

# RT '18

Rollin' Times from the Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America



The MPVA team holds the banner as the winner of the disabilities division crosses the finish line at the 2017 Detroit Free Press Marathon.





**Paralyzed Veterans  
of America**  
Michigan Chapter



PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA  
**MICHIGAN CHAPTER**

[www.michiganpva.org](http://www.michiganpva.org)



## About this Issue:

The MPVA proudly sponsors the disability division of the Detroit Free Press Marathon on an annual basis. This year's event was a tremendous success! Be sure to read the Executive Directors column for more details!

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Vice President..... Bob Vance	Director..... Scot Severn
Secretary..... Clark Shuler	Director..... Michael Harris
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### Disclaimer:

The Rollin' Times is a publication of the Michigan Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America. It is designed to inform the members of the PVA and other interested parties on veterans' issues, legislation, legal decisions, medical technology and other matters deemed to be relevant to the disability community.

The contents of this publication do not always reflect the views or policies of Michigan PVA, and no endorsement or approval is made or should be inferred with respect to products or services advertised herein. Consult an appropriate professional before making use of any product or service mentioned.

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Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America (MPVA) is one of 34 member chapters of Washington, D.C.-based Paralyzed Veterans of America. A Congressionally chartered veterans service organization, MPVA has been assisting veterans with spinal cord injuries or diseases, including Multiple Sclerosis and ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, better known as Lou Gehrig's Disease), in Michigan since 1961.

MPVA programs include:

- Veterans' Benefits
- Wheelchair Sports and Recreation
- Spinal Cord Injury Research
- Equipment Donation
- Advocacy to eliminate architectural barriers and protect civil rights for persons with disabilities
- Referral Services for assistive devices, housing, employment and transportation
- Literature on a variety of topics including self-care, independent living, and disability rights.
- The Pump Guide: an online directory of gas stations throughout Michigan that will pump gas at the self-serve price for persons with disabilities.
- MPVA is a nonprofit organization and receives no federal funding. MPVA relies on grants, sponsorships, and private and corporate donations to support its programs.

The MPVA headquarters is in Novi, Michigan. Our service officers are based out of the McNamara Federal Building in Downtown Detroit.

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# President's Report

By David Peck, President, MPVA

## New Year, New Opportunities

**H**appy New Year, members and friends!

While we rang in the New Year, we also sought out new opportunities at the Michigan Chapter. Those who have been by our headquarters may have noticed "said" opportunity in a "For Sale" sign posted in our boulevard.

This past summer, the MPVA Board of Directors met to discuss our next Fiscal Year and our budget goals. During that discussion, the Board talked about our long term objectives and strategic plans. We began to ponder the size of our building in Novi that we have owned since the early 1990's.

Although we get great use out of our Chapter building during a few membership events a year, we often do not utilize all of its space to its full capacity on a day-to-day basis. As such, we have a lot of costs associated with ownership (heating, cooling, maintenance, yardwork) that the Chapter incurs annually. This made the Directors of the Board very curious as to the value of our building and the cost-benefit to potentially sell it.

By September, the Board had reviewed three different realtor opinions and voted for one of the realtors to represent us in our listing. We were pleased with the potential profit that we could



*MPVA Board of Directors meet this past summer to discuss all that is happening at the Chapter.*

make, yet, we had the apprehension that most sellers have—“how long will it sit?”

Nearly 30 days after listing the building, an offer came in. The Board of Directors met, hashed over the details, and unanimously agreed that we should accept. With many particulars left to iron out, such as approval from our parent Chapter, PVA, we began the journey. Once approved by PVA, we pushed forward.

As of today, we are in the process of closing the sale on the building. In the interim, we happened upon a fantastic rental space located in Plymouth, Michigan, right off of M-14 and Beck Road. This space is operated by the “Michigan Life Science and Innovation Center,” another nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization. The office space there would allow the MPVA to rent for a nominal monthly fee (all maintenance, conference space areas, cleaning, heating, cooling and even office supplies included).

A site visit was conducted by members of the Board to ensure accessibility and the space passed with flying colors. In addition to the cost savings and simplified overhead, the Michigan Life Science and Innovation Center also has a large cafeteria area on site which will add to our ease while conducting meetings.

Moreover, reducing our size and renting will give our Chapter staff the capacity to host meetings

throughout our state where our members reside. This means that we will be coming out to you far more often than you have to come out to us! The cost savings from renting a smaller office in a larger, multitenant, space will offer up more monies that can directly go back into our membership programs which was the greatest selling point of all.

