

# Speedy Gazette

"Improving Lives... Building Futures"



# PVA

Paralyzed Veterans of America

Texas Chapter

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## July 2023





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**VA**

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

*South Texas Veterans Health Care System***SENT ON BEHALF OF SOUTH TEXAS VETERANS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**

As you know, the PACT Act is the largest expansion of Veteran health care and benefits in decades. Millions of Veterans, their families, and their survivors could be positively impacted by this landmark legislation, and we at VA want to make sure that every one of them gets the benefits and health care they deserve.

To that end, South Texas Veterans Health Care System is hosting a PACT Act Week of Action event to inform Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors about the PACT Act and encourage them to apply for the toxic exposure-related health care and benefits they have earned. This is one of 80+ Week of Action events at VA facilities nationwide between December 10th and 17th. Our event will feature a 30-minute speaking program and overview of PACT Act. VA staff will also be present to help Veterans to apply for benefits, complete toxic exposure screenings, and enroll in VA health care.

The PACT Act event for the San Antonio Northwest Health Care Center scheduled for Monday, December 12 is cancelled. The Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital scheduled for December 14 remains. There is a time change on the event, which is 2-6 p.m.

You are a tireless advocate for Veterans, and we at VA so appreciate your partnership in serving Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors as well as they have served our country.

Thank you for all you do. I hope you can join us to spread the word about this historic expansion of Veteran benefits and care. For additional information, please contact the Office of Public Affairs at (210) 617-5274.

# VA



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
South Texas Veterans Health Care System

SENT ON BEHALF OF JULIANNE FLYNN, MD  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



When Veterans served our country overseas, many of them were exposed to toxic hazards – burn pits, Agent Orange, and other hazards – that led them to develop health conditions long after they came home. For too long, these heroes weren't able to get the benefits and health care they deserved. But now, those days are over. Thanks to a new law called the PACT Act, VA has expanded health care and benefits for millions of Veterans and their survivors – including Vietnam-era, Gulf War-era, and Post-9/11 Veterans.

The PACT Act Summer VetFest is just one component of VA's nationwide PACT Act Veteran outreach campaign, which is the largest coordinated outreach campaign in VA history. This event is a part of a nationwide VA campaign between July 1 and August 10, when VA will host more than 50 Summer VetFest events across all 50 states, DC, and Puerto Rico.

As a part of this campaign, South Texas Veterans Health Care System (STVHCS) will host its own Summer VetFest on Wednesday, July 19 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. at the San Antonio Northwest Health Care Center. At the event, VA staff will be ready to help Veterans apply for PACT Act-related benefits (or submit an intent to file), enroll in VA health care, get screened for toxic exposures, and even apply to come work at VA.

STVHCS wants to ensure that every eligible Veteran and survivor gets the PACT Act-related health care and benefits they've earned, and we won't rest until we've done exactly that. Every employee at South Texas is vital to ensuring the success of the Summer VetFest and encouraging Veterans to apply before the August 9 deadline.

#### What Happens if Veterans Apply After August 9

- Most Veterans who apply for PACT Act benefits by August 9 will have their benefits, if granted, backdated to August 10, 2022 – the day the bill was signed into law. That's the earliest possible effective date for any PACT Act benefits, which is why we're encouraging Vets to apply now -- so they get the most benefits possible.
- Having said that, there is no deadline for PACT Act benefits. The PACT Act is here to stay, and Veterans can and should apply anytime for the benefits they've earned.
- Additionally, Veterans who apply after August 10 of this year may still be eligible to have their benefits backdated by one year.
  - o For example, if a Veteran applied in December of 2025, they could have their benefits – if granted – backdated to December of 2024.
  - o But, in that case, they would miss out on their earliest possible effective date of August 10, 2022, meaning that they would miss out on a couple years of benefit payments.
  - o That's why we're encouraging Vets and survivors to apply now – so they get the earliest possible effective date and the most possible benefit payments.
- Bottom line: the sooner a Veteran applies, the more benefits they may be eligible for.

June 27, 2023

Veterans who apply for PACT Act benefits by August 9 – or submit their intent to file – may have their benefits, if granted, backdated to August 10, 2022

WASHINGTON — In July, VA will kick off a PACT Act Summer VetFest to inform Veterans, their families, and survivors about the PACT Act and encourage them to apply for the health care and benefits they have earned. The PACT Act, which President Biden signed into law on August 10, 2022, is the biggest expansion of Veteran health care and benefits in generations.

Throughout July, VA will host 50+ Summer VetFest events across all 50 states, DC, and Puerto Rico. The events will be casual summer gatherings featuring Veterans, their families, Veteran advocates, and the VA health care and benefits professionals who serve them. At the events, VA staff will be ready to help Veterans apply for PACT Act-related benefits (or submit an intent to file), enroll in VA health care, get screened for toxic exposures, and more.

VA encourages all eligible Veterans and survivors to file a claim — or submit their intent to file a claim — for PACT Act-related benefits now. Veterans who do so by August 9 may have their benefits, if granted, backdated to Aug. 10, 2022, the day that President Biden signed the bill into law.

“There are millions of Veterans and survivors across America who are eligible for new health care and benefits, and we will not rest until every one of them gets what they’ve earned,” said Denis McDonough, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. “That’s what this Summer VetFest is all about: educating Veterans, their families, and survivors – and encouraging them to apply today.”

Since President Biden signed the PACT Act into law, VA has delivered more than \$1.4 billion dollars in PACT Act benefits to Veterans. Additionally, more than 665,000 Veterans have applied for PACT Act-related benefits, more than 3.7 million Veterans have received the new toxic exposure screenings, and more than 287,000 Veterans have enrolled in VA health care (this is 40,000 more enrollments than during the same timeframe last year, and it includes 94,000 enrollees from the PACT Act target population) .

The PACT Act Summer VetFest is just one component of VA’s nationwide PACT Act Veteran outreach campaign, which is the largest coordinated outreach campaign in VA history. The campaign has one goal: ensuring that every eligible Veteran and survivor gets the PACT Act-related health care and benefits they have earned. Highlights of the campaign to date:

- **VA.gov/PACT:** Within one hour of the Senate passage of the PACT Act, VA launched VA.gov/PACT – a one-stop-shop for Veterans and survivors to learn about and apply for PACT Act-related care and benefits. Since then, the website has garnered more than 13.4 million page views from 10 million unique visitors.
- **Earned Media:** VA is executing an aggressive national and local earned media campaign, seeking to inform Veterans and survivors about the PACT Act and encourage them to apply. Between August 10, 2022, and June 9, 2023, these efforts have helped generate 30,000+ news articles and 24,000+ broadcast items about the PACT Act.
- **Paid Media:** VA is executing a nationwide, targeted advertising campaign across streaming video (Hulu, Roku, YouTube); print (Military Times, Military.com, USA Today); radio (satellite, traditional); podcasts; signage (including Times Square ads, DC Metro ads, airports, billboards, and more); sponsorships (such as Military and Armed Forces Bowls); digital advertising, including Search (Google and Bing), Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Spotify, iHeartRadio, ESPN online, RallyPoint, and more. To date, VA has spent more than \$7.5 million on PACT Act advertising, driving millions of visitors to VA.gov/PACT, and generating hundreds of millions of impressions. Through Public Service Announcement distribution along with vendor negotiations, VA has also achieved \$7.9 million in added value between October 2022 and May 2023, more than doubling the media value of PACT Act efforts. By the August 9 filing deadline, we anticipate that VA will spend more than \$11.4 million. This campaign is focused on reaching all eligible Veterans and survivors, especially those who have not previously come to VA for benefits or care.
- **Events:** Since August 10, VA has hosted hundreds of PACT Act-related events across all 50 states, DC, and Puerto Rico with Veterans, their families, caregivers, survivors, and Veteran advocates. This includes a PACT Act Week of Action in December, when VA hosted more than 120 events across the nation. At the events, Veterans applied for benefits, got screened for toxic exposures, enrolled in VA health care, and learned more about what the PACT Act could mean for them and their families.
- **Print, digital, and video resources:** VA has developed a library of PACT Act flyers, videos, and fact sheets to help Veterans understand what this new law means for them. The videos have been viewed more than 4 million times across platforms, and the resources have been shared directly with Veterans, VA facilities, Veterans Service Organizations, and other partners nationwide. VA has also released PACT Act flyers and information in more than 10 languages, including Arabic, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.
- **Direct mail:** VA has sent more than 300 million PACT Act-related e-mails to Veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors, which were opened more than 94 million times.

VA encourages all eligible Veterans and survivors to apply for their earned PACT Act-related health care and benefits now. Veterans and survivors can apply or learn more about the PACT Act by visiting VA.gov/PACT, by calling 1-800-MYVA411, or by attending one of July’s events.

For more information about VA’s implementation of the PACT Act, visit the PACT Act Dashboard. VA is publishing this dashboard every other Friday to document the implementation of this law and showcase its impact on Veterans and survivors.



## ALS Medical Research Article:

Recently the FDA approved a small molecule drug for ALS. The drug slowed functional decline by 2 pts in 6 months. On the 48-point functional scale, two points is the difference between being able to walk vs using a wheelchair, feeding or bathing yourself, or breathing without a bipap. Furthermore, when analyzing the OLE data, it improved ALS survival by an average of 10 months in comparison with placebo & natural history. In approving this new drug with just one Phase II trial, the #FDA acknowledged it would exercise the “broadest of regulatory flexibility” for the “urgent unmet need” in #ALS.

### QuickSubmit

By Deontre Williams NSO

Effective June 2023, VBA has made a complete transition from the use of Direct Upload to QuickSubmit system. QuickSubmit is now the accepted way to upload correspondence directly from Veterans, claimants, and representatives, including external Veterans Service Organizations (VSO). The documents are converted and routed to the VA's Digital Mail Handling system (DMHS) work queues. The QuickSubmit application replaces Direct Upload to provide Veteran Business Partners, Veterans, Veteran Family Members, and VA Employee/Contractors, with the ability to upload Veteran evidence electronically, making it the fastest and most proficient way to submit Veteran evidence to the VBA Claims Intake Center.

QuickSubmit provides an efficient alternative to faxing or mailing documents to the Claims Intake Center. QuickSubmit also provides an audit history of all material uploaded to Digitized Mail Handling Service (DMHS) improving both Veteran and employee experiences by enabling claim evidence materials to be electronically accessible for immediate processing.

The QuickSubmit application is a modernized, flexible platform. It uses the latest technologies and human centered design to improve the user experience, facilitate the submission of Veteran evidence, reduce upload errors, and improve processing time. To access QuickSubmit go to:  
<https://eauth.va.gov/accessva/?cspSelectFor=quicksubmit>

NOTE: To login with external authentication, select the type of authentication applicable and follow the instructions. If you select “Sign in with ID.me” and do not have an ID.me account, the system will guide you through the process to create one. After the authentication process is complete, if you have an active QuickSubmit account, you are directed to the QuickSubmit landing page. Otherwise, you are directed to the User Registration page to select your user type and enter your registration information. As a new user, you are required to register during your first sign-on attempt. Registration is a one-time event and future logins will automatically take you to the QuickSubmit landing page. To register, select the appropriate User Type on the User Identification screen: Veteran, Veteran Family Member, VA Business Partner (e.g., officer, private attorney, or agent), or VA Employee/Contractor. The VA Employee/Contractor option is only available for a VA PIV sign in. Once you complete this step, you will have access to upload documents; also ensure that the populated information reflects your personal information. One exciting thing regarding QuickSubmit, is that your documents are uploaded immediately for processing!

