

Annual report, fiscal year 2017



Paralyzed Veterans of America

Keystone Chapter

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



We're a team.

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The Keystone PVA Board of Directors, 2017



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phone 724-287-6192



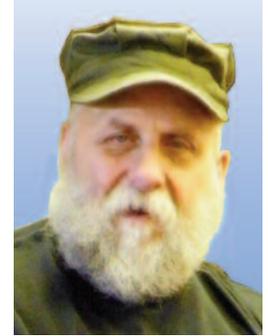
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Glenshaw PA 15116
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Jerry "Bull" Baylor
1066 State Route 356
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To provide for easy communication with members of the Board, the current (FY 2018) 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.



Chris Fidler
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Chapter governance & oversight

Paralyzed Veterans of America and its chapters are each governed by a Board of Directors, each member of which is a paralyzed veteran.

The primary duty of the Board is to set policy and provide oversight of all operations of the organization, and to do so with faithful adherence to each director's fiduciary obligations.

In addition, each of these Boards of Directors are working Boards, whose members involve themselves in programs such as hospital liaison, advocacy, and organizing activities for their fellow paralyzed veterans.

All nine Keystone Chapter directors are elected in annual classes of three by the voting members. Officers are elected annually by the Board itself.

Well-managed chapters hire full-time executive directors and staff to handle the day-to-day operations and to provide professional nonprofit management guidance and experience.

VA Voluntary Service representatives as of 30 September 2017

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

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
Tom Strang, representative
Jerry Baylor, deputy
Dave Gifford, deputy
Ben Williams, deputy

President's message 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.

We continue to advocate for the rights of disabled people by expanding the opportunities for wheelchair sports and recreation events. That includes weekly bowling and air rifle practice, and now monthly reimbursement for members to workout at fitness centers close to them.

The chapter also hosts an annual Kennywood Park picnic and an annual Awards Banquet. The chapter continues to seek additional events and activities that will benefit our members and increase member participation in chapter events.

The chapter is dedicated to assisting our fellow members, their families and others with spinal cord injuries or dysfunctions. Research on spinal cord injury treatment, pain mitigation, and mobility continues to advance through programs such as 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 provides nominal support for the work of Yale University spinal cord research, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS, "Lou Gehrig's Disease") Association, and the Lupus Foundation, the last three of which address the most com-

mon spinal cord diseases among veterans.

Members of the chapter volunteer at each of five VA medical centers in Altoona, Butler, Erie, Lebanon, and Pittsburgh in two capacities: as a VA Volunteer Service (VAVS) Representative and as a Chapter Hospital Liaison (CHL).

VAVS volunteers work in various parts of the VAMCs including in clinics, and by visiting patients and sponsoring activities. The chapter funds monthly programs for patient activities and distributes VA canteen (store) coupon books directly to patients several times annually.

The CHLs are the eyes and ears of the Paralyzed Veterans. They monitor patient care and as patients themselves, they are attuned to any issues or concerns which need to be addressed at the VAMCs. They do so in concert with PVA's National Service Officers (NSOs), who are paid, highly trained professionals. In Pennsylvania, they are Kurt Robinson, based in Pittsburgh and assigned to work with the Keystone chapter, and Violet Graham in Philadelphia. There are another 59 NSOs in 59 other major American cities.

My concerns are the same as the mission of the chapter and PVA, which is basically two-fold: better health care for veterans, especially paralyzed vets, and providing a variety of recreational opportunities that promote better health. I hope that, in reading this report, you will agree that we are meeting and improving both aspects of our mission with your help and advice.



Keystone Chapter President **Jim Riemer** (left) congratulates **Jim Rutledge** of Monroe, Wisconsin, who was a prize winner at the fifth PVA/Keystone Chapter Trap and Pistol Shoot held at the Clairton Sportsmen's Club in September 2017. In one year, President Riemer presides over a dozen Board of Directors meetings, a dozen Executive Committee meetings, six Membership Meetings, and the Annual Awards Banquet. He participates in other chapter events and many, many other meetings that affect paralyzed veterans.

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 VHA budget.

In partnership with 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.



Meeting with Senator Bob Casey's staff in the Russell Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C., (l.-r.), Bill Lightner, Chris Fidler, and Mark Rosensteel. discuss issues important to paralyzed and all veterans.

