



Paralyzed Veterans of America

New England Chapter

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

(Fiscal Year 10/01-09/30)



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Letter from the President

Dear Chapter Members, Friends, and Supporters:

It is with pleasure I present to you this Annual Report, which covers many highlights and activities of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, New England Chapter (NEPVA) during fiscal year 2015-2016. For the first time in several years, I am proud to announce that the Chapter ended fiscal year 2016 in the black. All of our programs were maintained at their budgeted levels for the fiscal year. Our membership and name recognition continues to grow throughout the six New England states.



Once again, all of our mandated programs have been very active and have served our membership throughout New England. We had members participate in New England Winter Sports Clinic, New England Summer Sports Clinic, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, The Golden Age Games, National Disabled Veterans Sports Clinic (CO), Sailing, Surfing, Softball, fishing, basketball, bowling, and other various activities, as well. It is so nice to have such an active Chapter and members who make the most of their lives.

Our Chapter Hospital Liaison Program continues to allow us to work closely with the National Service Offices (NSO), SCI Clinics and Primary Care Centers throughout the region. This close working relationship has enabled us to connect with both VA staff, and our members, and assist them with any issues or concerns they may have.

I believe it is very important to note that our Chapter is not affiliated with the government or Veterans Administration (VA), as we do not receive any financial assistance from the VA. We have been extremely pleased with the generosity of so many charitable donors, without whom, we would not be able to offer our many different and important programs. We continue to receive numerous direct donations, online donations, as well as proceeds from our enrollment in a vehicle donation program. We have also seen an increase in various bequests from individuals who in some way, shape, or form, the Chapter has assisted and made a difference in their lives.

Many of you know that I spent most of 2016 in the hospital. However, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Michael Guilbault Chapter Vice President for covering in my absence, the other Chapter Officers, Executive Board members, and our staff, Administrative Assistant Judy Goldstein, Bookkeeper Jeri Farinella, and Executive Director Debra Freed for their cooperation and hard work.

Also, although not falling within this fiscal year, I think it important to note, that we relocated our Chapter office in November from Walpole, MA to West Roxbury, MA. This new location provides a significant cost saving to the Chapter in reduced lease and operating expenses, but more importantly, it is within "walking" distance of the West Roxbury VAMC, providing quick and easy access for our Members, VA staff and Chapter visitors. I'd like to commend Board Member Michael Negrete for researching, coordinating and overseeing all the administrative, technical, and material logistics necessary to accomplish this move in such a seamless manner.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Finally, it has been a privilege to serve the Chapter as your President. I hope that you will continue to support the other Officers, Board, Staff and Volunteers in making the coming year a success. As always, if you have any questions about this report or about the Chapter in general, please call or stop by our office, or visit our web site.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne Ross". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Wayne Ross
President
Paralyzed Veterans of America
New England Chapter

LEADERSHIP, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Leadership, Staff and Volunteers

NEPVA OFFICERS

President	Wayne Ross
Vice President	Mike Guilbault
Secretary	Peter Moore
Treasurer	Charles Schena
National Director	Neal Williams
ADA Coordinator	Neal Williams

EXECUTIVE BOARD

John Brako	Walter Farrington
Bruce Bowen	Michael Negrete
Mark Sanders	Jim Wallack

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Bass Trail Liaison	Jim Wallack
Community Outreach	Mile Guilbault
Cord Word Editor	Judy Goldstein, Michael Negrete
Development Director	Wayne Ross
Membership Officer	Judy Goldstein, Mike Guilbault
MS Liaison	John Brako
Peer Mentor Rep.	Mike Guilbault
Sports Director	Mike Guilbault
Volunteer Coordinator	Judy Goldstein, Debra Freed
Women's Veteran Coord.	Debra Freed

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Finance	Charles Schena
Media & Communications	Michael Negrete
Scholarship	Wayne Ross

LEADERSHIP, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

HOSPITAL LIAISONS

Brockton VAMC, MA	Mike Guilbault
West Roxbury VAMC, MA	Wayne Ross
Northampton VAMC, MA	Tim Kelly
Providence VAMC, RI	Mike Guilbault
Manchester VAMC, NH	Walter Farrington
West Haven VAMC, CT	Peter Falcione
Whiter River Jct. VAMC, VT	Neal Williams
Togus VAMC, ME	Neal Williams

STAFF

Executive Director	Debra Freed
Administrative Asst.	Judy Goldstein
Bookkeeper	Jeri Farinella

ADMINISTRATION

Administration

The Chapter office was relocated in November from 1600 Providence Hwy, Walpole, MA to Suite 301, 1208 VFW Parkway, West Roxbury, MA 02132 and is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This new location provides the Chapter, it's Members and local VAMCs easier and closer access to one another. Additionally, this new locations provided a significant costs saving to the Chapter in reduced lease and operating expenses, as well as, unrealized expenses and time saved by reducing the commutes back-and-forth to the local VAMCs. For 2016, the Chapter was staffed by a full-time administrative assistant, a full-time bookkeeper, and a full-time Executive Director/Government Relations Director. As a result of PVA's requirement to adjust the Chapter's budget, the Board choose to consolidate the Administrative Assistant and Bookkeeper positions into one.

