



WHEELS IN MOTION

October 2021



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**Paralyzed Veterans of America
Central Florida Chapter
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Sanford, FL 32773-8120
Phone (407) 328-7041
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October Board Meeting is a **Zoom** - October 14th 10:30 AM.

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Email: office@pvacf.org
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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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President

October 13th 1754 was Molly Pitcher's birth day. Any number of books and popular websites will tell you today that while "Molly Pitcher" never existed, the real woman behind the nickname was likely Mary Ludwig Hays McCauley. The [National Women's History Museum](#), the [American Battlefield Trust](#), the [National Archives](#), the [American Revolution Museum at Yorktown](#), and New York's [Fraunces Tavern Museum](#) all have stories about McCauley, the real-life heroine of the Battle of Monmouth. On June 28, 1778, the popular history goes, McCauley was delivering water to men on the field (hence the "pitcher" nickname) and took over manning her husband's cannon after he was killed. McCauley was then recognized, by George Washington himself, as a non-commissioned officer. I can relate to this because I spent a year and a half at Ft. Monmouth.

The legend of a woman taking over her fallen husband's artillery gained further attention when George Washington's own adopted son (and Martha's grandson from her first marriage) George Washington Parke Custis recounted it in an 1840 newspaper article. A woman he called "Captain Molly" was bringing water to men on the field at Monmouth, and after her husband was shot dead, she "threw down the pail of water, and crying to her dead consort, 'lie there my darling while I avenge ye,' grasped the ramrod, ... sent home the charge, and called to the mattresses to prime and fire." For her bravery, the next morning George Washington met with her to recognize her service. Yet despite his close relationship with the original commander-in-chief, Custis' stories about the war were rarely family testimonials and instead legends passed down years later by others.

It's unclear exactly how these stories became pinned to McCauley, but it happened in the decades after her death in 1832. She applied for a pension from the state of Pennsylvania in 1822 as a widow of a veteran, but when it was awarded, it was "for services rendered" during the war. By the time of her son's death in 1856, his obituary identified him as "the son of the ever-to-be-remembered heroine, the celebrated 'Molly Pitcher.'" As part of national celebrations of the centennial of the Revolution in 1876, the Patriot Order of the Sons of America placed a memorial to "Molly Pitcher" at McCauley's grave in Carlisle.

If the Molly Pitcher/ Mary McCauley story is so flimsy, why do reputable historic sites still tell it? As historian Ray Raphael argues in this 2013 piece deconstructing the legend, "Molly Pitcher needs a flesh-and-blood woman to

make her way into the textbooks, where mythic figures are not allowed, and modern textbooks, seeking a female presence, need those dramatic paintings of Molly working her cannon." While Raphael and other historians have debunked the McCauley tale for years, once a story like this makes its way into a few publications, it gets repeated again and again.

There is much stronger evidence that another woman, Margaret Corbin (whom historians think also contributed to the Molly Pitcher legend) manned a canon at the Battle of Fort Mifflin in New York and lost the use of her left arm in the process. She was sent to the Corps of Invalids at West Point, where she was known in the records as "Captain Molly," and became the first woman in American history to receive a lifelong pension for military service.

Perhaps the most remarkable female soldier of the Revolution, however, was a woman named Deborah Sampson who entered the military as a man named Robert Shurtliff in 1782. She served with the Light Infantry Troops in New York and her gender identity was only discovered when she fell ill and was examined by a doctor. After the war, she married, received a military pension, and achieved fame with a speaking tour in which she told her story. Countless more women, whose names we may never know, served at the battlefield as nurses, cooks, laundresses and camp followers. The last group describes women who accompanied the troops and provided domestic (and sometimes sexual) services, in some cases because they were simply too poor to provide for their families with their husbands away fighting. Historian Holly Mayer estimates that perhaps 7,000 women accompanied the American troops during the war. George Washington complained in 1777 that "the multitude of women in particular...are a clog upon every movement." But he knew that the soldiers would desert without them, and that their labor was necessary. The next time you pass Molly Pitcher Service Area as you drive on the New Jersey Turnpike, or see her image in a textbook, spare a thought for the real female heroes of the American Revolution. We may not know many of their names, but thousands of them helped America achieve its independence.

Thanks to Cassandra Good and her article.

Steve Kirk



Caregivers on the Homefront

Mental Health and Wellness Restorative Weekend



November 18th-21st, 2021
Hilton Grand Resort at Sea
World

Apply today for our veteran and military family caregiver Restorative Weekend. You must be a registered caregiver with Caregivers on the Homefront. <https://caregivers-homefront.org/what-we-do/registration/>

Once registered apply here: <https://caregivers-homefront.org/mhwrestorativeweekend.html>

The Restorative Weekend consists of interactive workshops that focus on a variety of topics that surround the caregiver - self-care, identity, mental health, boundaries, suicide, and resiliency. Please understand while we hope you find a moment to yourself so you can reset, we will not have much down time nor will this be a getaway for the caregiver to isolate. We want to provide you with tools so that when you return home you are better equipped to navigate this journey we are all on together. We also hope you find a solid foundation and a wonderful caregiver tribe to ensure your resiliency.

www.caregivers-homefront.org

Find us on Facebook @caregiversonthehomefront

Caregivers Weekend Retreat

We are working with Caregivers on the Homefront (COH), a non-profit group located in Kansas City, MO to provide a Mental Health & Wellness Restorative Weekend, to be held November 18-21, 2021 at the Hilton Orlando Retreat in Orlando, Florida at no cost to the caregiver. This four-day retreat will have some of its meetings at the chapter office and others at the hotel.

