

MINNESOTA PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

Northern *highlights*

October 2010



*September fishing anglers and crew on Lake Mille Lacs
story inside*

Continuing to Serve

Minnesota Paralyzed
Veterans of America
One Veterans Drive
SCI-238
Minneapolis, MN 55417

Monday - Thursday:

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Friday:

8:00 AM - 1:30 PM

Phone: 612-467-2263

Toll Free: 1-800-663-6782

Fax: 612-726-9472

Email: mnpva@qwestoffice.net

Executive Director

Richard F. Jost

Phone: 612-467-1651

Email: rfjostmnpva@qwestoffice.net

Officers

President Thomas R. Fjerstad, PRP

Vice-President Russ Osborne

Secretary Eric Webster

Treasurer John Christensen

Past President Charlie Wittwer

Board of Directors

Leo Dondlinger – Todd Kemery

Tom Fjerstad – Dave Langsdale

Bill Frisby – Dave Hallis

Ken Klein

National Director

Thomas R. Fjerstad, PRP

National Service Offices

Jason Stephenson – 612-629-7022

Senior Benefits Advocate SCI-141

Jim Arndt – 612-629-7021

Vocational Rehab. Program SCI-139

One Veterans Drive

Minneapolis, MN 55417

Tami Anderson – NSO III

Federal Building Room 194B

St. Paul, MN 55111

612-970-5668

1-800-795-3609

FTS 612-970-5668

Northern Highlights Staff

Editor Richard F. Jost

Circulation Dianna Way

Northern Highlights

Advertising Rates

Please call the office for rates.

612-467-2263

or

1-800-663-6782

The Minnesota Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America is a non-profit organization. Our funding is primarily received from donations. The Paralyzed Veterans of America is the name of our parent organization, and is chartered by the Congress of the United States of America. All members of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, have sustained a spinal injury or disease. If you have any questions, or you would like to make a donation to our organization, please write to the address or call the numbers listed on this page

Any and all articles that appear in this newsletter, is the opinion of the author of said article, and not necessarily those of its members, Board of Directors, or that of this organization. Any advertising that appears in this newsletter, is paid for by the business or organization that placed the advertisement. The Minnesota Paralyzed Veterans of America, by printing said advertisements, does not endorse and shall not be held liable for any claims of any kind against said business or organization.

The Minnesota Paralyzed Veterans of America's newsletter will be published 6 times per year. The editor and/or assistant may edit all articles for content, grammar, clarity and punctuation.

— Richard F. Jost, Editor.

Happy
Halloween

BOO!



Table of Contents

Volume 17, Issue 1 Northern Highlights

President's Report 3

2010 Fishing Season 3

SCI Staff Corner 4

Executive Director's Report 5

5K Pictures 5

5K Pictures 6

National Service Officer's Report 7

October & November Birthday's 7

November Calendar and Schedule 8

Member Application 9,10

Dj's *Logic* 11

Inspirational Thoughts 11

Membership Report 11

Welcome New Members 11

2010 Election Results 11

I would like to start this first newsletter report as president by sincerely thanking everyone for their support and by providing you with a very brief history of my involvement in PVA. I served as the Minnesota Chapters first President from 1992 to 1996 and National Director from 1992 until 2000. In July of 2000 I was elected as PVA National Vice President and served in that position for four years. I was then elected as National Sr. Vice President where I served for two more years. I returned to the Minnesota chapter in 2006 and have served as a member of the Board of Directors, as National Director and as our Government Relations Director. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to once again serve in this capacity. I would like to thank outgoing President Charlie Wittwer for his years of service to the chapter. I know as immediate past president we can count on his continued participation in the chapter's governance. When I served as president the first time around the chapter did not have an Executive Director and I'm looking forward to working with Mr. Jost in the coming year.