Detailed information about the Chapter's programs and activities can be found on the Chapter's website at www.nepva.org. The Chapter's general information e-mail address is info@nepva.org.

MEETINGS

The Membership, Annual, and Executive Board Meetings are all held in the Executive Board Meeting Room at the Chapter Office. The Executive Board Meeting convenes at 10:30 a.m. on the first Wednesday of each month, and is followed by a General Membership Meeting at 1:00 p.m. Members are always welcome to attend and participate in the Chapter's monthly meetings.

MEMBERSHIP

As of September 30, 2016, the Chapter's total membership is 910, and consists of 458 service-connected and 452 non-service connected Veterans. There are also 4 honorary and 5 affiliate members.

CHAPTER PUBLICATION

The Chapter's newsletter, the *Cord Word*, is published twelve times a year as a vehicle to provide information about Chapter activities and issues of importance to our members. Articles appearing in the *Cord Word* contain reports from program directors, Chapter officers, legislative news (national and local) and other items of interest to our members.

The *Cord Word* is distributed to our members, affiliate members, patients on the SCI Units at the Brockton and West Roxbury VAMC, as well as the 3 SCI clinics and 3 primary care clinics in our spoke system, volunteers, VAMC officials, PVA National officers and directors, all Congress members representing New England, and all Chapters of PVA for a total circulation of approximately 1200. The Chapter continues to offer the *Cord Word* via email to many individuals and PVA Chapters. In 2017, the *Cord Word* will go completely digital and be available to members via email and on our website.

ADMINISTRATION

SERVICE OFFICERS AND OFFICES

The Chapter is very proud of the outstanding relationship it has with the PVA National Service Offices based in New England located at the West Roxbury and Brockton Massachusetts VA Medical Centers, and at the Togus, VA Medical Center in Maine. The job of the PVA National Service Officers (NSO) is to see to it that each honorably discharged member and veteran are receiving all the benefits they earned and that Congress has bestowed on them. Boston secured a total of \$7.9 Million in awards for veterans in Calendar year 2016. Togus secured a total of \$6.2 Million in awards for the same calendar year. This is a collective effort of Joseph Badzmierowski, Heather Cherniack, John Stansbury, Scott Eggleston, Ann Marie Wallace, and Violet Bates

We are very fortunate to have these dedicated and knowledgeable group of individuals available to assist paralyzed veterans and others in the New England area. Their offices and contact information are:

Boston, MA Office: Joseph Badzmierowski, Eastern Region Director, Veterans Benefits Department
Ann Marie Wallace, Senior Secretary

Boston address: Paralyzed Veterans of America, Boston VA Regional Office, Government Center, JFK Federal Building - Room 1575 C, Boston, MA 02203. The phone numbers are: (617) 303-1395 or 1-800-795-3607.

West Roxbury and Brockton VAMCs, MA: Heather Cherniack, Veterans Health & Benefits Specialist III, East-North Area Manager. Covering Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut.

West Roxbury address: Paralyzed Veterans of America, VA Medical Center, 1400 VFW Parkway, Rm AG 60, West Roxbury, MA 02132. The phone number is: (857) 203-6091.

Brockton address: PVA National Service Office, VA Medical Center, Building 3, Room 207, 940 Belmont St., Brockton, MA 02301. The phone number is (774) 826-2219.

Togus VAMC, ME: John Stansbury, Senior National Service Officer
Violet Bates-Secretary. Covering Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Maine address: PVA National Service Office, Togus, VARO, 1 VA Center, Bldg. 248, Room 112, Augusta, ME 04330. The phone numbers for the Maine office are: (207) 621-7394 or 1-866-795-1911.

Service office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Service Officers visit the Brockton/West Roxbury VAMC's on a regular basis and visit the other New England VAMC's periodically. It is through these visits and referrals from the Chapter that our members receive assistance in applying for benefits to which they are entitled.

SCHOLARSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL ENRICHMENT

Scholarship and Professional Enrichment

The Scholarship and Professional Enrichment Program provides funding for higher education in nursing through Nurse's Scholarships up to \$500 per year per individual (while funds last). Scholarships are also available for members and children of Chapter members (while funds last). In addition, through the Professional Enrichment Program, grants are awarded to SCI staff members, who work in VA Medical Centers, for furthering their education (while funds last).

In 2016, the Chapter assisted Kelly Skinner and Teresa Czepiel with nearly \$2000 in scholarship grants. We were also proud to assist Melissa Connolly and Amy Hart Rodriguez with nearly \$1500 in scholarship grants.

The Chapter was also pleased to award Chapter Board Member Jim Wallack's son Jake Wallack \$1,000 towards his tuition and expenses to attend Lyndon State College - majoring in Mountain Recreation Management-Adventure Leadership.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Government Relations

ADVOCACY

Advocacy can mean active support for an idea or cause. The Chapter is a prominent advocate for its members and the disabled community, meeting and working with our Congressional Legislators, in New England and in Washington, D.C. PVA and the Chapter remain committed to providing assistance in meeting the needs of our members, veterans, and the disabled community.

