The mission of the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) revolves around health, primarily, insuring that our veterans—all of them—get the best health care possible. That health care is reinforced by providing and supporting a wide variety of opportunities to get out and get moving. At left, paralyzed veterans race on the track at the 35th annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Dallas, Texas.

PVA conducts a trap shoot circuit at 12 locations across the country, one of which is co-hosted by the Keystone chapter of the PVA at the Clairton Sportsmen’s Club, just south of Pittsburgh. Ambulatory and wheelchair-using shooters are equally welcome.

Paralyzed Veterans from the Keystone Chapter get out on the water for the 12th annual Team Bass Tournament every June, in 2015 for the 12th year. It is co-organized with the BassMasters of Greene County and held at the marina of the American Legion Post 940 in West Brownsville, Pa., on the Monongahela
The 2015 Board of Directors included these paralyzed veterans pictured here in the Keystone chapter's conference room. 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. Immediate Past President Fred Tregaskes passed away in March 2015 (see page 7).

Contact information for the 2016 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

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

Mark O. Rosensteel
105 Spring Drive
Apollo PA 15613-9720
phone 724-478-4805

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 2015

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

Butler VAMC
Jim Riemer, representative

Erie VAMC
John Larese, representative
Rexford Nichols, deputy

Lebanon VAMC
Chris Fidler, representative
Ken Walters, deputy

VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System
H. John Heinz III Campus
Tom Strang, representative
Jerry Baylor, deputy

University Drive Campus
Ben Williams, deputy
As President of the Keystone Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, 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.

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 & Annual Air Gun Clinic, Team Bass Tournament, Trap & Pistol Shoot, and sending our athletes to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

The chapter 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.

The chapter’s members volunteer at five VA medical centers in Altoona, Butler, Erie, Lebanon and Pittsburgh. They do so as part of the VA’s Voluntary Service (VAVS) program, and as Hospital Liaison Officers (HLOs) for PVA and this chapter. Volunteers work in various capacities at the VA medical centers including assisting in clinics, visiting patients and sponsoring activities. The chapter donates funds for patient activities and to patients directly so they can obtain small, sometimes necessary items during their stays. HLOs monitor patient care for any issues or concerns which need to be addressed.

Our work is quiet, but pound-for-pound, no organization has as much impact on improving veterans’ health care as the Paralyzed Veterans of America, and we are proud that our own chapter’s veterans are such an important part of PVA’s work.
FIVE FACTS you ought to know about Paralyzed Veterans

Fact One:
Paralyzed veterans help themselves.
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.

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 $75 billion VA 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.

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): half of the IB’s authors are from PVA. 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 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.

Arriving at the Capitol in Washington, D.C., to meet with members of Congress about veterans’ issues (l.-r): Bill Lightner, Chris Fidler, Bill Jakovac, and Joe Dornbrock.
Treasurer’s report; Fundraising Report

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.

I am responsible for the funds of the chapter. QuickBooks 2014 is used to keep track of these funds.

Invoices are reviewed and initialed by the executive director for payment. Deposit slips for checks are prepared by the office manager and checked by me prior to deposit at the bank. If the checks are donations, thank-you letters acknowledge them. Checks are always deposited in our banking money market. As needed, the funds are transferred to our checking account.

The office manager enters the information in QuickBooks and prepares the checks. At the beginning of each month, I reconcile the bank statements. The executive director reviews the statements and insures that every check issued is accounted for.

The chapter president and I go to the office weekly to ensure that finances are up to date. Even though the chapter officers and the executive director can sign the checks, my signature is always on the first line. If the treasurer’s computer crashes, both the president and I have the information backed up on our home computers plus our flash drives.

Investments include certificates of deposit, money market funds, and equities. Most of our equity investments are managed by Hefren-Tillotson with a reasonably conservative approach. Our account managers meet with our Board of Directors every other year.

Fundraising report
We have been involved with the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) since 2012. The CFC is the only approved method for asking federal employees for support of charities. The CFC program has reduced its number of regions and those in which an organization can participate. Keystone PVA is now within the 3 Rivers/Pennsylvania West CFC, which covers primarily southwestern and central Pa. and parts of West Virginia and Ohio. We appreciate the generous support of federal employees, which include employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Successful fundraising and name recognition have gone hand-in-hand, as we expected. South Fayette High School conducted a T-shirt sale for our benefit for the second year, and donated over $1,000 to the chapter from the event. FY2015 was also the third year of receiving 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 continued to increase the number of its collection boxes located in high visibility areas in southwestern Pennsylvania, now well beyond only Allegheny County. The chapter name and/or the national/chapter logo appears on all four sides of the boxes. 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. We were pleased to recognize American Thrift Center owner and manager Jim Zeik as a “Friend of Keystone PVA” during the annual banquet that kicked off FY2015.