# PVA VETERANS CAREER PROGRAM UPDATE

June 2023

## TAKING A LEAP OF FAITH



Changing career paths can be daunting and complex, yet rewarding when you finally take the leap of faith. Ana Dominguez was seeking a more fulfilling career and contacted PVA's Veterans Career Program to assist her with a career transition in April 2023.

Ana served honorably in the Army National Guard, including a deployment to Iraq, while completing her bachelor's degree in Business Administration. She began her civilian career in the financial industry as a bank examiner with the FDIC. While her work was rewarding, she found herself feeling unfulfilled and seeking opportunities to serve people, primarily children in need.

In May 2021, Ana was diagnosed with Leukemia/blood cancer which placed her career on hold. She would go on to receive cancer treatments and achieve remission in February 2022. Shortly after, Ana began volunteering her spare time in both family violence prevention and child advocacy services. She enjoyed being an advocate so much, she began thinking about a career change. However, this was also placed on hold when the cancer relapsed in July of the same year. Finally, in October 2022, Ana's cancer would again go into remission and not return.

In early 2023, Ana began working with VCP's Employment Analyst, Rodney Lee. After sharing her compelling story, Rodney conducted research and found job opportunities that matched her volunteerism, background, and skills. After finding a great fit as a Child Protective Investigator trainee, Rodney provided resume tailoring assistance to Ana. Ana would then submit her application for the role, receiving a call to interview and a formal job offer within a week. She accepted her new position and started training with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services on June 19, 2023.

*"Although life throws unforeseeable curve balls at us, we must remain resilient and always stay true to our dreams and passions. Life moves quickly, take your leap of faith today, not tomorrow"*  
(Ana Dominguez, 2023).

## MONTHLY IMPACT

### 17 Client Placements

- 12 Paid Employment
- 3 Education/Training
- 2 Volunteer
  - 15 Veterans
  - 1 Active Duty
  - 1 Family Member
  - 1 Caregiver
  - 1 PVA Member
- The average salary for the 12 clients placed in full-time employment was \$71,778.



## FY23 Veterans Career Program Performance

Since its inception in 2007, the Veterans Career Program (formerly known as PAVE) has placed over 2,923 Veterans (including 435 PVA Members), military spouses and caregivers in meaningful employment, education and volunteer opportunities.

We are pleased to share some program accomplishments for FY23 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023):

### 223 Client Placements (including 31 PVA Members)

- 173 Paid Employment
  - Average full-time salary is \$69,965 (a 15% increase over FY22) and the average part-time salary is \$18,945 (a 7% increase over FY22)
- 40 Education/Training
- 10 Volunteer

### 82 Veterans Career Live Sessions

- 8,284 Registrants
- 2,523 Attendees (Avg: 31 Attendees per Session)
- 43 Career Skills, 17 Employer, 17 Education, 10 Small Business, and 4 Wellness Sessions

### 1-on-1 Counseling

- 500 Clients (average active total caseload)
- 28 New Clients (monthly average)
- 660 Client Interactions (monthly average)
- 133 PVA Members Assisted (monthly average)

# VETERAN LIVING HERE? JOIN ROCK FOR VETS' ONLINE MUSIC PROJECT!



[MUSICSTHEREMEDY.ORG/VIRTUAL-PROGRAM/](https://musicstheremedy.org/virtual-program/)

Despite the challenges brought by the pandemic, we (Rock For Vets in Long Beach, California) were able to shift to virtual programs and continue our mission of helping Veterans and other groups through music instruction, education and mentoring.

We are looking for collaboration opportunities, I think it would be great to explore how we can work together to support the serviceman/woman of the Texas PVA. Why Texas, is that I was born in San Antonio.

This is my vision; Rock For Vets, a music education program since 2010, would like to create a 6 – 8 week, 1 hour zoom (which includes 10 min check in out) session per week, vocal program. The Veterans will take part in the weekly singing session, where they learn to sing as a group, being coached by a professional singer, The Veterans either learn solo parts or sections or just even chorus/background parts. The final product will result in them being recorded via zoom and their vocals will be aligned with a pre-recorded backing track, from the Rock For Vets band (a band made up of Veterans from Long Beach).

During these sessions, the Veterans will get to know other Vets and will feel somewhat part of a collaborative and comradery group. There is no stress to commute as they can be involved at any geographic location and in the comfort of their own environment.

Here is a finished product with the Wounded Warrior Project:

<https://www.tiktok.com/@rockforvets/video/7242741026199325994>

Rock For Vets works for some and is not for everybody. But if you apply yourself, leave your ego at the door and want to engage with other like-minded Veterans who are going through the same things, then we are here for you.

In terms of partnering with Rock For Vets, we would offer the first 6-8 week program as a free trial. The regular cost of this program is \$2500, if continued, I feel we can find a partner for this venture. In return, we would need the Texas PVA to secure a minimum of 10 Veterans to participate for the full 6-8 weeks and ensure that pre and post surveys are conducted.

Again, this is just to offer a singing program for Veterans that are mainly home bound and have internet connection.

Look forward to talking soon and thank you.

Frank McIlquham  
Executive Director  
The Rock Club Music Is The Remedy  
M: 310-220-7995  
E: [frank@musicstheremedy.org](mailto:frank@musicstheremedy.org)  
[musicstheremedy.org](https://musicstheremedy.org)



# VA WHOLE HEALTH

## Reiki

At the VA, Reiki is recognized as a complementary integrative health modality. It is not intended as treatment for any specific diagnosis or condition. Rather, it can be paired with conventional forms of treatment to improve health outcomes. Reiki can also be provided to people looking to enhance their overall wellbeing.

Reiki is offered in a variety of healthcare settings including hospitals and medical clinics. Reiki ("Rei"- universal and "ki"- life energy) is a biofield energy modality in which the practitioner accesses healing energy from the universe and transfers this energy to the individual receiving Reiki. This facilitates activation of the person's own healing response. This can be attributed to achieving a state of full relaxation. Reiki is also used to promote balancing of a person's energy.

Evidence supports Reiki's use in reducing pain, stress, and fatigue and can be helpful to improve treatments for people with cancer, arthritis, musculoskeletal injuries, migraines/headaches, stroke, Alzheimer's, and depression/anxiety. Reiki is safe and no serious side effects have been reported.

## What to expect during a Reiki session

Reiki is a gentle healing practice that is used for stress reduction and relaxation. The practitioner will place their hands lightly on or above the person's body to evoke a healing response. Clients may experience a deep state of relaxation during a Reiki session. They might also feel warm, tingly, sleepy, or refreshed.

A Reiki session can last 30-60 minutes and is tailored to each person's needs and preferences. Depending on the underlying reason a person is seeking Reiki care, multiple sessions may be recommended.



You are your greatest healer



Live Whole Health.  
va.gov/wholehealth



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Derrick Bryant  
Todd Taylor  
Bruce Richardson  
Reginald Smith  
Samuel Natter  
Stanley Craig  
Richard Neubert  
Thomas Dufilho  
Daniel Aguilar

REST IN PEACE

James Prentice





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Joined



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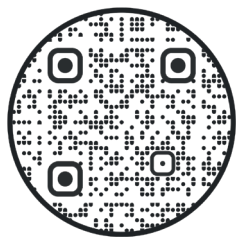
# Ekso Indego® Gets Veterans Walking Again

Eligible veterans can receive an Ekso Indego exoskeleton at NO COST!

## Ekso Indego Personal

### What is the Ekso Indego?

Ekso Indego is an FDA-cleared, powered exoskeleton worn around the waist and legs that enables individuals paralyzed from spinal cord injuries (level T3-L5) to stand and walk, offering a new level of independence.



Scan with your phone for more information on how you could receive your own Ekso Indego Personal.

### Getting Veterans with SCI Back on Their Feet

A recently revised VA policy allows Ekso Indego to be issued to qualified veterans at no cost.\*

- Regain your independence
- Improve your cardio & bone density
- Enjoy eye-level conversations again



Contact us to find out if you are eligible to receive an Ekso Indego at NO COST!

[www.eksobionics.com/request-information/](http://www.eksobionics.com/request-information/)

\* A screening process through the VA is required to determine eligibility for use of the Ekso Indego Personal device. For full indications for use, visit: [www.eksobionics.com/indications-for-use/](http://www.eksobionics.com/indications-for-use/)



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NASCIC

SCI RESEARCH  
ADVOCACY COURSE



**Register for free** today for the *SCI Research Advocacy Course* to increase your knowledge about spinal cord injury research, the research & development process, and how to have meaningful engagement and partnerships with the SCI community.

### About the Course

The North American Spinal Cord Injury Consortium (NASCIC) has developed a free online educational course to increase knowledge of the research process so that individuals with SCI and caregivers feel prepared to serve as research advocates and that SCI researchers, healthcare providers and industry stakeholders are better able to effectively partner with the SCI community.

The *SCI Research Advocacy Course* includes input from leading clinicians and researchers, as well as the guidance of a large community of people with SCI lived experience.

This is a program that was created by the community, for the empowerment of the community.

#### COURSE FEATURES :

- ✓ 12 COURSE MODULES
- ✓ MODULE QUIZZES
- ✓ GLOSSARY OF TERMS
- ✓ SUPPLEMENTARY LEARNING MATERIALS



*Scan to get started!*



North American  
Spinal Cord Injury  
— Consortium —

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



[info@nascic.org](mailto:info@nascic.org)

The North American Spinal Cord Injury Consortium (NASCI) has developed a free online course to present information and resources necessary to understand the complexities of an SCI. This will ultimately aid individuals with SCI and caregivers to serve as research advocates, as well as allow SCI researchers and healthcare providers to effectively partner with the SCI community. We believe that your current clientele and staff would benefit from this resource.

This information is condensed and presented in video form with additional supplementary material. The topics of each module are:

- Module 1 = Introduction to Research Advocacy
- Module 2 = Understanding the Research Process and R&D Decision-Makers
- Module 3 = Addressing Historical Challenges for SCI Studies
- Module 4 = SCI Biology Part I
- Module 5 = SCI Biology Part II – Aging with a Spinal Cord Injury
- Module 6 = Neuroprotection (Acute application)
- Module 7 = Regeneration (Neurorepair)
- Module 8 = Cell Replacement (Neuroreplacement)
- Module 9 = Neuroplasticity
- Module 10 = Quality of Life
- Module 11 = SCI 101 for Researchers
- Module 12 = Getting Started!

