



# Annual Report 2014

## Paralyzed Veterans of America

### Keystone Chapter

This report features the independent auditor's letter on page 13.

Showing our stuff!

The visibility of our Paralyzed Veterans, in service and in the public eye, grew in FY2014. From information exhibits (right) to service projects (below), Keystone PVA's people spread the word about the good work our members do and who they do it for. (Photo identification is on the back page.)



# The Keystone PVA Board of Directors, 2014



The **2014 Board of Directors** included these paralyzed veterans pictured here in the Keystone chapter's conference room, plus Immediate Past President **Fred Tregaskes**, who was not present. Clockwise from the left are Treasurer **Bill Jakovac**, **George "Murph" Neelan**, Secretary **Bill Lightner**, **Ben Williams**, President **Jim Riemer**, **Chris Fidler**, **Gary Orlando**, **Tom Strang**, and Jerry "Bull" Baylor.

## Contact information for the 2015 Board of Directors

To provide for easy communication with members of the Board, the current (FY 2015) officers and directors are providing their mailing addresses and home telephone numbers. They ask that people respect the opportunity and first try to reach them through the Chapter office.

James E. Riemer, President  
437 Freeport Road  
Butler PA 16002-3714  
phone 724-287-6192

George Neelan, Vice President  
415 Rachael Court  
Gibsonia PA 15044-4912  
phone 724-443-0229

William D. Lightner, Secretary  
565 Brush Mountain Road  
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648-9241  
phone 814-696-9597

William D. Jakovac, Treasurer  
103 Glen Inverness Drive, Apt. D  
Glenshaw PA 15116-2792  
phone 412-487-2422

Frederick J. Tregaskes,  
Immediate Past President  
507 State Route 1034  
Templeton PA 16259  
phone 724-548-5685

Jerry Baylor  
1066 State Route 356, Leechburg PA  
15656-2028, phone 412-855-7139

Chris Fidler  
71 Moonshine Road, Jonestown PA  
17038-8136, phone 717-865-0009

Gary M. Orlando, Sr.  
4365 Miller Ave., Erie PA 16509-1311  
phone 814-864-8912

Tom Strang  
18 Angerer Road, Canonsburg PA  
15317-5806, phone 724-745-1861

Benjamin Williams  
204 Arlington Drive, Canonsburg PA  
15217, phone 724-745-2612

### VA Voluntary Service representatives as of 30 September 2014

**James E. Van Zandt VAMC, Altoona**  
William D. Lightner, representative  
John Lightner, deputy

**Butler VAMC**  
Jim Riemer, representative

**Erie VAMC**  
Gary Orlando, representative  
John Larese, deputy

**Lebanon VAMC**  
Chris Fidler, representative  
Ken Walters, deputy

**VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System**  
*H. John Heinz Progressive Care Ctr*  
Tom Strang, representative  
Jerry Baylor, deputy  
*University Drive Medical Center*  
Ben Williams, deputy

# President's Report . . . . . Jim Riemer

As President of Paralyzed Veterans of America, Keystone Chapter, it is my privilege to report to you the progress the chapter has made over the previous year as we advocate for all veterans who have served our country and those that are serving to preserve the freedoms that we have and can enjoy so freely.

You should have seen by now that the chapter logo has changed from Speedy in the wheelchair to the saluting soldier seated in a wheelchair that the national Paralyzed Veterans and all 34 chapters now utilize. All of the chapters now formally identify ourselves as Paralyzed Veterans of America, followed by the chapter name, in our case, Keystone.

Members of the Keystone chapter are dedicated to assisting our fellow members, their families and others with spinal cord injuries or dysfunctions. Research has advanced and continues to advance. Keystone PVA donates money annually to the Human Engineering Research Laboratories, a joint project of the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the University of Pittsburgh, which works with wheelchairs and assistive technology. The chapter also supports the work of Yale University spinal cord research. Keystone PVA members assist in various

research programs. We also make annual donations to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS, "Lou Gehrig's Disease") Association, and the Lupus Foundation. These are the most common spinal cord diseases among veterans.

We continue to advocate for the rights of disabled people and expand opportunities in wheelchair sports and recreation by sponsoring our weekly Bowling League and annual Air Gun Clinic, Wheelchair Games and Bass Tournament. In September of 2014 the chapter hosted our second trap shoot on Labor Day weekend. This year the chapter added a pistol shoot to our trap shoot, both of which we expect to be annual events. The trap shoot is part of the national PVA trap shoot circuit.

The chapter also holds bimonthly Membership Meetings at various locations around Pennsylvania and sponsors an annual picnic with ride-all-day passes at Kennywood Amusement Park near Pittsburgh for members, associate members & volunteers and their families. We continue to seek other activities that will benefit our members and increase member participation in chapter events.



Keystone Chapter President **Jim Riemer** (left) presented a certificate of training completion in the Paralyzed Veterans Hospital Liaison Officer Program to **Gary Orlando**, the chapter's HLO program coordinator. Keystone PVA is committed to monitoring and improving the health care that veterans receive, especially through the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

# FIVE FACTS you ought to know about Paralyzed Veterans

## Fact One:

### **Paralyzed veterans help themselves.**

Right after World War II, groups of military veterans injured in that conflict came together to encourage and provide expertise to the Veterans' Administration (now the Department of Veterans Affairs, still known as the "VA") These groups became the Paralyzed Veterans of America, whose headquarters is in Washington, D.C., and which has 34 chapters across the nation, including Keystone.

**Our mission** is to improve the quality of life of paralyzed veterans by

- Encouraging and supporting spinal cord injury and disease research;
- Improving access to health care and other veterans' benefits;
- Assisting in the expansion of opportunities in wheelchair sports and recreation; and
- Advocating for the rights of disabled people, including the reduction and elimination of barriers to accessibility and mobility.