From February 29-March 3, Executive Director Debra Freed, Board Member Michael Negrete and his wife Terry Negrete (PVA/NEPVA Volunteer), Chapter member Dan Shaul from Brockton VAMC and his Aide Amanda Smith attended PVA's Government Relations Department annual Advocacy and Legislation Seminar in Washington, D.C. Each year, PVA's Government Relations staff hosts a training seminar to educate chapter representatives on PVA's current policy and legislative priorities at the start of each Congressional session. During the seminar, representatives from PVA chapters received presentations from Government Relations staff, as well as other PVA departments, Congressional staff, and Administration officials.



Pictured: Dan Shaul, Rep. Michael Capuano (D-MA), Michael Negrete, Terry Negrete, Amanda Smith

The seminar included two days of briefings and discussions about the wide range of issues that the Advocacy and Legislation Programs are focusing on this year, and two days of grassroots advocacy activities on Capitol Hill in meetings with members of Congress and their staffs. The Advocacy staff focused heavily on air travel and the Air Carrier Access Act, as well as Complex Rehabilitation Technology and voting. The Legislation staff focused on protection of specialized services and the need for reinstatement of the



Pictured: NEPVA Board Member Michael Negrete and PVA President Al Kovach

mandated capacity report, as well as proactive services, expansion of the VA Caregiver Program, and potential reform of the delivery of veterans' health care. Participants also received presentations from Federal agency staff as well as Congressional staff. One of the major highlights of the week was the presentation of Fred Downs, PVA Prosthetics Consultant, on his military service in Vietnam and his subsequent 38 years of service in the VA's Prosthetics Service.

The week concluded with the annual testimony of President Al Kovach before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs. President Kovach stressed the ongoing concerns PVA has with the VA budget and capacity management and its potential impact on the

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



Pictured: Michael Negrete, Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) , Terry Negrete, Dan Shaul and Debra Freed

Below are a few significant ones focused on this past year.

Senate VA Committee Considers Choice Program Legislation

On March 15, 2016, the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs conducted a legislative hearing to examine four bills that could lead to permanent changes to the delivery of health care from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), as well as improve claims processing at the appeals level. The Committee considered S. 2633, the "Improving Veterans Access to Care in the Community Act," and S. 2646, the "Veterans Choice Improvement Act of 2015," as well as S. 2473, the "Express Appeals Act of 2016" and a draft bill that would make revisions to personnel policy for the Senior Executive Service at VA. For details of PVA's comments and submissions please visit their website at www.pva.org.

Air Carrier Access Act Legislative Work Advancing

National Advocacy staff are currently negotiating with key offices in the Senate to advance legislation to amend the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA). Meanwhile, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization includes several provisions that PVA and our partners in the disability community are advocating for. The draft FAA Reauthorization does not currently include our calls for a private right of action as this is the toughest issue to address from a political perspective. While PVA does not view this as the optimal way forward, they are working with staff to amend the language as much as possible to help advance the effort. They are also very close to finalizing complete legislative language for a standalone ACAA amendments bill. PVA is reaching out to targeted offices at this time to introduce that bill.

delivery of specialized health-care services in the spinal cord injury centers where our members receive the vast majority of their health care.

This year's seminar proved to be a great success once again. The advocacy efforts of PVA members on the Hill lay the groundwork for the National Advocacy and Legislation programs efforts for the rest of this year.

LEGISLATION

There were numerous legislative issues relating to veterans and the disabled community coming from Congress in 2016.



Pictured: Dan Shaul, Terry Negrete, Michael Negrete, Debra Freed

DEVELOPMENT

Development

For fiscal year 2016, the Chapter contracted with All Pro Productions, based in Massachusetts, to raise funds on behalf of the Chapter. All costs associated with telemarketing campaigns were the responsibilities of the telemarketer and the Chapter receives a percentage of the gross donations. The funds received from telemarketing campaigns provided the revenue necessary to operate, improve, and expand the Chapter's programs to better serve its members and others with disabilities. Starting in fiscal year 2017, due to PVA restrictions, the Chapter is no longer able to fund raise through telemarketing and therefore will no longer be using All Pro Productions as a fund raising resource. However, we want to thank them for their dedication and assistance in supporting the Chapter mission and assisting in raising over \$225,000 in charitable funds for 2016.

In 2016, the Chapter continued its car donation program through Wheels Helping Warriors in partnership with PVA National. We encourage our members, their families and friends, that if they have any type of vehicle that they cannot sell and would like to donate, to please consider the PVA New England Chapter. The funds raised from this program can be designated for a specific program, i.e. Sports & Recreation, Community Outreach, etc.. The car donation program has been very successful and in FY 2016 has raised \$6,420.25 in donations.

Our annual fundraising mailing, in support of Chapter athletes competing in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, raised over \$5000.00. The Chapter also received over \$15,000 in individual donations and bequests mailed directly to NEPVA. Ninety five percent of the individual donations received by the Chapter office go directly to support our programs and services.

Research

The Chapter has a strong commitment in supporting Spinal Cord Injury/ Dysfunction (SCI/D) research. The Chapter is convinced that the road to a cure and restoration of function is through the research laboratories. Many scientists working in the SCI/D research field are convinced that a breakthrough to a cure or restoration of function is closer than ever before. One of the highlights of the Chapter's research efforts is participation as Consumer Reviewers in the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIRP).