Registration for the course is free for everyone and can be accessed on the NASCI website at:  
<https://nascic.org/courses/nascic-community-engagement-program-cep/>

We also have a Course Guide that may help you navigate the website and course features:  
<https://vimeo.com/825186784?share=copy>

Please let me know if you have any questions about the course. We'd also love to hear from you about feedback and how we can collaborate to disseminate this course further. Enjoy this free resource!



**Donate your gently used clothing and household items to help support our chapter. Please be sure to mention you'd like your donation to benefit the TEXAS PARALYZED VETERANS. All donations are tax deductible. To schedule a pickup please call:**

**346-319-2222**



**Don't**



Remove hangers, check the pockets and wash if possible. Don't forget we need shoes, purses, and accessories.

Even towels and bedding that are threadbare can have a second life as they are used for cleaning up, and recycling.



Office of the Texas Governor | Greg Abbott

Caregiver Webinar Series Presented by HHS Aging Services Coordination Office



Caregiver Webinar Series with HHS Aging Services Coordination Office Will Lead Into National Family Caregiver Month in November

The Texas Health and Human Services Aging Services Coordination Office is hosting a caregiver webinar series beginning in August with monthly lunchtime webinars and ending with a series of weekly webinars during National Family Caregivers Month in November.

The webinar series is for caregivers, people who work with caregivers and anyone interested in caregiving. Texans are diverse in their experiences caring for one another, whether it be an immediate family member, a close friend or a neighbor. Caregiver supports and resources must be as diverse as the growing range of care needs in Texas. Register to join this webinar series for a range of different caregiving topics during your Lunch Hour:

- August 16, 12:00 pm: Strengthening the care you give: An overview of caregiving in Texas and a highlight of the HHS Strengthen the Care You Give campaign. Register here.
- September 20, 12:00 pm: The importance of self-care while caregiving: How caregivers can care for their mental health as a part of their self-care. Register here.
- October 18, 12:00 pm: Caregivers in the workplace: The challenges caregivers face in the workforce, the laws protecting them and the supports available. Register here.
- November Series: To be announced soon.

For questions, please email [AgeWellLiveWell@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:AgeWellLiveWell@hhs.texas.gov).

The Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities provides GovDelivery updates for informational purposes on a variety of disability related issues for a diverse audience. Updates may include information provided by external sources. The inclusion of this external information does not constitute an official endorsement or approval by the Committee or the Office of the Governor of any information, policy, product, or service offered by an external source.

If you would like to be removed from the Governor's Committee e-mail distribution list, click the "Unsubscribe All" link below or click the "Manage Subscriptions" link below to update your account preferences.

We continue to offer free, In Person, mental health counseling for military veterans and their families. We practice social distancing guidelines and have hand sanitizer available. We can also help with transportation needs with weekly bus passes.

Charles Jackson MA LPC  
Licensed Professional Counselor  
Healthy Minds, Healthy Heroes

American GI Forum – National Veterans Outreach Program  
210-248-9933 Phone  
cjackson@nvop-sa.org  
206 San Pedro, Suite 201, San Antonio, TX 78205

Veterans when you sign up the tickets that you request will be at will call the day of event. This is all over the country and they have events like Disney on ice, monster trucks, nba, nfl, mlb, college sports, comedy shows, you name it.

Website: <https://www.vettix.org/tixer/my-account/login>

San Antonio membership forums will  
take place on the 1st Thursday of each  
month at 2 pm

# June & July Birthdays

Michael Johnson  
Carlos Nesmith  
Stephanie Flores  
Wanda Youpee  
Dillon Cannon  
Roger Nelson  
Victor Ventura  
Daniel Ebarb  
Mario Galvan-Castro  
Roger Figg  
Bennie Sullivan  
Patrick Moore  
Christopher Raymond  
Brent Norris  
Johnny Carabajal  
Jaime Garcia  
Timothy Taylor  
Kedgerick Smith  
Shelitta Breland-Ray  
Kirk Black  
Juan Maldonado  
Damon McDay  
Diana Arias  
Catherine Callahan  
Charles Randolph  
Moises Medrano  
Lawrence Benefield  
Ginger Rhodes  
Kirkland David  
Willie Simmons  
Carlton Brooks  
Don Marshall  
Lemar Murphy

Warren Tinseth  
Douglas Reeves  
Leslie Hester  
Rudy Ragland  
Joseph Robinson  
Carol Havelka  
William Latham  
Charles Robinson  
Jerry Hall  
William Maier  
Edward Born  
William Duckworth  
Jerry Sanders  
Don Haney  
Robert Ray  
Hugh Pitts  
Elmer Canady  
Larry Bates  
Norris Honeycutt  
Raymond Burford  
Bonnie Echols  
Jim Harris  
Lorenzo Thompson  
Daniel Hernandez  
Bobby Barton  
Arthur Kabayev  
Michael Crawford  
Steven Flemming  
Colin Doyle  
Talina Ferrell  
Joseph Bludeau  
Tanjaman Walker  
Orlando Cepeda  
Gina Paja  
Sean Barr

Steve Copsey  
Tammy Jones  
Danny Scott  
Jack Fenton  
Alvin Guerrero  
John Nappi  
Cynthia Hernandez  
Robert Webb  
Randy Sendejo  
Ralph Wilson  
William Luper  
Barry Smith  
Julio Rodriquez  
Glen Williams  
Steven Hickam  
Mary Castro  
Floyd Porter  
Gilberto Quinones  
Israel Yarchun  
Robert Bagley  
Rene Cardenas  
David Luera  
William Jennings Jr  
Jerome Apodackis  
Gregory Clark  
James Peevey  
Gary Ogburn  
Lionel James  
Lonnie Wilson  
Roy Inks  
Edward Rebeaud  
David Metcalf





May Birthday Raffle Winners:

- Juan Banda
- Daniel Burney
- Frank Daebelliehn
- Toai Nolan
- Paul Smith

June Birthday Raffle Winners:

- Carlton Brooks
- Michael Johnson
- William Latham
- Don Marshall
- Warren Tinseth

## 2023 Jack Sanders Banquet

The Paralyzed Veterans of America Texas Chapter would like to cordially invite you to Moody Gardens for our 2023 Jack Sanders Banquet! We will have dinner, an Award Ceremony as well as swearing in the incoming Board of Director members.

Please send in submissions for the following awards.

- Jack Sanders Award
- Houston and San Antonio VA Employee of the Year
- Houston and San Antonio Volunteer of the Year
- Spirit of the Games

When: October 7, 2023, 7 p.m. – 11 p.m. with dinner being served at 8 pm and Awards Ceremony to follow.

Where: Moody Gardens, Room Moody II  
1 Hope Blvd, Galveston, TX 77554

# Houston parks and recreation-adaptive division scheduled events

## West Gray weekly schedule

### Monday

1pm-2pm Boccia

5pm-7pm developmental wheelchair rugby

7pm-9pm wheelchair basketball

### Tuesday

1pm-2pm tabata Tuesday (adaptive fitness)

5pm-6pm beep baseball team fitness

6pm-8pm beep baseball practice

6pm-7pm prep wheelchair basketball skills and drills

7pm-9pm juniors wheelchair basketball

### Wednesday

6pm-9pm wheelchair basketball

### Thursday

10am-12pm cycling

1pm-2pm dance fitness

5pm-7pm VI fit

7pm-9pm wheelchair rugby

### Friday

7pm-9pm wheelchair tennis

6pm-8pm wheelchair lacrosse

### Saturday

9am-11am wheelchair rugby

11am-2pm power chair soccer

2pm-4pm deaf basketball

## Camp Update by Ron Stockholm

The Pier is finished... We are now working on a small dock attached to the pier in order to dock, load and unload wheelchairs/kids on the pontoon boat that is on order due to the grant we received from the Foundation of S/E Texas thanks to Eleanor for putting that grant together. Sounds like it will be ready for pickup sometime in late July. During the dedication a couple of weeks ago we had most of the contractors that were instrumental in both the building of the pier as well as the digging of the lake. Beautiful weather and a great crowd was here to witness the unveiling of the plaque commemorating those that were instrumental in the project. Now that the pier is complete and fingerlings in the water it's just a matter of time before the fishing programs are ready to begin.

Projects in the making.....

\*We (Phil Blackmon and I) had a meeting with the Hardin County Rotary this past Thursday to discuss the final touches of another project that they want to do. Some of you may have heard that a "deck" out on the hill down below the cabins was just another project that was on our "wish list". That deck is now on our "fixing to get done" list. The Hardin County Rotary Club is taking on that challenge. A (25" x 35") concrete floor covered deck with 8 handicap picnic tables will begin to take shape beginning in September. This covered deck will overlook a big part of the lake on the West end. I've got a little prep work to do but with it starting in September, I have little time to work on that.

\*Pathway from cabins to pier was/is another major project that was/is on our "wish list". Joe and I have it laid out and measured out and he is putting some drawings and figures together for proposals. This is going to be a lot of prep work that we might have to do beforehand. This will either be a "rolled crushed concrete or concrete" path close to 500' in its entirety. Also, the path from the cabins to the deck will utilize the same material at about 100+ feet.

Through all of Joe E's contacts, this next "fall in our lap" project we have some more fish to be added to our lake. Joe Penland will be "shocking" his 18 acre lake to remove some of his fish to be released into our lake... As I envision these will be some of the larger mature fish. I've never seen this procedure but I've heard that it is done a lot when a lake has more fish than the lake's O2 level can handle. SO, guess what..... This was in the making for quite some time but the weather just didn't cooperate and I didn't want to get our hopes up. Monday is "Fish" day for Indian Springs Camp. I don't know how many, I don't know what kind.. I've heard that they get rid of the "trash" fish before bringing out the bass/perch/cat's. I can see our vets having a little tournament pretty soon and the pier lined with kids catching the big ones...

Folks, this has been one/two/three busy blessed years. Draining the lake, laying out the borders, shooting grades, talking with contractors, begging for donations, writing grants, all to get enough \$\$ and material together to get the "Lake Project" going and finished. I couldn't have done this by myself. There are a few folks that I want to personally give a big SHOUT OUT for all that they have done on this as well as other projects for Indian Springs Camp. To get the job started we had to have \$\$.



Putting aside \$\$ from each festival that Donnie Courville puts together every year, to the big United Way grant that Sade' Chick worked on the \$\$ were getting close enough to start talking with contractors. Most of you don't know Sada' but she is our "behind the scenes" go to lady that seems to have all the contacts one would need for any project. She is truly a big assist to Indian Springs Camp. Joe Ehrhart was here from start to finish. From helping with getting the right contractor for the job to being out here every day from 6:30 a.m. till 4 p.m. to answer any questions the contractor might have. Speaking of contractors, we interviewed 6 different contractors before finding one that wanted and had the same vision that we had. RamTex came through by cutting out a lot of costs themselves. Quality Mat furnished all the mats which totaled well over 200.. The project could not have begun if we didn't have mats for the equipment to work off of. We used mats out in the refinery but nothing like working out in the middle of a swampy area.

