

The Wheeled Herald



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Great Plains Chapter

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PVA President Robert Thomas Testifies on Capitol Hill



I must call a 'foul' on this, because at the same time VA is saying they are getting rid of positions that weren't being filled, their hiring freezes and other policies prevented them from being filled.

—Robert Thomas
National President



Watch PVA President Robert Thomas' testimony before the joint House & Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. PVA was among a dozen other veteran service organizations on a two-panel hearing. If you skip to the 2 hour mark, you will see President Thomas' testimony.



April is PVA Awareness Month!

PVA is the nation's only nonprofit organization dedicated solely to helping Veterans with SCI/D, and diseases like MS and ALS, and is there to provide services and support. PVA Awareness Month raises awareness of the need for specialized health care, accessible housing, and career support, while highlighting PVA's advocacy for independence. It is a wonderful opportunity to share our stories, hear from those who've been impacted by our work, and broaden awareness of our programs and services.

This year, during PVA Awareness Month, we are planning a billiards tournament held at our chapter building; organizing a team for the Walk MS Nebraska fundraiser in support of our veteran members and others with MS; and providing an evening for caregivers to gather together to enjoy an activity in a relaxing, supportive environment.



President's Message by Randy Squier



Spring has sprung, let's get winter out of here. Every year winter gets harder. I'm glad spring is coming.

Looking ahead, PVA's calendar of activities includes a mini billiards tournament that will be held at the chapter building on April 21st. Chris Parnell, billiards tournament director, will help us with that mini tournament. Also, Big John's Billiards in Omaha has gotten a few of us interested in playing weekly. It's scheduled for Friday afternoons 2 to 4pm; the cost is five dollars a week. With enough participation, we hope to start a league, and rotate each week through the players in attendance.

Adapted sports and recreation is a big part of who we are. As we try to grow our participation, new friendships help spread the word. Our weekly bowling league continues to grow and attract more players from the disabled community who are a great asset to our cause. The weekly poker games are a great opportunity and source to socially interact with our players and membership.

The laughs, the jokes, and personal relationships we grow with each other are very important and we have a lot of fun. I know it has helped my bowling scores and the billiards and poker play, too.

Hopefully, you can join us in a few activities this year.

Chapter Officers

Randy Squier, President
John Scott, Vice President
Will Leavitt, Secretary
Seth Kotouc, Treasurer

Chapter Directors

Dave Nelson, Director
Tom Timmerman, Director
Shayna Goerd, Director

Immediate Past President

Mark Linquist

National Director

Dave Nelson

National Service Officer

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Sports Director

Patrick Reynolds
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MS/Women Veterans Lead

Shayna Goerd
shayna@greatplainspva.org

Upcoming Events

March

2nd: Power Soccer Practices Begin 6-8pm
12th: BOD Meeting 1:00pm
17th: St. Patrick's Day!

April *PVA Awareness Month*

1st: April Fool's Day!
9th: BOD Meeting 1:00pm
21st: Billiards Mini-Tournament at Chapter
22nd-25th: Do Good Days!
25th: MS Walk: Nebraska
28th: Caregiver Night

May

12th-15th: Annual PVA Convention, Las Vegas
14th: BOD Meeting 1:00pm
25th: Memorial Day - Office Closed
» Texas Hold'em games held every Thursday (except BOD meeting days) at the Chapter office at 12pm.
» Bowling League practices every Wednesday at Mockingbird Lanes at 1pm.

NSO Report

by Destiny Payne, PVA National Service Officer

VA Clarifies How Medication May Affect Disability Ratings

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently issued an interim final rule clarifying how medication and treatment should be considered when evaluating service-connected disabilities.

The rule, published in the Federal Register on February 17, 2026, modifies 38 CFR § 4.10, which governs how functional impairment is assessed under the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities.

What the New Rule Says

Under the updated regulation, VA examiners will evaluate disabilities based on how the condition affects a veteran's ability to function under the ordinary conditions of life while receiving treatment, including prescribed medications. If medication reduces symptoms, the disability rating may reflect the level of impairment that remains while the veteran is using treatment, rather than the untreated severity of the condition.