Keystone PVA contributes to The IB through the PVA Chapter Hospital Liaison 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): 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) and the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) 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, experienced, and have successfully obtained over \$1 billion in new and current benefits claims for veterans and their survivors.

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

Chapter Hospital Liaison

The chapter has a Chapter Hospital Liaison (CHL) assigned to five VA Medical Centers in Pennsylvania. The representative for Altoona is William Lightner; Butler, Jim Riemer; Erie, John Larese; Lebanon, Chris Fidler; and Pittsburgh, Tom Strang. At the end of FY2017 I handed off the CHL coordinator job to Mr. Fidler.

The duties of a CHL is to monitor patient care for any issues or concerns which need to be addressed, especially as they relate to access to and treatment of our paralyzed vets. Each CHL contributes to a monthly report by submitting any issues or concerns to the CHL Coordinator. The CHL Coordinator submits a monthly report to the Field Advisory Committee (FAC) of PVA, which reviews reports. Along with national PVA staff, the FAC uses the information as it shapes advocacy and other efforts on behalf of paralyzed veterans.

Chapter Hospital Liaison Officers have done an excellent job working with the various Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Coordinators to identify issues that need to be addressed at each of the VAMCs. In FY2017, the CHLs were instrumental in getting reserved Spinal Cord Injury Outpatient Clinic parking spaces at each of the VAs, reducing or eliminating obstacles to wheelchair accessibility and safety, and improving access to treatment facilities.

Report submitted by **Jim Riemer**
Chapter Hospital Liaison (Butler VAMC) and CHL Coordinator

The difference between national service offices and the chapter office

The Paralyzed Veterans of America has a central business headquarters at 801 18th Street, N.W. in Washington D.C., and national service offices in the largest 61 cities in the United States. Chapters of the PVA are separate but cooperative with the rest of PVA and share the same mission.

Chapters

There are 33 chapters of the Paralyzed Veterans of America across the United States, each of which is separately incorporated from the national PVA, but carry out the same mission closer to the members and with emphases on different parts of the mission.

“National” PVA supports each chapter with an amount of money that is roughly equal to between 40 and 80 percent of the chapter’s budget, depending on how much money each chapter is able to raise locally. (For Keystone PVA, that amount in FY2017 was 43 percent. We raised the other 57 percent thanks to a lot of generous people.)

The support from the national PVA is to make sure that eight “mandated” programs are carried out at each chapter: membership, chapter administration, service, hospital liaison, advocacy, fundraising, communications, and sports & recreation. This annual report has been organized to be sure that each program is reported on, though these few pages do not do justice to the extent of the work done by our members, non-member volunteers, and staff.

National Service Offices

The two service offices for most of the Keystone chapter members are in Philadelphia, staffed by Violet Graham, and in Pittsburgh, staffed by Kurtt Robinson and Darlene Mead.

They specialize in making sure that members are getting the benefits to which they are entitled, and they visit paralyzed veterans in medical facilities (usually VA medical centers) to check on their care. They are all very well trained, experienced, and effective!

The national PVA service staff people work directly for the national PVA, but each chapter is assigned a service officer to insure that all efforts on behalf of members is closely coordinated. Mr. Robinson is assigned to the Keystone Chapter.

The Keystone chapter and the service offices have always had a positive, productive relationship that has benefitted our members and many other veterans.

National Service Office Report

Kurtt Robinson, National Service Officer
Darlene Mead, Senior Secretary
National Service Office, Pittsburgh

The Pittsburgh office of the Paralyzed Veterans of America assisted 29 new claimants and grossed more than \$1,262,739 in benefits for our members and other veterans. It is through your support we are able to function at such a high level. Members are asked to keep this office informed of changes in your life such as a new residence or a new family member or most importantly, a change in your health that affects the 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

The Keystone PVA Sports and Recreation programs are overseen by a three-person 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 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 (that were held in Cincinnati, Ohio in July) and the Buckeye Games held at the Spire Institute in Geneva, Ohio (that were held in April).

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, 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, acquired associate members, and arranged for speaking engagements. The quad rugby tournaments this year included Rochester, New York, Slippery Rock University and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, Columbus, Ohio, West Palm Beach, Florida and Akron, Ohio.