Anyone reading this has an open invitation to come out for a visit, stay, campout, or whatever you might want to enjoy because each of you has had some part in the building of Indian Springs Camp.

The National PVA will be conducting a site visit at the Audie Murphy VA on Wednesday September 27th and Thursday September 28th. The National PVA team will meet with patients, employees and leadership to assist with our SCI/D patients' needs and concerns.

Our Sr Benefits Advocate, Armando De La Rosa is requesting if you can please notify him either by calling his office: 210-617-5275 with any issues or emailing him at: [armandod@pva.org](mailto:armandod@pva.org) so he can try to address or notify the National PVA Team before the meeting.



Sports & Recreation

# 2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## PVA Bass Tournament Series

- **Florida Gulf Coast Bass Tournament**,  
March 24-26, 2023 | Kissimmee, FL
- **Kentucky-Indiana Bass Tournament**,  
April 21-23, 2023 | Kuttawa, KY
- **Bayou Brawl Bass Tournament**,  
April 28-30, 2023 | Doyline, LA
- **Southeastern Challenge**,  
June 2-4, 2023 | Evans, GA
- **Capital Clash**,  
June 9-11, 2023 | Waldorf, MD

## PVA Billiards Tournament Series

- **Mid-Atlantic Billiards Tournament**,  
March 17-19, 2023 | Richmond, VA
- **Mid-America Billiards Tournament**,  
May 5-6, 2023 | Oklahoma City, OK
- **Buckeye Billiards Tournament**,  
June 24-26, 2023 | Columbus, OH

## Air Rifle and Pistol Program

- **Wisconsin Air Gun Tournament**,  
March 11-12, 2023 | Milwaukee, WI

## PVA Bowling Tournament Series

- **Mid-America Bowling Tournament**,  
March 31- April 1, 2023 | Oklahoma City, OK
- **Vaughan Bowling Tournament**,  
May 5-6, 2023 | Romeoville, IL

## PVA National Shooting Sports Circuit

- **Nevada Trapshoot**,  
March 31-April 2, 2023 | Las Vegas, Nevada
- **Wisconsin Trapshoot**,  
May 19-21, 2023 | Green Bay, WI
- **Vaughan Trapshoot**,  
May 26-28, 2023 | Elburn, IL
- **Iowa Trapshoot (Year-End Tournament)**,  
June 16-18, 2023 | Cedar Rapids, IA

## Boccia

- **Gateway Boccia Tournament**,  
March 17-19, 2023 | St. Louis, MO

## Handcycling

- **Pocahontas Off-Road Spring Camp**,  
April 12-17, 2023 | Chesterfield, VA
- **PVA High Performance Off-Road Camp**,  
August 12-21, 2023 | Crested Butte, CO
- **Off-Road Handcycling Championship**,  
August 18-20, 2023 | Crested Butte, CO
- **Pocahontas Off-Road Fall Camp**,  
September 13-18, 2023 | Chesterfield, VA

## Additional Programs

- **Wisconsin Pickleball Camp**,  
April 29-30, 2023 | Milwaukee, WI
- **Southeastern Pickleball Camp**,  
May 11-12, 2023 | TBD
- **Mountain States Disc Golf Camp**,  
June 3-4, 2023 | TBD
- **Mountain States Pickleball Camp**,  
August 2023 | TBD
- **Lakeshore Basketball Camp**,  
August 28-30, 2023 | Alabama
- **Gateway Disc Golf Camp**,  
September 15-16, 2023 | Potosi, MO
- **Rugby Camp**,  
September 29-30, 2023 | Phoenix, AZ
- **Great Plains Disc Golf Camp**,  
September 23, 2023 | TBD

## National Veterans Wheelchair Games

- July 4-9, 2023  
Portland, Oregon





Texas Chapter

### Request for Event funding from TPVA

P.O. Box 989  
Crosby, TX 77532  
Fax 713-520-8217

**Submit 30 days prior to the event application deadline**

Members name \_\_\_\_\_

Members email, phone \_\_\_\_\_

Event participating in \_\_\_\_\_

Sports participating in \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have medical clearance to participate in this event? YES NO

Are you requesting funding from Texas Chapter, Paralyzed Veterans of America to participate?

YES NO

Will you be flying? YES NO

Will you be driving, license plate number/state? \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be taking a caregiver or spouse/partner? YES NO

Full name on ID \_\_\_\_\_

Type of wheelchair manual or power?

Width of wheelchair. \_\_\_\_\_

When booking hotel rooms list preferences accessible room (1,2,3)

\_\_\_\_\_ Accessible room - Roll-in shower

\_\_\_\_\_ Accessible room - w/bathtub

\_\_\_\_\_ Room with extra space and bathroom door removed

\_\_\_\_\_ King Bed \_\_\_\_\_ Double Bed

Do you need the bed raised, for lift use? YES NO

In order to receive funding from TPVA you must have 75 points accrued for the event. Points must be submitted to the Chapter office by 10th of each month. If you do not have 75 points accrued, you must submit a request to the Chapter or Sports Director to be considered for the Maginot Award. The Maginot award is a lottery drawing with all members who request it and then one (1) name is drawn.

\_\_\_\_\_  
signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

# National Veterans Wheelchair Games 2023 Portland OR

Daniel Castillo – Gold Bowling, Club, Soccer, Boccia  
Silver Slalom

Nook Gustamante – Gold Boccia, Nine Ball  
Silver Table Tennis,  
Bronze Basketball

Irma Pennington – Gold Bowling, Shot Put, Rally, Slalom  
Silver Javelin

Tammy Jones – Gold Bowling, Slalom

Juan Banda – Gold Boccia, Nine Ball  
Silver Softball

Ivan Moya – Gold Powerlifting  
Silver Nine Ball

Patrick Ozborn – Gold Bowling  
Silver Nine Ball  
Bronze Shot Put, Table Tennis

Phillip Schweizer – Silver Discus, Rugby  
Bronze Javelin

VA Gene Calantoc – Gold Powerlifting, Cornhole, Nine Ball  
Bronze Pickle Ball













## The PACT Act Fact Sheet

**Laos** from Dec. 1, 1965, through Sept. 30, 1969

**Cambodia at Mimot or Krek, Kampong Cham Province** from April 16, 1969, through April 30, 1969

**Guam or American Samoa** or in the territorial waters off of Guam or American Samoa from Jan. 9, 1962, through July 30, 1980

**Johnston Atoll** or on a ship that called at Johnston Atoll from Jan. 1, 1972, through Sept. 30, 1977

### What new radiation presumptive locations were added?

VA added three new response efforts to the list of presumptive locations:

Cleanup of **Enewetak Atoll**, from Jan. 1, 1977, through Dec. 31, 1980

Cleanup of the **Air Force B-52** bomber carrying nuclear weapons off the coast of **Palomares, Spain**, from Jan. 17, 1966, through March 31, 1967

Response to the fire onboard an **Air Force B-52** bomber carrying nuclear weapons near **Thule Air Force Base** in Greenland from Jan. 21, 1968, to Sept. 25, 1968

## CLASSIFIEDS / SERVICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ADVERTISE WITH THE SPEEDY GAZETTE!

All submissions for the Classified Section of the SPEEDY GAZETTE must be submitted to the TPVA Office no later than the 1st of the month. The charge is \$15.00 for 15 words (each additional word is \$.25 cents). Payment must accompany the ad. If you are a member in good standing with TPVA, you may place a 15-word ad for FREE! An incentive of a 10% discount applies on ANNUAL commitments.

Display Advertisements: to offset some of the cost of printing and mailing the SPEEDY GAZETTE, the following ad rates apply:

SIZE:	MONTHLY:	ANNUAL (Approximately 6 issues per year):
Business Card	\$20.00	\$120.00 less 10% = \$108.00
¼ Page	\$30.00	\$180.00 less 10% = \$162.00
½ Page	\$55.00	\$330.00 less 10% = \$297.00
Full Page:	\$125.00	\$750.00 less 10% = \$675.00

Please call 1-800-933-4261 or 713-520-8782 (EXT. 4) to place a Display Advertisement or Classified Advertisement and watch your business get noticed!

# TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH!

- Eliminate sleep deprivation
- Prevent pneumonia and other respiratory problems
- Prevent painful and life-threatening pressure injuries (bed sores)

**VOICE CONTROL  
OPTION AVAILABLE!**

The Freedom Bed is the most advanced patient positioning system on the market, providing:

- ✓ AUTOMATED BODY ROTATION
- ✓ PROGRAMMABLE TIMES & ANGLES
- ✓ SMOOTH AND SILENT OPERATION
- ✓ UNINTERRUPTED SLEEP



**HEAD & LEG ELEVATION**

**LATERAL ROTATION**



One of our representatives will be pleased to explain the features and benefits of **THE FREEDOM BED**, our value-added programs and services offered.

**VA FSS CONTRACT: #36F79720D0184**

CALL TOLL FREE: 800.816.8243  
EMAIL: [INFO@PRO-BED.COM](mailto:INFO@PRO-BED.COM)  
WEB: [WWW.PRO-BED.COM](http://WWW.PRO-BED.COM)



**PRO BED**  
Medical USA Inc.



# Become A Donor

## Annual contributions for 2022-2023 will be as follows:

Platinum Donor	\$1,000 or more
Titanium Donor	\$500 – \$999
Gold Donor	\$250 – \$499
Silver Donor	\$100 – \$249
Bronze Donor	\$5 – \$99



## 2022-2023 DONOR CLUB as of July 2023

**Platinum:** Martha Joan Russell Estate, Greater Houston Community Foundation, Wayne & Joann Moore Charitable Foundation, Merrill Lynch/Bank of America, Onion Creek American Legion Post 326, Headwaters for Heros, Inc, Ken H Sharp, M. L. (Laura) Berry, Knights of the Inferno, Sonora Bank, Anonymous Donors, Amazon Smiles, American Online Giving Foundation, Paxton Arms LLC, John & Jill Lay & Alamo Safari Club.

**Titanium:** Dan McNeil, Debbie Smith, Johnny Godwin, Veterans of Foreign Wars 837, CFC TASC, Kevin E Corcoran, Robert Waite, Alvin Guerrero, Mr. & Mrs. Philip B Green, Mark Vratatic, Rachel, Exo Bionics, Mobius Mobility LLC, Edison International, Area Real Estate, LLC, Richard Carso, Willard Allen, Image Craft, Joel Hoots, Jim Gieptner, Syamal K Poddar, John E Jones Jr., Karen C Jackson, Thomas A West, White Flyer, United Access LLC & Alamo Retriever Club.

**Gold:** Summer Chesson, Ronald McAnally, Bill Sadler, Give Lively Foundation Inc, Mike Del Sotato, Mike Anderson, Therisa L Pilgreen, Zach Jones, Robert Conkling, Chuck Poole, Joel Caltrider, ED Peacher, Anthony Martinez, Network for Good, Tym & Gerry Kelley Charitable Fund, Barbara Slaughter, San Pipeline, Richard Fregia, Bruce W Kuker, Jose G Laguna, Charles Poole, True Vine Missionary Baptist Church, Robin Allshouse, Maryann Trujillo-Hanford, Gabriel Fernandez, Colleen A Jennings, Shell Oil Co Foundation, The Roger Myers Family Fund, Marilyn & Bradley Primeau & STS Tank Leasing LLC.