In FY 2015 the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America received no funding from local, state, or federal governments.

Charities are criticized for spending money on fundraising. The fact is, fundraising is expensive. To reach potential 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 “no or few funds were spent for fundraising.” Except in rare cases where few very large sums of money from few sources are committed to a project or a cause, a lot of 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.
Keystone PVA is one of 17 organizations of the Sharing & Caring Committee; I represent the chapter on it. Sharing & Caring 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.

In other activities, I often staff an exhibit table at outreach events, and I help present awards at schools to winners and finalists of the PVA Poster and Essay Contest and recognize their teachers.

National PVA Board of Directors
I represent Keystone PVA on the national PVA Board of Directors. The national Board meets in person twice a year and once a year by conference phone.
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 Dallas, Texas in 2015) 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 its Quad Rugby Team and participated in several 5K races. We also reminded our members of the opportunities at the national level in bass fishing, bowling, billiards, trap shooting and hand cycle racing.

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 third trap shoot on the PVA National circuit on the 2015 Labor Day weekend at the Clairton Sportsmen’s Club, and included a pistol shoot for the second year. The national PVA Shooting Sports personnel and the Club made the event easy for us and a welcome addition to our recreation programs.

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, this local (not a national) organization 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

(Continued on page 8)
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.

Among the passing of members in 2015 was Frederick J. Tregaskes, who in his many years with the Keystone Chapter, was usually an officer, usually president or vice president. Fred was a career soldier with over 24 years of service, some of which was in the Dominican Republic and in Vietnam during the war, where he sustained his paralyzing injury in 1967. He received eight Purple Hearts, two Distinguished Service Crosses, the Silver Star, and Bronze Star, among others. His service is recognized in the Soldiers and Sailors Hall and Military Museum’s Hall of Valor in Pittsburgh. Besides the Paralyzed Veterans of America and the State Veterans Commission, his memberships included the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, the 82nd Airborne Division Association, and the 101st Airborne Division Association, among others. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Arlene, who most of us know as Frieda. He is also survived by his daughters Mary Barbara, Deanna, Hannah, Kimberly and Patricia, and sons Frederick Jr. and Jonathan. Also surviving are his sister Shirley and brother William.
Program reports, continued

Advocacy Report ......................................................... Bill Jakovac

The PVA conducts an Advocacy/Legislative Seminar in March of each year in Arlington, Virginia. In 2015, 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 again strongly recommended that Congress includes unannounced visits to VA facilities as part of its oversight.

Keystone PVA continued to advocate for veterans during fiscal 2015 by staying involved in external events and meetings held by other organizations. As the Department of Veterans Affairs improved its outreach through its medical centers in our region, Keystone PVA made an extra effort to attend and engage at town hall meetings and roundtables for veterans organizations with the medical center directors.

The chapter’s “site leaders” — members who serve as local leaders and points of contact for the chapter at and around the 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. During fiscal year 2015, site leaders and other chapter representatives set up and staffed exhibits at 15 different locations around Pennsylvania, distributing thousands of promotional items and copies of literature to inform the public of the work of the Paralyzed Veterans and the Keystone chapter.

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 that 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 Office Report

Darlene Mead, Senior Secretary,
National Service Office, Pittsburgh

The Pittsburgh office of the Paralyzed Veterans of America assisted more that 25 new claimants and grossed more than $1,145,516 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 you 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

Sports & Recreation (Cont’d from page 6)

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 this year 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.

Building Report

Ben Williams,
Building Committee Chairman

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

The Keystone PVA building seems to be in good shape except for some minor problems with the side entrance door and the bathroom door, the push plate does not work.

Routine maintenance includes clearing the parking lot of snow in the winter and debris the rest of the year; trimming the bushes and pulling the inevitable weeds that pop up around them; having our furnaces checked prior to the winter and the air conditioners checked in the spring; paying an office cleaner to do janitorial work once every two weeks; keeping the thermostats in fresh batteries and properly set so as to not use too much electricity and natural gas; having the carpets cleaned annually; and keeping the kitchenette and associated appliances clean. The office recycles metal cans, plastics, paper and cardboard, minimizing the amount of refuse that requires disposal, and despite the lack of a municipal recycling service. Changing burned out light bulbs and automated bathroom fixture batteries, purchasing consumable supplies, maintaining the interior ethernet network are other tasks performed by the staff. Our employees keep the offices bright, clean, functional, and with plenty of room for wheelchair users to move around.

