



# *E-BRIDGE*

Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area & Western Chapter, INC.



## *Executive Director's Message*

**WRITTEN BY KORY AMARAL**

The Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter is hoping everyone is having a great start to 2026! Time is flying by already and we need to make sure we take the time to notice and recognize everything good in life. The Chapter is so grateful that we have been able to serve our members for almost 64 years, and we will continue to provide services and programs to our members throughout 2026.

On the last Thursday of the month, the Chapter and the VA Palo Alto Health Care System's SCI/D Center will be continuing our SCI Peer Mentoring Program - Education & Lunch. Each month we have an education topic pertaining to spinal cord injuries or diseases. The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 26, 2026 and the topic will be announced soon. This is also a great way to interact with your fellow veterans. Please refer to Page 2 for more information.

On Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at 11:00 AM in the SCI/D Center's Dining Room, the Chapter and the SCI/D Center will be hosting our Palo Alto Membership Meeting. This meeting will be a great way to receive updates from the PVA and the SCI/D Center. Many staff members will be present if you have any questions. The Chapter is looking forward to the event and hopefully we will see you there. Please refer to Page 5 for more information.

If you need anything, please either call or text me at (650) 399-5296 or email me at amaral@bawpva.org. I will be taking annual leave throughout the next couple of months, but I will make sure I contact you as soon as I am back in the office.

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## SCI Peer Mentoring Program - Education & Lunch

SPONSORED BY THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER, INC. AND VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM'S SCI/D CENTER



Please join us the **LAST THURSDAY** of the month starting **February 27, 2025** in **Building 7, Room F-108 (Dayroom)** at **12:00 PM** for education and a peer support activity. This is a monthly program designed for SCI/D Veterans to gather together and connect in a social and relaxed environment, socially distanced of course!

If you cannot attend in person, or if group is at capacity, you can call into ZOOM from your room or home.

MEETING ID: 835 1426 6166  
PHONE: +1 669 900 9128  
ONLINE: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83514266166>



PAO ID65 - Last Updated 2-20-2025

### February Calendar

RECREATION THERAPY RESOURCE FAIR  
FEBRAURY 4

NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICER (NSO) CHAT (VIRTUAL)  
FEBRUARY 10

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING  
FEBRUARY 10

ADAPTIVE RECREATION CLINIC  
FEBRUARY 12

PRESIDENTS' DAY (OFFICE CLOSED)  
FEBRUARY 16

BINGO & PIZZA NIGHT  
FEBRUARY 19

SCI PEER MENTORING PROGRAM - EDUCATION & LUNCH  
FEBRAURY 26

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## Goods Inspiring Veterans Everywhere (GIVE) Program

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA AND THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA & WESTERN CHAPTER, INC.**

PVA is looking to the community to donate lightly used clothing and other items. Through the GIVE Program, we would love to expand the program by bringing in more funds for our veterans. PVA has developed a relationship with a thrift store in Fresno, CA. Although the store is located in Fresno, there are donation pickups throughout the Bay Area.

Clothing Donation Program - GIVE

<https://www.pva.org/ways-to-give/g-i-v-e-clothing-donation/>

## Car Donation Program

**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA AND THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA & WESTERN CHAPTER, INC.**

Are you tired of having too many cars or is your car getting old and you are looking to donate it? The Car Donation Program is a program in which we accept vehicles and the proceeds go to our veterans. The process is very simple and veterans from Northern California will benefit from the donation.

Car Donation Program

<https://pva.careasy.org/HOME.html>

**GIVE**

Generosity can be found anywhere.  
Even the back of your closet.

Donating clothes and other household goods can help improve the lives of injured veterans.

Give GIVE a try and schedule your **FREE** pickup today.  
[www.org/givegoods](http://www.org/givegoods)

**PVA** PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA  
VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM

Especially now,  
we need your support.

Donate a car, truck or other vehicle. The process is easy, the pick-up is free, and your gift is tax-deductible.

**Give Today**

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## *National PVA's Washington Update*

**WRITTEN BY NATIONAL PVA'S GOVERNMENT RELATIONS TEAM IN WASHINGTON, D.C.**

### **PVA's 2026 Priorities Now Available**

As we embark on the second session of the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, PVA's priorities for 2026 are once again focused on ensuring access to the care and benefits PVA members have earned and the civil rights protections they deserve.

Our priorities for 2026 are as follows:

- Strengthen the Foundations of VA's Specialized Health Care Services
- Maximize VA Long-Term Services and Supports for Veterans with SCI/D
- Fortify the Financial Security of Veterans with SCI/D, their Families, and Survivors
- Increase SCI/D Veterans' Access to Health Care Services
- Ensure Equal Opportunity and Full Participation for Catastrophically Disabled Veterans

For more details on each of the priorities, please click [here](#).

### **PVA Efforts to Fix Bowel and Bladder Program Lead to New Legislation**

On January 15, Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Jerry Moran (R-KS) introduced S. 3647, the Disabled Veterans Dignity Act. This legislation would make VA's Bowel and Bladder program a statutory requirement and standardize all processes, training, and procedures associated with it. The bill clarifies that participation in the program is a clinical decision as well as reimbursement rates and frequency. Before denying bowel and bladder care for any covered veteran under the program, VA must obtain the review of and concurrence of that denial from one of the department's 25 SCI/D centers.