Stopping in front of the Capitol while visiting members of Congress (l.-r.): **Bill Lightner, Bill Jakovac, and Chris Fidler**

## Fact Two:

### **Paralyzed Veterans of America and its chapters are NOT parts of the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs.**

We couldn't do our jobs if we were. A major part of our health care advocacy involves keeping tabs on how our fellow paralyzed veterans are being treated in VA hospitals and other medical facilities. We report, without undue influence from VA officials, about the care our members get—or sometimes don't get, and we work for better treatment.

## Fact Three:

### **Paralyzed Veterans of America, its chapters and its partners provide strong guidance to Congress and the VA in writing the \$72 billion VHA budget.**

In partnership with AMVETS, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), PVA and its chapters annually write the Independent Budget (the IB), which Congress and the VA use as their guide for writing the budget for the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). Together, we have the expertise to effectively guide the VA and assist the Congress in appropriating the right funding for veterans' care.

### **Though PVA is the smallest of the veterans' service organizations that write the IB, half of the authors are from PVA.**

That's because the nature of spinal cord injuries and disease involve a broad range of medical issues and make the Paralyzed Veterans of America well-suited to advise the VA on health care.

**Keystone PVA contributes to The IB** through the PVA Hospital Liaison Officer program, in which our own members monitor the health care of our fellow veterans and report comprehensively every month to the PVA national organization. Then we personally visit our members of Congress to let them know how the taxpayers' dollars are being spent by the VA.

## Fact Four:

### **PVA punches way above its weight class.**

For a small veterans' service organization (VSO), we pack a powerful punch. Consider our dominant role in writing the Independent Budget (Fact Three). That budget doesn't just address the health care needs of paralyzed vets; it is a budget for ALL veterans who use the VA's medical centers and community health services.

And our advocacy to advance accessibility, mobility, and compliance with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) helps the millions of Americans to live their lives more in the mainstream than ever before.

Though there are thousands of organizations in the U.S. that

*(Continued on page 9)*

# Treasurer's Report; Fundraising Report . . . . . Bill Jakovac



## Treasurer's report

Keystone PVA's Fiscal Year 2014 financial records and practices were inspected by Pittsburgh-based Sisterson & Company, LLP. The auditor's opinion letter is located on page 14, followed by statements of activities and financial position. To insure against loss of current financial data, both the chapter president and I routinely back up the financial computer files and keep the backups off the chapter premises.

## Fundraising report

We have been involved with the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) in two regions of Pennsylvania: 3 Rivers/Pennsylvania West, which covers primarily southwestern Pa. and parts of West Virginia and Ohio; and the Central Pennsylvania CFC, which covers a portion of the Commonwealth from roughly Altoona to Harrisburg.. These campaigns make it easier for federal employees to donate to us.

Successful fundraising and name recognition have gone hand-in-hand, as we expected. Sharpsburg American Legion Post 106 again held a golf outing and donated the proceeds to the chapter. South Fayette High School conducted a T-shirt sale for our benefit, and donated over \$1,000 to the chapter from the event. During FY2014 we began to receive donations through the United Way of Allegheny County.

We are again very pleased to recognize many individuals, foundations, and other veterans service organizations who have provided support for the Keystone chapter's paralyzed veterans; please see the donors report that starts on page 11.

Longtime partner American Thrift Center, whose store is in West Mifflin, Pa., collects donated second-hand clothing and household items for resale, and the chapter receives a commission from the gross sales. The American Thrift Center increased the number of its

collection boxes located in high visibility areas in southwestern Pennsylvania (primarily Allegheny County) to 300 by the end of FY2014 and has begun to place our logo and name on all four sides. American Thrift also provides replacement household items and clothing within its inventory for Keystone PVA members who have suffered a catastrophic loss. American Thrift Center provides a 50% discount to Keystone PVA members.

**In FY 2014 the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America received no funding from local, state, or federal governments.**

Many nonprofit organizations are criticized for spending money on fundraising. The fact is, fundraising is expensive. At some point in the process of reaching generous donors to ask for their support, money has to be spent, or an active, willing and capable corps of volunteers must be recruited, trained, and engaged. Always be suspicious when you are told that "almost no funds were spent for fundraising." Except in rare cases where one or a few very large sums of money from a very few sources are committed to a project or a cause, people willing to support a cause must be contacted at some significant cost. Then there are the costs of followup, accounting, reporting and other compliance requirements. There is no free lunch.

**Keystone PVA is most grateful to all of its donors.**

## Sharing & Caring, etc.

I represent the chapter on the Sharing and Caring Committee which helps hospitalized veterans. For the four days following each Labor Day, we take 500 veterans from the area's VA medical centers and nursing/personal care homes out on the Gateway Clipper's *The Empress*. For three hours, these veterans are treated to a buffet lunch, entertainment, dance contests, and sightseeing on Pittsburgh's three rivers.

# Service report . . . . . Bill Jakovac

Keystone PVA members monitor the Seating Clinic and the SCI Clinic at the H. John Heinz III Progressive Care Center of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System.

Keystone PVA has Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) representatives and deputies at the VA medical centers in Altoona, Butler, Erie, Lebanon, and Pittsburgh. Our members visit other members in the Southwestern Veterans Center in Pittsburgh and the

Soldiers and Sailors Home in Erie (both operated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania), and in private nursing homes.

See page 2 for a list of our VAVS representatives and page 8 for a list of PVA's service officers in and around Pennsylvania. Keystone PVA would like capable members to volunteer to be VAVS deputies.