Consumer Reviewers evaluate research applications submitted to the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIRP) sponsored by the Department of Defense. Typically a three-day review panel held in Washington, D.C., Consumer Reviewers are full voting members, along with prominent scientists, at meetings to help determine how the \$30 million appropriated by Congress for Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16) will be spent on future spinal cord injury research.

Consumer Reviewers represent the collective views of individuals living with a spinal cord injury (SCI), patients, and family members when they prepare comments on the impact of the research to advance the treatment and management of SCI with strategies to improve the health and well-being of individuals living with SCI.

Consumer Reviewers and scientists have worked together in this unique partnership to evaluate the scientific merit of SCI research applications since 2009. Colonel Wanda L. Salzer, M.D., Director of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs, expressed her appreciation for the perspectives of the consumer advocates in the scientific review sessions. "The Consumer Reviewers on each panel are instrumental in helping the scientists understand the patient's perspective and provide valuable insight into the potential impact of the proposed project. They bring with them a sense of urgency and remind all of the human element involved in medical research."

Scientists applying for funding, propose to conduct innovative SCI research aimed at the treatment of SCI and to improve the consequences. The SCIRP fills important gaps not addressed by other funding agencies by supporting groundbreaking, high-risk, high-gain research while encouraging out-of-the-box thinking.

More information about the Department of Defense SCIRP Research Program is available on their website: <http://cdmrp.army.mil>.

HOSPITAL LIAISON

Hospital Liaison

The Hospital Liaison Program remains the centerpiece of Chapter's activities. Volunteer Chapter Hospital Liaisons (CHL) interact with National Service Officers, patients and staff within the VA Healthcare system throughout the New England region, which includes the Boston Healthcare System (VABHS), West Haven, CT SCI clinic, Manchester NH VAMC primary care clinic, Togus, ME SCI clinic, Northampton VA primary care clinic, White River Jct., VT SCI clinic and Providence Medical Center primary care clinic. It is through this interaction that CHLs assist members, patients, and often, family members with problems or issues that arise during a stay in the medical centers. The CHLs visit the medical centers and clinics frequently and speak with outpatients, inpatients, and staff. The Program has been extremely assistive in keeping the Chapter informed of the healthcare received and other pertinent activities going on at the SCI clinics and VAMC's throughout the New England region.

The Chapter continues to sponsor pizza parties for SCI staff and patients on a rotating basis at the Brockton, West Roxbury, West Haven, CT and Manchester, NH facilities. The Chapter has implemented a "treat a veteran to lunch" program where donations can be made specifically to these pizza parties, which often at times include informal meetings with staff. Those donating to this program will be mentioned on our web site in the appropriate section.



The Chapter sponsored parties in December to celebrate the holiday season. The holiday parties were held at the Northampton VA facility, in the day room of the spinal cord injury unit (A-2) at the West Roxbury VA, at Building 8-1-C at the Brockton VA, and another at the West Haven, CT VA SCI Clinic. It is an enjoyable time for all attending to share in the holiday spirit, and a small token of the Chapter's appreciation for the hard working staff and volunteers.

The Chapter is represented on many medical center committees, including: the Veterans Administration Voluntary Service Advisory Committees at West Roxbury and Brockton; the VA Central Region Mini-Management Advisory Committee; the VA Boston Healthcare System Integration Advisory Board; the Brockton VAMC Veterans' Advisory Board; and on the VISN 1 Management Advisory Committee. The Chapter is proud to have representation on these important committees within the medical centers as it allows us to provide input on issues that will have an impact on the members of the Chapter and others with disabilities.

The Chapter has developed an excellent working relationship with the medical center administrators and can access them at any time. We have built a reputation as a hard working advocate that is willing to work with the medical center administrators to assist in providing solutions that work and will benefit the members, patients, and VA staff. We also have an excellent working relationships and communication with the Chief of the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Service, the physicians, and the nursing personnel. Many times this

HOSPITAL LIAISON

positive relationship has assisted in the prevention of problems. The Chapter has also been called upon to provide input on issues that will have an impact on the SCI patients. We are extremely proud to have these relationships and the ability to assist in any way that will benefit the patients and improve the care that they will receive.

BROCKTON VAMC (MA)

Vice President Michael Guilbault is also the Chapter Hospital Liaison and VAVS Chapter representative for the Brockton Long Term Care patients at Bldg 8. He attends VAVS and as many monthly community meetings as possible. The Chapter, along with many other organizations promotes many activities for long term care as possible, providing financial assistance for bi-monthly pizza parties and donating funds towards their annual Thanksgiving and Christmas Parties as well.

WEST ROXBURY VAMC (MA)

Chapter President Wayne Ross is also the Chapter Hospital Liaison and VAVS representative for West Roxbury's A-2 SCI facility. Wayne also attends VAVS meetings. When A-2 have their annual Nursing Recruitment Day, Wayne has been invited multiple times to speak about his care and why SCI/D is in need of highly trained nurses specializing in SCI/D.

NORTHAMPTON VAMC (MA)

Long Time member Timothy Kelly attends the monthly SCI/D meetings at the Leeds facility. It has only been in the last year or two that the Chapter supports these meetings by providing refreshments and funds for their annual holiday party.