VA's Bowel and Bladder program is administered by VA's SCI/D National Program office. Veterans with SCI/D who qualify for bowel and bladder care may receive that care through a home health agency, a family member, or an individually employed caregiver. The department's current program is fraught with challenges for caregivers and is unevenly applied across the VA system. Timely reimbursement and the tax treatment of payments are the chief complaints of PVA members who must rely on bowel and bladder care to meet their needs.

PVA believes that codifying the program would allow Congress to resolve most of the existing concerns experienced by family members who perform bowel and bladder care under the program. Since PVA members are the principal users of the program, we urge Congress to pass this legislation as quickly as possible.

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## Palo Alto Membership Meeting

SPONSORED BY THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER, INC AND VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM'S SCI/D CENTER

  
  
**PALO ALTO**  
*Membership Meeting*

**TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2026**  
 MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND LUNCH  
 TIME: 11:00 AM  
 LOCATION: VA PALO ALTO HEALTH CARE SYSTEM  
 3801 MIRANDA AVENUE  
 BUILDING 7 SCI/D DINING ROOM  
 PALO ALTO, CA 94304  
**\*\*FOOD WILL BE PROVIDED\*\***

RSVP BY  
**TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026**  
 1 (650) 399-5296  
 OR AMARAL@BAWPVA.ORG

**SPONSORS**  




### Important Links

[AIR ACCESS 30 SHARE STORIES ABOUT YOUR AIR TRAVEL EXPERIENCES AS A PASSENGER WITH A DISABILITY](#)

[PUBLICATIONS VIEW CHAPTER NEWSLETTERS, ANNUAL REPORTS, PVA PUBLICATIONS](#)

[COVID-19 RESOURCES VIEW NATIONAL PVA'S RESOURCES AND UPDATES ON COVID-19](#)

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## Recreation Therapy Resource Fair

SPONSORED BY VA PACIFIC ISLANDS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM'S RECREATION THERAPY DEPARTMENT

**VA**



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

Veterans Health Administration  
Pacific Islands Health Care System

### Recreation Therapy Resource Fair

Come learn about what VAPIHCS has to offer, and learn about community resources that are available to Veterans



### Resources, Demonstrations, and Education



February 4<sup>th</sup>  
10am-12pm

Daniel K. Akaka VA Clinic  
91-1051 Franklin D Roosevelt  
Kapolei, HI 96707



For More Information  
Call 808-433-0240



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## National Service Officer (NSO) Chat

SPONSORED BY THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA AND THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER, INC.

### Member Column

THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA AND WESTERN CHAPTER INC.'S WILL BE HOSTING MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS THROUGHOUT 2026.

THE CHAPTER IS STILL IN THE PLANNING STAGES FOR ALL MEETINGS, BUT WE PLAN TO VISIT ALL OUR CATCHMENTS AREAS. BELOW IS THE TENATIVE TIMELINE FOR EVENTS.

PALO ALTO - MARCH 10TH  
SACRAMENTO - MARCH 2026  
FRESNO - APRIL 2026  
HAWAII - OCTOBER 2026

WE LOOK FORWARD TO FUTURE EVENTS. WE ENCOURAGE PVA MEMBERS, CAREGIVERS, SPOUSES, FAMILY MEMBERS, FRIENDS, AND OTHERS TO ATTEND THE EVENTS. IT IS A GREAT WAY TO INTERACT WITH OUR SCI/D FAMILY AND LEARN MORE ABOUT PVA.

## Monthly Chat with your National Service Officer (NSO)

**Who:** PVA Members & SCI/D Veterans

**When:** Second Tuesday of the Month  
11:30am

(Will only stay on the call for 15 mins if no one calls in)

**Where:** Virtual (Zoom)  
Meeting ID: 867 9150 1025  
Passcode: 370759  
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86791501025?pwd=OHJ1KzNoVi9XR0FoSHNvVHRkcFRUZz09>

**Why:** To receive benefit updates and to ask questions



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## *About Us*

### **THE PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, BAY AREA & WESTERN CHAPTER, INC.**

The Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter, INC. (BAWPVA) is a nonprofit, veterans service organization located in Palo Alto, CA. BAWPVA serves spinal cord injured and/or dysfunction veterans located in Northern California, Northern Nevada and the Pacific Islands. BAWPVA is one of 33 chapters of the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) located across the United States. Currently, BAWPVA has 550 members, but sees over 1,000 paralyzed veterans at the SCI/D Center at VA Palo Alto Health Care System.

The Paralyzed Veterans of America, Bay Area and Western Chapter, INC. (BAWPVA) services provide direct support to the Chapter's programs. BAWPVA sponsors various events and adaptive sports clinics at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System in Palo Alto, CA, VA Northern California Health Care System, VA Central California Health Care System, VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System and VA Pacific Islands Health Care System.

If you are interested in membership, volunteering, or donating please contact us today.

Our office is located at:

3801 Miranda Ave.  
Building 7 Rm. E-118  
Palo Alto, CA 94304

Our Mailing Address is:

P.O. Box 27  
Palo Alto, CA 94304-0027

Phone:

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(650) 399-5296 - Mobile

Email:

administration@bawpva.org

Website:

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