# PROGRAM REPORTS



## Sports & Recreation

Jerry "Bull" Baylor  
Sports & Recreation Director

The Keystone PVA Sports and Recreation Programs are overseen by a three-man committee: Jim Riemer, President; Tom Strang, Associate Sports Director, and me. This system continues to work quite well.

The mission of the Keystone PVA Sports and Recreation Program is to improve the quality of life of paralyzed veterans and other persons with disabilities. This is achieved by assisting with expansion of both the quality and quantity of opportunities in sports and recreation, especially with those activities which enhance lifetime health and fitness.

We have a program for members to use our sports and recreation travel fund to attend regional and national sports and recreation events, such as the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (held in Philadelphia, Pa. in 2014) and the Buckeye Games held at the Spire Institute in Geneva, Ohio.

Members who wish to participate with chapter financial support must accumulate 12 or more Health and Recreation Points as listed in each issue of the chapter newsletter, The Parascope. The chapter sets an annual budget to support athletes attending the Games; funds are limited.

As new members join, our chapter is getting more involved in sports. Our members participate in track, field, road racing, weightlifting, swimming, trap shooting, air guns, hunting, fishing, hand cycling, bowling, billiards, quad rugby, basketball, scuba diving, power soccer, table tennis, slalom, bocce, and the list keeps growing. Our chapter offers a bowling league, a bass tournament, hunting, and our Kennywood Park picnic.

We have opened up more opportunities by working closer with the disabled groups in our area, such as the Hope Network, the National Rifle Association (NRA) for Air Gun Clinics, and sponsoring a trap shoot competition. This year we worked with the Pittsburgh Steelwheelers and their Quad Rugby Team and participating in several 5K races, not to mention reminding our members of the opportunities at the national level in bass fishing, bowling, billiards, trap shooting and hand cycle tour.

**Quad Rugby** ... the chapter supported the Pittsburgh Steelwheelers, the Pittsburgh area's quad rugby team. The team includes two of our members, Joe Gilkinson and Jerry Baylor. Our chapter supported the Western Pa. Trial Lawyers Association's 5K race fundraiser for the Steelwheelers, and a quad rugby tournament held at Slippery Rock University. Through this participation we have increased public awareness of paralyzed veterans and acquired associate members and speaking engagements.

**Trap Shoot** ... We held our second trap shoot on the PVA National circuit on the 2014 Labor Day weekend at the Clairton Sportsmen's Club. We added a pistol shooting competition to the event. The national PVA Shooting Sports personnel and the Club made the event easy for us and a welcome addition to the recreation we offer.

**Hunts at WCJ Ranch**... Located in Crawford County, WCJ Ranch

offers deer, turkey, and pheasant hunts for disabled hunters at no charge. Several of our members hunt here and report enjoyable and productive experiences.

**Wounded Warriors of Western Pennsylvania** ... located in Washington County, sponsors hunts and shoots for disabled hunters. Game includes deer, turkey, pheasant, and coyote. Quite a few of our Keystone PVA members participate in these hunts and shoots.

**Bowling** ... Several members of Keystone PVA participate in bowling. Our chapter reimburses members for up to three games per week; we report scores in our newsletter and present prizes to the highest scorers at the Annual Banquet.

**Keystone PVA and Greene County Team Bass Tournament** ... takes place each year on the Monongahela River at the marina of American Legion Post 940 in West Brownsville. Paralyzed veterans and boat captains compete in a day-long competition that concludes with prizes and a picnic.

**Veterans Art Festival** ... was held at the Pittsburgh VA Medical Center's Heinz Campus was canceled this year because of the conflict with the games. They return in May; several of our members enter every year and have won awards.

**Kennywood Picnic** ... is a one-day event for members, their families and friends each summer. The chapter sponsors admission and dinner for our group. The event enables our members to enjoy the sights and sounds of an amusement park and share camaraderie with others.

**National summer and winter sports clinics** ... are promoted by National PVA and open to our members.

Members interested in getting involved in and participating in these activities can contact me, the Sports Director, through the office, at any time; I will do my best to help you.



The Sports Authority: (Seated, l-r) **Jim Riemer**, **Tom Strang**, and **Bull Baylor**, with **Chad Evans** of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, who serves as coach for the Wheelchair Games and organizes the annual Air Guns Clinic.

## Program reports, continued



### Membership . . . . . Tom Strang, Membership Officer

Military veterans who have a spinal cord injury or spinal cord disease, and who were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions are welcome to join the Paralyzed Veterans of America free of

charge.

Direct benefits of membership include hospital liaison for in-patients and out-patients, representation to the Department of Veterans Affairs (the "VA"), discounted or no-charge recreational activities, and participation in the operation and governance of the organization. Membership programs are listed in detail in every issue of the chapter newsletter, *The Parascope*. All members receive *The Parascope* six times a year, and receive a copy of *PN* magazine from the national PVA each month.

Indirect benefits of membership, which may be more important to a member in the long run, include the work of the PVA and the Keystone PVA in advocacy, legislative affairs, and support for research. The more members the chapter has, the more influential it can be on members' behalf.

It is important for current members to keep the chapter informed of changes to addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers to keep in touch. And, as always, Keystone PVA's membership lists will not be shared outside the PVA.

Keystone PVA also offers associate memberships to individuals who do not have a spinal cord injury or disease. The dues for associate membership are \$25.00 per year. Lifetime associate membership is available for a one-time fee of \$250.00.



### Volunteers

**Agnes Strang**  
**Volunteer Coordinator**

Volunteer hours for the 12 months ending September 30, 2014 for VA Volunteer Service totaled 5,047. Volunteer non-VAVS National PVA hours donated to service to the chapter totaled 4,216.