- Trap Shoot ... We held our fifth trap shoot on the PVA National circuit 22-24 September at the Clairton Sportsmen's Club and included a pistol shoot for the third year. The national PVA Shooting Sports personnel and the Club made the event easy for us and a welcome addition to our recreation program.
- 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 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 day-long competition that concludes with prizes and a picnic.
- Kennywood Picnic ... is a one-day event open to members and their families and friends each summer. The chapter sponsors admission and dinner for our group. The event enables our membership 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 are open to our members.

Members who are interested in getting involved 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.

Report submitted by **Jerry "Bull" Baylor**,
Sports and Recreation Director

The Keystone Paralyzed Veterans sports & recreation program includes many partnerships, such as the Air Rifle Clinic and Competition, in which the chapter works with the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, the National Rifle Association, and the HOPE Network at the HealthSouth Harmarville rehabilitation hospital.

Membership

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 Parascoper. All members receive The Parascoper 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 research support. 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.

Tom Strang, Membership Officer

Members who have passed on to the Eternity Chapter

FY 2017 : 01 October 2016 to 30 September 2017

*All towns in Pennsylvania except where noted;
“LAM:” lifetime associate member.*

- Jeffrey J. Klein, Moon Township, 29 October 2016
- Terry L. St. Denny, Erie, 03 January 2017
- Robert M. Milan, Kennewick, Washington (formerly of Washington, Pa.), 09 January 2017
- Donald L. Patrick, New Alexandria, 31 January 2017
- Thomas Mehaulic, Uniontown, 23 February 2017 (LAM)
- Arthur Bartman, Barto, 26 February 2017 (LAM)
- Walter Lomax, Wilmerding, 24 March 2017
- Michael Petrus Jr., Smock, 06 May 2017
- Paul A Wentworth, Youngsville, 24 June 2017
- Daniel Stark, Donora, 27 June 2017
- Suzanne Zeff, Avella, 21 July 2017 (LAM)
- Edwin W. Jones, Coatesville, 25 July 2017

The following passings prior to FY2017 were reported during last year:

- Barton J. Duva, Apollo, 13 July 2013
- John J. Barva, Pittsburgh, 23 October 2013 (LAM)
- James George, Pittsburgh, 31 July 2016
- William P. Reed, Hollidaysburg, 30 September 2016

Membership as of 30 September 2017

Life members, service connected	134	Associate members, annual	18
Life members, non-service connected	<u>132</u>	Associate members, lifetime	<u>64</u>
Total life members:	266	Total associate members:	82

TOTAL CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP: 348

Sharing & Caring

Keystone PVA is one of 17 organizations of the Sharing & Caring Committee, which helps hospitalized veterans. Each year, during the four days after Labor Day, 500 veterans from the area’s VA medical centers and nursing/personal care homes are treated to rides on the Gateway Clipper Fleet’s *Empress*. For three hours, these veterans enjoy a buffet lunch, entertainment, dance contests, and sightseeing on Pittsburgh’s three rivers. Returning to their buses, each veteran receives a gift bag.

PVA Poster & Poem Contest

National PVA sponsors the annual Poster and Poetry Contest, which is extended to schools through participating chapters. Each year, students from Pennsylvania are finalists and even category winners. Helping chapter contest committee chairman Rob Morris visit the schools to present awards are Bill Jakovac, Chris Fidler, Mark Rosensteel, Bull Baylor, and others. Entries from schools in Pennsylvania usually account for over 40 percent of total entries in this national contest.

Advocacy

National PVA conducts an Advocacy/Legislative Seminar in March of every year. In 2017, Keystone PVA sent two members for the intensive, two-day training session. Two more members joined them in going to Capitol Hill and visited the offices of members of Congress from Pennsylvania. As usual, we focused on the high points of the Independent Budget, which is a recommended budget for the VA's Health Administration formulated by Paralyzed Veterans of America with our partners from the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Disabled American Veterans.

Keystone PVA continued to advocate for veterans during fiscal year 2017 by staying involved in external events and meetings held by other organizations. As the Department of Veterans Affairs improved its outreach through its medical facilities 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 centers.

