The Desert Oracle
A Member Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America

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Happy New Year!

CITY WHEELS HEARTS
DALLAS, TX ★ JUNE 21 – 26, 2015

Paralyzed Veterans of America
Arizona Chapter

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The Desert Oracle is Published at least 6 x per Year
Updated Clinical Practice Guideline On Pressure Ulcers Now Available For Health-Care Professionals

2nd Edition CPG Provides Latest Information on Treating Pressure Ulcers in Spinal Cord Injured Individuals

Washington, DC—Health-care professionals now can access the most up-to-date information on treating and preventing pressure ulcers in the 2nd edition Clinical Practice Guideline, *Pressure Ulcer Prevention and Treatment Following Spinal Cord Injury*, an updated guide from the Consortium for Spinal Cord Medicine.

Pressure ulcers are the most dangerous secondary complication for individuals of all ages with spinal cord injury and disease (SCI/D). “We know that the prevention of pressure ulcers begins within the first few hours after an injury and continues throughout the lifespan,” said Lana McKenzie, associate executive director of Medical Services and Health Policy for Paralyzed Veterans, the organization that administers and provides financial support for the Consortium. “Ensuring that our veterans and all individuals with SCI/D receive the best care immediately from the start has been and will always be a priority for Paralyzed Veterans of America.”

The updated publication provides the most comprehensive recommendations for the prevention, assessment and management of pressure ulcers. This updated clinical practice guideline is designed as an essential tool to help empower, inform, and educate health-care professionals who treat individuals with SCI/D. Specifically, the guideline is designed to be used by physicians in a number of specialties (i.e. internal medicine, plastic surgery, and physical medicine and rehabilitation), nurses, physical and occupational therapists, social workers, and psychologists.

The Consortium for Spinal Cord Medicine is a collaboration of professional and consumer organizations funded and administered by Paralyzed Veterans. Over almost 20 years, the Consortium and Paralyzed Veterans have produced clinical practice guidelines and companion consumer guides on the many health-care issues common to individuals with spinal cord injury, such as upper limb preservation, bladder management, and sexuality and reproductive health. The publications are independently reviewed, science-based compendia of the latest and best knowledge from which to draw and apply in the care of people with SCI/D.

PVA Hosts Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities

On January 13, 2015, PVA hosted the annual meeting of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) in its new Jeffrey M. Carlton Conference and Training Center. PVA has been a long time member of CCD, a coalition of more than 100 national disability rights, consumer, provider and advocacy organizations representing America’s 54 million people with disabilities. Participants heard from staffers from the Senate Health, Education Labor and Pension Committee and House Education and Workforce Committee about major initiatives they will be pursuing in the 114th Congress. Taryn Williams, the White House Disability Policy liaison, briefed attendees on the administration’s plans to mark the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Ellen Nissenbaum with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities outlined a number of challenges likely to confront the disability community during 2015 budget and fiscal deliberations. In addition to efforts to cut Social Security, Ms. Nissenbaum described the potential for attempts to block grant Medicaid and further reduce domestic spending in areas such as education and housing as policy makers seek to deal with sequestration and raising the debt ceiling.
If you are interested in attending this great event, please call the Chapter office. We have tickets to hand out for free!!!!

Humana & The Military Benefit Association Present America's Heroes

THE WOUNDED WARRIOR AMPUTEES VS ARIZONA'S NFL ALUMNI

- A GAME OF HONOR -

WEDNESDAY, JAN 28, 2015
FROM 6:00PM - 9:00PM
SHADOW MOUNTAIN HS
2900 E SHEA BLVD
PHOENIX, AZ

COST: $10 ADULTS
FREE ADMISSION - ALL CHILDREN & STUDENTS, 18 & UNDER

Tickets may be purchased online at WWAFT.org or the evening of the game at Shadow Mountain High School (just west of 32nd St on Shea Blvd). More than 40 Cardinals, Pro Football Hall-of-Famers, NFL Alumni & SNOOP DOGG, yes, Snoop Dogg, will attend this tribute.

This game is being presented by Humana & Humana Military, the Military Benefit Association, Zimmer Orthopedics, Kaplan University, Low T Center, Cold Stone Creamery & Blimpie and is being hosted by NFL legend and decorated Vietnam veteran Rocky Bleier. Joining him for this tribute will be Jake Plummer, Danny White, Frank Kush, Dale Hellestrae, Darren Woodson, Dan Manucci, NFL Hall-of-Famers Dan Hampton, Jack Youngblood, Randy White & Anthony Munoz, Packers legend Jerry Kramer, Bob Cello, CBS' Spencer Tillman and dozens more ASU and University of Arizona, Cardinal & NFL stars ... Olympic Gold Medalist Amy Van Dyken, Mike Bibby & ESPN's Sal Paolantonio & Kenny Mayne & Snoop Dogg, along with prominent members of Arizona's media. More than 40 famous sports celebs, so bring your autograph book and your camera...