I ask that our members and friends be patient with us as we finalize all of these details. Right now, the sale is not considered “closed” as our buyer is ironing out final details (zoning issues and inspections). So, that means that there is still a slight chance that the deal does not come to fruition. However, we have an excellent relationship with the potential buyer and I feel strongly that all of these details will fall right into place.

Rest assured, our Board of Directors has you in mind throughout this endeavor. I promise that we will keep you all up-to-date. Should we finalize the sale, you should expect to have a flyer in your mailbox noting our move, our new address, and details of an open house!

Best wishes to all of you in this New Year! Thank you, as always, for your support.





# 38<sup>TH</sup>

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# Executive Director's Report

By Jaclyn Kochis, Executive Director, MPVA

## Reflecting on Veterans Day 2017



*Novi Choir Students share their gift of song at the 2017 Salute to Veterans Gala.*

**O**n November 10, 2017, the Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America (MPVA) celebrated Veterans Day by hosting our Annual “Salute to Veterans” Dinner, at the Suburban Collection Showplace, in Novi. Nearly 200 guests gathered to pay tribute to Michigan’s Veterans of the past and present.

Most people see Veterans Day as a day off from work. At MPVA, we see it as an opportunity to properly thank veterans for their service to their country. We see it as a celebration to honor America’s veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

The Keynote Speaker at this year’s dinner was someone who has been a part of the MPVA and its program for many years—Clark Shuler! A MPVA Member since 1991, Clark Shuler has actively served the Chapter in many capacities including: Chapter President, Chapter Board Member, and Chapter Secretary. He currently is the longest-serving Director of the Board who brings a wealth of knowledge that comes from his years of experience as a husband, father, business owner, and advocate.

Clark has worked hard over the years to exemplify that life with a disability should know no bounds. In 1987, Clark was catastrophically injured while driving from base during his service in the Michigan Air National Guard. His injury left him as a C-6/7 Quadriplegic. Despite his injury, Clark has undoubtedly kept a wonderful spirit and excellent sense of humor. He brings that attitude wherever he goes (which is not a short list) including his volunteerism at not only the Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America, but the Center for Independent Living. His advocacy and expertise has been acknowledged as he was bestowed the MPVA’s

highest honor in 2002, with the Chapter’s Brookes-Royal Memorial Award.

Hearing Clark speak was inspiring and entertaining. His thoughts and funny quips about life with a disability, military service, and PVA embody what our organization is about—a group that pushes through and advocates fiercely. I would like to thank Clark for acting as our Keynote—he was reluctant to do it, however, he exceeded our already high expectation!



*Clark Shuler speaking at the 2017 Salute to Veterans Gala.*

I would be remiss if I did not take time out to say thanks to some very special people for making this event possible. I would like to thank Rich Luterman for his continued support to our organization as the events Master of Ceremonies—we hope you are always able to join our Salute program! I would also like to recognize the Novi High School Choir for joining us for the first time! This group of students are so unbelievably talented and we were awed by their gift of song! It meant so much to us to have the students sing our nations anthem and a few patriotic songs.

Everyones contribution truly made a difference! I would especially like to thank the following list of sponsors who made our event possible:

Al Bourdeau Insurance Company, Bath for All, Clark Shuler, Fiat Chrysler, Fidelity Charitable, Health Partners, Littler, Lydia Graber, Michael Harris, Moceri, Providence Hospital, Richard & Norma Sarns, Star Rehab, Walk the Line SCI

See the inside back cover of this issue for photos from the 2017 Salute to Veterans Gala!

## Detroit Free Press Marathon

This year's Detroit Free Press/Talmer Bank Marathon took place on October 15th, 2017 and welcomed over 40 hand-cyclists and wheelchair push rim racers to take on the 26.2 mile course that twists throughout Detroit and Canada. Once again the Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America, along with Fusion Medical, were proud sponsors of the Disability Division of the race.

Guiding the streaking handcyclists were more than 60 bicycle escorts supplied by cycling clubs across southeast Michigan, and coordinated by the Royal Oak-based Wolverine Sports Club.

The addition of the bicyclists seemed to be a hit with the participants who can sometime encounter problems with their race equipment ranging from flat tires or broken chains that can hinder their race time. Likewise, the bicycle escorts came across the finish line expressing their admiration and marvel over the tough feat that hand-cyclists and wheelers has accomplished.



*Gregory D. Gadson, a retired colonel in the United States Army, and double amputee, prepares for a great race.*

MPVA had the opportunity once again to greet the Achilles Freedom Team of Wounded Veterans who

brought veterans from across the country to participate in this year's marathon.