The Volunteers of Keystone PVA deserve a special "Thank You" for their precious time and energy given with the aim of helping our veterans, and help they do. All volunteer

#### Membership as of 30 September 2014

Life members, service connected	147
Life members, non-service connected	<u>140</u>
Total life members:	287

Associate members, annual	18
Associate members, lifetime	<u>63</u>
Total associate members:	81

<b>TOTAL CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP:</b>	<b>368</b>
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### Members who have passed on to the Eternity Chapter

**FY 2013 : 01 October 2013 to 30 September 2014**

*All towns in Pennsylvania except where noted*

Stanley Pugh, Aliquippa, 20 May 2013

Elmer Evans, McKees Rocks, 22 July 2013

Roger Detwiler, Souderton, 25 November 2013

John Stolarik, Scranton, 06 February 2014

James Fowler, Pittsburgh, 25 March 2014

William R. Seibert, Valencia, 25 March 2014

Frank Malobicky, Murrysville, 26 March 2014

Gene D. Albright, Hollidaysburg, 20 August 2014

Bill Johnston, Butler

William E. Langston, Hollidaysburg

time must be received in the Keystone PVA office by the 7th of each month so it can be submitted to the National PVA office in a timely manner.

Several of our volunteers have served with Keystone PVA many years. We continue to serve because of our commitment to our veterans. Volunteers are rewarded by the smiles, tears, and many warm hands we hold at the VA medical centers and nursing homes. On behalf of the Board of Directors and Members, thank you for your time given to help others. We value your time and encourage our members' family, friends, and neighbors to also become involved by giving some time to help our veterans.

**Volunteers are the hallmark of our organization!**

# Program reports, continued

## Advocacy Report . . . . . Bill Jakovac

The PVA conducts an Advocacy/Legislative Seminar in March of each year in Arlington, Virginia. In 2014, Keystone PVA sent two people for the intensive, two-day training session, then two more members of the chapter went to Washington to join them in visiting the offices of members of Congress from Pennsylvania. As usual, we focused on the high points of the Independent Budget, thanked the members for fully funding the Veterans Health Administration and a two-year rolling budget, and strongly recommended that Congress includes unannounced visits to VA facilities as part of its oversight.

Keystone PVA continued to advocate for veterans during fiscal 2014 by staying involved in external events and meetings held by other organizations. The chapter continues to “tune” the “Five Facts” flyer that succinctly explains what PVA and the Keystone Chapter do.

The chapter’s “site leaders” — members who serve as local leaders and points of contact for the chapter at and around the



### Building Committee Chairman’s Report Ben Williams

As Building Committee Chairman, I have reported to the Board of Directors the necessary maintenance repairs required on our building.

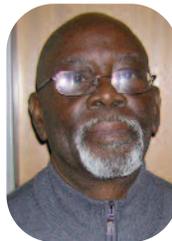
During Fiscal Year 2014, I continued to visit and monitor our hospitalized members at the Pittsburgh VA Healthcare System at H. J. Heinz Campus. When available, I passed out canteen coupon books.

This year I staffed our table at the Washington County Sportsmen’s show. In June I participated in our annual Bass Tournament which is an excellent fun day where we are treated like kings. My thanks are extended to the Board of Directors for making these events available to all members of Keystone PVA.

I continue to attend the mandatory VA Voluntary Service Program.

Altoona, Butler, Erie, Lebanon, and Pittsburgh VA medical centers --- are provided with exhibit materials whenever an opportunity to set up a display table at an event arises. Those materials were updated with the new “Saluting Man” national/chapter logo, now used by the entire Paralyzed Veterans organization.

Much of the chapter’s advocacy, especially in breaking down accessibility barriers, is done casually and quietly. Our members attempt to drive home the broad demographics that benefit from improved accessibility and mobility. We emphasize that these improvements to our civil environment benefit many more than just our own paralyzed vets. We also emphasize that the specifications of the ADA are absolute minimums, and that substantially exceeding those minimums helps many people and costs relatively little.



### National Service Officer’s Report

Christopher Jenkins, NSO II,  
National Service Office, Pittsburgh

This past year, The Pittsburgh office of the Paralyzed Veterans of America assisted more than 21 new claimants and grossed more than \$1,134,876 in benefits for our members and other veterans. It is through your support we are able to function at such a high level. Please keep us informed of changes to your life such as a new residence or a new family member or most importantly, a change in your health that affects your valuable benefits you have fought so hard to obtain.

Feel free to contact us at your convenience: 412-395-6255.

PVA Service Office Room 1602  
1000 Liberty Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

## National Service Officer contact information

NSO Pittsburgh: Christopher Jenkins,  
NSO II  
Secretary: Darlene Mead  
1000 Liberty Avenue, Room 1602  
Pittsburgh PA 15222  
800-795-3629 or 412-395-6255

*Members in the eastern part of Pa. should contact the Philadelphia office for benefits assistance; western Pa. members should contact Mr. Jenkins.*

*For other locations near Pennsylvania:*

NSO Philadelphia: *Currently vacant*  
Secretary: Violet Graham  
5000 Wissahickon Avenue  
Philadelphia PA 19144  
800-795-3628 or 215-381-3057

Western New York  
Michael Kruse, Buffalo, 800-795-3619

Eastern New York  
866-297-1319

New Jersey  
Thomas Ricks, Newark, 800-795-3617

# Program reports, continued

## Communications

Overseen by the Board of Directors

### The Parascope

The chapter's newsletter, The Parascope, remains the chapter's main tool for communicating large quantities of information to our members, associate members, and volunteers. We also send it to all PVA chapters and the national PVA, as well as allied organizations and businesses. The Parascope provides regular reports on advocacy, legislation, sports and recreation, membership, chapter events, veterans' benefits, other issues and other items in which the readers may have an interest.