PROVIDENCE VAMC (RI)

Chapter Board member Bruce Bowen was the Chapter Hospital Liaison to Providence until health reasons forced him to resign just before the end of the fiscal year. Bruce has met with the Director on a couple of occasions. Since his departure, the Director of Providence VAMC continues to reach out to the Chapter with any news and information that may be important to Chapter members and all veterans. We are looking for someone to take Mr. Bowen's place but until then, Mike Guilbault will be listed as Chapter Hospital Liaison.

MANCHESTER VAMC (NH)

Chapter Board Member Walter Farrington relays information about remodeling going on in the area of the former Spinal Cord Injury area. He and his wife, Pat Farrington, also a volunteer would host a monthly get-together providing refreshments and celebrating various occasions with attendees.

WEST HAVEN VAMC (CT)

Long Time Chapter member Peter Falcione has been instrumental in getting information into and out of the weekly/monthly SCI/D meetings. Peter also coordinates the annual bbq and holiday party.

HOSPITAL LIAISON

WHITE RIVER JUNCTION VAMC (VT)

It has only been in recent months that WRJ has restarted its monthly SCI/D meetings and the Chapter is very pleased to sponsor their get-togethers with refreshments.

TOGUS VAMC (ME)

Chapter National Director and member Neal Williams has been the Chapter Hospital Liaison for several years. Because of his contact and work with PVA and VA, the Chapter has provided an annual pizza party for the Veterans Benefits Staff. This is just a small way to say thank you to hard-working employees who assist veterans in getting the benefits they have earned through their military service.

PVA SITE VISIT/FIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The PVA Site Visit Team and the Chapter's respective Chapter Hospital Liaisons reviewed available data and met with patients, administrative staff, medical support staff, staff physicians and nurses, the Chief of SCI/D Services, and Senior Hospital Leadership at the West Roxbury VAMC and the Brockton VAMC this year.

The purpose of these site visits is to evaluate every aspect of the VAMC's healthcare system as it effects the delivery of care to the SCI/D patients being treated at these facilities, and to make recommendation, where needed to improve upon that care.



Site Visit Team Members: Farnaz Firoz, RN, Associate Director of Medical Services; Brian Hooser, RN, Associate Director of Medical Services (Trainee); Fe Laurente, MD; Ken Klein, Field Advisory Committee; Heather Cherniack, Interim Eastern Region Director, Chapter VP Mike Guilbault and Chapter Board Member Michael Negrete

CHAPTER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Chapter Volunteer Program



Chapter volunteers participate in a variety of Chapter programs and the VAVS program at the Brockton/West Roxbury VAMC. Volunteers record their hours of service and miles traveled on a monthly basis, which is then submitted to PVA's National office on a monthly basis, as well.

For 2016, Chapter volunteers reported 3,435 hours served (chapter programs). If the Chapter had to pay for these services, even at \$8.00 an hour, it would total nearly \$27,480.

The Chapter owes a debt of gratitude and a special "Thank you" to all the Chapter's volunteers, for without them, many of the Chapter's programs would not be possible.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM

Community Outreach Program

The Chapter was again pleased to provide the “What’s It Like” program to local elementary schools. This was the 32nd year the Chapter has provided this program. The program is presented to school children in the third, fourth and fifth grades usually during their school’s Disability Awareness week, or for Veterans or Memorial Day events. Director Mike Guilbault and a number of outstanding volunteers explain how people with disabilities live, work, and play. The program consists of a presentation about physical disabilities, and explaining the use of prosthetic devices and adaptive equipment. Students then have an opportunity to try maneuvering a wheelchair through an obstacle course set up for them, and also try shooting a basketball from the wheelchair. Afterwards the presenters offer a question and answer session for the students. The Chapter has an Adaptive Sports Presentations for eighth graders and older. This presentation includes wheelchair basketball exhibitions and an opportunity for students to play scrimmage games. These school visits are enjoyed by the students, as well as the volunteers, and the Chapter continues to receive requests every year for these educational visits.

This year the Cunningham Elementary School in Milton, MA held their “Bring a Vet to School Day.” This event was held the day before Veterans Day and this year, our “What’s it Like” Program was included with their Veterans Appreciation week, where students learned about Veterans Day and why we celebrate it. Any student with a veteran or active duty relative got to bring them to school that day and skip the first two periods. An event was held in the library and then moved outside where a Color Guard raised the colors while the National Anthem was played. Students in the chorus then performed patriotic songs. After the Veterans Tribute, everyone moved into the gym where the “What’s it Like” program was presented to the 4th grade classes. It was a very moving event with veterans from WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and all Post 9/11 conflicts, along with current active duty soldiers present. This really gives the students a great education about both Veterans Day and military history seeing so many generations assembled who have served.

While the school program is the most often presented Community Outreach Program, the Chapter also sends members and sets up booths at various Disability Expos. We annually set up a booth and bring patients to a Pow Wow in Attleboro, MA. The NEPVA Bass Trail also gets our name out there attending multiple sportsman’s shows promoting our Bass Fishing Tournaments throughout New England. We’ve gained anglers and also volunteer boat captains for our tournaments at these shows while also meeting and forming partnerships with other organizations who also offer outdoor activities to the disabled. This is very beneficial since we now can make members aware of opportunities which may be more local to them. The Bass Trail participants also towed boats in the Halloween parade in Woburn, MA with anglers aboard throwing candy to the children, creating more awareness in the community.