During the year, we replaced aging and cracked windows with the help of a grant through the Pittsburgh Foundation. We put off repaving the parking lot due to its considerable expense, and we anticipate replacing the roof over the rear “storage shed” part of the building in 2016.
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
Web site, www kpva.org

Our use of e-mail improved in FY2015. We passed along many messages, from VA health care notices to recreation opportunities to members who had and used e-mail.

During FY2015, we began a revision of the design and content of our web site that was due to be complete in early calendar year 2016.

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. and Erie, Pa. areas were regular participants. We continued to use the PVA conference bridge routinely to let Board members, some of whom live up to 250 miles from the chapter office, join the monthly Board meetings, making it possible to often have 100% attendance.

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 on page 4. Our experience is 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. Even more importantly, we communicate that paralyzed veterans themselves do so much of the work of the organization. This fact is a hidden gem that needs to be more assertively promoted.

Volunteers

Agnes Strang
Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteer hours for the 12 month period ending September 30, 2015 for VA Volunteer Service (VAVS) totaled 5,658. Volunteer non-VAVS National PVA hours donated to service to the chapter totaled 3,809.

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 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!
Site Leader and VA Voluntary Service reports

Chris Fidler

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

The Keystone chapter is one of the few veteran service organizations in Pennsylvania not based in central Pennsylvania. Thus, the chapter has seen fit to appoint me to represent it on the Pa. State Veterans Commission, which meets every other month not too far from my residence, and on whose Veterans Trust Fund committee I sit.

I also represent the chapter on the Pa. War Veterans Council. This is my third year as Keystone PVA’s representative and due to the non-compliance of the building with the Americans with Disabilities Act, I continue to be forced to sit alone in a room downstairs, watching the meeting upstairs on a TV monitor. These meetings set the legislative direction for many veterans’ related issues including the Paralyzed Veterans Pension. I have previously reported on this situation, in both this report and to the PVA National office.

As part of my membership in the Lebanon Veterans Advisory Council representing Keystone PVA, I was re-elected president of the council. I was the chairman of the Veterans Day ceremony held at Fisher Veterans Park in Lebanon, Pa., and was master of ceremonies for the event. I acted as parade chairman and master of ceremonies for the annual Memorial Day Parade & Ceremony. The parade is one mile long through Lebanon, ending with wreath-laying ceremonies in two locations.

I serve on the Lebanon VA Volunteer Services Executive Committee and as the Lebanon VA Voluntary Service representative. I also volunteer at the Lebanon VAMC three times a week at the Veterans Activity Center, assisting the recreation therapy staff and volunteer services staff.

Often with other Keystone PVA members, I staffed an information table at these events:

- “Retiree Appreciation Days” held at the Carlisle Army Barracks in Carlisle, Pa.
- Combined Federal Campaign Fair at the Defense Logistics Agency Installation at the New Cumberland Army Depot.
- “Open House” weekend event at Total Mobility Services in Harrisburg, Pa.
- “Veterans Day at the Capitol” event in Harrisburg, which was sponsored by the State Veterans Commission.

Participated in the PVA Training/Advocacy Seminar in Arlington, Va., and met with members of Congress and their staffs to discuss and promote issues important to paralyzed and all veterans.

Participated in a Paralyzed Veterans of America site visit at the Lebanon VA medical center, which included meeting with the Spinal Cord Injury/Disease team, touring the facility and discussing concerns veterans face as SCI/D patients.

Received PVA Hospital Liaison Officer training with four other chapter HLOs at a two-day seminar in Dallas, Texas.

As part of a tour of the new Mental Health Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program Center (MHRRTPC) at the Lebanon VAMC, I made recommendations regarding ADA compliance, which were adopted.

Attended a “Stand Down” event at the Lebanon VAMC’s MHRRPC facility. Later that day I attended a committee meeting of the Therapeutic Pool Renovation Project at the Lebanon VAMC. I’ve been working with the VA to advance this project for three years now.

Assisted the Lebanon VAMC recreation therapy staff by arranging for the use of the indoor range at the Palmyra Sportsmen’s Association, and worked as a range officer for the practices.

Arranged for and attended our annual Christmas Lunch for Keystone PVA members and VA guests. We also collect donated gifts from the members to give to the inpatients at the Lebanon VAMC.