The Wounded Warrior Amputee Football Team is composed of men and women who lost a limb while serving this country in Iraq or Afghanistan... The WWAFT record vs the NFL Alumni currently stands at 9-0... 3-0 at the last three Super Bowls...

* ALL proceeds benefit the WWAFT and Disabled Veteran's Initiatives of Arizona
* FREE Autographs & photo opportunities
* Raffle Prizes include Suns, Coyotes, Diamondbacks & Phoenix Open tickets and autographed NFL memorabilia

For more on this event please visit WWAFT.org or call (703) 923-3000

Photo of the Humvee of a WWAFT player

Humana.

...still serving our Nation..
Six words uttered by President Barack Obama during his "State of the Union" speech that embody the unbridled optimism of a country touched by war for more than a decade. Optimism defined by a comfortable displacement from the events of September 11, 2001, when people loved the troops because they didn't have to be the troops who answered the call following the most egregious attack on the homeland by a foreign enemy. For them — and for Paralyzed Veterans of America — the page has not turned.

Army specialist Curtis Spivey became a paralyzed veteran with a traumatic brain injury following an IED blast in Iraq. He died at a VA medical center after suffering a brain aneurysm. His wife, Aida, and 2-year old daughter, Marianna, would subsequently experience hard times that would endure well beyond the grief of losing Curtis. Money, benefits, and support would serve as mere band aids to the emotional hemorrhaging they feel to this very day. It is those stories that our service officers and clinical advocates never forget as they carry out our mission. We will not turn the page on our veterans, their families, and caregivers for, in the words of Plato, "only the dead have seen the end of war."

Paralyzed Veterans of America reinforces its commitment to ensuring that a new generation of veterans comes home and enjoys the opportunity to live the American Dream they helped defend. Whether that means holding the Department of Veterans Affairs accountable for reducing the disability claims backlog, delivering timely and quality healthcare, or fostering career opportunities, Paralyzed Veterans will not relent. Even as we ensure accountability, we gladly assume the burden of caring for those who have borne the battle through the myriad programs and services we offer, free of charge and with no government support, for our nation's heroes.

It is through their lives that the story of this era is still being written and the cost of war still being accrued. Paralyzed Veterans of America calls on our government leaders and ordinary citizens to follow through on the promise to support our heroes. That promise includes timely delivered benefits that should not be eroded or viewed as a handout. It also includes continued investment in the VA healthcare system, which represents the only hope for successful transition and recovery for the many severely disabled veterans.

What Is A Veteran?
A "Veteran" - whether active duty, discharged, retired, or reserve - is someone who, at one point in his life, wrote a blank check made payable to "The United States of America," for an amount of "up to, and including his life."
PVA Priorities for the First Session of the 114th Congress

As the 114th Congress opened, Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) recently outlined our priorities to the leadership in the House of Representatives and the Senate. In letters to Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-OH) and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), PVA presented the following issues for consideration:

Legislative Program Priorities (Veterans Issues):
- Implementation of P.L. 113-146, the “Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act.”
- Expand Eligibility for the VA Comprehensive Caregiver Program
- Reinstate Capacity Reporting Requirement for SCI Service and other Specialized Services.
- Improve Benefits for Catastrophically Disabled Veterans to Include Beneficiary Travel for Priority Group 4 and Additional Automobile Grants.
- Procreative Services for Catastrophically Disabled Veterans.

Advocacy Program Priorities (Disability Community Issues):
- Addressing Air Carrier Access Problems for People with Disabilities.
- Strengthening and Protecting Social Security.
- Complex Rehabilitation Technology.

Organizational Issues:
- Addressing the Problem with Vehicle Donation Valuation for Charities

For more information on each of these priorities, please visit [www.pva.org](http://www.pva.org) or contact the PVA National Government Relations staff.

Wheels Helping Warriors Vehicle Donation Program

Looking for another way to make a difference in the life of a paralyzed veteran? Consider donating your vehicle, boat, RV or motorcycle and help build brighter futures for our veterans and their families...and receive a tax deduction when you itemize your return!