The clarification follows several court decisions addressing whether VA should consider the effects of medication when assigning disability ratings. The VA states the purpose of this rule is to ensure disability evaluations reflect a veteran's actual level of functioning in daily life.

Potential Impact on Veterans

After immense pressure from Veterans Service Organizations and the public, VA rescinded this new rule and all previously issued guidance on how functional impairment is assessed remains in effect.

Executive Directors Report

by Mary Bushman

This year marks the 80th Anniversary of Paralyzed Veterans of America. PVA was founded in 1946 by a group of service members who came home from World War II with spinal cord injuries. These heroes now faced challenges in their homes and communities that no one was prepared for. Instead of giving up, the fighting spirit in these soldiers carried on and together they went on a mission to change their lives and the lives of spinal cord injured soldiers that would come after them.

In 1946, Paralyzed Veterans of America was founded as a congressionally chartered veterans service organization. 80 years later, PVA has grown to 33 Chapters and a network of 70 National Service Officers (NSOs) across the country. Great Plains became a PVA chapter in 1971.

National PVA, its chapters, and NSOs continue to work together to advocate for quality health care for its members, research and education about spinal cord injuries and dysfunction, veterans benefits, and civil rights for its members.

At Great Plains PVA we are focused on our 2026 goals and a calendar of events that provides opportunities for members and caregivers to get active in their chapter and community and enhance their quality of life. Please reach out to the Chapter office in Omaha or our NSO office in Lincoln if we can be of service to you.



Adapted Sports & Recreation Update

The Omaha Power Soccer Club began its spring session at Great Plains PVA at the beginning of March. Half of our team has specialized power soccer chairs, plus the program owns a specialized power soccer chair that can be used by any of the players and the coaches, as needed.



The Great Plains PVA Wheelchair Bowling League practices weekly at Mockingbird Lanes on Wednesdays at 1pm. One of our newest members, Bailor, checked out our ikan bowling ramp - a specialized ramp that attaches to a power wheelchair and allows the bowler to get a more precise release of their bowling ball enhancing their overall experience.



Great Plains PVA members have begun practicing for our billiards tournament in September. The billiards league practices at Big John's Billiards on Fridays from 2-4pm.





Wine & Roses

WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER

featuring

The Music Bingo People



**Saturday
May 2nd
5-8PM**



at

Great Plains PVA
7612 Maple Street

\$30

Prizes

Hors D'oeuvres
Silent Auction

RSVP by April 24th to Amanda at vazquez@greatplainspva.org or 402-398-1422.



Paralyzed Veterans of America

Great Plains Chapter

Proceeds benefit the Great Plains PVA Ladies Auxiliary's McAleer/Pierce Memorial Scholarship Fund for students with disabilities.

by Patrick Reynolds, Sports Director

2025 Team Competition

The 2025 Great Plains PVA Fitness Team Competition was a three-team battle. Tim Hobbs/Daniel Schmitt, Travis Hasenkamp/Chris Parnell and Bruce Froendt/Barry Ridout paired up to find the fittest team in our gym. Ten events were completed over a six-week period, with Daniel & Tim winning week one/event one. Travis & Chris won event two by a 17-point margin, which helped them to the top of the leaderboard, and they held that lead all the way until event 10. That final event (event 10) was disastrous for Travis & Chris, finishing last and only adding 59 points to their total. Daniel and Tim won that event and the 41 point swing gave them the competition win! Below are the event win totals and the final leaderboard:

- Event Wins
 - Daniel & Tim – 5
 - Travis & Chris - 5
- Final Leaderboard
 - 1. Daniel Schmitt & Tim Hobbs – 917 points
 - 2. Travis Hasenkamp & Chris Parnell – 893 points
 - 3. Bruce Froendt & Barry Ridout – 775 points

2026 January Challenge

The first Challenge workout of 2026 was a SkiErg/shoulder-to-overhead couplet, with the meters on the SkiErg decreasing throughout. Tim Hobbs won this workout by over two minutes, which in hindsight seemed to be a sign of how 2026 was going to go. Thanks a lot, Tim. These workouts can be viewed on our YouTube channel (Great Plains PVA Adaptive Fitness), just search 2026 January Challenge. Below is the leaderboard of the January Challenge:

- Leaderboard
 - 1. Tim Hobbs – 11:46
 - 2. Daniel Schmitt – 13:54
 - 3. Travis Hasenkamp – 14:00
 - 4. Chris Parnell/Bruce Froendt – 14:57
 - 6. Barry Ridout – 15:37

2026 February Challenge

While the January Challenge was a fairly long test, the February Challenge was a sprint. This was five minutes to accumulate as many dips as possible following a buy-in on the rower. Travis Hasenkamp came through with the victory here, completing 56 dips and just edging out Matt Ross. These workouts can also be viewed on our YouTube channel by searching 2026 February Challenge. Below is the leaderboard of the February Challenge:

- Leaderboard
 - 1. Travis Hasenkamp – 56
 - 2. Matt Ross – 52
 - 3. Daniel Schmitt – 44
 - 4. Chris Parnell – 38
 - 5. Barry Ridout – 36
 - 6. Tim Hobbs – 34
 - 7. Bruce Froendt – 14

New Equipment

We're constantly looking for ways to improve the gym and part of that is adding equipment so more athletes can train here in groups. Over the past few months, we've received big donations from

Tim Hobbs and Bruce Froendt, which helped us add a new VitaGlide, a new pulldown machine and new blocks we use for dips/cleans/deadlifts/step-overs/squats. We can't improve this program without outside financial help, so we owe a debt of gratitude to Tim and Bruce!

2026 March Challenge

The March Challenge is the first with our new pulldown machine from Rogue Fitness. This is a chipper of pulldowns, sled pulling/pushing and curb hops/step-overs. I'm excited to see how this one goes down! Below is the format of the March Challenge:

- For Time:
 - 50 pulldowns
 - 300' sled drag/push
 - 35 pulldowns
 - 16 curb hops/step-overs
 - 20 pulldowns

Join Great Plains PVA's Walk MS Team - It's FREE!

Join Great Plains PVA's Team at Walk MS: Nebraska on Saturday, April 25th! This awareness event is free and gathers a community of supporters committed to helping find a cure for MS.

Great Plains PVA is proud to support its members living with MS by sponsoring this event. Registration is FREE! Come out and join other PVA members by walking or rolling with us. Be sure to stop by our information booth at the Dog Zone during the event, too!

Pictured below: Our team from Walk MS 2025!



Join our team – Great Plains PVA!
Scan the QR code
to donate and register today!





Save the Date for Walk MS 2026!
Walk MS brings together passionate
people nationwide who raise funds
to change the world for those
affected by multiple sclerosis.



Walk MS: Nebraska

Date: Saturday, April 25, 2026

**Location: The Heartland of America Park
Omaha, NE 68102**

Site Opens: 9:00 a.m.

Walk Starts: 10:00 a.m.



Join our team – Great Plains PVA!
Scan the QR code
to donate and register today!





SAVE THE DATE!



PVA Bowling Series Nationals

Hosted by Great Plains PVA

June 25-28, 2026

Mockingbird Lanes in Omaha, NE



- Singles * Doubles**
- 3-Person Team**
- Up/Down Tournament**
- Goody Bags**
- Lunches * Photos**
- Raffles * 50/50s**
- Silent Auction**

\$30,000 Prize Fund!

FEATURING:

**More Free Bowling Ball Drawings!
On-Site Pro-Shop Special Offers**



Questions: Contact Dave Nelson at 402-208-4841 or dnelson68135@yahoo.com



PVA Bowling Series Nationals

Hosted by Great Plains PVA

June 25-28, 2026

Mockingbird Lanes

4870 S. 96th St. Omaha, NE 68127

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Thursday, June 25

3-Person Team Check-In	9:00 am
3-Person Team Competition	10:00 am
Lunch on your own & Doubles Check-in	12:30 pm
Doubles Competition & Roll-Off	1:30 pm

