

WHEELS IN MOTION

February 2024



*Happy Valentine's
Day*



**Paralyzed Veterans of America
Central Florida Chapter
2711 S. Design Ct.
Sanford, FL 32773-8120
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February Board Meeting is via **Zoom** - February 8th 10:30 AM

Website: pvacf.org
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.

Paralyzed Veterans of America Central Florida

10th Annual

Jerry Dugan Memorial Charity Golf Tournament

The Club at Venetian Bay

New Smyrna Beach, Florida



Save The Date

May 4, 2024

Registration 7:30 AM Shot Gun Start 9:00 AM

Registration: \$150.00 per golfer (Veterans \$125) Foursomes: \$540

Cart & Green Fee, Range Balls, unlimited beer, soda and water during play

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Trophies for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams, prizes for closest to the pin and closest to the center-line.

Raffle/silent auction

Send check to: PVACF 2711 South Design Court Sanford, FL 32773 or register online at pvacf.org

For more information call 407-328-7041 or email joannep@pvacf.org



Chapter President

Steve Kirk

This issue of our February magazine made me think that spring break isn't too far away. Soon college students will be swarming the beaches here in the Sunshine state. Dayton, Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, just to name a few. I ran across someone who joined the army from Ft. Lauderdale and went on to West point, AKA Sandy.

The Nininger family moved to Fort Lauderdale, Florida in 1926, Sandy (Alexander) had an interest in West Point. He received a Congressional appointment to West Point his senior year in high school, and he entered the United States Military Academy on July 1, 1937.

Nininger graduated from the US Military Academy at West Point with the Class of 1941. At the Academy, he was involved in track, the debating society, and was chairman of the lecture committee. He was part of the Academy's 3rd Battalion "L" Company, in which he served as a Cadet Sergeant.

He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for leading an assault on Japanese positions. He was the first American army soldier to be so honored in the Second World War. Nininger was killed in action near Abucay, Bataan on January 12, 1942.

After entering active service, according to Malcolm Gladwell, Nininger "wrote a friend to say that he had no feelings of hate, and did not think he could ever kill anyone out of hatred. He had none of the swagger of the natural warrior. He worked hard and had a strong sense of duty." Nininger loved to draw pictures.

During the first month of the Japanese invasion of the Philippines, Nininger's unit helped prepare American defenses in Bataan. After the Japanese launched their assault on Bataan, Nininger voluntarily joined another company because his unit was not yet engaged in combat.

"Sandy" Nininger's Yearbook biography is as follows: "--'tis not what man does which exalts him, but what man would do!" It was Sandy's good fortune to be provided with the means and the background necessary to know and appreciate the many arts.

Rank and organization: Second Lieutenant, 57th Infantry, Philippine Scouts, U.S. Army. Place and date: Near Abucay, Bataan, Philippine Islands, January 12, 1942. Entered service at: Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Born: Gainesville, Georgia.

Here is his Citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with the enemy near Abucay, Bataan, Philippine Islands, on 12 January 1942. This officer, though assigned to another company not then engaged in combat, voluntarily attached himself to Company K, same regiment, while that unit was being attacked by enemy force superior in firepower. Enemy snipers in trees and foxholes had stopped a counterattack to regain part of position. In hand-to-hand fighting which followed, 2d Lt. Nininger repeatedly forced his way to and into the hostile position. Though exposed to heavy enemy fire, he continued to attack with rifle and hand grenades and succeeded in destroying several enemy groups in foxholes and enemy snipers. Although wounded 3 times, he continued his attacks until he was killed after pushing alone far within the enemy position. When his body was found after recapture of the position, 1 enemy officer and 2 enemy soldiers lay dead around him.

When you think of Spring break, remember Sandy.





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Executive Director

John DeMauro



As some of you may know, the chapter is adding a warehouse to our property to house the ever-expanding REEP (refurbished equipment exchange program). This program involves us receiving donated durable medical equipment and then redistributing it to people in need in our community.

The program not only helps people in need of the equipment, but it also helps people who have the equipment and no longer need it find somewhere for it to go to good use. The program is a small way in which the chapter can give back to the community that often gives to us.

We have never marketed this program. Its popularity has been simply by word of mouth. The marketing benefit to the chapter is that people mention our name to friends and relatives, who then share with those that they know. As a result, we are getting calls from all over the state. Just today I received a call from Cape Coral asking about a power wheelchair. In the past nine years that chapter has given away over one and a half million dollars' worth of equipment to nearly 2,000 people. We partner with multiple organizations in Central Florida and because of this program we have developed multiple relationships with local foundations who not only support this program but many of the other programs of the chapter.