Paralyzed Veterans of America’s Wheels Helping Warriors program will gladly accept the following vehicles, regardless of their current condition: **Airplanes, Motorcycles, Boats, RVs/campers, Cars, Semi-Trailers, Farm equipment, SUVs, Horse trailers, Trucks**

Simply complete and submit the vehicle donation form or call 1-855-744-0782. Be sure you have your title in hand before calling. A representative will explain all of the details and schedule a pickup that's convenient for you, FREE of charge. The average pickup time is usually 24-48 hours from the time of the call. Even if your vehicle doesn't run, we will gladly accept your donation.

Once your vehicle has been sold, you'll be sent a receipt for your tax records and the sale of the proceeds will be donated to the Paralyzed Veterans of America. In advance, we appreciate your support of Paralyzed Veterans of America’s Wheels Helping Warriors program. We are able to improve lives and empower veterans - and all Americans - living with a disability because of your donation. So, thank you!
At Permobil, helping to improve on your expertise in complex rehab and powered mobility through education is a top priority. That is why we are proud to offer a series of programs designed to help you learn as much as you can about how complex rehab products can help your clients, as well as basic to high-level technical training. In some cases, Permobil can also offer continuing education credits (CEUs) to keep your certifications up to date.

Are there any veterans interested in care?
Cindy Fjerstad, a registered Nurse with 13 years of SCI/D rehab experience. I am available to provide attendant care in the central Phoenix area. Please contact the chapter office if you are interested in obtaining more information. 602-244-9168
House of Representatives Adopts Rule to Force Cuts in Disability Benefits

In 2016, the Social Security disability insurance (SSDI) trust fund will be depleted - resulting in a 20 percent cut in SSDI benefits. An uncontroversial solution would involve adjusting the percentage of payroll taxes flowing into the Old Age & Survivors and Disability Insurance trust funds. This adjustment has been done over ten times since 1968 - involving payroll tax transfers in both directions. The last reallocation occurred in 1994 and passed Congress in a bipartisan fashion without opposition. At the time, it was expected that another reallocation would be needed in a little over twenty years so the need to adjust has been known for some time. Rebalancing the trust funds requires no cuts in benefits, no increases in taxes and maintains the solvency of the overall system through 2033.

However, on its first day in session, the House of Representatives passed a rule precluding that simple fix unless it is accompanied by cuts in Social Security benefits or increases in revenues, an unlikely occurrence in the present political environment. There is widespread agreement that the Social Security system needs to be strengthened for long term financial soundness. By taking this step, the House has foreclosed opportunities for a full and open debate on ways to ensure the Social Security system's long term fiscal solvency.

The New Independent Budget Released

The new *Independent Budget (IB)* was released on January 15, 2015. This will be the 29th edition of the *IB*—co-authored by AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Veterans of Foreign Wars. This year marks several new changes to the *IB*. This year’s *IB* is being released as a policy guide for the entire 114th Congress (spanning 2015 and 2016). The document will only be released once every two years at the start of each new Congress. The policy guide will be followed by a series of reports on important issues released periodically over the course of the two-year period. The first report to be released will address the FY 2016 VA budget in February 2015.

The presentation of the policy document has also been changed. The co-authors of the IB have highlighted critical issues that they believe should be at the forefront of any oversight and legislative activity in Congress. The five critical issues include:

- Ensuring Timely Access to High Quality Care
- Expanding Access to Caregiver Support for Veterans of All Eras
- Fixing the VA’s Claims Process to Include the Appeals Systems
- Maintaining and Rebuilding VA’s Critical Infrastructure
- Ensuring Programs and Services Meet the Gender Specific/Unique Needs of Women Veterans

*The Independent Budget* is available online at [www.independentbudget.org](http://www.independentbudget.org).
Most House and Senate VA Committee Leadership Positions Filled

The 114th Congress was sworn in on Tuesday, January 6, 2015. This Congress includes 25 lawmakers who served in the military during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. This represents the largest number of veterans from this era to serve in Congress. However, the total number of members with military experience continues to decline. Overall, less than 20 percent of the new Congress has any military experience. And for the first time since 1944, there will be no World War II veterans serving in the House or Senate.

The leadership positions for the House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs have been assigned, while the House Subcommittee positions on the Democratic side (Ranking Minority Members) have yet to be selected. Senator Johnny Isakson (R-GA) was named Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs. Senator Isakson was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2004, after serving three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. A veteran himself, Isakson served in the Georgia Air National Guard from 1966-1972. He has been a member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee since he joined the Senate in 2005.

The Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs will be Richard Blumenthal (D-CT). Senator Blumenthal is serving his first term as a United States Senator. Previously Senator Blumenthal served five terms as Connecticut’s Attorney General. His military experience includes service in the United States Marine Corps Reserves from 1970-1976.