**Silver:** Ellen Elwell, James Howard, Jerry & Tammy Brasher, Sue Postelle, James Johanssen, Jeffrey Dickinson, William A Davis III, M & D Ace Cypress, YourCause, Rufus Prikryl, Marion Bell, David Erdelt, Laurie Stiteler, Michael Lee, Nishidha Kumaresan, Tammie C & Jamie P Robey, Lynn M & Edwad Lee Foster, Diane Green, Joseph Bludeau, Drennon Cunniningham, Juana Pagel, Steven Mack, Betsy L. & Roland E. Dossman, Jason W Mead, Brandy Sausse, Laura Schaeffer, Pamela Craig, Sandra Vasek, Judith A Oliver, American Family Corporate, Fedex-Cargo Claims, Michael Taggart, Lisa Clark, Jim Baccus, Philip Tereskiewicz, Gary Hudson, Rosemarie Zimmer, EMD Millpore Co, Suzanne Lee, Linda G Patrick, Villages By The Bay, Zachary S Jones & Marlon M Punch.

**Bronze:** William Hambley, Marissa Masterson, David Romine, Richard Pekkala, Christyl Antoniou, Jeanne Phelps, Paul Podsiadlo, Richa Devlugt, City of Houston, Texas, Barbara McDonald, Brian & Druann Bosien, Oanh Tran, Tisbest Philanthropy, New York Life, Paul Groszkiewicz, Sally Verrilli, Marie Sorrell, Kostas Lambrakos, Charles Garcia, Veronika Csanyi, Eric Morante, Charles Bauer, Bill Geubelle, UMB Financial, Sarbony Mantrala, Elizabeth Pena, Jo Ann Rahn, Eric Anderson, D.J. Byler & K.L. Byler, Willie Jackson, Lidia F Quincy, Roy D Bristow, Albert Betta, Larry Richard, Giving a Foundation, Inc, UK Online Giving Foundation, Charles Lagarde, Koruin Vartevan, Dianne Armstrong, Linda F Quincy, Paula D Cabello, Pamela Garland, PayPal Charitable Giving Fund, Shaheen Ansari & Lucille Golden.



# Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers

By John Allen, SBA

A family caregiver is a person who provides any type of physical and/or emotional care for an ill or disabled loved one at home. Loved ones in need of care include those suffering from a physical or mental illness, disability, or other condition. In most cases, the primary caregiver is a spouse, partner, parent or adult child. Caregivers often take on the responsibilities of the patient while still providing for themselves and other family members.

The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, allows Family Caregivers provide crucial support in caring for Veterans to enhance the health and well-being of veterans in a home environment.

To be eligible for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, Veterans must first be enrolled for VA health services, if not enrolled previously. The veteran must need personal care services because of an inability to perform one or more activities of daily living and/or need supervision or protection based on symptoms or residuals of neurological impairment or injury, traumatic brain injury, psychological trauma or other mental disorder-incurred or aggravated in the line of duty. As of October 1, 2022, this program is now open to family caregivers of eligible Veterans of all eras. This includes eligible Veterans who served after May 7, 1975, and before September 11, 2001. So, Family caregivers of eligible Veterans of all eras can now apply.

The Veteran can appoint 1 Primary Family Caregiver (the main caregiver), and up to 2 Secondary Family Caregivers (people who serve as backup support to the primary caregiver when needed) Eligible Primary and Secondary Family Caregivers can receive Caregiver education and training, Mental health counseling, Travel, lodging, and financial assistance when traveling with the Veteran to receive care. Eligible Primary Family Caregivers may also receive a monthly stipend (payment), Access to health care benefits through the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA)—if you don't already qualify for care or services under another health care plan, and Respite Care (not less than 30 days per year).

Eligibility requirements for the family caregiver:

- You must be at least 18 years old. And at least one of these must be true for you:
- You're a spouse, son, daughter, parent, stepfamily member, or extended family member of the Veteran, or
- You live full time with the Veteran, or you're willing to live full time with the Veteran if we designate you as a family caregiver

Eligibility requirements for the Veteran All of these must be true for the Veteran you're caring for:

- The Veteran has a VA disability rating (individual or combined) of 70% or higher, and
- The Veteran was discharged from the U.S. military or has a date of medical discharge, and
- The Veteran needs at least 6 months of continuous, in-person personal care services

If you think you meet the requirements for this benefit. The veteran and caregiver will need to apply together and participate in an application process to determine the Veterans eligibility for the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers. You'll both need to sign and date the application, and answer all questions for your role. Each time the Veteran wants to add a new family caregiver, the Veteran and the new caregiver will need to submit a new application. Remember, there can only be 1 Primary and up to 2 Secondary Family Caregivers designated at any one time. You may online or complete a VAF 10-10G and mail to Health Eligibility Center **or carry the completed form to your local VA medical center's Caregiver Support Coordinator.**

Additional application assistance can be found via phone at 1-877-222 VETS (8387).

# TEXAS LEGISLATURE 2023

## Gov. Greg Abbott signs \$18 billion tax cut package for Texas property owners

At a time when the state has some of the nation's highest property taxes, the initiative was a cornerstone of his 2022 reelection campaign.

Gov. Greg Abbott has signed an \$18 billion tax cut for Texas property owners, sending the proposals to voters for their approval later this year.

The package puts \$12.6 billion of the state's historic budget surplus toward making cuts to school taxes for all property owners, dropping property taxes an average of more than 40% for some 5.7 million Texas homeowners and offering brand-new tax savings for smaller businesses and other commercial and non homesteaded properties.

On Saturday, Abbott added his signature to Senate Bill 2, the property tax cuts bill, and Senate Bill 3, a franchise tax relief bill, which were passed by Texas lawmakers two weeks ago after months of negotiations between the state's top Republicans.

A third measure, House Joint Resolution 2, will go before voters in a constitutional election in November. Voters would need to approve the package for the cuts to take effect this year.

At a time when the state has some of the nation's highest property taxes and lawmakers face massive political pressure to ease the financial suffering of their constituents, the initiative was a cornerstone of Abbott's 2022 reelection campaign and that of most state lawmakers.

The package's marquee item is a \$5.3 billion expansion of the state's homestead exemption, the amount of a home's value that can't be taxed to pay for public schools, from \$40,000 to \$100,000. The new exemption combined with school tax cuts would save homesteaders — Texans who live in a residence they own — an average of \$1,300 a year in property taxes, said state Sen. Paul Bettencourt, R-Houston, who sponsored the package of legislation in the Senate.

It also offers additional cuts for seniors and property owners with disabilities, averaging about \$170 more in savings per year, Bettencourt said.

The most novel part of the plan, an idea introduced publicly for the first time on Monday, is a first-ever temporary 20% cap on appraisal increases for properties valued at \$5 million or lower that aren't considered homesteads. Those would include second homes, vacation properties, rental houses or commercial retail or business properties.

Including more than \$5 billion approved four years ago, the legislation also allocates nearly \$12.6 billion to reduce the school property tax rate by 10.7 cents per \$100 valuation for all homeowners and business properties.

Those billions are being sent to school districts so they can cut their taxes for all property owners and shift a portion of their maintenance and operations costs to the state. But the package would give no new funding to schools, a sticking point with critics who note that, compared to other states' spending, Texas is ranked near the bottom in per-student funding for education.

Targeted tax relief for the state's 3.7 million renter households has been left out of proposals that have passed both chambers.

House Democrats unsuccessfully tried to push their own versions of tax relief, including a tax-cut package sponsored by Dallas state Rep. John Bryant that would've given tenants a cash refund equaling up to 10% of the rent they paid the previous year. It also would have made the homestead exemption \$200,000, doubling the exemption in the current bill, and would have included a teacher pay raise and added more school funding.

The following article is from the 5 July 2023 Texas Tribune, Jasper Craven author.

As veteran disability claims soar, unaccredited coaches profit off frustration with VA system.

<https://www.texastribune.org/2023/07/05/veterans-disability-benefits-brian-reese-va-claims-insider/>  
STATEMENT FROM PRESS SECRETARY TERRENCE HAYES

On June 26, VA received a tip from an attorney that VA Claims Insider, LLC, a company not accredited by VA, had an app on our VA Resources page that, with the Veteran's permission, allowed them to access a portion of VA's system. Veterans who used this app to check on their claims may have given permission for the app to access some of their VA information. This app may have been used by the company as a workaround to the VA accreditation process. VA had sent VA Claims Insider a "cease-and-desist" letter in April, 2019, regarding their practices.

VA began the process to remove the app from the website, and it was removed on June 29. Of note, NBC reporter Lucy Bustamente raised questions about an unaccredited app in Secretary McDonough's monthly press conference on June 27. Vetting for the resource page included a review of the app itself, not the company that sponsored it. We are expanding our vetting process to include the sponsoring company. We are also scrubbing the remaining list of apps to ensure they fully meet VA standards. Most importantly, we are looking into the roughly 1,100 Veterans who may have been impacted, will notify them promptly of VA's concerns, and will take any steps that may be needed to address potential negative impacts. A business or individual who prepares, presents, or prosecutes VA benefit claims without proper accreditation by the Department is doing so contrary to law. A complete list of VA-recognized organizations and VA-accredited individuals can be found at: OGC - Accreditation Search.



## FDA Approves First ALS Treatment Via Accelerated Approval ALS Association Funded Antisense Technology Behind Tofersen

Washington, D.C. (April 25, 2023) – The ALS Association commends the FDA for approving tofersen under the agency’s accelerated approval pathway for the treatment of people living with ALS connected to mutations in the SOD1 gene. This marks the first time the FDA has approved a treatment for ALS under accelerated approval and serves as a promising endorsement of the antisense technology that underlies tofersen.

“Every opportunity to make a new treatment available that can stop or slow down this disease is a win for the whole community,” said Larry Falivena, a member of The ALS Association’s Board of Trustees who is living with SOD1-ALS and who has participated in the tofersen trials.

The FDA’s Central and Peripheral Nervous System Drugs Advisory Committee voted unanimously in March to support accelerated approval of tofersen.

“The FDA’s decision marks a significant step in our effort to make ALS livable for everyone, everywhere, until we can cure it,” said Calaneet Balas, president and CEO of The ALS Association. “This is the second time in less than a year our community gets to celebrate the approval of a new drug to treat ALS and we have great hope for the future of antisense technology.”

Tofersen is the third drug approved to treat ALS in the last six years.

Balas added: “We thank the FDA and Biogen for working together to bring tofersen to people living with ALS as quickly as possible.”

Tofersen is an antisense oligonucleotide therapy, a small string of DNA letters that are designed to bind to specific molecules of RNA and stop the production of toxic proteins. Tofersen was developed to specifically target the RNA produced from mutated a SOD1 gene to stop toxic SOD1 proteins from being made.