The Outreach program brings awareness of PVA and New England PVA throughout the six New England states. Chapter’s ongoing Outreach program is most visible to a larger audiences through wheelchairs sports exhibitions, PVA Awareness Month, The Winter Sports Clinic for Disabled Veterans in New Hampshire, The Summer Sports Clinic for Disabled Veterans in Providence, RI, and our NEPVA Bass Fishing Tournaments in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine.

SPORTS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

Sports and Recreation Programs

Throughout its history, the Chapter has stood by the belief that active participation in wheelchair sports and recreation pays tremendous dividends in terms of physical fitness, building self-esteem, chair mobility and competitiveness. The informal peer mentoring that occurs during these activities is invaluable to recently injured individuals, and aids in their efforts to re-enter their communities after the rehabilitation process. Through the Chapter's Wheelchair Sports & Recreation Program, we have been able to provide this valuable need to our members.



Many of the Chapter's past and present Officers, Board Members, and Members have participated in some form of wheelchair sports or recreational activities in the Chapter's Wheelchair Sports & Recreation Program, and have first hand knowledge of the many benefits that participation in wheelchair sports provides.

While the Chapter's Wheelchair Sports & Recreation Programs first objective is to provide activities for Veterans with spinal cord injuries or dysfunction, we also open up our non-veteran specific wheelchair sports programs to others with disabilities. In addition to our Chapter and VA events, life members are encouraged to compete in other wheelchair sporting events hosted by others. There is limited funding available to life members of the Chapter to sponsor their participation in sports and recreational events. Life members can request an Individual Allotment, on a first-come-first-served basis, to be funded up to one thousand dollars towards such events, while funds remain available. Requests must be made prior to the event and voted on by the Board of Directors. Approved requests entitle the member to reimbursement after the event pending submission of receipts.

HISTORY

After World War II, New England veterans were returning home from the war with spinal cord injuries/dysfunctions, and quickly became involved with wheelchair sports, such as basketball, ping pong, etc. Some of these veterans were part of the first wheelchair basketball team in New England, the New England Clippers. The Clippers are mentioned in the National Wheelchair Basketball Association's history as being one of the first wheelchair basketball teams in the country.

The Chapter's Wheelchair Sports & Recreation Program has since won numerous PVA Sports Awards and has been involved with the promotion, development and sponsorship of a variety of wheelchair sports and recreational activities for our members and others with disabilities in New England.

SPORTS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

PRESENT

The Chapter's Wheelchair Sports & Recreation Program has continued to lead the way in providing opportunities for Chapter members, and others with disabilities throughout New England, to participate in a variety of activities. Some of the activities in our Sports & Recreation program are for veterans only, such as the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, New England Winter Sports Clinic for Disabled Veterans, Summer Sports Clinic for Disabled Veterans, and some fishing and shooting events, while other activities like the Bowling League and the NEPVA Bass Tail are open to members, affiliates and all others with disabilities.

In 2016 the Chapter's Wheelchair Sports & Recreation Program included sponsorship for the following events, activities and teams.

NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES

One of the most important functions of the Chapter's Sports and Recreation Program is to provide members with the opportunity to participate in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG). Each year, the Chapter sponsors a team (NEPVA Coasters) to compete in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and our parent organization - Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA). The most important goal of the NVWG is to introduce new injuries and/or Novices to the amazing experience, health benefits, and camaraderie available through participation in wheelchair sports. Though the NVWG is sort of an introduction to wheelchair sports for many of our members who take part each year, it also provides an opportunity for veterans around the country to get together and renew old acquaintances.



The 36th National Veterans Wheelchair Games were held in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Chapter sponsored 20 athletes, along with nursing staff, coaches, volunteers, and family members. The competition was as hot as the weather in Salt Lake City. The team took home over 80 medals, and many more times that in memories that will last a lifetime.

NEW ENGLAND WINTER SPORTS CLINIC FOR DISABLED VETERANS

This year the VA Boston Healthcare System invited military service veterans with spinal cord injuries, orthopedic amputation, visual impairments, certain neurological problems and other disabilities to participate in the 19th Annual New England Winter Sports Clinic for Disabled Veterans. This event promotes rehabilitation by instructing physically challenged veterans in adaptive Alpine skiing and provides an introduction to other adaptive activities and sports. The Chapter continues to be a sponsor of the New England Winter Sports Clinic since its inception. This event is held at Mount Sunapee, in New Hampshire each year in January. In 2016, we also sponsored the 6th New England Summer Sports Clinic for Disabled

SPORTS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

Veterans, which was presented by the VA Boston Healthcare System and hosted by the Providence VA Medical Center with event venues in Coventry, Newport – collaboration with the Sail to Prevail program and Galilee RI.

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER BASS TRAIL

The NEPVA Bass Fishing Trail is in its 18th season and continues to be well attended. The Bass Trail consists of three one-day tournaments throughout New England. The Bass Trail event was founded and is organized by Eugene (Tiny) LaFontaine, the American Eagle Bass Anglers, and includes volunteers from the local Bass Federations, and the Nam Knights motorcycle club. There is never a charge to participate by either the angler or boat captain. In each of the events, anglers with disabilities are paired with local bass pros for a day of competitive fishing. The partners compete as a team and the teams with the largest weight of fish have a chance to win prizes.