Arranged for VAMC patients to attend three Hershey Bears hockey games, in cooperation with the VFW Ladies Auxiliary and VA Volunteer Services; provided food and transportation.

Attended the annual “Wreaths Across America” program at Indiantown Gap National Cemetery, for which Keystone PVA annually donates 10 wreaths.

Attended a ceremony to formally recognize the name change of this section of the annual report was due.

Editor’s note: Gary passed away, not totally unexpectedly, just before his report for this section of the annual report was due. Suffice it to say that Gary’s dedication to his many responsibilities was an integral part of the work and successes of Keystone PVA. He demonstrated that the chapter is where its active members are, not where the office is. If he was able to participate in the work and other activities offered by the chapter in any way, he was there, and if not, he was on the phone or present by e-mail. He used to finish many of his messages with “U R KPVA!!!” No one was more “KPVA” than Gary, and he will not be replaced, only succeeded.

Gary M. Orlando, Sr.

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

Page 10  Keystone PVA 2015 Annual Report
Keystone PVA thanks you for your generosity

These people and institutions made direct donations to the Keystone PVA in our fiscal year 2015 (01 October 2014 to 30 September 2015). 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**

Lance & Maria Alexander, Blairsville
William Alexander, Pittsburgh
American Legion Auxiliary Post 978, Weedville
American Legion Post 106, Sharpsburg (golf outing)
American Legion Post 299, Sharon
American Legion Post 351, Verona
Adam H. Andreae, Greensburg
Assembly of God Church, Dave Nash, Triadelphia, West Virginia
Edgar K. Blose, Punxsutawney
Harry Carey, Harrisburg
Cigna Insurance Co, Nikki Andrako, Pittsburgh
Kellie Cramer, Reynoldsville, Pa
Marco Dimemmo, W. Conshohocken, Pa
Kristine Dongilla, Jeannette
Jerome & Deborah Dragoone, Glenshaw
Christine Errin, King of Prussia
Fidelity Chari GDR Charitable Trust, Ms. Giap Nguyen, Houston, TX
Fidelity Charitable GDR, Cincinnati, Ohio
Fidelity Charitable Grant, Eugene Klaber, Slippery Rock
Fidelity Charitable Rosalie M. Murrer Charitable Fund, Pittsburgh
Fidelity Charitable, Cincinnati, Ohio
Fidelity Charitable, William J. Petkanics, West Mifflin
Gail Goldberg, Warminster, Pa
Tom & Debbie Goral, Pittsburgh
James Gray & Pattie Lujetic
Louann Hamilton, Pittsburgh
Patricia Harris
Jon Hawk, Pittsburgh
Cheryl Hika
Teresa Hohn, Marietta
Gail S. Kephart, Hummelstown
Keystone Coach Works, Inc., Bethel Park
Tom Landish, Monongahela
Mr. & Mrs. James MacKenzie, Oxford
Daniel Martin, North Irwin
Jay & Elaine Medasie, Claysburg
Merrit Herr-Neckar Family, Holmes

Melvin & Daria Newsom, Pittsburgh
Ms. Raluca Oleanu, Philadelphia
William S. O’Neill, Moon Township
Others First, Rick Frazier and David Kennedy, Rochester Hills, Michigan
Palm Beach Kennel Club, Patrick Rooney, West Palm Beach, Florida
Philadelphia Contribution Insurance Co., Philadelphia
Cynthia Rieken, San Francisco, California
Roxanne Romah-Picard, Pittsburgh
Rooney’s Golf Foundation, Patrick Rooney, West Palm Beach, Florida
Alan & Liddie Ann Segal, Allison Park
Janice Shaffer, New Castle
Sharp Edge Bistro, Sewickley
Chris Sheets
Elaine Simms, Pittsburgh
South Fayette Township School District, McDonald
R & K Swope, Reading
Karen Switzer, Lebanon
F.W. & Peggy Taverner, Silver Spring, Maryland
Teamster’s Local Union # 205, White Oak
Scott & Beth Tkach, Castle Shannon
Trib Total Media, Kristy Wilson, Pittsburgh
VFW Club 8269 Home Association, Howard
Sam & Susan Weber, Coraopolis

**DONATIONS for EASTER BAGS for HOSPITALIZED VETERANS**

American Legion Post 260, Bushy Run
American Legion Post 778, Butler
American Legion Auxiliary Post 902, Canonsburg
American Legion Post 82, Carnegie
American Legion Post 365, Corry
American Legion Auxiliary Post 380, Dravosburg
American Legion Post 902, Houston
American Legion Auxiliary Post 359, Irwin
American Legion Post 485, McDonald
American Legion Post 48, Natrona Heights

(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. (The newer PVA “Saluting Man” logo is now being applied to new and refurbished boxes.)