In the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, Representative Jeff Miller (R-FL) will retain his Chairmanship of the Committee. The Ranking Democrat on the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs will be Representative Corrine Brown from Jacksonville Florida. Ranking Member Brown has served on the Veterans Affairs Committee since first being elected to Congress in 1992.

During the first week of business, Chairman Miller announced his selection of Subcommittee Chairmen for the 114th Congress. These positions include: Rep. Dan Benishek (R-MI) on the Subcommittee on Health; Rep. Mike Coffman (R-CO) on the Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations; Rep. Brad Wenstrup (R-OH) on the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity; and Rep. Ralph Abraham (R-LA) on the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs. Rep. Abraham is a freshman member of Congress. The Democratic leadership is expected to name its Ranking Members during the week of January 19.

...still serving our Nation..
Ten Good Reasons to Support Paralyzed Veterans of America

There are many worthy veterans’ organizations in our nation that you can choose to support financially. Why choose Paralyzed Veterans of America?

Below are ten ways that we help veterans with disabilities every day using the generous donations we receive from you.

Paralyzed Veterans of America:

1. Delivers our services to ALL veterans and their families FREE of charge, thanks to the generous support and donations of the American people.
2. Advocates for quality Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care and veterans benefits – veterans and survivors received over $1 billion in benefits in FY14 facilitated through a national network of National Service Officers (NSOs).
3. Pushes to make America more accessible. Paralyzed Veterans has helped lead the way for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The wide range of work our architects complete on a regular basis includes removing barriers from large public projects to individual residences, coordinating with design teams on VA medical center facility projects, and communicating/educating about accessible design.
4. Advocates for all people with disabilities in regards to housing, employment, voting rights, and more through our Disability Rights and Advocacy Department.
5. Empowers veterans with the tools they need to obtain good careers. Our careers program PAVE (Paving Access for Veterans Employment) helps veterans living with disabilities secure good jobs with great employers.
6. Invests in innovative research to find new treatments and a cure for paralysis.
7. Promotes and provides adaptive sports and recreational activities. Each year, Paralyzed Veterans co-presents the world’s largest annual wheelchair sports event, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, attracting more than 500 veteran participants every year.
8. Provides free membership to those who have been honorably discharged from the U.S military with a spinal cord injury or dysfunction. Paralyzed Veterans’ membership is a passport to a broad array of benefits, services, help and support.
9. Educates on veterans claims issues and connect attorneys with veterans law resources through our Legal Services Department. Paralyzed Veterans’ attorneys have litigated hundreds of cases on behalf of members and other veterans, helping them receive the benefits they have earned.
10. Provides online and print publications with an extensive library of self-help, educational and clinical resources for people with disabilities.
35th Annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games
June 21-26, 2015
Dallas, TX

IMPORTANT Dates – Registration is now available. All registrations must be returned and post marked by no later than April 15, 2015. Events are assigned in the order that registration are received. Don’t delay in getting your registration in!

Dallas, Texas has long been referred to as ‘Big D’ in part for its grand scale of progressive thinking. Dallas is very supportive of Veterans and is involved in many aspects from partnering with VA to help end Veteran homelessness to conducting education and job fairs to give returning service men and women the tools they need to get back to work after active duty.

Aside from its financial investment to support Veterans, Dallas will be enriched when more than 600 wheelchair Veterans from all over the Nation roll into town. These Veterans aren’t quitters. Their sheer determination drives them beyond life in a wheelchair ~ pushing personal limits and comfort zones to flourish and improve their quality of life.

Undoubtedly Dallas has much to offer as host, including cultural districts, the best restaurants and hotels, concert venues – you name it. But what the city will get in return is a grateful heart from wheelchair Veterans who have not lost their zeal for living and giving back to society. As seasoned ‘gold medal’ Veterans who compete each year rush to aid the first timer, just struggling to finish. Cheering them each step of the way, their hearts are truly as big as Texas!

2015 NVWG Recommendations and Changes

1. Track – NEW EVENT – 600m Biathlon – 600m track/air rifle combined. Veterans begin with 200m distance and athlete moves into shooting range to take aim at five targets. Each miss is a 30 second penalty. As soon as the athlete finishes shooting, they then complete a 400m distance to the finish line. Racing chairs/helmets are mandatory for all competitors. The competition will be conducted as Para Combined; Quad Combined and both by gender.