What started as a one-day bass tournament on the Charles River in Boston has grown and expanded to include multiple one-day tournaments throughout the season. In 2016,

Chapter Bass Tournaments were held on the Charles River in June, on Lake Winnepesaukee, NH in September and North Pond, Maine in October.

It is important to note that the Bass Trail assists with raising money specifically to keep it free for veterans and those with disabilities. 2016 was a banner year for the NEPVA Bass Trail. At the June event, they received \$4,000 in donations and the mayor of Newton, Mayor Setti Warren (former military) stated he hopes to provide some form of support as well. Overall, the NEPVA Bass Trail raised over \$12,000 in 2016. Again, these funds were specific to the Bass Trail.



SHOOTING EVENTS

2016 has treated us exceptionally well, as we have had several shooting events, mostly on Cape Cod. These events were sponsored by many of the rod and gun clubs throughout the region. These shoots were held in Bellingham (sponsored by the Bellingham Police Dept); Shawmee Rod and Gun Club in Sandwich, MA; Monument Beach Sportsman's Club in Bourne, MA, the Bass River Rod and Gun Club in Yarmouthport, MA and this year we also held two at the Wampanoag Rod & Gun Club in Seekonk, MA All of their volunteers were wonderful, as they supplied the guns and ammo and fantastic luncheons.

SPORTS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

NEPVA ROLLERS BOWLING LEAGUE

The Chapter's Bowling League is one of our longest running program, and is a great recreational and competitive program that many Chapter members have enjoyed participating in over the years. It is easily adaptive, which allows people with almost any physical disability to bowl from a wheelchair. Wheelchair bowlers use the same scoring system and the same lanes as bowlers who stand. Adaptive devices such as ramps, push sticks and "handle ball" can be utilized to assist bowlers with less function.

The season begins the Tuesday after Labor Day and runs 35 weeks. The Chapter bowling team bowls every Tuesday afternoon at the Westgate has done its best to accommodate not only our league, but supports Long Term Care and other veterans from the Brockton VA. It also supported the American Wheelchair Bowling Association's national tournament in 2011 and may support another AWBA tournament in 2017 or 2018.

ANNUAL BANQUET

Annual Banquet

The 69th Anniversary Annual Banquet was held at the Holiday Inn in Mansfield, Massachusetts. Always the Chapter's major social event of the year, this year approximately 150 members, VA staff, and friends enjoyed an evening of friendship, fine food, entertainment and dancing. The Chapter was honored to have in attendance several officials from the VA New England Healthcare System. Each year at the banquet, the Chapter awards the Madeline Pierik Award to two members of the SCI nursing staff, one from the VA SCI Center at West Roxbury, and one from the Long Term Care facility in Brockton. The Pierik Award was founded by Madeline Pierik, who retired as Chief of Nursing many years ago. Each year, the award is presented to two individuals who demonstrate dedication to the spinal cord injured patient through both satisfactory attendance and exemplary performance in his/her role. This year, the Pierik Awards were presented to Karen Garcia who works at the Brockton VA Medical Center and Glen Williams from the West Roxbury VA Medical Center.

This year, Chapter President Wayne Ross presented the President's Award to Ms. Eileen Craffey. Eileen was a 30+ year employee of Rehab Medicine at the West Roxbury VA. She taught swimming. She was instrumental in assisting a number of SCI veterans to swim and compete in various events including Paralympic Swimming Trials.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Statement of Financial Position

Statement of Financial Position for Years Ended September 30, 2016 and 2015

ASSETS	2016	2015
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalent	\$175,735	\$277,463
Investments	611,678	444,909
Contributions Receivable, Current	39,050	17,575
Other Current Assets	5,964	26,832
Total Current Assets	832,427	766,779
Property and Equipment		
Furniture and Equipment	199,699	199,699
Leasehold Improvements	4,845	4,845
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(148,432)	(118,108)
Net Property and Equipment	56,112	86,436
Contributions Receivable, Net of Current Portion	30,000	-
Deposits	1,375	1,375
Total Assets	919,914	854,590
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	48,614	31,675
Total Current Liabilities	48,614	31,675
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	871,300	822,915
Total Net Assets	871,300	822,915
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	919,914	854,590

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

Statement of Financial Activities

Statement of Activities for Years Ended September 30, 2016 and 2015.