American Thrift Center is registered as a fundraising organization with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Its beneficiaries are the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans.
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, 2015 and 2014, 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 presentation 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 appropriate 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, 2015 and 2014, 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 21, 2016
Unrestricted net assets | 9/30/2015 | 9/30/2014
--- | --- | ---
**Unrestricted revenues and support:**
National PVA contributions | $155,775 | $155,000
Thrift Shop Fundraising | 66,591 | 63,030
General contributions | 40,087 | 40,296
Trap Shoot tournament | 9,995 | 8,595
Membership dues | 1,225 | 900
Newsletter advertising | 968 | 628
Project Salvage/"ammo" donation boxes | 869 | --
Combined Federal Campaign | 262 | 2,698
Hunting and Fishing Tournaments | 240 | 710
Non-cash property and equipment contribution | -- | --
Income from investments
   Interest and dividends | 39,996 | 32,995
   Net gain (loss) on investments | (62,389) | 35,667
Net assets released from restrictions | 6,457 | 5,000
**Total unrestricted revenue and support** | 260,076 | 345,529

**Unrestricted expenses:**
**Program services:**
   Membership and benefits | 142,669 | 145,320
   Public affairs | 113,656 | 99,518
   Research | 9,945 | 10,893
**Support services:**
   General and Administrative | 77,944 | 75,352
   Fundraising | 9,735 | 8,989
**Total unrestricted expenses** | 353,949 | 340,072

Increase (decrease) in unrestricted net assets | (93,873) | 5,457

Temporarily restricted net assets
   National PVA special grant | 7,500 | --
   Net assets released from restrictions | (6,457) | (5,000)

Increase (decrease) in temporarily restricted net assets | 1,043 | (5,000)

Net increase (decrease) in net assets | (93,873) | 457

Net assets, beginning of year | 1,509,987 | 1,509,530

**Net assets at end of year** | **$1,417,157** | **$1,509,987**
KEYSTONE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
For the Years Ended September 30, 2015 and 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>September 30,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current assets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and equivalents</td>
<td>$ 139,413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising and fundraising receivables</td>
<td>12,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepaid expenses</td>
<td>7,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply inventory</td>
<td>1,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total current assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>160,482</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments at fair value</td>
<td>1,038,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property and equipment, net</td>
<td>246,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,445,263</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS |               |               |
| Accounts payable and accrued expenses | $ 28,106 | $ 19,758 |
| **Net assets** |               |               |
| Unrestricted | 1,416,114 | 1,509,987 |
| Temporarily restricted | 1,043 | -- |
| **Total net assets** | **$1,417,157** | **$1,509,987** |
| **Total liabilities and net assets** | **$1,445,263** | **$1,529,745** |

Administration and staff report (Continued from page 16)

Two good measures of office-centered activity are the incoming phone calls and preparation for public exhibits.

Office Manager Diane Byrnes recorded taking 1,043 incoming phone calls during FY2015; 40 percent of them were calls from members seeking some form of support, service or information. Executive Director Joe Dornbrock and Administrative Assistant Beth Carmona took additional calls at times, but Diane handled most of them by far. (This does not include incoming e-mail, which we estimate at 30 to 40 a day, not including “junk” e-mail.)

Joe Dornbrock has organized literature, displays and promotional items for outreach exhibits, such as the Combined Federal Campaign “fairs” or veterans’ service exhibits. He, Board members and other volunteers staffed 17 exhibits in FY 2015, giving away thousands of items and meeting face-to-face with an estimated 550 people, promoting PVA, the chapter and our mission.

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.

Diane Byrnes began her ninth year on staff in 2015, and Joe Dornbrock was with the chapter for over a decade by the end of FY2015. In November 2014, Beth Carmona joined the staff as the administrative assistant, with major responsibilities for supporting membership, organizing documents for the Board of Directors, supporting the chapter’s participation in the PVA Poster and Poetry Contest, and scheduling Congressional visits for chapter members.
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.

CONNECT WITH US
The BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
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.

Administration and staff report
The main purpose of the chapter staff is to provide support for the leadership, which is made up of members, the paralyzed veterans themselves. That support is mostly administrative work and facilities maintenance, plus filling in for members when they aren’t available. Keystone PVA staffs its office in Sharpsburg, Pa., 40 hours a week, every week of the year except for holidays.

(Continued on page 15)