2. No Archery loaner equipment will be available.

3. Do not schedule these conflicting events:
   - Table Tennis (IA, IB, IC) & Softball
   - Quad Rugby & Softball
   - Archery, Slalom(IV, V) Nine Ball (II, III)

4. Dallas weather in June – ave temp is 88* – 94*F (high) and 70*-76*F (low)
   - Drink plenty of water before and during your trip to help your body adjust to the humidity.
   - Eat foods high in potassium, such as broccoli, bananas, avocado, etc.
   - Travel essentials – medications in carry-on luggage, sun screen, lip balm, sun glasses.

5. Preparing for the 35th NVWG in Dallas:
   - Before you start a new physical training regime, consult with your MD or therapist.
   - The best way to succeed at the NVWG is to participate in sports and recreation programs throughout the year! You’ll make the greatest impact in your life by getting involved every day in fitness, sports or other recreational activities.
   - Don’t wait till June to get started. The first time you participate in the particular sport should not be at the NVWG. Practice, practice and more practice.
   - Make sure you are ready for the Games! Get an appointment with your VA rehabilitation therapist and make sure you have the correct equipment, practice schedule and if needed, support to do your best!
CMI Mobility, now celebrating our 30th anniversary, is a respected member of Arizona’s automotive business community. We strive to understand the needs of our customers and then follow through to fit the customer with the right wheelchair-accessible vehicle at the right price. Our prices are always fair, often times thousands below the competition, and always includes a 3 year 36,000 mile warranty on new conversions in addition to a warranty on the vehicle. If you are looking for a new wheelchair-accessible vehicle or just an upgrade from your current vehicle, call to speak with one of our specialists.

CMI Offers a range of wheelchair-accessible vans such as the Dodge Grand Caravan, Chrysler Town & Country, Toyota Sienna and Scion, Honda Odyssey and Element, Volkswagen Routan and the Ford Transit Connect.

Remote Side Entry $16,980.00 Starting at $13,900.00

CMI Mobility.com  480-688-6000

Ask for Stewart

*FIRST NAME:- ________________________________

*LAST NAME:- ________________________________

ADDRESS:- ____________________________________

*CITY: STATE: ZIP:- ____________________________

*PHONE:- ____________________________________

*E-Mail:- ____________________________________
Paralyzed Veterans of America volunteers do invaluable work that makes a real difference to veterans, their communities and Paralyzed Veterans' chapters. Volunteering can change your life, too. Why is it so rewarding?

- Volunteers make their communities a better place to live.
- You can work for an organization and mission you believe in.
- Having a positive impact on others feels great.
- You can meet new people and develop new leadership skills.
- Family volunteering lets you spend time with loved ones while helping others.

Becoming a Paralyzed Veterans volunteer has never been easier. Each PVA chapter offers its own volunteer program with a variety of opportunities to contribute, plus you can commit to as many hours as you choose. Call the Chapter for an Activation Form and get involved!
Cath hard to insert?

You may qualify for a coudé catheter:

- Coudés are prescribed when there's trouble inserting a straight catheter
- Coudé tip is bent at an angle to open the passageway and help navigate obstructions
- The curved tip helps avoid damage to the urethra on insertion
- Helps with enlarged prostate glands and other conditions causing obstructions

Benefits of SpeediCath® Coudé:

- SpeediCath catheters are pre-hydrated and instantly ready to use right out of the package
- Unique hydrophilic coating and polished eyelets allow for even greater comfort during insertion and withdrawal
- Trusted brand, available with a coudé tip!

For SpeediCath® Coudé samples, click southcentral.us.coloplast.com or call 1-855-863-3908
**MEMBERSHIP REPORT**  
from  
The Arizona Chapter

The Arizona Chapter voting membership stands at **506** as of January 1st 2015. National and AZPVA records show our voting membership as:

- **270**- Service Connected  
- **236**- Non-Service Connected

The Arizona Chapter encourages each of our members to contact the Chapter and let us know how you are doing, and if we can help you in any way. If you know of any of our members who have passed away, or if you have an address/phone change, please contact the Chapter as soon as possible. Also, if you would like to receive the Desert Oracle Newsletter by e-mail, please call or e-mail the office with your e-mail address.

Do you know a veteran with spinal cord dysfunction who isn’t a member of the AZPVA? Let us know at the Chapter office by calling 602-244-9168 or 1-800-621-9217  
e-mail: azpva@azpva.org

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Any questions, or if you would like to add to the calendar please call the office at 602-244-9168

Please have someone contact our Chapter office in the event of a member’s death so that we can inform other member’s who might wish to pay their respects to the departed.

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### January 2015

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