The chapter's "site leaders" – members who serve as local leaders and points of contact for the chapter at and around the

Volunteer Service

Volunteer hours for the 12 month period ending September 30, 2017 for VA Volunteer Service (VAVS) totaled 5,734. Volunteer non-VAVS National PVA hours donated to service to the chapter totaled 4,449 including volunteer hours at 1,222 and member hours at 3,227.

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.

National Director

The Paralyzed Veterans of America organization is governed by a Board of Directors (BOD) and an Executive Committee. Each of the 33 chapters elects a member to represent them on this board as a National Director. The officers, of which there are eight, are elected annually by the BOD. Together, we set the direction, policies, and programs of PVA. Our actions must always be in the best interests of the organization.

PVA holds three BOD meetings each year. These meetings always include reports from national elected officers and staff department heads. These set the stage for discussion and votes on business resolutions concerning programs, policies, and funding of PVA.

Altoona, Butler, Erie, Lebanon, and Pittsburgh VA medical centers – are provided with exhibit materials whenever an opportunity arises to set up a display table at an event. During fiscal year 2017, site leaders and other chapter representatives set up and staffed exhibit tables at 25 different locations around Pennsylvania, speaking to over 3,000 individuals and distributing thousands of promotional items and copies of literature to promote the work of the PVA 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 than just our own paralyzed vets. We also emphasize that the specifications of the Americans with Disabilities Act are absolute minimums, and that substantially exceeding those minimums help many people and costs relatively little.

Bill Jakovac, Advocacy Director

Several of our volunteers have served with Keystone PVA for 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 chapter members, thank you for your time given to help others. We value your time and encourage our members' families, friends, and neighbors to also become involved by giving some time to help our veterans.

Volunteers are the hallmark of our organization!

Report submitted by **Agnes Strang**,
Volunteer Coordinator

The Fall BOD meeting was held in Cleveland, Ohio, and was attended by acting Director Mark Rosensteel and Chapter Executive Director Joe Dornbrock.

The midwinter BOD meeting was held via teleconference.

At the Annual Convention, we meet to elect national officers, acknowledge organizations and people for their work and support of paralyzed veterans, and discuss/vote on resolutions that concern the operations of PVA. The FY2017 convention was held in National Harbor, Maryland, and was attended by Mr. Rosensteel, Mr. Dornbrock, and me.

Report submitted by **Bill Jakovac**,
National Director

Communications

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.

Apparel and other promotional items

The "Saluting Man," the nationwide corporate logo of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, appeared on more publicly-displayed items that the chapter used in FY2017 than ever before. That included shirts, jackets, vehicles, and publications. We made apparel available in red, white and blue, but the choices of the members was overwhelmingly blue with white highlights and imagery (see the front-page photo and the photo at right).

Active members usually place magnetic signs, with the chapter name, corporate logo and web site address on their vehicles' doors, providing many thousands of miles of exposure in a year. Both chapter-owned vehicles similarly display the chapter's logo and information.

E-mail, keystonepva@comcast.net

Web site, www.kpva.org

Our use of e-mail increased in FY2017, though we had to cope with an "improvement" by our Internet service provider that wasn't. We passed along many messages, from VA health care notices to recreation opportunities to members who had and used e-mail.

While our web site has been improved, it needs more constant attention and updating. We wish to include some content that better explains what Paralyzed Veterans and this chapter does.

Teleconferencing

The chapter continued to use teleconference phones to link Membership Meeting sites and Board members who live some distance from the office. Use of the PVA conference bridge to link members together greatly increased member participation. However, this service ended near the end of the fiscal year and this chapter will engage a new teleconferencing service.

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. We believe, and evidence supports, that the public is much more likely to support our veterans and our mission when they know the "Five Facts."

Face-to-face outreach exhibits

Our members attended and staffed 25 events sponsored by a variety of organizations in which they were able to communicate directly with over 3,000 people. These were variously called a "Health and Wellness Fair," "Veterans Outreach Expo," "Washington County Sports Show," "Veterans' Mini-Stand Down," and more. Some exhibits were part of other events, such as at the Steel City Slam Quad Rugby Tournament in Slippery Rock. More of our members used these opportunities to get out, meet the public, and tell personal stories that helped increase understanding and support for Paralyzed Veterans — our people and our organization.