Friday, June 26

Singles Check-In	10:00 am
OPENING CEREMONIES	10:30 am
1st Singles Set (3 Games)	11:00 am
Lunch provided	1:00 pm
2nd Singles Set (3 Games)	2:00 pm
Up/Down Check-In	5:00 pm
Up/Down Event	6:30 pm

Saturday, June 27

3rd Singles Set (3 Games)	11:00 am
Lunch provided	1:00 pm
4th Singles Set (3 Games)	2:00 pm

Sunday, June 28

5th Singles Set (3 Games)	10:00 am
Stair Step Roll-Off – Scratch, A & B Divisions	





PVA Bowling Series Nationals
 Hosted by Great Plains PVA
 June 25-28, 2026
 Mockingbird Lanes
 4870 S. 96th St. Omaha, NE 68127
Singles Entry Closing Date - May 20, 2026



Mail Entry to:

Great Plains PVA
 7612 Maple Street
 Omaha, NE 68134
 402-398-1422



Singles Entry Fee - W/C & MS Standup Divisions	\$ 150.00	_____
Doubles - W/C Division	\$ 40.00	_____
3-Person Team - W/C Division	\$ 40.00	_____
Up/Down - W/C & MS Standup Divisions	\$ 40.00	_____
Sidepots: Handicap	\$ 15.00	_____
Scratch	\$ 15.00	_____
TOTAL DUE:	\$	_____

Please pay with one check made payable to Great Plains PVA. To pay online, scan the QR code on the left. Please type BOWLING in the note area and email your forms to bushman@greatplainspva.org.

Please Print:

Name _____ Phone# _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Jersey Size _____ T-Shirt Size _____

Birthdate _____ Are you traveling with a spouse/caregiver? Yes No Name _____

Are you a veteran? Yes No Branch of Service _____ PVA Chapter _____

Check those that apply: SCI/D MS Amputee Other (describe) _____

CHECK DIVISION ENTERING: W/C SCRATCH W/C HANDICAP MS STANDUP

Doubles: Partner _____ Handicap _____ Please Assign _____

3-Person: Partner _____ Handicap _____ Partner _____ Handicap _____

AVERAGE VERIFICATION of 9 Games or more: FAILURE TO PROVIDE REQUIRED VERIFICATION WILL RESULT IN PRIZE MONEY AND/OR DOOR PRIZES BEING WITHHELD.

Entrants without qualified averages must bowl scratch. A bowler's PVA Bowling Series average will be your entering average. If you do not have a PVA average, your highest current USBC average will be your entering average. USBC member cards must be presented. For new bowlers, a league sheet will be accepted as long as 9 games have been bowled establishing the average.

USBC # _____

Highest 2024-2025 USBC Sanctioned League Average _____ # Games _____

Highest Summer League 2025 Sanctioned League Average _____ # Games _____

League Sec. Verification _____ Phone# _____



TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR:
 Dave Nelson 402-208-4841





Great Plains Chapter

24th Annual



Tee Off
& Support
Wheelchair
Sports

Golf Tournament

Join us for Great Plains PVA's
24th Annual Golf Tournament!

Sunday, June 7, 2026
Tiburon Golf Club, Omaha
9:00am Shotgun Start
\$125/Golfer



Sign up
today!

<https://events.golfstatus.com/event/PVAGolf2026>

*Proceeds support our programs & services for
paralyzed veterans and other adults & children
living with a disability.*

QUESTIONS? CONTACT AMANDA AT VAZQUEZ@GREATPLAINSPVA.ORG

Presenting Sponsor - \$10,000

***1 available**

- logo prominently displayed on event website
- logo prominently displayed on app
- logo on banner at event
- 2 registered golf teams
- social media recognition
- sponsor logo on hole

Pin Flag Sponsor - \$5,000

***3 available**

- logo on event website
- logo on 9 pin flags on one 9-hole course
- 1 registered golf team
- social media recognition
- sponsor logo on hole

Hole-in-One Sponsor - \$2,500

***4 available**

- logo on event website
- logo featured on 1 Hole-in-One hole, recognized on all 4 holes
- 1 registered golf team
- social media recognition
- sponsor logo on hole