One of those foundations, The Harper Family Charitable Foundation, has pledged to match gifts

to the PVACF Capitol Campaign up to \$125,000. That means for every dollar someone donates to the chapter, specifically for the building project, the Harper Family Charitable Foundation will match that dollar up to \$125,000. By leveraging this generous offer from the foundation, we can cover nearly the entire cost of the building. To date we have received \$15,000 in donations, a \$1,200 pledge and another \$22,000 pledged to this project.

We are expecting to break ground soon and I am hoping that by the time we break ground we will have already reached our goal of raising \$320,000. If you have an interest in helping us reach our goal and want to make your gift count twice as much, give now and let us know that it is for the building campaign.

As a footnote, in the past 5 years the Harper Family Charitable Foundation has given the chapter \$40,000 towards the costs of this program and \$40,000 in sponsorships of our golf tournament to help with the costs of our other programs. Thank You Harper Family Charitable Foundation for your continued support of paralyzed veterans throughout Central Florida. And thank you to those who have already given to PVACF and to those who will soon give to this project. Helping the disabled community is part of what we do in Central Florida in addition to all we do for paralyzed veterans in Central Florida

Did You Know?

Did you know there's a toilet museum?

In New Delhi, the Sulabh International Museum Of Toilets features a rare collection that details the historic evolution of toilets from 2500 BC all the way up to the present day. When you browse through the exhibit, you'll learn about the plumbing system of ancient societies, marvel at the elaborately decorated toilets of 18th and 19th-century Europe, and even get to sit upon one from Austria that is shaped like a lion!

Did you know the Eagles' stadium once had a courtroom?

Veterans Stadium, where the Philadelphia Eagles once played, had a stadium courtroom and jail to handle the team's notoriously rowdy fans. However, one of the judges for said courtroom reported that 95% of the "inmates" were actually not from the city itself!

Did you know Winston Churchill was hit by a car and nearly killed during a New York visit?

Talk about an all-American welcome! During a lecture tour in the U.S. in Dec. 1931, Winston Churchill was struck by a car while crossing Fifth Avenue and nearly killed. Fortunately, he survived the accident.

Did you know "strengths" is the longest word in the English language with one vowel?

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, "strengths" is the longest word in the English language with one vowel. The word contains nine letters, eight of them being consonants.

Did you know your liver's size fluctuates significantly throughout the day?

While studying mice, a team of Swiss researchers found that the mice's liver cells swelled and contracted up to 40% while doing their daily activities. Though research being conducted whether that happens to that extent in humans, one study from 1986 found a person's liver swells about 20 percent between day and

night—presumably related to the fact that the liver is not working as hard when a person is sleeping.

Did you know there are actually two Air Force Ones?

When its only job is to transport one of the world's most influential leaders all over the globe, it's important that it is maintained in tip-top shape. So when Air Force One's SAM 28000 Boeing 747-200B plane is getting fixed, there's an identical plane standing by!

Did you know it only takes six minutes for alcohol to affect your brain?

Give yourself 6 minutes and you'll see your favorite alcoholic beverage can go to your head a lot quicker than you think. Researchers at Heidelberg University Hospital found that just six minutes after consuming alcohol, changes are already taking place in the brain!

Did you know Loch Ness contains more freshwater than all of England's lakes combined?

Located in Scotland, Loch Ness holds more freshwater than any other British lake at a volume of 7,452 cubic meters! If any lake could hold a mythical dinosaur-like monster, it's this one.

Did you know the youngest Olympian was 10 years old?

According to official Olympic records, the youngest athlete to win an Olympic medal was Greek gymnast Dimitrios Loundras, who finished third at the 1896 Olympic Games when he was 10 years old.

Did you know only 18 out of 1 million Lego pieces are defective?

The molds at the manufacturing plant at Lego are so precise and effective that just 18 out of 1 million are found to be defective. That's out of the 20 billion pieces that are manufactured every year!