The retreat will involve a small group of caregivers. There is room for 12 caregivers from our membership to attend. If more than 12 caregivers from PVACF apply, the first 12 caregivers that apply and are qualified will be notified of their selection to attend. Any spots not filled by October 22, 2021 will be open to the public. There will be no cost to the caregiver, other than a \$100 refundable deposit. The chapter will reimburse transportation costs to member caregivers.

*Please note - You must be a registered caregiver with COH in order to apply to attend the retreat. To register, go to <https://caregivers-homefront.org/mhwrestorativeweekend.html> and click on the caregiver registration tab. Once registered, you can apply for the Restorative Weekend on the website. Applications will not be processed unless you are a registered COH caregiver. Registration provides vital information for meeting your needs and for your protection. You will be required to pay a \$100 deposit (which will be reimbursed at the end of the retreat). If you are interested in attending or have any questions, please call the office and let us know. Some of the speakers at the Mental Health and Restorative Weekend will be;

Shawn Moore, Founder/Executive Director

Shawn is the Executive Director and Founder of Caregivers on the Homefront, a Kansas City based non-profit that supports the mental health and wellbeing of veterans and their family members. Shawn graduated with a Masters in Social Work from Park University and is licensed with the State of Missouri and Kansas. She was a 14-year veteran with the Kansas City, Missouri Police department. She is a Missouri Dole Caregiver Fellow alumna for the Elizabeth Dole Foundation. Since May of 2013 Shawn has been a caregiver for her husband who is a 23-year Army veteran. Shawn is a member of the Phi Alpha Rho Epsilon Honor Society and was

the 2019-2020 President at Park University. She has presented to a national audience on how our communities can best support the family members of our veterans with SAMHSA, The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers, and the Elizabeth Dole Foundation to name a few. She has shared her story on PBS NewsHour, MSNBC, and local news channels. She was chosen as a Caregiver Visionary winner for Caregiving.com in 2019. Shawn openly shares her caregiver story throughout the United States in hopes that all family caregivers will be recognized for the work they do to take care of our wounded veterans.

Natasha J. Swayze MSW, Program Director

Natasha received her Bachelor's of Social Work and a Master's of Social Work degree from Park University. Natasha is a member of Phi Alpha Rho Epsilon Honor Society and was active in participating in service activities as a member. Natasha has a passion for the military community. Natasha brings a unique perspective to Caregivers on the Homefront as she openly shares her story of what the caregiver role looks like after divorce, especially when children are involved. While completing a Summer internship at The Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Leavenworth Kansas and connecting to Caregivers on the Homefront, Natasha's desire to advocate for the caregivers of military families grew.

Essie Titus, Yoga Therapist

Essie leads Trauma Informed Yoga classes for the Kansas City MO Police Department and the Kansas City MO Fire Academy cadets. Her practice as a yoga therapist includes individual sessions that vary in length according to the needs of the client. The last 2 years she led workshops that range from an intimate self-care retreat in southern Missouri to Trauma Informed Yoga presentations and Warriors Ascent in Parkville MO. Essie has been providing yoga and meditation to veteran caregivers at Mental Health and Wellness Restorative Weekend for



Caregivers Weekend Retreat

the past four years.

Here are some of the comments from those who have attended Caregivers on the Homefront Mental Health & Wellness Restorative Weekends in the past:

- I was able to open up about my current caregiver situation and touch on a lot of issues I had to deal with as a child, as it seems my life is going full circle. This week opened up some hidden issues and feelings that needed airing out, knowing my strengths also helped me in dealing with all of it. I found out that I am not the only person who has these emotions and problems-that right there was the best support I could have ever asked for. Thank you for making this weekend happen.
- This weekend taught me that I cannot be there for everyone at 100 percent if I don't start being there for myself. I need to take time for my physical and mental health and be a better person from the inside to be a better person for those around me. I need to give myself love instead of only giving everyone around me love.
- I had such an amazing time at the WWP and COH restorative weekend! They reiterated tools I haven't used in a while and also learned new tools. While it's never easy talking about my trauma, it was effortless with this group. They've shown me that I AM worth enough to take care of myself by working through my traumas and that I'm worthy enough for a tribe. There was so much love and support before we were at the retreat, helping to ensure I had care for my veteran when it was cancelled 6 days previous. This was LIFE CHANGING for myself and my home. I'm forever grateful.
- I signed up hoping to gain some information on reducing stress, managing a household with a wounded warrior, also tools for my daily life. I gained so much more. I had the opportunity to connect with other caregivers. We shared our stories and found we shared similar struggles as well. It was extremely validating. Problems that are ignored by many around us were understood in this

space. Many of us lack a support system. I gained one at the retreat. The thing that stands out the most is we introduced ourselves at the beginning of the retreat. I think all of us could not describe ourselves without including our children and/or significant others. At the end of the retreat we all were able to say who we truly were. I am forever grateful to you for this. I changed so much in those four days. I came home feeling refreshed. I had the most productive day I'd had in a long time. My husband even made appointments to improve his mental health. I am no longer burnt out and I don't feel such resentment.