Mutations in the SOD1 gene are found in about 10-20 percent of cases of familial ALS, as well as 1-2 percent of sporadic ALS cases.

In approving the first antisense oligonucleotide for the treatment of ALS, the FDA also created hope for other antisense therapies currently in development to treat other forms of ALS. Antisense technology stems from very long investments made by The ALS Association, the NIH, and the companies IONIS and Biogen. Tofersen is a direct result of the donations from

supporters of the ALS Association, the strong advocacy work of the ALS community, the scientists and clinicians carrying out this work, and most importantly, the many people living with ALS who volunteered to participate in this research.

Approval of tofersen also shows promise for the use of secondary, or surrogate endpoints to show effectiveness of a treatment for ALS. Tofersen effectively reduced the production of a chemical known as neurofilament light (NfL) in the blood and spinal fluid. High levels of NfL are indicators of damage to motor neurons.

The FDA's advisory committee found that the neurofilament light levels indicate a change in the course of disease for people receiving the treatment which translates into benefits such as longer life, increased muscle function and reduced disease progression -- some months after neurofilament levels go down. Tofersen is currently being tested in clinical trials to determine whether it can be effective in preventing the onset of ALS in people with SOD1 mutations.

"Tofersen could be the opportunity to break the cycle of genetic ALS for families who have been devastated by ALS for generations," Falivena said.

## ABOUT ALS

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. Over the course of the disease, people lose the ability to move, to speak, and eventually, to breathe. On average, it takes about a year before a final ALS diagnosis is made. The disease is always fatal, usually within five years of diagnosis. There is no cure.

## ABOUT THE ALS ASSOCIATION

The ALS Association is the largest philanthropic funder of ALS research in the world. The Association funds global research collaborations, assists people with ALS and their families through its nationwide network of care and certified clinical care centers, and advocates for better public policies for people with ALS. The ALS Association is working to make ALS a livable disease while urgently searching for new treatments and a cure. For more information about The ALS Association, visit our website at [www.als.org](http://www.als.org)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Brian Frederick

The ALS Association

[Brian.Frederick@als.org](mailto:Brian.Frederick@als.org)

(202) 464-8612

## Dove Hunts

There will be 3 dove hunts this year. Space is limited and priority will be given to novice shooters. You will need to submit your name, the name of any guest you plan to bring and what dove hunts you would like to be considered for. Adding your name on the list DOES NOT guarantee you have a spot for the hunt. You will receive a call or email that CONFIRMS we have space for you. We need all RSVPs by August 24th.

Buda Dove Hunt is Friday, Sept 1st

Lodging for Thursday night is only provided for novices and those organizing the event.

Mason Dove Hunt is Friday, Sept 8th and Saturday, Sept 9th

Lodging at the camp is provided.

Pat Pool Memorial Dove Hunt in Gouldbusk is Friday, Sept 15th - Sunday, Sept 17th  
(Gouldbusk is in Coleman County near the Texas Panhandle)

Lodging at the camp is provided.

If you haven't previously used your once per year recreational reimbursement of \$120 you can use it toward the cost of the hotel room in Buda or other travel expenses.



Paralyzed Veterans of America

Texas Chapter

## Veterans Annual Hill Country Dove Hunt

*The tradition continues and you are invited!*

WHEN: OPENING DAY • FRIDAY, SEPT. 1, 2023  
WHERE: RANCH 11 11 (JB & Kelly Kolodzey)  
901 Williamson Rd., Buda TX 78610

- Meet at 5:00 a.m. 9/1 at RANCH 11 11. Hunt at sunrise.
- Lunch provided at the ranch.
- Every wounded hero can bring 1 extra person with them as an attendant/helper.
- Limited attendance **RSVP by Aug. 24<sup>th</sup>** Mandatory. Confirmation sent via text or email.

RSVP/Questions -

Bruce Kuker	210-632-0495	<a href="mailto:brucek@texaspva.org">brucek@texaspva.org</a>
David Bradshaw	210-410-1599	<a href="mailto:dbradshaw1@sbcglobal.net">dbradshaw1@sbcglobal.net</a>
Alvin Guerrero	210-488-3472	<a href="mailto:alvin-guerrero@att.net">alvin-guerrero@att.net</a>
Amanda Saunders	713-520-8728	<a href="mailto:amandas@texaspva.org">amandas@texaspva.org</a>
Kelly Kolodzey	512-461-6506	<a href="mailto:kellyranch1111@gmail.com">kellyranch1111@gmail.com</a>

*\*We need to know if you need a shotgun provided for you and we will make every effort to have one available for your use.*

**PLEASE NOTE** - BYO (bring your own) ammo, in addition to a chair, hat, eye protection, ear plugs, appropriate shoes (mesquite thorns) and bug spray (chiggers).

**A CURRENT HUNTING LICENSE WITH A MIGRATORY BIRD STAMP and HUNTER EDUCATION CERT. IS REQUIRED FOR ALL HUNTERS (AND ON YOUR PERSON) WITHOUT EXCEPTION AS PER TPVA RULES**

If you need a hotel, at your own expense, there are several Buda hotels nearby. It is a holiday weekend so don't hesitate to reserve your room for August 31. Here are a few. Comfort is the main location.

Comfort Inn & Suites 15295 S IH-35 Blocked for TPVA, \$99 if reserved by 8/1

\*Reservation link <https://www.choicehotels.com/reservations/groups/QZ11X1> or 512-295-8600

Holiday Inn Express	15295 S IH-35	512-295-8040
Hampton Inn	1201 Cabela's Dr	512-295-4900
Microtel	1285 Cabela's Dr	512-295-5444

Donations may be sent to Paralyzed Veterans of America,  
Texas Chapter, P.O. Box 989, Crosby, TX 77542 or call 800-933-4261



Texas PVA San Antonio Members,

We've been having a delay with wheelchair evaluations here at the San Antonio VAMC. I've address this with the SCI Chief, and we've reached out the PM&R Wheelchair Clinic for assistance on the delay for evaluations. Currently, our veterans are being scheduled 3-4 months for an evaluation once their manual/ power chair has been condemned.

We were informed, the wheelchair clinic currently has one APT Therapist addressing all veterans' wheelchair consults, but to notify them if there are any veterans that have any delays.

If there are any delays with wheelchair evaluations, please send me an email and I can address with the SCI Chief and Chief of PM&R (Wheelchair Clinic).

Armando De La Rosa  
Central-Central Area Manager  
Sr. Benefits Advocate  
O: (210) 617-5275

Are you interested in helping those new to SCI/D adjust to their new reality?

We are looking to start a pilot peer mentoring program virtually to connect new SCI/D veterans with other veterans who have personal experience with SCI/D. With Covid restrictions, it's difficult for new patients to meet others who have faced similar circumstances. Communication would be via phone, text or zoom. If interested in helping others who are adjusting, please provide your SCI/D condition, sex, age or other demographics. Your information will only be given to veterans who wish to reach out regarding your experience with SCI/D and other questions pertaining to their condition.

# ARE YOU A VETERAN WITH A DISABILITY? DO YOU NEED HOME REPAIRS OR



## MODIFICATIONS? SBP CAN HELP!



SBP is a disaster recovery organization that is looking for disabled veterans who need repairs or modifications to make their home more accessible.

To be eligible for our services you must meet the following requirements:

- ✓ Have a DD214 or VA Card
- ✓ Income must be at or below 80% AMI
- ✓ Recipients must occupy the home as a primary residence
- ✓ Must not own multiple properties
- ✓ Be within service area
- ✓ Not located in a floodway or the 100 yr floodplain

### Services provided:

- ✓ Physical handicap accessibility
- ✓ Roofing, floor, and other health safety home repairs
- ✓ Physical modifications to allow caregivers to live with veterans



**(346) 570-4867**  
**sbpusa.org**



# **RISE TO THE OCCASION** in the **iBOT® Personal Mobility Device**



**Qualified Veterans can receive an iBOT® at NO COST  
under VA FSS #36F79721D0202**

**Contact your VA physician or therapist today**

**MOBIUS  
MOBILITY**



**1-833-3GO-IBOT  
(1-833-346-4268)**



**mobiusmobility.com**



**info@mobiusmobility.com**



**@mobiusmobility**

I work for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission as the Director of Veterans Mental Health Services. I oversee a couple of mental health programs for active duty, veterans and their families. We can provide you contact information for these programs, which are statewide and free of charge. The programs are:

### **The Texas Veterans + Family Alliance (TV+FA) Grant Program**

Program improves the quality of life of veterans and their families by expanding the availability of and access to, mental health treatment and services. Grant are awarded to community collaboratives to implement new or existing mental health services and provide linkage to support services that increase response to mental health treatment such as employment services. TV+FA grants support a range of clinical mental health and non-clinical supportive services for veterans and their families that include:

- Evidence-based therapies and treatment;
- Individual, group, and family peer support services;
- Individual and family counseling;
- Treatment of substance use disorders;
- Suicide prevention initiatives to help veterans and their families develop skills in recognizing, assisting, and referring to mental health services; and
- Case-management and referral services.

### **Mental Health Program for Veterans (MHPV)**

Providers deliver peer counseling services to veterans and their immediate family members through contracts with local mental health authorities, and local behavioral health authorities. Individuals enrolled in the program receive peer services from trained and certified peer service coordinators (PSCs) and volunteer peers. Peer services are informal and include: one-on-one peer support, peer support groups, and referrals to health and community-based support organizations at no charge.

PSCs are also trained to identify and engage with veterans who are justice-involved at different entry points into the mental health and criminal justice systems. Additionally, there is also a veterans counselor project in which licensed mental health professionals are trained in military informed care and provide mental health services. This project is implemented at six areas that serve rural communities.

We co-administer the MHPV program with the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC). We can provide contact information for all of these mental health providers and other resources. I've included Dr. Blake Harris on this email, who runs the mental health department at TVC. Please let me know if we can provide this information.



**George McEntyre**

**Director, Veterans Mental Health Services**

**Office of Mental Health Coordination**

8317 Cross Park Dr, Ste 350, Mail Code-1155

Austin, TX 78754 (building # 1410)

Office: (512) 380-4335 | Cell: (512)-660-3136

Email: [george.mcentyre@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:george.mcentyre@hhs.texas.gov)

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



# Challenged Athletes Foundation Application Is Now Open



## CAF ANNUAL GRANT PROGRAM

CAF's flagship grant program aims to remove the barriers that exist between adaptive athletes and their pursuit of sport and fitness.

## ELIGIBILITY

Individuals worldwide with permanent physical disabilities are eligible to apply for the CAF grant. Teams, organizations, etc. are not eligible to apply. Hearing impairments, Intellectual and developmental disabilities do not qualify for support through CAF. Medical Verification of Disability is required.

## GRANT REQUEST OPTIONS

Applicants may request one of the following grant types:

- Sports Expenses Grant
- Equipment Grant

## APPLICATION WINDOW

The 2023 CAF Annual Grant application opens on September 1, 2022. If you are a 2022 CAF grant recipient, [click here](#) for information about grant receipts and FAQs.