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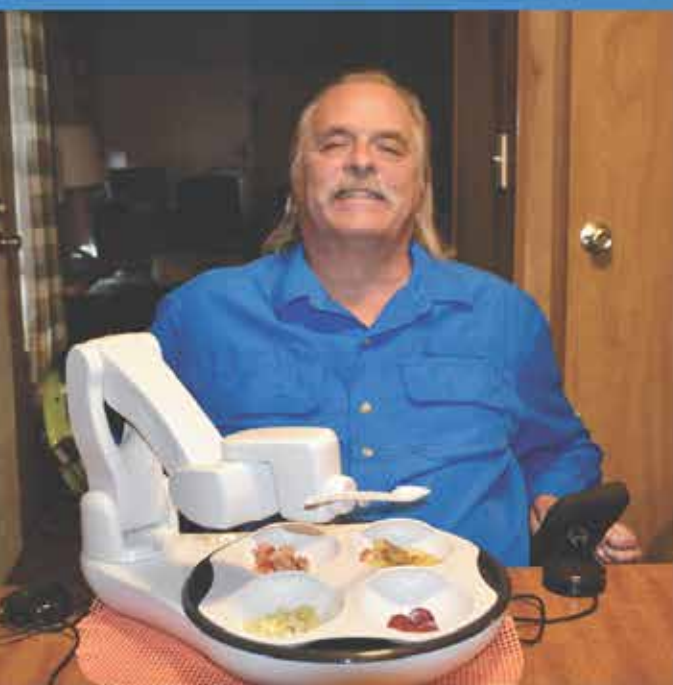
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Sports Director

Roger Sack

Boccia

2024 Started out with Boccia this past Friday. We had two veterans and a coach come out for it on the 5th. On the First Monday of every month, Boccia training will continue.

Archery

On the 8th, we kicked off with an Archery/Fly Fishing event at the Orlando Bass Pro Shop. We had 33 veterans, 2 VA Coaches and a VA Physician come to the event. Bass Pro Archery Instructors “Fred” (a Navy Veteran), “Art” (a Veteran); along with Fly Fishing Instructor “Steve” (also a Veteran) and myself taught for the day. The introduction of the Sport in the morning, lunch and then split into two groups. One group went to Fly Fishing, as the other to the Archery Range. One on one time on the range, along with individual equipment evaluations were given.

This event was great for the kickoff of Archery for 2024.

Skiing

Beach Mountain clinic had over 590 registered for this years event. We are on the list for 2025 when their adaptive program begins again. For those who still want to go skiing, please reach out an let me know to coordinate a weekend to go.

Bowling

Central Florida Veterans Bowling League will be starting in February. Please watch the PVACF calendar and emails for the flyer and details.

Air Rifle

This Monday, the 15th of January, Zachery Schnelling from SCOPOS (Athena/Orion Systems) will be at the chapter for those who would like to know more about how the system works and some repairs to the range will also be completed at that time. He will be giving instructions on how the range fully works and answer any questions that you may have.

We will also be entering a PVA Postal Match each month as Veterans prepare for the NVWG, NVSG and NVGAG this year. Also, we will be competing against other Move United, PVA Chapter Teams.

Next Chapter Air Rifle is the 4th Wednesday of January.

NVWG

If you are wanting to go to the games, have questions on applications, contact Jimmy Green (NVWG Sports Coordinator).

Roger Sack



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Washington Update

ACCESSIBLE DROP-OFF ZONES COMING TO CAPITOL HILL

At the beginning of December, the Committee on House Administration's Modernization Subcommittee sent a letter to the Capitol Police, the Architect of the Capitol, and the House Sergeant at Arms requesting "a preliminary study to identify possible drop off and pick up locations on level ground" for members of the public with mobility impairments.

In May 2021, PVA's Chief Policy Officer Heather Ansley testified before the House Select Committee on Modernization of Congress on making the House more accessible to the disability community. In her testimony, she mentioned the challenges faced by PVA's members, and others with mobility limitations when they visit the Capitol and neighboring office buildings. Ansley specifically highlighted how the barriers start at the curb and called for designated drop off (or pick up) zones near all accessible entrances, among other improvements.

While the exact locations of these drop-off zones are currently being determined, a short-term fix is expected to be in place in early 2024, ahead of the springtime tourist and advocacy season. More permanent solutions are actively in the works and will be realized in the weeks and months ahead.

HVAC HOLDS FULL COMMITTEE MARKUP

On December 5, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee (HVAC) held a full committee markup discussing bills that advanced from the Economic Opportunity (EO) and Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs (DAMA) Subcommittees.

