elects its leadership, it is important to spend a moment or two to think about what makes a good leader. W.C.H. Prentice’s in an article he wrote in 1961, rejected the notion of leadership as the exercise of power and force or the possession of extraordinary analytical skill. Instead, he defined leadership as “the accomplishment of a goal through the direction of human assistants” and declared a successful leader as “one who can understand people’s motivations and enlist participation in a way that brings together individual needs and interests to accomplish the group’s purpose”. Those are pretty strong and challenging words. Most leaders want to “rule the roost”, they want to declare their position of power and exercise that power to accomplish their own goals, often ignoring the “needs and interests to accomplish the group’s purpose”. However, the best leaders are those who use reason while understanding the people involved and goals before them. Some seeking leadership fail because they do not study leadership and therefore do not understand leadership. Instead, they study popularity, power, showmanship, or wisdom in long-range planning.

Prentice stated that “a good leader may not possess or display power; force or the threat of harm may never enter into his dealings. He may not be popular; his followers may never do what he wishes out of love or admiration for him. He may not ever be a colorful person; he may never use memorable devices to dramatize the purposes of his group or to focus attention on his leadership. As for the important matter of setting goals, he may actually be a man of little influence, or even of little skill; as a leader he may merely carry out the plans of others. His unique achievement is a human and social one which stems from his understanding of those around him and the relationship of their individual goals to the group goal that he must carry out.”

There is tremendous pressure in leading. Often there are members of the group who do not agree with decisions made, many times because they have not studied the issue thoroughly. Sometimes because they have a different philosophy or motivation. However, a leader does not have the option having a personal philosophy or motivation outside of the purpose of the group. The leader’s job is to lead the group in a direction, which results in doing what is best for the group. Leaders are expected to achieve organizational success. This is not unreasonable. Often the leaders we choose is for that very reason. The person who can lead under the pressure of accomplishment, makes the best leader. Effective mobilization of human resources always requires the voluntary participation of all. Leadership is an interaction among people. It requires followers with particular traits and particular skills and a leader who knows how to use them to accomplish the task. For that reason, choosing the right leadership makes all the difference in success or failure.

So, as your Executive Director, I encourage you to make your choices wisely and thoughtfully as you pick the candidates you want to see lead our chapter. I hope that each of you will return your ballots before August 30, 2021.

John DeMauro
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 help you achieve them.

Pulling Someone’s Leg
Meaning: deceive someone playfully; tease someone.
Origin: While there is no evidence to back up these claims, there are two popular theories for the origins of this playful expression, neither of them particularly playful. The first relates to thieves in medieval times, who apparently pulled on the legs of their victims to trip them, and swiftly make off with their booty. The second theory comes from the Tyburn, the principal place of execution in Ye Olde England. It referred to the so-called ‘hangers-on’ who tugged at the legs of people being hanged to give them a mercifully swift death. Neither of these theories are really plausible however, so the search for the true origin continues.

Let Your Hair Down
Meaning: Behave uninhibitedly.
Origin: It was an important rule between Parisian nobles to wear elaborate hairdos while in public, and some of the looks required hours of long work. Clearly, a moment of taking your hair down after a long day became associated with a relaxing ritual.

To Sell Someone Down The River
Meaning: Betray someone, especially so as to benefit oneself.
Origin: This idiom comes from 19th century, in the Southern states of America. During this period it was already illegal to import slaves, so there would be internal trades where people would ship slaves down the Mississippi river and sell them at the market. For this reason, ‘selling someone down the river’ symbolizes betraying someone and using them for your own good.

This specifically refers to kidnapping free black people in the north and taking them down the river to sell them into slavery.

Read The Riot Act
Meaning: Give someone a strong warning that they must improve their behavior.
Origin: In 18th century England the Riot Act was a legal document, that was read aloud in front of a crowd bigger than 12 people that were considered a threat to the peace. A public official would read a small part of the Act and order people to leave peacefully within an hour, anyone that remained after one hour was subject to arrest or removal by force.

Paint The Town Red
Meaning: Go out and enjoy oneself flamboyantly.
Origin: There are two versions on how this idiom came to use. First, it is believed that back in 1837 a famous mischief maker known as the ‘Marquis of Waterford’ had a wild night out with his group of friends, during which they knocked over flower pots, pulled knockers off of doors and even broke windows. One of their biggest acts of vandalism was painting the doors of several homes with red paint. The other version of the story says that the origin of this idiom might have originated from the brothels of the American West, where they referred to drunk men behaving as if the whole town was a red-light district.

Beat About The Bush
Meaning: Discuss a matter without coming to the point.
Origin: Beating about the bush is actually an action performed while hunting, driving birds and other animals out into the open. After this was done others would than catch the animals.