I was in Providence, RI August 23rd through the 28th attending PVA's 64th Annual Convention. The business to come before the body during the week was dealt with in a professional manner and where everything doesn't always go the way you'd like all in all it was a very productive meeting. Two significant pieces of business were the adoption of equal voting by weight in meetings of the board of directors and the elimination of one National Vice President Position. The "one chapter one vote" concept has come before the body numerous times in recent years and has always received the support of 2/3 of the actual voting directors but had failed to receive 2/3 of the weighted vote. PVA had equal voting at its first meeting in Chicago in 1947 and implemented a weighted voting system in 1948. I believe the board is now in a better position and hope this change will contribute to a heightened understanding of purpose. The elections brought us a new President in Mr. Bill Lawson and a new Sr. Vice President in Mr. Al Kovak. With only three vice president positions to be filled we have John Jackson, Laura Ellington, and Mr. Ken Weas. Frank Rigo returns as Secretary as well as Craig Enenbach as Treasurer. Congratulations to all! I would like to thank New England Chapter President and National Director Craig Cascella and Vice President Debra Freed for all they and their chapter did in hosting an outstanding convention. I hope we have the opportunity to return to Providence sometime in the near future.

If you have any questions or an issue you would like to discuss, please feel free to give me call.

Tom

2010 Fishing Season - Dianna Way

The Minnesota Paralyzed Veterans of America Chapter's 2010 fishing season ended on Wednesday September 8th. It was a great season for the members and their guests. Some of the members caught some really nice sized fish during the season but some of the fish caught ended up being thrown them back into the water because of the fishing guidelines set by the State of Minnesota.

I went on the last fishing trip in September along with 17 members and guests plus Captain Ron and his helper. Since I did not have a fishing license, I did the next best thing; I started chatting with everyone on board. When talking with Captain Ron, I discovered how much he enjoys the fishing trips and even had some suggestions for next season if the MNPVA Chapter decides to host the fishing trips. The crew took really good care of the anglers fishing needs to make sure they had bait on their hooks and when someone did hook a fish they were right there to help them reel it in and ready with their nets to net it into the boat. When ever any one hooked a fish everyone got excited and we all hoped it would be a keeper.

Upon leaving the dock to head out to the open water I made my rounds on the boat to chat with all the members and their guests and quickly realized how much they all enjoyed fishing and really appreciated the Minnesota Chapter for hosting the fishing trips to Mille Lacs every summer. As soon as we anchored in at the first location Captain Ron and his helper started putting bait on hooks for the anglers as they were all eager to start fishing. One of the members has gone on so many fishing trips that he and Captain Ron have come to know each other very well and it was fun to listen to their friendly sparring back and forth in their usual manner. After about an hour, we pulled up anchor to look for another spot in hopes of hooking that big fish.

Upon anchoring in the second location, the crew once again made their rounds to make sure everyone had bait on their hooks and then they started the grill to cook the brats and hamburgers. We feasted on brats, hamburgers, potato chips and Oreo cookies. I took the Oreo cookies around to everyone to eat while the brats and burgers were cooking and passed out water and soda to all that wanted something.

In closing, I would like to thank Ric Jost for giving me the opportunity to go on the fishing trip and experience what was a fun day. Even though none of the fish caught that day were keepers to cook up in the frying pan for a tasty feast, everyone enjoyed the outing for the day. Fishing for one day was fun but I will never be a true angler any time soon.

To the anglers, you have all winter to think or dream of ways to hook that perfect fish next season.

Dr. King – SCI Psychologist

The severity of pain can only be accessed through a person's self-report. That means there is no measuring device like a thermometer or blood pressure cuff or even a blood test that can establish a specific level of pain. The experience of pain varies from person- to-person and from day-to-day, even within people who have very similar medical conditions. The emotional aspects of pain are often overlooked by the general public. Pain affects one's mood, and vice versa, one's mood, including feeling stressed out, worried or down, can make the experience of pain much worse. The fact that pain is influenced by emotions does not mean that the pain is "all in your head". Stress and other emotions affect our physical functioning on many levels including our likelihood of catching a cold, our ability to heal a cut, as well as the intensity of pain. Dealing with the emotional aspects of pain is one more strategy in the pain management toolbox.