Producing The Parascope is a time-consuming part of the work of the chapter, from the reports written by officers and directors to the staff time spent editing and fitting all information onto pages in increments of four. The process is made easier by contributors who submit their information in electronic form. It is also expensive to produce, but two new copiers obtained on a lease in 2013 have reduced some cost.

The chapter accepts some unsolicited photos, but due to quality or appropriateness issues, not all find their ways into publication.

The "Saluting Man" logo was adopted for use by all parts of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, including the chapters. Solid guidelines insure that a unified image is included on all publications and promotions. Changing the letterhead was easy. More difficult was getting chapter apparel suitably modified. There was no problem with the quality of the image or our supplier; instead, we decided to offer more choice of styles, colors, and options for applying logos and personal names, and that led to some complexity. But about two dozen of our more active members now proudly wear jackets and shirts in red, white and blue, promoting the image of the Paralyzed Veterans and this chapter.

**E-mail, [keystonepva@comcast.net](mailto:keystonepva@comcast.net)**

**Web site, [www.kpva.org](http://www.kpva.org)**

Getting reliable e-mail and Internet service proved difficult in FY2014. We were able to get by, but improving both will be a priority in 2015. During FY2014, several companies and institutions contacted the chapter to make a donation, and they found us while they were searching for a suitable veterans' service organization on the Internet.

### Teleconferencing

The chapter continued to use teleconference phones to link Membership Meeting sites together for nearly an hour each

meeting. Our members in the Lebanon, Pa. area have been regular participants, and in FY2014, our members in the Erie area frequently joined the other sites for the meetings. We used the PVA conference bridge routinely to let Board members, some of whom live up to 250 miles from the chapter office, to join the monthly Board meetings — a very valuable service during the winter months.

### The "Five Facts Flyer"

The chapter produces a flyer that contains the "Five Facts You Ought to Know About Paralyzed Veterans" that are printed here and start on page 4. This is in response to our experience that the public does not know much about the Paralyzed Veterans organization, and worse, has several misconceptions. We have found that communicating these facts — especially the ones that we are NOT a part of the VA and DO NOT get tax funding — generates important, positive support for our veterans and their needs.

## FIVE FACTS

*(continued from page 4)*

try to help vets, **only 38 VSOs can legally represent veterans to the VA in order to get the benefits to which the vets are entitled, and PVA is one of them.** PVA has a "national service officer" in most major metropolitan areas, including Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Our NSOs are highly trained and experienced, and successfully obtained over \$1 billion in new and current benefits claims for veterans and their survivors in fiscal year 2014.

Keystone PVA is the tip of the Paralyzed Veterans' powerful spear for the veterans we serve in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

### Fact Five:

**Keystone PVA gets no tax dollars. None.**

Our chapter's small budget depends on some support from the national PVA, proceeds from the sale of goods by the American Thrift Center, and private donations.

Because Keystone PVA is a charity organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code, and because we are approved by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a charitable, nonprofit organization, your donation is tax deductible on your federal tax return if you itemize.

The tax-exempt status of Keystone PVA is only partial. The only exemptions specifically made are sales & use taxes (though not all) and property tax on our small office building in Sharpsburg, Pa., near Pittsburgh. We pay plenty of others, and our employees pay every tax on their income that for-profit employees do.

# Site Leader and VA Voluntary Service reports



## Chris Fidler

Director; Lebanon VAVS Representative, Leader, and Hospital Liaison Officer

The following is a summary of my activities from October 2013 to September 2014 supporting and promoting the Keystone Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America.

In October I represented Keystone PVA at both the Pa. War Veterans Council and Pa. State Veterans Commission. I have been working with PVA's Architecture Department to help the War Veterans Council meetings become Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant by installing an elevator at the American Legion State Headquarters in Wormleysburg.

In November I attended a two day seminar – "Pa. Veterans Forum: Community and Connections" at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Harrisburg, Pa. I represented Keystone PVA as guest speaker at the Veterans Day ceremony at Fisher Veterans Park in Lebanon.

In December I traveled to Pittsburgh to attend a dedication of the World War II Memorial between Heinz Field and PNC Park. I attended the "Wreaths Across America" ceremony at Indiantown Gap National Cemetery where KPVA donated 10 wreaths for the cemetery.

Between March 9 and March 14 I attended the Advocacy/Legislation Seminar in Washington, D.C., and I met with members of Congress and their staff people regarding issues relating to PVA issues.

In April I traveled to the State Capitol Rotunda to give a speech at a press conference supporting legislation to expand the Veterans Property Tax Exemption.

In June I attended the Pa. State Veterans Commission meeting at Ft. Indiantown Gap and delivered a letter from Keystone PVA to the Commission that was sent to then-Pa. Governor Corbett regarding the VA problems in delivering services to veterans. I attended a meeting with Governor Corbett with members of the Pa. State Veterans Commission and press conference afterwards at the Williamsport American Legion. I drove to Cheltenham High School in Wyncote, Pa. to deliver the PVA Essay Contest Award to the student who won.

In addition, I represented Keystone PVA at the regular meetings of the Pa. War Veterans Council, the Pa. State Veterans Commission, the VA Volunteer Services Executive Committee and VAVS Representatives meetings, and the Lebanon Veterans Advisory Council.



## Gary M. Orlando, Sr.

Director; Erie VAVS Representative, Site Leader and Hospital Liaison Officer/ Chapter HLO Coordinator

The Keystone Chapter has made great strides in the past year. My one wish didn't happen, though. I was and am still hoping and wondering how we can get some of the younger voting members involved more by running for a Board seat. This is my personal opinion. The many sports programs are doing great and more adaptive sports are becoming available to all members. Sports is the best therapy you can do. And, the many sports programs are located throughout the state and country. I urge all voting members to take advantage of these programs.