Travis Peruski was the first hand-cyclist to reach the finish in time of 1:21:06 followed by Zach Stinson with a time of 1:30:39, and Nick Koulchar finished third with a time of 1:32:38. Emily Obert was the first female hand-cyclists with a time of 3:19:34. Andrew Barnhart was the first wheelchair racer to reach the finish line with a time of 3:46:25.



*Nick Koulchar, Army veteran and double amputee, gives some love to his family before he sets off for his race.*

Michael Harris, MPVA Director to the Board, served on the Board of the Detroit Free Press Marathon stated "I am always impressed by the athletes that participate in this race. Each year, I witness the work that goes into the race from both planning for the event and for the dedication and commitment that the athletes go through to complete the marathon."

There are only 50 spots available for the wheelchair division so if you want to guarantee participation in 2018 Marathon than I would recommend that you register as soon as possible.

The Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America would like to congratulate each and every person who competed in this year's Marathon. We look forward to next year's event and supporting the 2018 Disability Division.





**Photo: Stephanie Strickland, Sr. National Service Officer serving Michigan**  
**Written By: Doug Woodard, Sr. National Veteran Service Officer**

## New Veterans ID Cards

**A**cknowledgement of being a U.S. military veteran is very gratifying to me. Like all the veterans that I have met throughout the years, I am proud of my service to our country. Considering some of the tremendous sacrifices that many veterans have made, I am humbled to be a part of the community of former service members.

Furthermore, I have found it very pleasing that some commercial entities recognize the sacrifice and dedication that men and women in uniform have endured for the good of our country and fellow citizens. These retailers, restaurants, and certain other businesses have shown their appreciation of military veterans by providing discounts to certain goods and services. Typically, one must show verification of being a military veteran, usually in the form of the veteran ID card issued by a VA medical center or copy of his or her DD 214, when they purchase the good or service. Unfortunately, not all veterans have the appropriate identification. For example, if a veteran does not receive his or her healthcare at a VA medical center he or she won't likely have any type of photo ID that shows veteran status. Granted, some states in the country now indicate veteran status on a driver's license. However, not all veterans have a driver's license. Moreover, how many veterans carry a copy of their discharge papers with them when they go shopping? As you can see, it is not always easy for all veterans to prove their status when they go to buy a gallon of paint.

Consequently, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has now made it easier for former service members to show their veteran status. The VA is now offering to provide veterans ID cards (VIC) to those eligible. To receive a VIC, you must have a discharge of honorable or general from the military. To request a VIC, veterans must visit [www.vets.gov](http://www.vets.gov), click on "Apply for Printed Veteran ID Card", sign in or create an account.

Personally, I accessed this website on the evening of December 10, 2017, then clicked on the appropriate link. I was then directed to enter my email address, and that I would receive a response on how to proceed. The news release of this new initiative was announced on November 29, 2017; therefore, I do expect the possibility of some delay before I receive my VIC. However, I will diligently and patiently watch for notice of the next action that I am instructed to take to receive my VIC. Furthermore, encourage all eligible to log on to the website and start the process. As always, if you have any question about the information provided in this article, you can contact the VA directly at 800-827-1000. Also, you can contact Stephanie Strickland in the Detroit PVA office at 313-471-3996.



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By: Mike Harris

## Michigan no-fault reform defeated in House of Representatives

**O**n November 2, 2017, the Michigan House of Representatives voted 45-63 to defeat House Bill (HB) 5013.

HB 5013, opposed by Michigan Paralyzed Veterans of America (MPVA) and most other auto no-fault supporters, would have made drastic changes to Michigan's auto no-fault insurance system, with serious implications for those injured in auto accidents and providers.

So what exactly would HB 5013 do? Basically, the measure, if passed, would have been "the end of no-fault as we know it" according to CPAN legal team. In addition of not guaranteeing auto insurance rate reductions, HB 5013 would have:

- Authorized unprecedented dollar cap limitations on no-fault benefits by allowing motorists to choose less coverage for a reduce rate.
- Give insurance companies substantial control over patient's medical care.
- Increased the power of insurance companies, while taking away the legal rights of patients.

Once again, I want to thank the Coalition to Protect Auto No-fault (CPAN) for their efforts in defeating HB 5013. Their efforts along with other stakeholders, keep the opposition strong despite intense lobbying in support of the legislation by Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan, Speaker of the House Tom Leonard and Governor Rick Snyder.

CPAN has not stopped its efforts to find the necessary bipartisan support for a reform package that could

receive legislative approval. Discussions continue with legislative leadership and certain House members willing to be thoughtful and seek balanced reform to achieve cost savings. Certain proposals from the recently introduced Fair & Affordable Reform Package, supported by CPAN, are part of the discussions.