## 2023 ANNUAL GRANT PERIOD TIMELINE

The 2023 CAF Grant Period runs from September 1, 2022 – January 31, 2023

Sept 1, 2022: 2023 Grant application opens

Nov 4, 2022: 2023 Grant Application closes

March 22-31, 2023: Grant Award notifications sent out

March 22, 2023 – May 31, 2023: Grant Award Acceptance & Distribution period

May 31, 2023: Deadline to accept the 2023 grant

January 31st, 2024: 2023 Grant Period closes. Monetary grants must be spent, and receipts uploaded



# Knights of the Inferno

TEJAS THUNDER CHAPTER



*benefiting*

## Paralyzed Veterans of America

### **SATURDAY, SEPT. 16, 2023**

### **9AM**

### **Starting at**

### **STOPS**

### **Jimbo's**

### **Bootlegers**

### **Thirsty Parrot**



**HARLEY-DAVIDSON**  
**CROSSROADS**

Mancuso Harley  
12710 Crossroads Park  
Houston TX

### **Ending at**



for info text or call  
**Gunner 216-225-4978**

Texas Thunder  
29460 FM1488  
Waller, TX





# Dive Pirates

By: Steve Holbert

This is my story about adaptive scuba diving. What is adaptive scuba diving you may ask? I guess it's a nice way to say scuba diving for disabled people. In my case I'm a paraplegic completely paralyzed from the T3 level down. The Dive



I paddle along fine with webbing I slip over my fingers.

Pirates Organization is a non profit that teaches disabled people how to scuba dive. They can train and certify paraplegics, quadriplegics, amputees, just about anything they have probably trained someone and got them scuba diving. They certify you as an adaptive scuba diver and then take you on a week long scuba diving trip to the Caribbean. I went to Cayman Brac. Not only do they teach you and take you on a dive trip, they supply you with your very own scuba diving gear to keep. Everything you need to scuba dive except a tank. Which you can't take a scuba tank with you on a flight anyway. In some cases they will even train and supply the equipment for your own adaptive dive buddy. For all recreational scuba divers you are required to have a dive buddy with you at all times.(for safety reasons) For an adaptive buddy they train them with several other advanced course certifications such as rescue and life saving. Plus train them how to help the adaptive diver with whatever special assistance they may require. The Dive Pirates philosophy is that if they train you and an adaptive buddy plus supply you with your very own scuba gear that you will be able to continue scuba diving on your own any time you want to go. Once selected as a recipient Dive Pirates does ask that you help fundraise to support the trip.





Ed Shearer, my daughter Hailey & I

I was selected as a Dive Pirates recipient in 2018. My adaptive buddy and I did our training here in the Houston area and completed our open water certifications at the Blue Lagoon lake just north of Huntsville, TX. We then went to Cayman Brac that summer. I went back to Cayman Brac in 2019. Then to Cozumel Mexico in 2021 with a different adaptive diving organization. I've been back to the Blue Lagoon several times over the years. This year I was awarded a scholarship from the Bert and Anne Shearer Foundation to attend the Dive Pirates trip to Cayman Brac. Along with me there were two other US Military Veteran adaptive divers that were also able to return to the Brac thanks to the Bert & Anne Shearer Foundation. Cayman Brac is only about 2 miles wide and 12 miles long. There is only one resort on the island and the Dive Pirates group pretty much took up the whole resort. There were over 60 total scuba divers spread out between three dive boats. It's a wonderful place on such a tiny island and is completely wheelchair accessible.



**Cayman Brac Beach Resort**

One of the things I like best about scuba diving is a complete feeling of freedom. What I mean by that is escape from my wheelchair. I can go up down sideways do flips rolls or just drift aimlessly. In the clear blue tropical water it's easy to propel myself wherever I want to go, to look at whatever I want to look at without ever having a second thought of how to overcome some obstacle to get there. I am no longer bound to the limits of my wheelchair. I really forget that I'm paralyzed. Plus there is a lot of cool stuff to see!



For more information and to complete an application go to <https://divepirates.org>



© Jean Jones

A turtle went cruising right past me. Below me you can see part of the Captain Kieth Tibbets ship wreck we got to dive on.

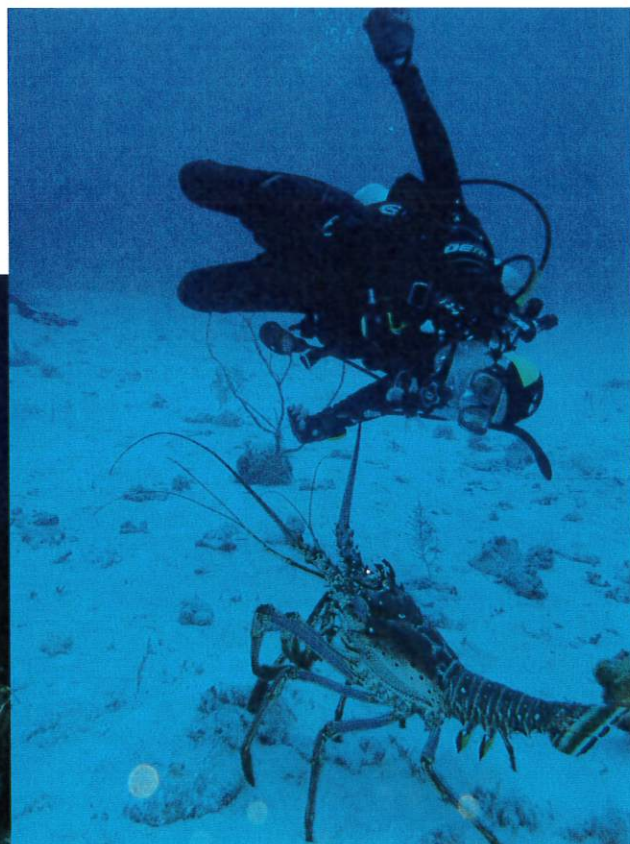


Sharing some of the techniques I use underwater with one of the other adaptive dive buddies. A great bonus of a trip like this is sharing and learning knowledge of adaptive scuba with all the other great people on the trip.



© Brian Kuner

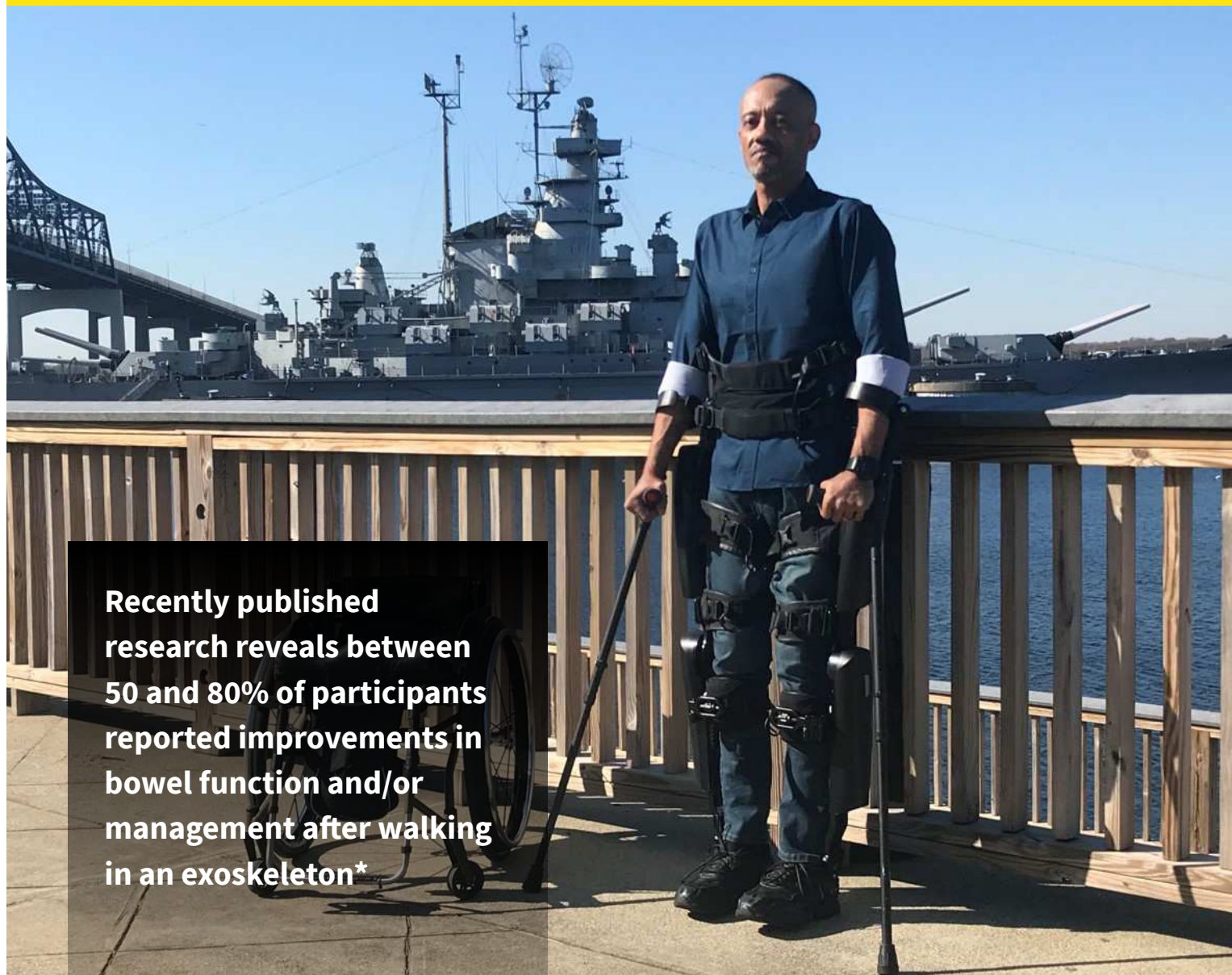
The boat dive master getting up close and personal with the local friendly grouper.



Getting a close look at a lobster.



## Want To Improve Your Bowel Function?



Recently published research reveals between 50 and 80% of participants reported improvements in bowel function and/or management after walking in an exoskeleton\*

**Did you know Paralyzed US Veterans May be Eligible for a ReWalk Personal Exoskeleton?**

**Contact ReWalk for more Information:  
[rewalk.com/contact](https://rewalk.com/contact) or  
508.251.1154 option 2**

## Membership Rewards Program

Hello Texas Paralyzed Veterans of America Members! Your BOD just implemented a new membership rewards program. It's a very simple program. **During your birth month**, just contact the Chapter Office or one of your Board of Directors and let them know you want to participate. At the end of each month a drawing will be held and five lucky members will each receive a gift card worth \$200 to spend however you wish.

As long as you're on the phone with us, let us know how you're doing. Get an update on the latest Chapter news and events. You can also make sure your phone number and address are up to date. Remember we're an organization made up of members trying to help other members. We need to know who you are, where you are and what kind of concerns or ideas you may have. Plus you may be able to volunteer some time with us.