At the Erie VA Medical Center, the major developments are the ongoing construction and the recent start of the new hospital director, David Cord. He comes to us from the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (VAPHS). We also recently lost our chief of staff. Dr. Anthony Behm left to pursue his work as a physician. The chief of staff role is being covered by a rotation of physicians until that position is awarded. The Keystone chapter will be kept up to date on who becomes the new chief of staff as soon as it is announced. I have already had a good talk with our new director and will be having a one on one visit with Mr. Cord in the next few weeks to bring him up to date on the Erie VAMC Spinal Cord Injury Team. I can see that progress will be made for the SCI Team and the hospital as a whole.

The Keystone PVA volunteers are doing a fantastic job. In the past fiscal year, we put in many more hours helping the in-patients and out-patients. The Keystone Chapter is well known by the patients and staff at the Erie VAMC in a positive manner.

As the HLO coordinator, I may be biased, but I feel that most of our HLOs are doing fantastic jobs. But we all need to take our VHA guidelines manuals with us when making visits to each VAMC for reference, if needed. You would be surprised how many VA staff and leaders do not know their own regulations. When I point something out to the staff, I do get positive feedback and, sometimes a "thank you." I feel that the HLO program is the most important program the PVA has. A big "thank you" to our HLOs for being dedicated to our fellow veterans. It is the work of the other HLOs who make me and the Chapter put out the best monthly HLO reports to National PVA.

I do believe that the chapter has to boost our presence in the largest medical facility among all that we monitor, the University Drive campus of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System. This is the hospital that all of our MS and ALS patients go for care and I feel that we need to be present more often there. We must remember that "U Drive" has had major problems that made negative national news this past year.

# Keystone PVA thanks you for your generosity

These people and institutions made **direct donations** to the Keystone PVA in our **fiscal year 2014 (01 October 2013 to 30 September 2014)**. We thank you for your generosity in contributing to the many works that support paralyzed veterans. We publish only names and communities of residence. Monetary donations are always acceptable and are preferred due to their flexibility in providing services. Because of space limitations and appropriateness to the mission of the Keystone PVA, not all nonmonetary donations can be accepted.

We strongly suggest that those who have gently-used home furnishings, clothing and shoes donate them to the American Thrift Center, a second-hand-goods store based in the Village Shopping Center, 1806 Homeville Road, West Mifflin PA 15122. Donations and sales there benefit the Keystone Chapter. For pickup of larger items in Allegheny County, Pa., and parts of surrounding counties, call the American Thrift Center at 412-469-9663. Or place clothing and shoes in one of nearly 300 red boxes in the Pittsburgh region, two samples of which are pictured on the next page.

*All locations are communities or postal designations in Pennsylvania unless otherwise noted.*

## **UNRESTRICTED DONATIONS**

Jack Affolder, Cranberry Township  
American Legion Post 226, Brackenridge  
American Legion Post 351, Homewood  
Anonymous, Cincinnati, Ohio  
Anonymous, Charlotte, North Carolina  
Ken Baumgartner, Monongahela  
Edgar & Carol Blose, Punxsutawney  
Diane Byrnes, Pittsburgh  
Ann Charmely, Pittsburgh  
Citizens Charitable Foundation Matching Gifts Program  
JoAnn Cooney, Ridgewood, New York  
Combined Federal Campaign donors of the Capitol Region  
Combined Federal Campaign donors of the 3 Rivers/  
Pennsylvania West Campaign  
Kellie Cramer, Reynoldsville  
Christine Errin, King of Prussia  
Norma & Rona Ferguson, Kittanning  
Katherine M. Flood, M.D., Renfrew  
Rick Frazier, Rochester Hills, Michigan  
Thomas J. Friel Estate, (Patricia Toner, Executor), Media  
GDR Charitable Trust, Cincinnati, Ohio, via  
Fidelity Charitable  
Gail & George Goldberg, Warminster  
Thomas & Debbie Goral, Pittsburgh  
Thomas Goral, Pittsburgh  
Gott Family Foundation via The Pittsburgh Foundation  
Benjamin F. Grassi, Cornwall  
Dale K. Groves, DuBois  
Luann Hamilton, Pittsburgh  
Jon Hawk, Pittsburgh  
Patricia Harris  
Terrisa L. Hohn, Marietta  
John E. & Karen Kennedy, Bellevue  
Tom Landish, Monongahela  
Macy's East  
Virginia Mance, Turtle Creek  
Donald D. Mateer Foundation, Charlotte M. Stephenson,  
Pittsburgh  
Rosalie M. Murrer Charitable Fund, Pittsburgh, via  
Fidelity Charitable

PNC Institutional Investments via R. Douglas DeNardo  
of Rothman Gordon, Pittsburgh  
Kenneth Ochs, Lucinda  
William J. Petkanics, West Mifflin  
Pittsburgh Gives via the Pittsburgh Foundation  
Madelene M. & Leroy Pryor, Glenshaw  
Roxanne Romah-Picard, Pittsburgh  
St. Paul's Methodist Church, Allison Park  
Janice Shaffer, New Castle  
South Fayette Township School District, McDonald  
Scott & Beth Tkach, Pittsburgh  
J. M. Trainor, Pittsburgh  
VFW Post 3945, Morningside, Pittsburgh  
Samuel J. & Susan M. Weber, Kennedy Township