MPVA agrees that Michigan auto insurance rates need to be lower. HB 5013 was not the solution. What it was is a bad deal for Michigan drivers and accident victims. In fact, the only group that benefited from the bill was the auto insurance industry which would have seen benefits capped for accidents victims and no permanent requirement to lower costs. Now that HB 5013 has failed, it is time for the Legislature to consider a real solution with strong bipartisan support that would provide rate relief for all drivers without gutting benefits.

Once again, MPVA is calling on Michigan legislators to enact laws that require the MCCA to release financial information so both policy makers and interest groups can make informed decisions on proposed changes to the Michigan No-Fault law.

The information is critical in revealing to Michigan citizens and lawmakers the rationale behind the insurance industry claim that Michigan's current auto no-fault system is financially unsustainable and that the MCCA will soon go bankrupt without capping benefits and enforcing strict cost controls.

To date, the MCCA has continued to assert its claim of exemption from all attempts to secure this essential information – including the recently-filed FOIA lawsuit by CPAN – effectively blocking the ability of all concerned parties to assess the no-fault system, address

its shortfalls, and collaborate on appropriate solutions to fix the system without sacrificing no-fault's core principle of immediate access to appropriate, unlimited care for catastrophically-injured victims.

This is about transparency and access to information. The MCCA is a public body that collects millions of dollars from millions of Michigan citizens, including our state lawmakers, and we have a right to see the records of how that money is managed.

The MPVA believes that the Michigan No-fault system provides the best insurance value in the country and needs to be maintained. Since the early 1990's

insurance companies have been attempting to impose strict controls, reduce benefits and promote other reforms that would eliminate no-fault as it is known in Michigan today.

Each attempt has ended in the same result: with lawmakers and the public reaffirming their support for a system that allows people seriously injured in an auto accident to get the medical care they need without bankrupting their families and turning to welfare.



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# Sports & Recreation

By: Ray Brown

## Deer Hunting with Wheelin' Team 457



“Line of Duty” is a new program added to the team, in its second year it chose Charlie Woods to receive the prized hunt. Charlie is a Vietnam Army Veteran and is a double Purple Heart recipient. “Line of Duty” qualifications say you must have been injured in the line of duty--firemen, border guards, and soldiers may all be awarded. However, only one lucky servant may be selected. There is hope the program will expand to include more recipients in the near future.

Charlie was injured in a high speed chase of a wanted criminal and a severe auto crash forced him into retirement. Charlie is a very deserving hero whom we were pleased to see recognized.

Mike Green of Greens Deer Ranch guided Charlie on his exciting hunt. Charlie first saw the 11 point buck and brought it to Mike's attention. Impressed, Mike said, “take that buck!” Charlie affirmed that he had an ethical shot and yielded a great harvest. On top of this, Charlie

also received a free processing and shoulder mount for his living room!

I was fortunate to be awarded the largest buck award in our Independent Hunt. The massive 8 point was well

listened to heart felt stories from each hunter.

I would like to especially thank the Deerfield Fire Department as they helped us harvest the deer on this 3 day hunt. Additionally, Johnston's Meats of Peck



over 200 pounds. My guide, Roger Wilcox, first saw the deer at 200 yards. We agreed that Roger should use his grunt to call the deer in closer for a better shot. The plan worked accordingly, and I dropped the buck at 90 yards.

Mike Leonard, Air Force Veteran, also took an 8 pointer while fellow Air Force Veteran, Bill Horen, scored a 6 pointer. Marvin Powell took a 7 point, Loren Ludwig a 5 point, and Andy Winter took a 5 pointer!

Our hunt ended with a harvest dinner at Lions Bear Lake Camp where hunters, guides, and property owners

Michigan donated free processing of all the deer taken. I would also like to recognize the MPVA, Ray C's Harley Davison of Lapeer for their continued support.

The anticipation of the Spring Turkey Hunt was in the air as we said our goodbyes and close the book on another great Wheelin' Team 457 event. Thank the good Lord for the great harvest!





# 2017 Salute to Veterans Gala





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## Valuable Dates for 2018



### Presidents Day

Office Closed February 19<sup>th</sup>  
in Observation of  
President's Day



### Membership Meeting

LET'S GO BOWLING!!  
Come join us for bowling, lunch and fun!  
(NO COST TO YOU 😊)  
Thursday, February 15, 2018  
Lunch will be served at noon,  
and 2 games of bowling will follow at:  
Revel and Roll Bowling Lanes  
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To reserve your spot...

Please R.S.V.P-MPVA by  
Friday, February 9th  
Phone: 800-638-6782