The gold standard for chronic pain treatment is the multidisciplinary approach which may include education about the nature of pain, physical and occupational therapy, medications, physical interventions such as electrical stimulation or surgeries, and as well as counseling to address the emotional parts of pain. Every treatment approach has pros and cons. Many medications are very effective initially, but can lose their effectiveness over time as the body develops tolerance to the medication. Unfortunately, when a medication dosage is increased due to the development of tolerance, unwanted side effects can increase as well. Antidepressant medication can often be helpful at reducing pain even when a person is not reporting symptoms of depression. Physical therapy and occupational therapy offer a wide variety of pain management strategies including strengthening, stretching, as well as strategic ways of moving. The management of pain always begins by reporting the pain to your medical provider. While this may seem like an obvious suggestion, they think nothing can be done about it, while others may not report pain because they do not want to appear to be complaining or weak. If pain is not reported, important medical problems can be missed or opportunities for new treatment approaches can be overlooked.

Various psychological approaches have been demonstrated to improve the management of pain both independently and in conjunction with other approaches. Stress management, relaxation, meditation, and distraction are all psychological techniques which can help manage the experience of pain. A new approach to pain, ACT for "Acceptance and Commitment Therapy", can be helpful to those people who want an approach to help them get on with their lives, despite having ongoing pain. This approach is much more sophisticated than just telling people to "snap out of it" or "tough it out". It is about focusing on the life values that are most important to each person, while managing the psychological aspects of pain that can make physical pain more intense. Sometimes the negative emotions and thoughts that often go with chronic pain get in the way of living one's life. For example, some people wait to do special activities, trips, hobbies, until they "get rid of the pain". Acceptance and Commitment Therapy helps people with chronic pain sort out which strategies help them effectively deal with the physical aspects of pain and which strategies have just been getting in the way of life, based on each individual's unique experiences. One of the pros of psychological approaches to pain management is that there are very few, if any, negative side effects. The SCI/D Center is currently accepting patients with chronic pain who already receive their care at the SCI/D Center for a new ACT group. The group will begin with a single session with the psychologist and social worker facilitating the group, followed by 7 weekly group sessions (Group meetings will be two hours). For more information about pain management in SCI and MS, see the websites below, talk to your medical provider, or contact Christie King, at the SCI/D Center in the Minneapolis VA HCS for additional information about psychological approaches, including the upcoming Acceptance and Commitment Therapy group for chronic pain.

For more information, see these resources:

<http://www.spinalcord.uab.edu>

<http://www.nationalmssociety.org>

Dahl, J. & Lundgren, T. (2006). *Living beyond your pain: Using acceptance and commitment therapy to ease your chronic pain*. New Harbinger Publications, Inc., Oakland, CA.

Executive Directors Report - Ric Jost

The Minneapolis VA Healthcare Systems 5K Walk Run Roll event was a huge success. There were over 150 participants. A special thanks to Leo Dondlinger, Eric Webster, Jason Stephenson, Julie Allen, John Christensen and family, Dianna Way and Penni from Allegra Print & Imaging of Edina for participating in the event. We also had patients from the SCI Unit and Poly Trauma Unit thanks to all the Recreational Staff at the Minneapolis VA Healthcare Systems. We are already planning when to host the event next year. *Photo's are courtesy of April Eilers (Minneapolis VA Healthcare Systems) and Penni St. Hilaire (Allegra Print & Imaging, Edina)*

There were 102 total guests at the annual banquet on Saturday October 3, 2010. I wish to thank everyone who came out to attend the event. A complete story on this with photos will be in the next newsletter.

The Minnesota Paralyzed Veterans of America Chapter, Paralyzed Veterans of America and Viking Cue Manufacturing, Inc. hosted a pool tournament this Saturday October 9th and Sunday October 10th at the Billiards Street Café/Two Stooges Sports Bar & Grill. There were over 31 pool players eager to win the big prize. Bill Frisby did an excellent job in organizing the event plus he was the first place winner. Sam's Club was a big supporter for this event and we truly are grateful for their support; thank you Sam's Club!!

The office is busy preparing for the annual audit to be done soon.





ACCELERATED BENEFITS -- 38 CFR 9.14

What is an Accelerated Benefit? Per 38 CFR 9.14 it is a payment of a portion of a service member or veterans' Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance or Veterans' Group Life Insurance that you can receive before you die.