## **DONATIONS for EASTER BAGS for HOSPITALIZED VETERANS**

Frank Amaditz, Pittsburgh  
American Legion Post 77, Aspinwall  
American Legion Post 659, Belle Vernon  
American Legion Post 226, Brackenridge  
American Legion Post 935, Brentwood  
American Legion Post 940, Brownsville  
American Legion Post 377, California  
American Legion Post 82, Carnegie  
American Legion Post 365, Corry  
American Legion Post 278, Fairchance  
American Legion Post 852, Harrisville  
American Legion Post 493, Homer City  
American Legion Post 902, Houston  
American Legion Post 267, Ligonier  
American Legion Post 472, Manor  
American Legion Post 159, Mercer  
American Legion Post 19, New Brighton  
American Legion Post 663, Schenley, Oakland, Pittsburgh  
American Legion Post 106, Sharpsburg  
American Legion Post 106 Home Association, Sharpsburg  
American Legion Post 331, Trafford  
American Legion Post 114, Vandergrift

*(Continued on page 12)*



## Donation boxes in the Pittsburgh Region

Most of the donation boxes that benefit the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans are red, and look like one of the two examples shown here. The smaller one at near left is newer and is painted on all sides with the “Speedy” logo and the words “Paralyzed Veterans” to make clear to the public who benefits from their donations. American Thrift Center is registered as a fundraising organization with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and whose sole beneficiary are the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans.

American Legion Post 243, West Sunbury  
 American Legion Post 432, Wheatland  
 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 902, Canonsburg  
 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 380, Dravosburg  
 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 359, Irwin  
 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 556, Six Mile Run  
 Carrick-Brentwood Legionnaires Inc., Bethel Park  
 Ernest Clark, Wales Center, New York  
 Virginia Mance, Turtle Creek  
 Presbyterian Church of Pitcairn, Pitcairn  
 Lois Schenker, Allison Park  
 VFW Pvt. James Perry Post 191, Canonsburg  
 VFW Post 3945, Morningside

### MEMORIAL DONATIONS

#### *In memory of Sonya Bond*

Order of the Eastern Star, Glen Chapter 425, Halifax

#### *In memory of Tryoan E. Bresett*

Debbie Campbell & the Swartz Family, Zanesville, Ohio  
 David Szczublewski, Pataskala, Ohio

#### *In memory of Catherine (Kitty) Fetscher*

Nancy E. Doolin, Pennsburg

#### *In memory of Larry Howard*

Tom Landish, Monongahela

#### *In memory of Joseph Luke*

Tom Landish, Monongahela

#### *In memory of LTjg Brandon McCombie*

William Zally, Port Mathilda

#### *In memory of R. Palaschak*

Robert Chatios D.M.D. and Associates  
 John & Georgiana Hanley, Pittsburgh

#### *In memory of Melvin P. Riemer*

Agr International, Butler  
 Jim & Adella Barr, Mars

F. Leighton Fennell, Cabot  
 Carol S. Hartzell, Butler  
 Jeffrey & Jenny Hartzell, Butler  
 Judy D. Herman, Butler  
 Jeanne Keenan, Pittsburgh  
 Harold Riemer, Cabot  
 Maxine Riemer, Cabot  
 Ethel Selliman, Sarver

#### *In memory of Barbara Lee Schiffman Samet*

Jeanne Keenan, Pittsburgh

#### *In memory of William Siebert*

Angela Kaiser, Pittsburgh

#### *In memory of Thomas Szmed*

Ken & Beth Mattheis, Pittsburgh

#### *In memory of Robert Tedesco*

Michael Santoro, Greensburg

#### *In memory of Joseph Winiarski*

Louis J. Laib, Philadelphia

#### *In memory of Norman P. Wood*

Carl & Nancy Schrock, Pittsburgh  
 Nancy Oyler, Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh  
 William & Margaret Samples, Pittsburgh  
 Elizabeth Ostorowski, Baltimore

### DONATIONS supporting wheelchair athletes participating in the NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES

Karen Switzer, Lebanon  
 American Legion Post 432, Wheatland

### NON-CASH DONATIONS

Gloria Atherholt, Danville  
 Mobility Works, Wall  
 Tom & Debbie Goral, Pittsburgh

# Independent Auditor's Report and Financial Statements

The Keystone Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America (Keystone PVA) engaged Sisterson & Company, LLP, CPAs to perform its Fiscal Years 2013 and 2014 audit. The following opinion letter, Statement of Activities, and Statement of Financial Position are the highlights of the results of the FY 2014 audit. To see the complete audit, including supporting notes, contact Keystone PVA.



## Sisterson & Company, LLP

310 Grant Street, Suite 2100  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219-2300  
Phone 412-281-2025  
Fax 412-338-4597  
Web [www.sisterson.com](http://www.sisterson.com)

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Directors of  
Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America, Inc.  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America, Inc. ("Chapter"), which comprise the statements of financial position as of September 30, 2014 and 2013, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have provided is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America, Inc. as of September 30, 2014 and 2013, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Sisterson & Co., LLP

January 22, 2015

KEYSTONE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC

**STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES**

For the Years Ended September 30, 2014 and 2013

	<b>9/30/2014</b>	<b>9/30/2013</b>
Unrestricted net assets		
<b>Unrestricted revenues and support:</b>		
National PVA contributions	\$ 155,000	\$ 136,245
Thrift Shop Fundraising	63,030	54,140
General contributions	40,296	24,950
Trap Shoot tournament	8,595	12,853
Newsletter advertising	628	1,515
Combined Federal Campaign	2,698	1,058
Membership dues	900	535
Hunting and Fishing Tournaments	710	380
Non-cash property and equipment contribution	--	--
Income from investments		
Interest and dividends	32,995	40,743
Net gain (loss) on investments	35,667	11,207
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>5,000</u>	<u>--</u>
<b>Total unrestricted revenue and support</b>	<b>345,529</b>	<b>283,626</b>
<b>Unrestricted expenses:</b>		
<b>Program services:</b>		
Membership and benefits	145,320	136,131
Public affairs	99,518	97,466
Research	<u>10,893</u>	<u>16,781</u>
<b>Support services:</b>		
General and Administrative	75,352	77,829
Fundraising	<u>8,989</u>	<u>9,711</u>
<b>Total unrestricted expenses</b>	<b><u>340,072</u></b>	<b><u>337,918</u></b>
Increase (decrease) in unrestricted net assets	5,457	(54,292)
Temporarily restricted net assets		
National PVA special grant	--	5,000
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>(5,000)</u>	<u>--</u>
Net increase (decrease) in net assets	457	(49,292)
Net assets, beginning of year	<u>1,509,530</u>	<u>1,558,822</u>
<b>Net assets at end of year</b>	<b><u>\$ 1,509,987</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,509,530</u></b>