Break The Ice
Meaning: Do or say something to relieve tension or get conversation going in a strained situation or when strangers meet.
Origin: In the old days, commercial ships would often get stuck in frozen rivers during winter time, so smaller ships called “icebreakers” would come to clear a path to shore by breaking the ice. In the 17th century, people began to use the phrase to mean “to reduce tension in a social situation.”

More Than You Can Shake A Stick At
Meaning: a large amount or quantity of something.
Origin: This idiom was born when farmers, who waved sticks to herd sheep, would have more sheep than they could control.

Minding Your Ps And Qs
Meaning: Be careful to behave well and avoid giving offence.
Origin: This expression has quite a few theories as to its origin, but our favorite refers to the practice of chalking up a ‘tab’ of drinks for later payment. The P refers to pints, and the Q is quarts. You would do well to correctly tally up the right amount as not to cause offense, especially a customer with a few beers under their belt! Again, there is little to support this theory other than the correct lettering, but we like it nonetheless.

Another one where no-one is exactly sure of the origin. An early rhyme by Charles Churchill, published in 1700s: “On all occasions next the chair / He stands for service of the Mayor, / And to instruct him how to use / His A’s and B’s, and P’s and Q’s. Doesn’t mean that is the origin of the expression to ‘mind them’. Others explain as ‘Please and Thank-You’ as latter sounds like ThanQ and these words are vital for manners - so mind your Ps and Qs = mind your manners.
A new Florida law, passed in late May of this year, changed the rules for people to get help with delivering their mail ballot to election officials. Under the new rule, now each volunteer (for example, a caregiver) can help only up to two people per election who are not their immediate family members to deliver voters’ vote-by-mail ballots. The Board of Directors of PVA Central Florida Chapter, PVA Florida Chapter and PVA Florida Gulf Coast Chapter voted to work with Fair Elections Center, a nonprofit, nonpartisan voting rights organization, to make sure that all of our members can exercise their right to vote. Fair Elections Center is providing legal services on a pro bono basis in a suit being brought against the State of Florida concerning this matter.

Previously, there were no statewide limits on ballot delivery assistance, so setting aside immediate family, there was no universal two-person limit for volunteers. By contrast, Section 208 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (a federal law) provides: “Any voter who requires assistance to vote by reason of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write may be given assistance by a person of the voter’s choice, other than the voter’s employer or agent of that employer or officer or agent of the voter’s union.” “Vote” is defined broadly, and been held by courts to include absentee by mail voting. Under Section 208, a voter who is blind, disabled, or unable to read or write (“208-covered voter”) possesses the right to choose any person other than their employer/union representative—regardless of whether the person is an immediate family member or has helped two other voters—to assist them with the voting process, including the steps necessary to obtain, cast, and submit a vote by mail ballot.

Your Chapter leadership has been in communication with National PVA’s Government Relations and General Counsel Departments about this issue in the State of Florida. Since the law could adversely affect members of PVA’s Florida chapters as voters with disabilities, we feel that this lawsuit would present a great opportunity for the chapter to take a leading role in preserving the voting rights of our members, as well as potentially gaining the chapters public notoriety as disability advocates. Our own Board President, Steve Kirk, a quadriplegic who could not vote without the assistance of his caregiver, is a perfect example of the need for this new rule to be corrected.

Fair Elections Center is also looking for individual people to potentially participate in litigation who need help submitting their mail ballot. If you meet the below list criteria and are interested in being involved to help fight this law so that people who need assistance can vote in Florida, please contact Michelle Kanter Cohen who is an attorney at Fair Elections Center at mkantercohen@fairelectionscenter.org, or if you prefer, call Bob Brandon at 202-248-5355:

- you are eligible to vote and want to vote in Florida
- you need to vote by mail because voting in person is impossible because of transportation/mobility barriers, or have been told by a doctor you should continue to avoid in person activities due to Covid-19.
- you need assistance to submit your vote by mail ballot because of their disability, e.g. visual disability, mobility disability or other reason you cannot independently submit your ballot without someone else taking possession of it;
- you do not have an immediate family member (“a person’s spouse or the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling of the person or the person’s spouse”) who you want to help deliver your ballot; AND
- you are likely to need/want assistance from someone who may be also helping two other voters deliver their ballots (e.g. social worker, facility staff, caregiver who is assisting others, non-immediate family member, etc.).

The 1984 Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act requires polling places across the U.S. to be physically accessible to people with disabilities for federal elections. Or, to provide alternate means for casting a ballot.
Getting Paralyzed Veterans Walking Again with Indego®

New VA Program offers eligible veterans an Indego® Exoskeleton at no cost.