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	UNRESTRICTED	2016	2015
Contributions	\$1,090,422	\$1,090,422	\$1,108,885
Membership Dues	200	200	1,750
PVA Chapter Grant	158,100	158,100	163,589
Fundraising	6,421	6,421	6,675
Investment Income			
Interest and Dividends	12,560	12,560	8,715
Unrealized/Realized Gains (Losses) and Fees	6,253	6,253	(2,241)
Sporting Activities	18,460	18,460	20,899
Other Program Revenues	29,066	29,066	25,893
Total Support and Revenue	1,321,482	1,321,482	1,334,165
EXPENSE		56,112	86,436
Programs and Services			
Membership and Benefits	289,900	289,900	356,350
Public Affairs	169,745	169,745	171,600
Research	-	-	20,000
		919,914	854,590
Total Program and Services	459,645	459,645	547,950
SUPPORTING SERVICES			
General and Administrative	53,749	53,749	54,350
Fundraising	759,703	759,703	784,160
Total Expense	1,273,097	1,273,097	1,386,460
Change in Net Assets	48,385	48,385	(52,295)
Net Assets, Beginning of Period	822,915	822,915	875,210
Net Assets, End of Period	871,300	871,300	822,915

IRS FORM 990

NEPVA 01/19/2017 10:03 AM

Form **990** **Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax** OMB No. 1545-0047
 Department of the Treasury Under section 501(c), 527, or 4947(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code (except private foundations) **2015**
 Internal Revenue Service Do not enter social security numbers on this form as it may be made public. **Open to Public Inspection**
 Information about Form 990 and its instructions is at www.irs.gov/form990.

A For the 2015 calendar year, or tax year beginning **10/01/15** and ending **09/30/16**

B Check if applicable:
 Address change
 Name change
 Initial return
 Final return (terminated)
 Amended return
 Application pending

C Name of organization: **PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA**
NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER
 Doing business as:
 Number and street (or P.O. box if mail is not delivered to street address): **1208 VFW PARKWAY, SUITE 301** Room/suite:
 City or town, state or province, country, and ZIP or foreign postal code: **WEST ROXBURY MA 02132**

D Employer identification number: **04-6112881**
E Telephone number: **508-660-1181**
G Gross receipts: **1,315,229**

F Name and address of principal officer:
WAYNE ROSS
1208 VFW PARKWAY
WEST ROXBURY MA 02132

H(a) Is this a group return for subordinates? Yes No
H(b) Are all subordinates included? Yes No
 If "No," attach a list. (See instructions.)

I Tax-exempt status: 501(c)(3) 501(c) () (insert no.) 4947(a)(1) or 527

J Website: **WWW.NEPVA.ORG** **H(c)** Group exemption number:

K Form of organization: Corporation Trust Association Other **L** Year of formation: **1957** **M** State of local domicile: **MA**

Part I Summary

Activities & Governance	1 Briefly describe the organization's mission or most significant activities. See Schedule O		
	2 Check this box <input type="checkbox"/> if the organization discontinued its operations or disposed of more than 25% of its net assets.		
	3 Number of voting members of the governing body (Part VI, line 1a)	3	12
	4 Number of independent voting members of the governing body (Part VI, line 1b)	4	12
	5 Total number of individuals employed in calendar year 2015 (Part V, line 2a)	5	9
	6 Total number of volunteers (estimate if necessary)	6	38
	7a Total unrelated business revenue from Part VIII, column (C), line 12	7a	0
7b Net unrelated business taxable income from Form 990-T, line 34	7b	0	
Revenue	8 Contributions and grants (Part VIII, line 1h)	Prior Year	Current Year
	9 Program service revenue (Part VIII, line 2g)	1,274,224	1,255,143
	10 Investment income (Part VIII, column (A), lines 3, 4, and 7d)	46,792	47,526
	11 Other revenue (Part VIII, column (A), lines 5, 6d, 8c, 9c, 10c, and 11e)	8,715	12,560
	12 Total revenue - add lines 8 through 11 (must equal Part VIII, column (A), line 12)	4,434	0
Expenses	13 Grants and similar amounts paid (Part IX, column (A), lines 1-3)	1,334,165	1,315,229
	14 Benefits paid to or for members (Part IX, column (A), line 4)	20,000	0
	15 Salaries, other compensation, employee benefits (Part IX, column (A), lines 5-10)	0	0
	16a Professional fundraising fees (Part IX, column (A), line 11e)	254,942	202,267
	b Total fundraising expenses (Part IX, column (D), line 25)	774,961	752,614
	17 Other expenses (Part IX, column (A), lines 11a-11d, 11f-24e)	759,703	
18 Total expenses. Add lines 13-17 (must equal Part IX, column (A), line 25)	336,557	318,216	
19 Revenue less expenses. Subtract line 18 from line 12	1,386,460	1,273,097	
Net Assets or Fund Balances	20 Total assets (Part X, line 16)	-52,295	42,132
	21 Total liabilities (Part X, line 26)	Beginning of Current Year	End of Year
	22 Net assets or fund balances. Subtract line 21 from line 20	854,590	919,914
		31,675	48,614
		822,915	871,300

Part II Signature Block

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have examined this return, including accompanying schedules and statements, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is true, correct, and complete. Declaration of preparer (other than officer) is based on all information of which preparer has any knowledge.

Sign Here Signature of officer: **WAYNE ROSS** Date: _____
 Type or print name and title: **PRESIDENT**

Paid Preparer Use Only Print/type preparer's name: **JASON F. CLAUSER** Preparer's signature: **JASON F. CLAUSER** Date: **01/19/17** Check if self-employed PTIN: **P01051094**
 Firm's name: **Jason F. Clausen P.C.** Firm's EIN: **27-4097479**
 Firm's address: **21412 Willow Wisp St. Clair Shores, MI 48082-1250** Phone no.: **586-216-4673**

May the IRS discuss this return with the preparer shown above? (see instructions) Yes No
 For Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see the separate instructions. Form 990 (2015)