Eagle Sponsor - \$1,200

- logo on event website
- 1 registered golf team
- social media recognition
- sponsor logo on hole

Flight Sponsor - \$500

- social media recognition
- Sponsor name on hole

Hole Sponsor - \$250

- Sponsor name on hole



UPCOMING EVENTS

2026



FEBRUARY

19th: Membership Meeting & Lunch
11:00am at the chapter
28th: Ladies Night
4:00 - 7:00 PM

MARCH

3rd: Power Soccer Session Begins
Tuesdays, 6-8pm

APRIL *PVA Awareness Month*

21st: Billiards Mini Tournament
4-8pm at the chapter
25th: MS Walk: Nebraska
28th: Caregiver Night
6-8pm at the chapter
Power Soccer Tuesdays 6-8pm

MAY

2nd: Wine & Roses Fundraiser
5th: Power Soccer Session Ends
11-15th: PVA Convention, Las Vegas

JUNE

7th: Golf Tournament
9-11th: PVA Advocacy Seminar,
Washington DC
25-28th: PVA Bowling Nationals
Mockingbird Lanes, Omaha

SEP-DEC

Billiards Tournament
Trunk or Treat
Veterans Day Poster + Poem Contest
Cornhole Clinic/Tournament
Christmas Party

For more information, contact us at vazquez@greatplainspva.org
or visit our website www.greatplainspva.org.

BILLIARDS

League



2-4pm

Fridays

Starts April 4th

Cost

\$5

per week

at Big John's Billiards
9819 M St in Omaha

Join for fun, or to help
prepare for our
tournament in September!

Questions? Email Amanda-vazquez@greatplainspva.org



Paralyzed Veterans of America

Great Plains Chapter



do
good
DAYS
APRIL 22-25

GIVE
GOOD

Donate at
[ShareOmaha.org!](http://ShareOmaha.org)

CHAPTER BIRTHDAYS

February

Dominic Lovison * Neeley Gentry * Teddy Daniels * Dana Hall * Sidney Rightmyer *
Clayborn Barnett * David Seyler * Andrew Nelsen * James Harrin * Jerry Tharp *
Norman Davis

March

Zach Libben * Eric Rudberg * Lindsay Stearns * Chris Holcomb * Richard Kahla *
Michael Brown * William Connor * Michael Warde * Michelle Shupe * Russell Rimovsky *
Randolph Squier * Michael Janik * Charles "Chas" Magdanz * David Hebert * Joseph May * Barbara
Bailey * Marvin McClaughry * Dale Grub * Jerry Sandage * Charles Dus * Robert Roskens

April

Tyrell Johnson * Peter Matson * Timothy Abshire * Clifford Leffingwell * Glenn Fretz *
Michael Ward * David Newburn * John Scott * Thomas Katalenich



Washington Update

Check out the [PVAAction Force](#) page to view legislative campaigns and a list of key legislation.

PVA NATIONAL PRESIDENT ROBERT THOMAS, JR. TESTIFIES BEFORE CONGRESS

On March 4, PVA National President Robert Thomas, Jr. testified before a joint session of the Senate and House Veterans' Affairs Committees regarding PVA's 2026 policy priorities. President Thomas stressed the importance of restoring VA's specialized care services, which are in dire need of adequate funding and staffing; expanding access to Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS), like the department's Veteran Directed Care program; and codifying VA's Bowel and Bladder program.

For veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D), support for neurogenic bowel and bladder dysfunction is a crucial aspect of their care. Unfortunately, VA's current Bowel and Bladder program is fraught with challenges for caregivers. Timely reimbursement and the tax treatment of payments are two of the complaints most often expressed. President Thomas explained how codifying the program could fix many of its problems and urged support for the Disabled Veterans Dignity Act (S. 3647).

President Thomas also spoke about some transportation problems PVA members are experiencing when attempting to access VA care, and the growing need to raise baseline rates for special monthly compensation (SMC) and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

(DIC). The two-panel hearing lasted nearly three hours. You can watch a recording of the hearing [here](#). President Thomas's oral statement begins at the 2:00:00 mark. His full written statement is located [here](#).