Remember if it's your **Birth Month**, all that it takes for a chance at a \$200 Birthday gift is just a phone call. If you don't call in, you won't be entered.

Catherine Webster 713-520-8782 [admin@texas.pva.org](mailto:admin@texas.pva.org)  
Frank Daebelliehn 281-256-5652 [frankd@texaspva.org](mailto:frankd@texaspva.org)  
Bruce Kuker 210-632-0495 [bwkuker@gmail.com](mailto:bwkuker@gmail.com)

## We have venison available for members

We have venison available in San Antonio and the Houston area for members. Please call 713-520-8782 or email [info@texaspva.org](mailto:info@texaspva.org) to coordinate a time to pickup.



Texas Chapter



**Paralyzed Veterans of America, Texas Chapter  
SANCTIONED BY IBCA**

<https://ibcabbq.org/organization-documents>

**Texas Thunder Saloon, 29460 FM 1488, Waller, TX 77484  
Friday, Nov 17th and Saturday, Nov 18th**

**\$175 Entry  
CHICKEN, PORK SPARE RIBS & BRISKET**

**80% Pay out  
MARGARITA \$25  
OPEN \$25 (No dessert)**

Friday

4:00 PM to 6:00 PM Tray pickup

6:00 PM Cooks Meeting

7:30 PM Margaritas

Saturday

9:30 AM to 10:30 AM Tray pickup

11:00 AM Open (No dessert)

12:00 PM Chicken Turn In (one (1) fully jointed chicken (to include breast, wing, thigh and drumstick) SKIN ON

1:30 PM Pork Spare Ribs (8 individual pork spare ribs)

3:00 PM Brisket (8 full slices)

**AWARDS AND PRIZE \$\$\$ FOR TOP 3 IN EACH MEAT CATEGORY**

Raffles & auction (custom AR15 & a YETI Cooler)

**Early set up Thursday / No electric**



**Google maps link:** <https://www.google.com/maps/place/29460+Farm+to+Market+Rd+1488,+Waller,+TX+77484/@30.1625814,-95.9002575,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m6!3m5!1s0x8646d1d574055271:0xe83965e46ff4180a!8m2!3d30.1625814!4d-95.8976826!16s%2Fg%2F11c1cwb8r9?entry=ttu>

Contact Amanda at 713-520-8782 /832-814-5126 or [amandas@texaspva.org](mailto:amandas@texaspva.org) For more info please visit [www.texaspva.org](http://www.texaspva.org)





# Paralyzed Veterans of America, Texas Chapter BBQ Entry Form

SANCTIONED BY IBCA  
<https://ibcabbq.org/organization-documents-2/>



Texas Chapter

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City-State-Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Members:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FEE \$175.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken, Pork Spare Ribs, Brisket

Open (No Dessert) \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Margarita \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have an RV? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ If yes what size is it \_\_\_\_\_ Ft.

**PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA–TEXAS CHAPTER, HAWG STOP, OR ANYONE ASSOCIATED WITH THE COOK-OFF WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEFT OR DAMAGE TO EQUIPMENT, OR BODILY INJURY OF ANY KIND. DECISION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON AND JUDGES ARE FINAL. BY ENTERING THIS CONTEST, YOU AGREE TO ABIDE BY ALL THE RULES. IF NOT PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA – TEXAS CHAPTER AND/OR TEXAS THUNDER SALOON HAS THE RIGHT TO ASK YOU & YOUR TEAM TO LEAVE THIS COOKOFF. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR COOKING THIS COOKOFF AND SUPPORTING THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA – TEXAS CHAPTER**

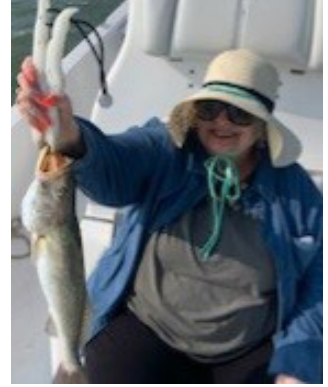
SIGNATURE OF HEAD COOK: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Checks Payable to: Paralyzed Veterans of America – Texas Chapter**

Mail to: PVA, Texas Chapter  
P.O. Box 989  
Crosby, TX 77532

To pay by credit card please check call 713-520-8782

# Flag Day Fishing







## Archery Practice





# Member Outings



## Field Practice

## Inpatient Outing





FDA Approves Briumvi™ for the Treatment of Relapsing Forms of MS

Latest News December 28, 2022

Reviewed by MSAA Chief Medical Officer Barry A. Hendin, MD

TG Therapeutics has announced that the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Briumvi™ (ublituximab-xiiy) for the treatment of relapsing forms of multiple sclerosis (MS) in adults – including clinically isolated syndrome, relapsing-remitting MS, and active secondary-progressive MS. This medication is a monoclonal antibody that targets CD20, a protein found on the surface of B cells, and induces B-cell depletion within 24 hours. B cells are white blood cells shown to play a role in MS.

Briumvi is given by infusion, with two initial doses administered 14 days apart, followed by infusions every 24 weeks. In studies, Briumvi met its primary end point of reducing annualized relapse rates when compared to individuals taking the oral medication, Aubagio® (teriflunomide). It also met certain secondary endpoints, including the reduction of gadolinium-enhancing lesions as seen on magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), compared to individuals taking Aubagio.

The most common side effect was infusion-related reactions. This new therapy is expected to be available in early 2023.

### Study Design and Findings

The Phase III ULTIMATE I and ULTIMATE II trials were identical, double-blind, and double-dummy (placebo) studies taking place at 104 sites throughout 10 countries. Enrolled participants were between the ages of 18 and 55, were diagnosed with relapsing MS, were limited to the use and timing of certain disease-modifying treatments, and had an Expanded Disability Status Scale (EDSS) score of 0 to 5.5 (with greater scores indicating more significant disability).

Between September 2017 and October 2018, the ULTIMATE I trial enrolled 549 individuals and the ULTIMATE II trial enrolled 545. Participants were randomized and the numbers were split in half to receive either Briumvi with an oral placebo or Aubagio with an intravenous placebo. The median follow-up of these studies was 95 weeks (a little less than two years) and some of the results were determined through a pooled analysis of both trials.

Results of these two studies include the following:

In the ULTIMATE I trial, the annualized relapse rate was 0.08 in the Briumvi group versus 0.19 in the Aubagio group. In the ULTIMATE II trial, the annualized relapse rate was 0.09 and 0.18, respectively. Generally speaking, individuals taking Briumvi experienced about half the relapses than those taking Aubagio.

In the ULTIMATE I trial, the mean number of gadolinium-enhancing lesions (per T1-weighted MRI scan) was 0.02 in the Briumvi group versus 0.49 in the Aubagio group. In the ULTIMATE II trial, the mean number of gadolinium-enhancing lesions was 0.01 and 0.25, respectively.

In the ULTIMATE I trial, the mean number of new or enlarging hypointense lesions (per T2-weighted MRI scan) was 0.21 in the Briumvi group versus 2.79 in the Aubagio group. In the ULTIMATE II trial, the mean number of new or enlarging hypointense lesions was 0.28 and 2.83, respectively.

In the ULTIMATE I trial, “no evidence of disease activity” (NEDA) was seen in 44.6% of those treated with Briumvi versus 15.0% of those receiving Aubagio. In the ULTIMATE II trial, NEDA was seen in 43.0% of those treated with Briumvi versus 11.4% of those receiving Aubagio.

### Side Effects, Adverse Events, and Screenings Required

Among those taking Briumvi, the most common adverse event was infusion-related reactions (47.7%). Fever, headache, chills, and flu-like symptoms were the most commonly reported symptoms when experiencing an infusion-related reaction. Other side effects included headache (34.3%), nasopharyngitis [cold symptoms] (18.3%), pyrexia [fever] (13.9%), and nausea (10.6%). These were compared to side effects experienced by the Aubagio group, whose most common adverse events included headache (26.6%), nasopharyngitis (17.9%), alopecia [hair loss] (15.3%), infusion-related reactions [to the placebo given intravenously] (12.2%), and diarrhea (10.6%).

Looking at both trials combined, just over half of each treatment group experienced infections – 304 participants or 55.8% of the Briumvi group and 298 or 54.4% of the Aubagio group. Most of these were related to the respiratory tract. Urinary tract infections and herpes virus infections also were seen in smaller percentages of participants.

Serious and life-threatening infections were seen in 5% of study participants taking Briumvi, compared to 3% of those taking Aubagio. Three infection-related deaths occurred with Briumvi-treated patients. Administration of Briumvi should be delayed in patients experiencing active infection.

Also in these trials, one participant taking Briumvi experienced Hepatitis B Virus (HBV) reactivation. All patients should be screened for HBV prior to starting Briumvi and anyone with active HBV should not be given Briumvi.

Although cases of progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy (PML) have been reported in patients taking other anti-CD20 antibodies, no cases of PML occurred during the 96-week period. Additionally, no opportunistic infections were reported.

Results of animal studies suggest that Briumvi may harm the fetus if given to a pregnant woman. For this reason, women who could become pregnant should be given a pregnancy test prior to starting Briumvi as well as prior to each infusion. Effective contraception is recommended during treatment with Briumvi and for six months after discontinuing treatment.

#### For More Information

For more information, please visit [www.briumvi.com](http://www.briumvi.com), or go to TG Therapeutics' dedicated patient support website at [www.briumvipatientsupport.com](http://www.briumvipatientsupport.com). This latter website will be available to access within a few days following this approval. Interested individuals may also call 1-833-BRIUMVI, or 1-833-274-8684.

Whether connecting online or via phone, patient support representatives can provide information about financial assistance programs. Representatives can also assist individuals with locating their nearest infusion site. As noted earlier, Briumvi is expected to be available in early 2023.

For general information or to speak with one of MSAA's trained Client Services Specialists, please contact us in one of the following ways:

Call (800) 532-7667, extension 154 or email [MSquestions@mysaa.org](mailto:MSquestions@mysaa.org). Helpline hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 8:00 PM, Eastern Time. To reach a Spanish-speaking Client Services Specialist, please call (800) 532-7667, extension 131.

Para comunicarse con un Especialista de Servicios al Cliente que habla español, llame al (800) 532-7667, extensión 131 o envíe un correo electrónico a [MSquestions@mysaa.org](mailto:MSquestions@mysaa.org). El horario de la línea de ayuda es de lunes a viernes, de 8:30 AM a 8:00 PM, hora del este.

Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Texas Chapter  
P.O. Box 989  
Crosby, TX 77532

Non Profit Org.  
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99476



**Paralyzed Veterans  
of America**  
Vehicle Donation Program

**Turn Your Used Vehicle Into Support  
for Paralyzed Veterans of America**

We'll use the proceeds from the sale of your car,  
truck, RV or boat to change lives and build brighter  
futures for our seriously injured heroes.

To learn more, call or visit us online:  
**877-900-VETS | [pva.careasy.org](http://pva.careasy.org)**