What is Indego?
A robotic device that enables veterans to walk again.

Indego is an FDA-approved exoskeleton worn around the waist and legs that enables individuals paralyzed from spinal cord injuries to stand and walk, offering a new level of independence.

Indego can currently be used with spinal cord injury levels of T3 to L5 in community or home settings.

Free Indego Webinars
During the first Thursday of every month you can join a free live webinar to learn more about the Indego and hear from a veteran who owns a device already.

Contact us today to reserve your spot or find out if you are eligible to receive an Indego exoskeleton at no cost.
Email: support.indego@parker.com
Phone: 844-846-3346

Watch Marine Veteran Steve Holbert’s story at www.indego.com/veterans
We will pay you for where you go and what you know!

Paralyzed Veterans of America Central Florida is ready to pay its members to go out on the town and have fun! And as you do, we want you to tell us how wheelchair accessible your experience was. Go out to dinner, the theatre, a sporting event or any other public place where people eat or are entertained. Report back to us if the facility was accessible, if the staff is receptive to your visit and if you would recommend the establishment to others in wheelchairs.

Here is how this works:

• Go to a restaurant or a place of entertainment and enjoy!
• Send your receipt to us with your name and the name of your guest written on the back side.
• Answer the questions on our questionnaire (on line at http://tinyurl.com/wheelsgo) or mail the form below to 2711 S Design Court Sanford, Florida 32773
• Cash your reimbursement check for 100% of what you spent and enjoy using it again and again (Up to $500 per year per member/guest).*

This questionnaire (with answers) must be sent with the receipt in order to receive a refund

Where did you go (Name and address of the establishment)?
When did you go (Day of week and time of day)?
Was there adequate handicap parking and was it wheelchair friendly?
Was there a handicap ramp? Was it wide enough?
Was the entrance wheelchair friendly (was the doorway wide enough, was there an automatic door opener for the handicapped)?
Were you received well by the staff?
Was the facility accommodating (restrooms, counter tops, buffet counters, drink stations, etc.)?
Would you recommend the establishment to other PVACF members?

*Please note: we do not pay for alcohol.

*On National Non-profit Day, fight for those that fought for you. Our members receive the benefits and services they need when you donate your gently used clothes and household goods. To donate, visit: https://secure.pva.org/default.aspx?bid=4941&donationamount=other&m=source:WIC0YBF26P8&ga=2.1705649.1607860698.1552920584-258990982.1342719982

Be kind to humanity! You can #GIVE back to PVACF members by donating your gently used clothes and household goods. Your donation can help a paralyzed veteran today. To learn more and donate: https://secure.pva.org/default.aspx?bid=4941&donationamount=other&m=source:WIC0YBF26P8&ga=2.1705649.1607860698.1552920584-258990982.1342719982

To learn more or to book your stay, call us at (407) 562-1860 or email info@tiffsplace.org.
Upcoming (August) Events
PVACF Sports & Recreation

August 7th: (Saturday, 3pm & 4pm)
PVACF NVWGAtHome Bowling & Billiards
*** 3pm for those competing in NVWGAtHome, 3:30pm for all others
Boardwalk Bowling
10749 E. Colonial Dr.
Orlando, FL 32817
PVACF will pay for 2 games of bowling and 3 games of billiards for any active PVACF member and any of their immediate family members or care attendant.
Contact: SeanG@pvacf.org

August 17th: (9:30am & 1:30pm)
PVACF Air Rifle NVWGAtHome
PVA Central Florida Office
2711 S. Design Ct. Sanford
Contact: RogerS@PVACF.org to reserve time slot

August 22nd: (Sunday, 4pm)
Bowling & Billiards
Boardwalk Bowling
10749 E. Colonial Dr.
Orlando, FL 32817
PVACF will pay for 2 games of bowling and 3 games of billiards for any active PVACF member and any of their immediate family members or care attendant.
Contact: SeanG@pvacf.org

August 25th: (9:30am & 1:30pm)
PVACF Air Rifle Training & Postal Match
PVA Central Florida
2711 S. Design Ct. Sanford
Contact: RogerS@PVACF.org to reserve time slot

August 26th: (2pm)
PVACF Boccia Practice
PVA Central Florida Office
2711 S. Design Ct. Sanford
Contact: Front Office (407) 328-7041

August 28th: (9am)
Handcycle Practice
West Orange Trail
501 Crown Point Cross Rd, Winter Garden, FL 34787
Any level riders welcome. Families welcome. PVACF membership NOT required.
Contact: SeanG@pvacf.org

Sean Gibbs