To be eligible for the accelerated benefit; you need a valid written medical prognosis from a physician that you have 9 months or less to live, and otherwise comply with 38 CFR 9.14. The service member or veteran is the only person who can apply for this benefit. No one can apply on your behalf.

The maximum that you can request of the Accelerated Benefit is up to 50% of the face value of your insurance coverage minus the interest reduction. The request must be in \$5,000 increments. The interest reduction is determined by the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance actuarially and it is the amount that would be lost due to the early withdrawal of the benefit. The Accelerated Benefit is paid to you in one lump sum.

To apply for this benefit, you can obtain an application form, "Claim for Accelerated Benefits" by writing the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, 290 W. Mt. Pleasant Avenue, Livingston, NJ 07039; or by calling 1-800-219-1473; or by downloading the form from the internet at www.insurance.va.gov.

A portion of the application is completed by you, the service member or veteran; another portion by the physician and if you are on active duty, your branch of service will also be required to complete a portion of the form.

The Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance will review your application and determine whether you meet the requirements or not. If the application does not meet the requirements, they will contact you and request that you or your physician complete the missing information.

If you change your mind about receiving the Accelerated Benefit or want to change the amount you receive; you can do so as long as you have not cashed the check. You would need to notify the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance in writing and return the check. To change the amount that you would like to receive, you would need to complete another application. If you die before cashing or depositing the payment; the payment would need to be returned to the Office of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

If you have any questions, please give Tami J. Anderson, National Service Officer a call at 612-970-5668 or Jason Stephenson, Senior Benefits Advocate at 612-629-7022.

October Birthdays

October 2
Monique A. Skewes

October 3
James R. Graham
Kenneth L. Janusz

October 4
Dave J. Langsdale

October 6
Steven J. Kotten
Robert J. Krone
Michael L. Malm

October 7
John S. Novicki

October 10
Lloyd R. Jones
Thomas B. Michel

October 13
Rex Bowman
Kevin J. Miller
David J. Sullivan-
Nightingale

October 14
Dennis R. Nelson

October 15
Gary R. Lehmeier
Jerry L. Mohart
Lawrence A. Mullaly

October 16
Chris C. Johnson

October 17
John H. Hiller

October 18
Harry Carlson

October 19
Larry J. Molenaar

October 23
Robin A. Bodhaine

October 24
Eric S. Poehler

October 25
Clark L. Forte

October 27
Richard A. Smith

October 28
Daniel E. Couture
Hannah L. Johnston
Orville John Schlagbeck

October 29
William K. Murray

October 30
Gerald W. Myers

October 31
Jeffrey J. Larson

November Birthdays

November 1
Woodrow W. Garrett
Dan Kirkpatrick

November 2
Bruce E. Hochstetler

November 4
Eugene A. Gruber

November 5
Brian H. Walstad

November 6
Dwight E. Boomgaarden
Lawrence M. Slattum

November 7
Robert A. Maksymchuk

November 10
James E. Karels
Dean Nesley

November 11
Michelle Frazier

November 13
Danny R. Martin
James A. Salisbury

November 14
Steven J. Ramirez

November 15
John E. Conner

November 16
Orie C. Beltz
Joseph E. Harbinson

November 19
Wade N. Reckinger

November 23
Allen G. Kingsley
Peter J. Riggs

November 24
Patrick J. Erickson

November 25
Bonnie J. Haugen

November 26
Leo Dondlinger

November 28
Avrom I. Robinow

November 29
Bruce M. Christi

November 30
Norma J. Blankenship



PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

An individual is eligible for membership by meeting the following criteria: (1) is a citizen of the United States; (2) was regularly enlisted, inducted, or commissioned, and was accepted for or on active duty, in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard of the United States or an ally of the United States; (3A) was separated from the service in the Armed Forces under conditions other than dishonorable; or (3B) is on active duty or must continue to serve after the cessation of hostilities; and (4) has suffered a spinal cord injury or disease (such as MS, ALS), whether or not service connected in origin. Membership is free. Complete and mail the application to: PVA Membership Department, 801 18th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006 or to the chapter of choice. Providing the requested information is entirely voluntary but required for membership with PVA.