- It's very easy to forget that you aren't alone on this journey and this weekend helped remind me in a tangible way that while it may not be the exact same journey, we're all toiling up the same mountain. Probably the most significant thing was the time spent working on figuring out who we are as individuals, not as caregivers, wives, partners, mothers, employees, or workers. I learned that I have no idea who I am and I haven't known for a very long time. Instead I've thrown myself into my titles rather than figuring out my own identity. I've been home less than 24 hours, and my husband and my children have all observed that "Some of your spark is back." We, as caregivers, NEED these kinds of events in ways I can not even begin to explain. Just a few months ago a caregiver I know personally took their own life because they felt like they had no other option. Getting good, informed mental health care is incredibly difficult for caregivers. Events like this are a lifeline. I've been on the edge for months. This event helped me remember that my tribe is out there, maybe not here where I would like them to be, but in Pennsylvania and Ohio and Michigan and Indiana and New York. There is hope and you're not alone. Those are the two biggest takeaways for me from this weekend and I can honestly say, they may have saved my life.

John DeMauro

Election Results

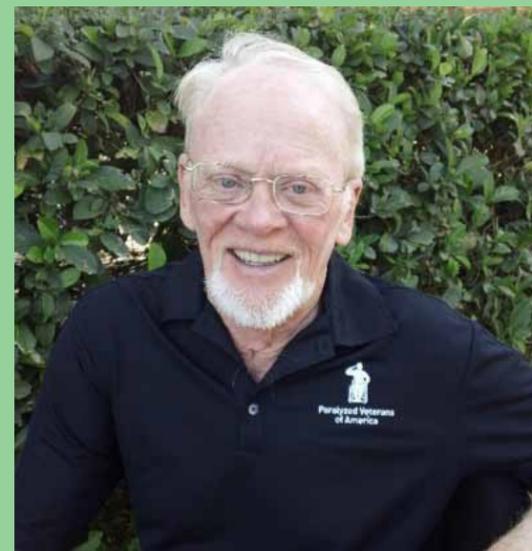


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Upcoming (October) Events

PVACF Sports & Recreation

For a complete schedule, please go to www.pvacf.org/sports or contact Rogers@pvacf.org

October 16th Special Event: Champions Ride for Charities

This event is a 10-mile bike / handcycle ride to help raise awareness and funds for local charities. If you would like to participate, please contact Roger Sack at rogers@pvacf.org. Registration is FREE to PVACF members. If you would like to borrow a handcycle please contact the front office.

Sled Hockey, Wheelchair Football and Power Chair Soccer:

If you live in Orlando area and would like to try Sled Hockey, Wheelchair Football or Power Chair Soccer, please contact Roger Sack at rogerspvacf.org.

October 1st: (1st Friday, 1pm)

PVACF Bowling & Billiards
Airport Bowl, Sanford, FL

For more information, please go to www.pvacf.org/sports or

Contact: rogerspvacf.org

October 9th: (2nd Saturday, 9am)

Handcycle Practice
Seminole Wekiva trail
8515 Markham Rd., lake Mary FL 32714

Any level riders welcome. Families welcome. PVACF membership NOT required.

Contact: rogerspvacf.org

October 13th: (2nd Wed., 9am & 1pm)

PVACF Air Rifle Practice
PVA Central Florida Office
2711 S. Design Ct. Sanford
Contact: rogers@PVACF.org to reserve time slot

October 14th: (2nd Thurs. 2pm)

(After BOD Meeting)
PVACF Boccia Practice
PVA Central Florida Office
2711 S. Design Ct. Sanford
Contact: Front Office (407) 328-7041

October 15th: (3rd Friday, 1pm)

PVACF Bowling & Billiards
Airport Bowl, Sanford, FL

For more information, please go to www.pvacf.org/sports or

Contact: rogerspvacf.org

October 23rd: (4th Saturday, 9am)

Handcycle Practice
West Orange Trail
501 Crown Point Cross Rd, Winter Garden

Any level riders welcome. Families welcome. PVACF membership NOT required.

Contact: rogerspvacf.org

October 27th: (4th Wed., 9am & 1pm)

PVACF Air Rifle Training & Postal Match
PVA Central Florida
2711 S. Design Ct. Sanford
Contact: rogers@PVACF.org to reserve time slot

October 28th: (4th Thurs., 2pm)

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



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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.

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