A few other important numbers

3,000+ person-to-person contacts made by members at public exhibit events

1,103 phone calls taken just by the office manager, not including other staff members

149 e-mails distributed to members with information originating from or forwarded by the chapter

Building

During FY2017, we had tire bumpers added to the parking lot by chapter member Dane Smith. The lot had been paved and restriped at the end of FY2016. Staff did minor repairs, such as replacing fluorescent lamp ballasts, and kept up the grounds, removing debris, trimming the shrubs, clearing snow and maintaining waste-hauling truck access to the dumpster. Staff also maintained the interior appearance and cleanliness of the building in between the biweekly service of a cleaning company. Our employees keep the offices bright, clean, functional, and with plenty of room for wheelchair users to do work, conduct meetings, and move around easily.

Ben Williams, Building Committee Chairman

Chapter administration

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 in direct support of the chapter's programs for paralyzed veterans. It includes 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.

A good measure of office-centered activity is the number of incoming phone calls. Office Manager Diane Byrnes, who is based in the office 40 hours a week, recorded taking 1,103 incoming phone calls during FY2017; 88 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.) Outgoing phone calls and e-mails

The executive director spent much time building the chapter's civic connections, public profile, and favorable image, which appears to be bolstering the increasing number of unsolicited offers to donate money to the chapter from individuals, corporations and other institutions. He also attends Veterans Service Officer roundtable meetings with the director of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, teleconferences of the PVA Associations of Government Relations Directors, face-to-face meetings of the PVA Association of Chapter Executive Directors (of which he is an officer), and national PVA Board of Directors meetings, accompanying the chapter's national director. He is the staff person for the annual PVA circuit Trap and Pistol Shoot. Routine work includes supporting the processing of legal and financial documentation and maintenance of the chapter's grounds and vehicles. He had been with the chapter for 12 1/2 years as of the end of FY2017.

Diane Byrnes began her eleventh year on staff in 2017. She is the most identifiable staff person to callers, since her assignment to be in the office 40 hours a week makes her the primary receptionist. But her major responsibilities are bookkeeping, purchasing supplies, processing incoming postal mail and much of the e-mail. She is the primary staff person for the Easter Bag Project and the Annual Dinner, and the processing of vital paperwork for events such as the applications for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games is in her hands.

Beth Carmona had been on staff nearly three years at the end of FY2017. While technically part-time, her hours were

increased to allow her to make several outreach calls per week to members that we seldom have contact with, to find out if they are getting the services they need from PVA, this chapter, the Department of Veterans Affairs, or other providers. Beth also serves as staff for the Poster and Poem contest, the legislative visits to members of Congress by members, and especially for membership issues. These duties put her in contact with national PVA staff daily, a critical link between national PVA and the Keystone chapter.

Report submitted by **Joseph W. Dornbrock**,
Executive Director

Treasurer

Keystone PVA's Fiscal Year 2017 records and practices were inspected by K.E. Randall and Associates. The auditor's opinion letter is located on page 13, followed by statement of activities and financial position.

I am responsible for the funds of the chapter, but our financial recording and reporting security is based on having four people involved with overlapping responsibilities: the treasurer, the president (who is a past treasurer), the office manager (who is also the bookkeeper), and the executive director. All are involved in the financial accounting process in significant ways. All are encouraged and empowered to call attention to and investigate anything that seems amiss.

Though separately incorporated from the national Paralyzed Veterans of America, the national office rightly requires (as part of its financial support) that each chapter arranges for an annual independent audit, plus reports on programs and fundraising that the chapter does. The national PVA office of the chief financial officer has always been accessible, responsive and helpful.

An important part of our financial process is to acknowledge donations. Our thank-you letters, personally signed by the president and me, also serve as a record of donations for the donor's tax records, since all donations to support Keystone PVA programs are federal income tax-deductible for those whose itemize.

Investments include certificates of deposit, money market funds, and equities. Most of our equity investments are managed by Hefren-Tillotson financial advisors and planners with a conservative approach. Our Hefren-Tillotson account managers meet with our Board of Directors periodically to review our investment status and strategy.