All of the bills discussed, several of which are being tracked by PVA, successfully advanced through the markup. PVA priority, H.R. 3790, the Justice for ALS Veterans Act, was among those bills that is now ready for the House floor. As a reminder, surviving spouses of a service-connected veteran may be eligible for dependency and indemnity

(DIC) benefits. The current rate for DIC is \$1,562. For veterans that lived for at least eight-years with their service-connected injury, spouses may be eligible for the DIC "kicker," an additional \$331 each month. The Justice for ALS Veterans Act would authorize the surviving spouse of a veteran who dies from ALS to receive the DIC "kicker" in the event their spouse died before the eight-year requirement.

Other DAMA-related bills addressed in the markup include one that would address disparities for women veterans who served in combat when seeking VA benefits, one that seeks to improve transparency at the Board of Veterans' Appeals, a fraud reimbursement bill, and also a bill that ensures a veteran's claims cannot be denied simply because they miss a compensation and pension (C&P) exam.

VA HOLDS WOMEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

In mid-December, VA's Advisory Committee on Women Veterans met for a meeting. The sessions are open to the public and the links are provided to all attendees to listen in to the discussion. Advisory Committee participants receive briefings on unique efforts that VA is making to engage women veterans.

The first day included briefings from the National Cemetery Administration, the Veterans Benefits Administration, the Intimate Partner Violence Assistance Program, and the Office of Women's Health. All presentations focused on unique efforts each program is making to increase engagement from women veterans.

The second day included updates on the Women Veteran Call Center, veteran homelessness, assault and harassment prevention and the Office of Transition and Economic Development initiatives. The second day also included time to address public comments.



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Government Relations

Tim Wolfe

The Continuing Resolution goes through January 19th which includes the VA. This week the House Speaker and the Senate Majority leader announced they've come up with a top line agreement, so hopefully they'll be able to come up with a full year resolution. The VA budget has not been slated for a reduction like some other agencies in either the House or Senate. Congress will need to extend the CR or agree to the full year resolution to avoid a government shutdown. However, VA healthcare and monthly benefits are secure.

The Veterans omnibus that VA committees have been talking about for quite a while are finally at a point of agreement with language,

so it is with CBO now for scoring. It includes the Elizabeth Dole Home Care Act and some other bills so it would be a large package of things that are meaningful and address some of our main focus areas. The CBO score and how it measures with the offset that they currently have will help determine what comes of this.

Across the board Congress was at a historical low for passing legislation. Our website will be updated soon with these issues.

Tim Wolfe



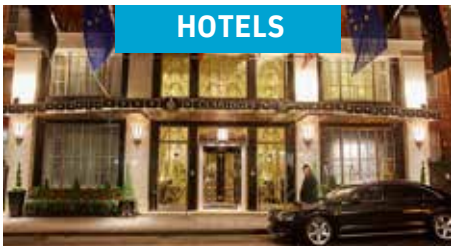


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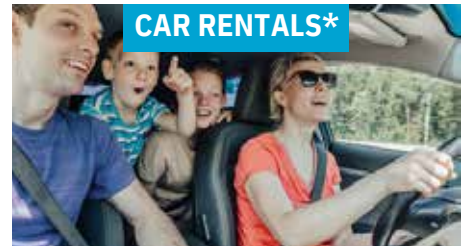
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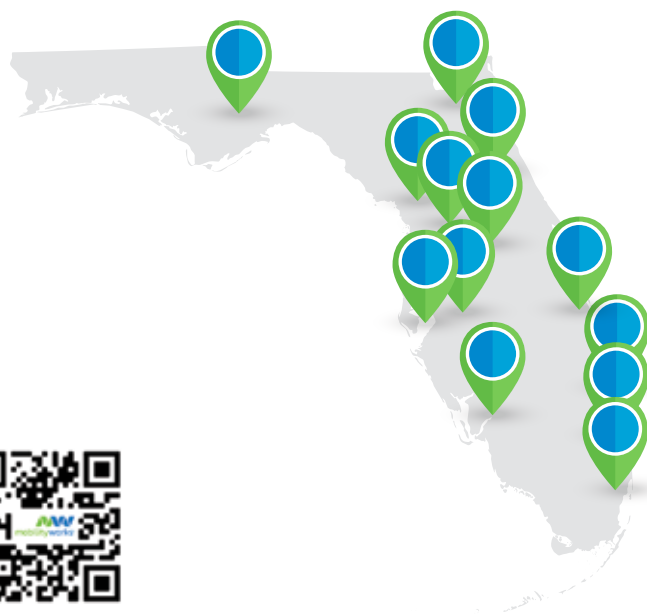
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