While in Washington, D.C., President Thomas and other members of PVA's Executive Committee met with 10 congressional members and the staff of the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees. Members of the Executive Committee met with Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Ranking Member Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), as well as the House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Mike Bost (R-IL) and Ranking Member Mark Takano (D-CA).

During their visits, PVA leaders stressed the importance of preserving VA's specialized services; and the need to expand the department's HCBS programs, codify VA's Bowel and Bladder program, and increase rates of SMC and DIC. Members of the Executive Committee also had the chance to visit with the Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Military Construction and VA Subcommittee, Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-FL), and urge her to work toward restoring research funding for SCI/D in the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program.

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@PVA1946



LATEST EFFORTS TO MOVE THE MAJOR RICHARD STAR ACT BLOCKED IN THE SENATE

On March 3, Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) moved to advance the Major Richard Star Act out of the Senate. However, the motion to advance was blocked by Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) due to its overall cost and the lack of a funding mechanism. “We can’t just come down here and talk about how much we love vets and how we want to support them,” Johnson said. “We also have to look at the reality of the situation in dollars and cents. We are \$39 trillion in debt. Over the next decade, we’ll probably go to \$60 trillion. We have to look at the dollars and cents.” PVA supports the Major Richard Star Act, which would eliminate the offset between military retirement pay and VA disability compensation for veterans who were medically retired before reaching 20 years of active service and had a disability caused by combat service.

BILL INTRODUCED TO ALLOW SSDI RECIPIENTS TO OPT OUT OF WAIT FOR BENEFITS

On February 25, Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-NH) [announced](#) the reintroduction of S. 3924, the [We Can’t Wait Act](#). The bill would allow Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) claimants to elect to receive their SSDI benefits during the usual five-month exclusion period in exchange for a small reduction in their monthly benefit. After the Social Security Administration determines whether an applicant is eligible to receive SSDI benefits, there is a mandatory five-month wait where claimants are denied payments after becoming eligible.

Thousands of SSDI claimants are forced to file bankruptcy while waiting for a decision on their SSDI application. In some cases, claimants die before ever receiving their benefits. Imposing additional exclusionary periods harms disabled veterans and individuals with disabilities. PVA supports the We Can’t Wait Act and urges advocates to send a message to their senators [here](#).

HVAC ASSESSES VA’S IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SENATOR ELIZABETH DOLE 21ST CENTURY VETERANS HEALTHCARE AND BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT

On March 4, the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee (HVAC) held an Oversight and Investigations subcommittee hearing to examine how the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act, commonly called the Dole Act, has been implemented during its first year and whether it is improving support for veterans and their caregivers.

Dr. Thomas O’Toole, Acting Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Services, testified on behalf of VA and highlighted the implementation of 25 out of 72 sections in the law. He noted that remaining sections are pending announcements in the Federal Register. Subcommittee members voiced their frustration at the slow pace of implementation and lack of transparency in the process. You can watch the hearing [here](#).

HVAC REVIEWS HOW VA SUPPORTS VETERANS WITH TBI

On March 5, the House Veterans’ Affairs Committee (HVAC) held a Health subcommittee hearing on “Hidden Wounds: Effectively Supporting Veterans with TBI.” The hearing examined how the VA identifies, treats, and supports veterans with TBI, often referred to as the ‘signature wound’ of the post-9/11 conflict.

Subcommittee members received updates on VA’s current clinical programs, data systems, and research infrastructure. The purpose of the hearing was to make sure each of these areas is adequately meeting veterans’ long-term needs. You can watch the hearing [here](#).

VA ANNOUNCES FIRST STEPS IN PARTIAL CLAIM PROGRAM TO AVOID FORECLOSURE

Last year, PVA supported the VA Home Loan Program Reform Act (P.L. 119-31), that created a partial claim program (PCP) within the VA Home Loan Guarantee program. A “partial claim” is intended to provide relief for veterans who fall behind on their mortgage and

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hopefully keep them in their homes. Unlike other federally backed mortgage products, the VA Home Loan has never had a PCP, which came to a head two years ago in a series of NPR articles highlighting the increasing number of veteran foreclosures.