Report submitted by **Bill Jakovac**,
Treasurer

Fundraising

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 percentage of the gross sales. The American Thrift Center continues to increase the number of its red collection boxes located in high visibility areas in south-western Pennsylvania and increasingly beyond Allegheny County. The chapter name and/or the national/chapter logo appear on all four sides of the boxes. American Thrift also provides replacement household items and clothing within its inventory for Keystone members who have suffered a catastrophic loss. They also provide a 50% discount to Keystone PVA members. The American Thrift Center is owned and operated by James V. Zeik, whom we thank for his commitment to the support of paralyzed veterans.

We also receive donations from Project Salvage USA, a metal recycling program, and through "ammo" donation boxes placed in various locations. These programs are operated by Timothy G. Knoebel, who is in the early phases of developing these promising projects.

We have ceased our relationship with the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), which instituted a schedule of fees that are based on an inflated estimate of the chapter's financial capability and are in excess of the income we might expect from the program. We do appreciate the generous support that we received from federal employees, which include employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(Continued on page 15)

Keystone PVA thanks you for your generosity

These people and institutions made **direct donations** to the Keystone PVA in our **fiscal year 2017 (01 October 2016 to 30 September 2017)**. 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 non-monetary 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 over 500 red donation boxes in the Pittsburgh region, samples of which are pictured on the next page.

*All locations are communities or postal designations in Pennsylvania unless otherwise noted.
Numbers in parentheses indicate multiple donations.*

UNRESTRICTED donations

American Legion Auxiliary, Valley Post 978, Weedville
Anonymous
Anonymous c/o Fidelity Charitable, Cincinnati, Ohio
Bank of America Employee Giving Campaign (2)
Carol & Charles Bays, Richmond, Virginia
Michael & Patricia Best, West Sunbury
Borough of Aspinwall Parade Fund, Pittsburgh
CFC Central Ohio & West Virginia (3)
CFC SHR #0897, Norfolk, Virginia
Leticia Cunningham, Orange, California, through the CFC Charitable Flex Fund
Fair Oaks Foundation, Inc. "Jeans for Charity", Carnegie
Rick Frazier, Others First, Rochester Hills, Michigan
Gary Gajdzik & Karen Gajdzik (2), Cranberry Twp, through Fidelity Charitable
GDR Charitable Trust, Cincinnati, Ohio, c/o Fidelity Charitable
William Jackson, Erie
Eugene Klaber, T&G Gift Fund, Slippery Rock, c/o Fidelity Charitable
Louann Hamilton, Pittsburgh, c/o Morgan Stanley Cyber Grant

Patricia C. Kirkpatrick, (2), Pittsburgh
James & Kathleen MacKenzie, Oxford
Mrs. Dorothy G. Magers (2), West Grove, c/o Fidelity Charitable
Elaine & Jay Medasie, Claysburg
Rosalie M. Murrer (2), Pittsburgh, c/o Fidelity Charitable Grant
Ms. Giap Nguyen, Houston, Texas, c/o Fidelity Charitable
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Spadafora, Indiana, through Fidelity Charitable
Merrit Herr Neckar, Holmes
Raluca Olteanu (2), Philadelphia, c/o KPMG Community Giving Campaign
Michael R. Paral & Sally J. Paral, Manitowoc, Wisconsin, c/o Thrivent Financial
Jessmine Parker, Pittsburgh
Walter M. Pawlosky, Washington
Deborah J. Pomposini, Pittsburgh
Madelene M. Pryor, Glenshaw
Jennifer Quimby, "Jeans for Charity," Rochester, New Hampshire

(Continued on page 12)



500 donation boxes in the Pittsburgh Region!

Most of the 500-plus donation boxes placed around south-western Pennsylvania that benefit the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans are red, and look like one of the two examples shown here. The newer PVA "Saluting Man" logo, on the box in the leftmost photo, is now being applied to new and refurbished boxes. American Thrift Center manages and collects the contents of the boxes, and operates a thrift store in West Mifflin, Pa. It is registered as a fundraising organization with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Its only beneficiaries are the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans.