800-424-8200 • www.pva.org

Chapter Name: Minnesota PVA Chapter

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____ Last Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ / _____ / _____ Last 4 Digits of Social Security Number: _____
month date year

Male Female

Are you a United States citizen? Yes No

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Other Phone: _____

Email: _____

VETERAN STATUS INFORMATION

DATE(S) OF MILITARY SERVICE		TYPE OF SEPARATION Discharge (D) or Retirement (R)	BRANCH OF SERVICE				
Start Date <small>month/date/year</small>	End Date <small>month/date/year</small>		DD214 required (attach a <u>copy</u> to application)				
		<input type="checkbox"/> D or <input type="checkbox"/> R	<input type="checkbox"/> Still on Active Duty (DD214 Not Required)				
		<input type="checkbox"/> D or <input type="checkbox"/> R	<input type="checkbox"/> Army	<input type="checkbox"/> Air Force	<input type="checkbox"/> Navy	<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Corps	<input type="checkbox"/> Coast Guard
		<input type="checkbox"/> D or <input type="checkbox"/> R	<input type="checkbox"/> Army	<input type="checkbox"/> Air Force	<input type="checkbox"/> Navy	<input type="checkbox"/> Marine Corps	<input type="checkbox"/> Coast Guard

Have you ever been discharged under conditions that are less than honorable? Yes No

Is your spinal cord injury or spinal cord disease service connected? Yes No

DISABILITY CLASSIFICATION

SPINAL CORD INJURY

(Complete ONLY if you have a traumatic spinal cord injury)

Date of Injury: _____ / _____ / _____

Injury Level: C1-C08 Cervical T01-T12 Thoracic
 L01-L05 Lumbar S01-S05 Sacral

Cause of SCI:

- Vehicular (auto, motorcycle, aircraft, bicycle, etc.)
- Violence (gunshot, stabbing, explosion, etc.)
- Pedestrian (hit by car, etc.)
- Sport or recreation (swimming, diving, etc.)
- Flying or falling object
- Medical-surgical complications
- Other traumatic injury _____
- Unknown

SPINAL CORD DISEASE

(Complete ONLY if you have non-traumatic spinal cord disease)

Date of diagnosis/onset of condition:

_____ / _____ / _____

Specific disease:

- Multiple Sclerosis
- Poliomyelitis
- Amyotrophic diseases (lateral sclerosis, transverse myelitis)
- Syringomyelia
- Other (specify) _____

LEVEL OF FUNCTION

Indicate your level of function:

- Paraplegia Tetraplegia (Quad) Hemiplegia No paralysis at this time

GENERAL INFORMATION (Optional, not required)

Please check the appropriate box or fill in the blank of each of the categories that best describes your present status. This important information enables the PVA to compile data for the effective implementation and support of our programs.

EDUCATION (highest level)

- Less than high school graduate
 High school graduate/GED
 Some college or trade school
 Associate's degree
 Bachelor's degree
 Attended graduate school
 Graduate degree
 Other _____

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS

- Employed full time
 Employed part time
 Self-employed
 Unemployed
 Unemployed due to disability
 Retired
 Other _____

MARITAL STATUS

- Divorced
 Married
 Never Married
 Separated
 Widowed

RACE/ETHNICITY

- Asian or Pacific Islander
 Black, not Hispanic/Latino origin
 Hispanic/Latino
 Native American or Alaskan Native
 White, not Hispanic/Latino origin
 Other _____

TYPE OF RESIDENCE

- Apartment
 Assisted living facility
 Single-family home/condominium
 State/veterans retirement home
 Nursing home
 VA hospital
 VA nursing home
 Other _____

SOURCE(S) OF INCOME

(check all that apply)

- Employment
 Gifts/Other
 Private pension
 Social Security
 VA compensation
 VA pension
 Worker's compensation

The Veterans Benefits Department advocates for quality health care for our members and can assist you to obtain the appropriate benefits available as a result of your military service. Is PVA presently your benefits representative? Yes No

If yes, I have no objection and hereby permit PVA Service Officers to provide information to the PVA National Membership Department that pertains to my qualifications for membership.