The bill became law last July, and VA is now in the development phase of implementing VA's first PCP. VA has shared their draft language with stakeholders to gather feedback on the impact of their proposal and to ensure the plan will truly help veterans. PVA worked with veterans organizations, industry professionals, and other stakeholders in reviewing the draft PCP language. We are hopeful the VA will consider the feedback received and make any needed adjustments to the program.

PVA AND U2FP: PARTNERING TO PROTECT AND ADVANCE SCI RESEARCH

PVA regularly partners with organizations on issues that affect our members. One key partner is Unite 2 Fight Paralysis (U2FP), a nonprofit founded in 2005 that brings the spinal cord injury (SCI) community together to advance research, advocacy, and education aimed at curing paralysis.

Last year, U2FP organized a coalition that included PVA and other SCI organizations to respond to a sudden cut in SCI funding from the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program. That coalition's advocacy helped restore much of the SCI-related research funding for fiscal year 2026.

In mid-February, U2FP held its 20th Annual Science and Advocacy event in Washington, D.C. The three-day event included:

- two days of briefings and panels for people with SCI, family members, scientists, clinicians, biotech representatives, and advocates to learn about the latest SCI care and research, and
- one day of Hill visits, when more than 100 advocates met with staff from more than 50 congressional offices to press for increased federal funding for SCI research.

PVA was proud to support and participate in the event. We attended briefings and helped prepare advocates for their meetings on the Hill—work that is critical as we push for continued investment in SCI research.

NEWS OF NOTE

Yes, You Can Version Five Goes Live

For the past four decades, *Yes, You Can!* has been an invaluable resource for newly injured and/or diagnosed veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D). PVA has long partnered with the VA to make sure this resource is available across the VA SCI/D system of care. After years of updates and review, the fifth version is live on [PVA's website](#).

Workforce Pell Regulations Posted on the Federal Register

In December and January, PVA staff participated in a negotiated rulemaking with the Department of Education to establish the regulatory text for an expansion of the Pell Grant Program to include workforce programs. An eligible workforce program is intended to be a "high-quality, performance-based, short-term program" that supports America's workforce needs. The language proposed by negotiators is now available on the Federal Register where it will be up for public comments. The proposed regulation is available [here](#).

WEBINARS AND COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

FINAL REMINDER—Webinar: Accessibility of Federal Facilities—An Overview of the ABA

Join us on March 19 at 2:00 p.m. ET as we explore accessibility under the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA). Travis Saner, Accessibility Specialist, U.S. Access Board will discuss the essentials of federal facility accessibility under the ABA, from entrances and signage to restrooms and assembly areas.

To register, please click [here](#).

Veterans' Committee Activities

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Paralyzed Veterans of America

Great Plains Chapter

ADAPTIVE FITNESS



Workout with

PAT REYNOLDS

Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist

COST: \$25 PER MONTH

*FREE FOR PVA MEMBERS

- ✓ Increase Endurance
- ✓ Build Muscle
- ✓ Improve Independence
- ✓ Enhance Overall Fitness

 **GREAT PLAINS PVA**

7612 Maple St.
Omaha, NE 68134

FOLLOW US ON



Adaptive Fitness Videos

More Information:
www.greatplainspva.org



Make an Appointment



REYNOLDS@GREATPLAINSPVA.ORG



Paralyzed Veterans of America

Great Plains Chapter



Follow us on Social Media!

@greatplainspva



Great Plains PVA, 7612 Maple Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68134-6502

www.greatplainspva.org

402-398-1422



Paralyzed Veterans of America Great Plains Chapter (Great Plains PVA) is a non-profit organization that has dedicated 55 years to helping veterans with spinal cord injuries, as well as other individuals living with disabilities across Nebraska, Western-Iowa, and Kansas. Great Plains PVA is dedicated to improving quality of life by providing education, promoting equal opportunities, encouraging independence, and enhancing lifetime health and fitness. PVA is at the forefront helping and advocating for the rights and benefits of veterans and all people living with disabilities.