Joseph & Lore Salata, Lansdale, c/o Schwab Charitable (2)
 Peggy & Richard Spangler, Pittsburgh
 Robert H. Swope, Reading
 Alice J. Testa, Warminster, c/o Thrivent Financial
 VFW Roy Calvin McGinnis Post 7073, Parker
 Robert and Mary Weisbrod Foundation, Pittsburgh
 Nancy J. Woods, "Jeans for Charity", Pittsburgh

BASS TOURNAMENT donations

Thomas Landish, Monongahela
 Sharpsburg Veterans Assn., Howard Strain, Pittsburgh

PROJECT EASTER BAG donations

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 364, Avella
 American Legion Post 638, Bessemer
 American Legion Post 128, Bolivar
 American Legion Post 54, Bridgeville
 American Legion Post 117, Butler
 American Legion, Bushy Run Post 260, Claridge
 American Legion Post 365, Corry
 American Legion Auxiliary Post 380, Dravosburg
 American Legion Post 380, Dravosburg
 American Legion Post 48, Harrison Twp, Natrona
 American Legion Post 493, Homer City
 American Legion Post 0902, Houston
 American Legion Post 764, Springdale
 American Legion Post 114, Vandergrift
 American Legion Post 161, Wexford
 Ernest Clark, Wales Center, New York
 Comptec, Inc., Irwin
 Presbyterian Church of Pitcairn, Ed Agate, Pitcairn
 Katie Dewitt, Morgantown, West Virginia
 Timothy J. Doyle, Erie
 Deborah & Richard Lawson, Finleyville
 Lester & Penny Neimiller, Boswell
 Bill & Lois Schenker, Allison Park
 Angela Summers, Clairton
 VFW Private James Perry Post 191, Canonsburg
 VFW Post 803 911 N. State St., Clairton
 VFW Post 8430, Hilltoppers Home Association, East
 McKeesport

VFW Post 481, 2010 Kentucky St., Export
 VFW W. Ralph McNulty Post 214, Lawrenceville
 VFW Post 92, 1601 Wildlife Lodge Road, Lower Burrell
 VFW Post 709, 1017 Main Street, Sharpsburg

MEMORIAL donations

In memory of Robert Kacinko

Anonymous (2)
 Doreen E. Consentino, Pittsburgh
 Don & Tootie Grigg, Pittsburgh
 Naomi Grigg, Pittsburgh
 Peggy Hofschler, Pittsburgh
 Anna J. Malarkey, Pittsburgh
 Lynne & David Smith, Pittsburgh
 Jack Wilson, Johns Creek, Georgia
 Shelley & Thomas Wilson, Bernville

In Memory of Jan P. Krause

Matthew S. Krause, through Schwab Charitable

In Memory of LeRoy Lewis

Roberta & Robert Lewis, Boise, Idaho

In Memory of Elsie Riemer

Christopher Fidler, Jonestown
 M. Eleanor Snider, Butler

In Memory of Joseph C. Smithco

Judith A. Iurlano Dietz, Pittsburgh

In Memory of Salvatore Venturino

DAWAR Technologies, Pittsburgh

NON-CASH donations

American Legion Post 940, West Brownsville--use of its marina for the Team Bass Tournament
 Gloria Atherholt, Danielsville, hand knitted afghan & lap blanket
 Clairton Sportsmen's Club--use of its facility near Clairton, Pa. for the Trap and Pistol Shoot
 Jeffrey Thorne, Saugerties, New York

Independent Auditor's Report and Financial Statements

The Keystone Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America (Keystone PVA) engaged Kimberly Y. Donovan, CPA, to perform its independent audit for Fiscal Year 2017. The following opinion letter, Statement of Activities, and Statement of Financial Position are the highlights of the results of the FY 2017 audit. Fiscal Year 2016 numbers are provided by the chapter from the previous year's audit for comparison. To see the complete audit, including supporting notes, contact Keystone PVA.

Kimberly Y. Donovan
Certified Public Accountant

235 New Castle Road
Butler PA 16001
724-283-6040
Kimberly@kerandall.com

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

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

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America, Inc. (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statements of financial position as of September 30, 2017, 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

My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that I 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, I 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.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my 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, 2017, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Kimberly Y. Donovan, CPA
Butler, Pa.
January 9, 2018