KEYSTONE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC  
**STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
For the Years Ended September 30, 2014 and 2013

	September 30,	
	2014	2013
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and equivalents	\$ 127,417	\$ 89,417
Advertising and fundraising receivables	13,773	11,997
Prepaid expenses	7,310	9,189
Supply inventory	<u>1,176</u>	<u>1,176</u>
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>150,058</b>	<b>114,339</b>
Investments at fair value	1,105,878	1,123,404
Property and equipment, net	<u>273,809</u>	<u>297,204</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ <u>1,529,745</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>1,534,947</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 19,758	\$ 25,417
<b>Net assets</b>		
Unrestricted	1,509,987	1,504,530
Temporarily restricted	<u>--</u>	<u>5,000</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>\$ <u>1,509,987</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>1,509,530</u></b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$ <u>1,529,745</u></b>	<b>\$ <u>1,534,947</u></b>

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## Administration and staff report

The major concerns of office management and administration during fiscal year 2014 was to adapt the chapter's communications and promotional tools to the new "Saluting Man" logo that now identifies both the national PVA and its 34 chapters, and to continue to promote the work of PVA and the Keystone chapter in Pennsylvania.

Of course, the staff also has to maintain the chapter's building in Sharpsburg, Pa., support Board, Membership, and other meetings, support events, maintain records and generate and/or edit reports ranging from the Hospital Liaison reports to the documentation demanded by various levels of government. Working with the chapter's volunteer leadership, the professional staff takes pride in accuracy, completeness, and transparency of all reports.

By the end of FY2014, Jeanne Keenan began to phase out of her 13-

year role as the chapter's administrative assistant. Her background as a military spouse and an office manager for Rockwell International when it was headquartered in Pittsburgh made her very well suited to work for the Paralyzed Veterans. She has left a mark of diligence, professionalism, and civility on the chapter that continues to serve our veterans well as we follow her example and build on it.

The executive director spent much time building the chapter's civic connections, public profile, and favorable image, which was reflected in the increasing number of unsolicited offers to donate money to the chapter from individuals, corporations and other institutions.

Office Manager Diane Byrnes began her eighth year on staff in 2014, and Executive Director Joe Dornbrock was with the chapter for nine and a half years at the end of FY2014.



## Paralyzed Veterans of America

Keystone Chapter

1113 Main Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15215-2407

Phone 412-781-2474 or 800-775-9323

Fax 412-781-2659

[www.kpva.org](http://www.kpva.org)

[keystonepva@comcast.net](mailto:keystonepva@comcast.net)

### CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

### Officers, Directors and Appointments, FY 2014

See page 2 for contact information

#### President

James E. Riemer

#### Vice President

George M. "Murph" Neelan

#### Secretary

William D. Lightner

#### Treasurer

William D. Jakovac

#### Immediate Past President

Frederick J. Tregaskes

#### Directors

Jerry "Bull" Baylor

Chris Fidler

Gary M. Orlando, Sr.

Tom Strang

Ben Williams

#### Advocacy Director

William D. Jakovac

#### Legislative Director

Chris Fidler

#### Hospital Liaison Coordinator

Gary M. Orlando, Sr.

#### Membership Officer

Tom Strang

#### Service Officer

Frederick J. Tregaskes

#### Sports Director

Jerry Baylor

#### Volunteer Coordinator

Agnes Strang

#### National Director

William D. Jakovac



### CONNECT WITH US

The **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**: *Contact information on page 2.*

**THE OFFICE**: *Information is in the keystone in the top left.*

#### SIX MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS A YEAR

*Sites, dates and times are in The Parascope and on the web site.*

#### SIX NEWSLETTERS A YEAR

*The Parascope is sent to each member, to public officials and key Department of Veterans Affairs officials, and circulated at the many VA medical centers in which we have a presence.*

#### On the front page:

Top photo, left-to-right: **Chris Fidler**, **Bob Wood**, and **Ken Walters** staffed an exhibit at the Defense Logistics Agency in New Cumberland, Pa. on behalf of the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans as part of the Central Pa. Combined Federal Campaign, in which charities reach out to federal employees.

Bottom photo: Getting ready to deliver the Easter Bags at the Heinz Campus of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System are (front row, left-to-right) Army veteran **Robert Carlisle**, Navy veteran **Robert Cincirpini**, and Navy Veteran **Tom Strang**. In the back row are **Taylor Strang**, **Lavender Woolstrum**, **Agnes Strang**, and **Leona Cincirpini**.

**Photo credits**: Chris Fidler, page 1, top photo; William George, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, page 1, bottom photo; Agnes Strang, page 6.

All other editorial photos by Keystone PVA staff.

## The mission of the Keystone Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America is

- to improve the quality of life of paralyzed veterans by
- Encouraging and supporting spinal cord injury and disease research;
- Improving access to health care and other veterans' benefits;
- Assisting in the expansion of opportunities in wheelchair sports and recreation; and
- Advocating for the rights of disabled people, including the reduction and elimination of barriers to accessibility and mobility.