I declare that I have read and meet the qualifications. I understand that my membership could be revoked if any information provided is inaccurate.

Applicant's Signature

8/26/10

Date

Office Use Only

Date Received: _____

Member ID#: _____

Processed Date: _____

Are those darned hands (or lack thereof) just getting in the way?
The following was written by a MNPVA member and was previously published online in a “How I Speak Dragon” contest with Voice Software Maker “NUANCE”{nuan}.

Hands-free & Les'abled

First, the intro... I'm a married, father of 4, grandfather of 7 (going on 8), 62-year-old disability-retired postmaster who, in spite of 40 years of cp MS (now a full quadriplegic) and a head-on car accident several years ago, am able to do most anything, even sometimes faster, than the able-bodied computer user; and doing so HANDS-FREE.

Like many Dragon NaturallySpeaking users, I started because of limited use of the hands; when the out-of-box- tools of Dragon would have been good enough. But, and as luck would have it, as the use of my hands methodically waned, I was inspired to learn to use it hands-free by my friend Terry, who too was using Dragon; but much too often with the help of a mouthstick! Well, seeing that in my future was the tipping-point, and by choice, the last time I chose to use the keyboard or mouse.

It was slow going for a while, but with the help of the local Dragon reseller <http://thespeechgurus.com/> here in Minneapolis, and their Dragon aficionado Jon jon@TheSpeechGurus.com I was soon up and running hands-free, and now sometimes question why anyone would choose to use their hands on the keyboard anymore!

We, as in Dragon & I, easily handle the Internet using IE & Firefox, send & receive e-mail, usually in Mozilla's Thunderbird and saving the attached pictures of the grandkids to HP & Photoshop. We have the typical “how did I ever have time to work” calendar (Calendar Creator Plus) and an older version of an address book.*Notice the no mention of Outlook?* We download music and read books from iTunes, more accurately track the online checking, banking and credit cards with Quicken , and do my own taxes with TurboTax. We're building the family tree with the help of Ancestry.com & Family Tree Maker, and often and more importantly, use Skype & Web Cam to keep in touch with the kids & grandkids around the country. Oh, and I play checkers with the 7-year-old grandson on the other side of the country; and he sometimes even lets me win.

As for Microsoft's Outlook et al., though they are widely used by many people, I prefer Mozilla's Thunderbird & Firefox applications, in part because of their highly rated security and excellent support, and in part because they're just plain nice to work with.

That's where the Command Browser (my favorite part) comes in. This browser enables one to use, duplicate, modify and create new commands that are capable of doing everything from substituting an “Okay” for the “press enter”, “new line” or most anything qualifying as a “next”, to things like creating a new multitasking command that combines a dozen or more steps into 1; and doing so for all applications, or just that one special one that isn't cooperating; yet. But be careful with the Command Browser; you might get hooked and not want to do anything else with your time (I have > 5000 macros :-).

Btw, the Les'abled stands for less abled vs. disabled, and is pronounced less abulled.

David J Langsdale langs006@umn.edu
BOD Member MNPVA mnpva@qwestoffice.net

Inspirational Thoughts

Leo Dondlinger

Psalm 119:89-90

Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm
in the heavens.

Your faithfulness continues through all generations;
you established the earth, and it endures.

Membership Report

Dave Hallis

Current Membership is at 345

Service Connected = 152

Non Service Connected = 193

Welcome New Member

Robert Prince

2010 Election Results

OFFICERS

President – Thomas R. Fjerstad, PRP

Vice-President – Russ Osborne

Secretary – Eric Webster

Treasurer – John Christensen

Past President – Charlie Wittwer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Leo Dondlinger • Tom Fjerstad

Bill Frisby • Dave Hallis

Todd Kemery • Ken Klein

Dave Langsdale

Congratulations to all!!



MINNESOTA PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

1 Veterans Dr. SC1-238
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55417

Membership Change of Address Form

First Name: _____ MI: _____

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____ E-mail: _____

Birth Date: ____ / ____ / ____ Membership ID Number _____