KEYSTONE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

For the Years Ended September 30, 2017 and 2016

	Year ended September 30,	
	2017	2016
Unrestricted net assets		
Unrestricted revenues and support:		
National PVA contributions	\$ 159,405	\$ 158,100
Thrift Shop Fundraising	70,207	66,591
Legacies and bequests	—	47,546
General contributions	39,616	37,880
Trap Shoot tournament	8,789	9,240
Membership dues	270	775
Newsletter advertising	1,088	883
Project Salvage/"ammo" donation boxes	1,577	1,305
Combined Federal Campaign	908	1,071
United Way contributions	407	
Hunting and Fishing Tournaments	1,380	470
Income from investments		
Interest and dividends	31,818	34,402
Net gain (loss) on investments	72,481	44,749
Net assets released from restrictions	—	1,043
Total unrestricted revenue and support	387,946	401,167
Unrestricted expenses:		
Program services:		
Membership and benefits	143,928	149,022
Public affairs	121,900	116,502
Research	10,657	10,246
Total program services	276,485	275,770
Support services:		
General and Administrative	85,215	79,199
Fundraising	11,113	10,246
Total support services	96,328	89,445
Total unrestricted expenses	372,813	365,481
Increase (decrease) in unrestricted net assets	15,113	35,686
Temporarily restricted net assets		
Net assets released from restrictions	—	(1,043)
Increase (decrease) in temporarily restricted net assets	—	1,043
Net increase (decrease) in net assets	15,113	43,643
Net assets, beginning of year	1,451,800	1,417,157
Net assets at end of year	\$ 1,466,933	\$ 1,451,800

KEYSTONE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
For the Years Ended September 30, 2017 and 2016

	September 30,	
	2017	2016
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and equivalents	\$ 74,352	\$ 104,965
Advertising and fundraising receivables	11,687	5,377
Prepaid expenses	<u>13,051</u>	<u>8,638</u>
Total current assets	99,090	118,980
Investments at fair value	1,176,715	1,116,353
Property and equipment:		
Building and improvements	322,001	
Equipment and furniture	14,906	
Vehicles	<u>84,008</u>	
Property and equipment, net	<u>218,643</u>	<u>242,170</u>
Total assets	\$ <u>1,494,448</u>	\$ <u>1,477,503</u>
LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ <u>27,515</u>	\$ <u>25,703</u>
Net assets		
Unrestricted	1,466,933	1,451,800
Temporarily restricted	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
Total net assets	\$ <u>1,466,933</u>	\$ <u>1,451,800</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ <u>1,494,448</u>	\$ <u>1,477,503</u>

Fundraising *(Continued from page 11)*

We are a participant in the United Way of Allegheny County, and appreciate the support of donors through that program.

In Fiscal Year 2017, 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 must 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 costs of follow-up, accounting, reporting and other compliance requirements. There is no free lunch.

We are 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 starting on page 11.

Keystone PVA is most grateful to all its donors.

Report submitted by **William D. Jakovac**,
Chapter Fundraising Coordinator



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

keystonepva@comcast.net

Officers, Directors and Appointments, FY 2018

See page 2 for contact information

President

James E. Riemer

Vice President

George M. "Murph" Neelan

Secretary

William D. Lightner

Treasurer

William D. Jakovac

Directors

Jerry "Bull" Baylor

Chris Fidler

Mark O. Rosensteel

Tom Strang

Ben Williams

Advocacy Director

William D. Jakovac

Fundraising Coordinator

William D. Jakovac

Hospital Liaison Coordinator

Chris Fidler

Legislative Director

Chris Fidler

Membership Officer

Tom Strang

Service Officer

George M. "Murph" Neelan

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 eight VA medical centers in Pennsylvania.

About the front page photo: Keystone PVA's volunteer coordinator, Agnes Strang, took this photo of Keystone PVA athletes, attendants, and families prior to the Opening Ceremonies of the National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Cincinnati, Ohio in July 2017. The sea of PVA blue indicates the team they are competing for; a few athletes did tribute with Terrible Towels to another team they look up to that wears black-and-gold. At the time of publication, the other Pennsylvania pro football team is headed to the Super Bowl. Our best wishes to the Philadelphia Eagles!

Terminology note: Our full names—Paralyzed Veterans of America and Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America—are a lot to say and print, so sometimes we abbreviate to "PVA" and "Keystone PVA." We don't like to abbreviate a lot, though, because sometimes people think "VA" in "PVA" means we're part of the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Please see our "Five Facts" on page 4.

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.