

Southeastern Chronicles



June—July 2025



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4010 Deans Bridge Road | Hephzibah, Georgia 30815

706-796-6301 | www.pvasoutheastern.org



Serving Those Served

The Team Behind The Mission

Hollis L. Bush, Jr. – Executive Director

Evelt Williams – Administrative Assistant

PVASE OFFICERS

President – Linda Hutchinson

Vice President – Frank Dewayne McGowan

Secretary – Marco Bungert

Treasurer— Larry Dodson

Board Member - Michael Bishop

Board Member – Jason Dills

Board Member – Frederick “Rick” Evans

Board Member – Justin Hall

Board Member – Charles Outlaw

Board Member— Scott Winkler

National Director – Frederick “Rick” Evans

PVASE PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Sports and Recreation Director
Frederick “Rick” Evans

Government Relations Director
Justin Hall

Women’s Veteran Empowerment
Coordinator – Linda Hutchinson

Membership Director—Michael Bishop

Chapter Newsletter Editor – Amy Dotson

Volunteer Coordinator – Evelt Williams

VAWS Representative – Alan Washington

NATIONAL SERVICE OFFICERS

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From the President

Linda Hutchinson

Southeastern Chapter - On the Move

President's Report



It was a true honor to attend PVA's National Convention in Austin, Texas this year—my first time representing the Southeastern Chapter at this national gathering. I'm proud to share that the progress we've made in strengthening the way our chapter conducts business was recognized multiple times by members of the National Executive Committee. In fact, we've been asked to collaborate with the leadership of two other chapters to share the strategies behind our improvements. It's encouraging to see our chapter becoming a model for others.

The Board of Directors has made the important decision to retain our current building and property. With the rising costs in the Medical District real estate market, it's not financially feasible to relocate at this time. Instead, we're focusing on maintaining and upgrading our current space. We're gathering estimates

"I'm proud to share that the progress we've made in strengthening the way our chapter conducts business was recognized multiple times by members of the National Executive Committee."

for roof replacement and additional repairs to ensure our building continues to meet the needs of our members. As outlined in the Executive Director's report, we're actively pursuing grant funding to help cover these expenses.

In June, I'll be representing our chapter at the annual Legislation and Advocacy Seminar, followed by the Push on the Hill event in Washington, D.C., from June 10th–12th. There, I will meet with members of Congress from South Carolina to advocate for the healthcare, benefits, and accessibility needs of our veteran community and all individuals living with mobility disabilities. A full report on these efforts will appear in our August/September newsletter.

As always, your voice matters. If your contact information has changed, please let us know so we can stay connected. In the coming weeks, a member of our team will be reaching out to learn more about your interests and how the Chapter can better support you—whether through events, services, or advocacy efforts.

Thank you for your continued strength, engagement, and commitment to our mission.

Thank you
for your generous
contributions.

1 October 2024 - 30 May 2025 Donors

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From the Executive Director

Hollis Bush



Progress, Purpose, & Participation

PVA Southeastern Chapter

Southeastern Members,

The Chapter moves forward in a positive direction. The Chapter is no longer on monitoring status!! Now, at the Annual Convention and Fall Board of Directors meetings, Southeastern Chapter votes on National PVA resolutions which affect the organization's direction and members. With a new Chapter Executive Committee and Board of Directors, we are working hard to ensure the organization focuses on members' care, membership, sports, recreation, and legislation/advocacy.

We're not moving. The Board of Directors voted not to sell the Chapter headquarters on Deans Bridge Road in Hephzibah, Georgia. The headquarters requires a new roof and gutters. Through the grant writing service, grants will be researched and submitted to cover these costs.

To increase revenue, the Chapter office will organize an annual PVA Southeastern Chapter Golf tournament starting in 2026. Preliminary coordination has started with the Mount Vintage Golf Club located in North Augusta, South Carolina.

A member of the Chapter Finance Committee continues to conduct monthly Chapter reconciliation to ensure contributions are used efficiently. With these reconciliations, the Chapter is postured to complete an annual audit.

"The Chapter is no longer on monitoring status!! Now, at the Annual Convention and Fall Board of Directors meetings, Southeastern Chapter votes on National PVA resolutions which affect the organization direction and members."

Volunteers are still needed to fill critical positions in the Chapter. The Chapter is seeking members to work with the Membership Director, Michael Bishop as Membership Leads in Birmingham, Alabama and Montgomery, Alabama as well as Columbia, South Carolina. Also, the Chapter is seeking members to work with Justin Hall, Government Relations Director as Advocacy/Legislation Leads. As all members know, providing information to members is one of the most important functions of the Chapter. Since the chapter has members in five states, (AL, TN, NC, SC and GA), Advocacy/Legislation members are needed to properly support this requirement in all five states. Informing locally elected officials at the federal and state level about access and disability legislation issues is imperative. Building a relationship with legislators ensures efforts are coordinated and worked by our representatives. Please contact the office to get involved.

Remember, this is your Chapter. Your support and voice are needed to make the Paralyzed Veterans of America Southeastern Chapter a chapter that cares and supports its members and improves their quality of life. I encouraged members without registered email addresses to contact the Chapter and provide an email address at 706-796-6301 or paravet@comcast.net.

Rick Evans

Sports/Recreation Director



Gearing Up for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games — Minnesota, Here We Come!

Excitement is in the air as we gear up for one of the biggest adaptive sports events of the year — the 2025 National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG), set to take place in Minnesota! We're proud to announce that 36 dedicated athletes from the Southeastern Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America will be representing us at this year's games. Each of these athletes embodies the spirit of perseverance, strength, and sportsmanship that makes our chapter so special.

As we look forward to this inspiring week of competition, connections, and celebration, our mission doesn't stop at the Games. At PVA Southeastern, we're committed to promoting wellness, community, and active lifestyles all year round. We know that staying active goes beyond organized sports. That's why we're always looking for new ideas, events, programs and activities to help our members stay active, engaged, and most importantly — having fun.

Whether you're a seasoned athlete or just looking to try something new, we want to hear from you! We're here to support every member in finding activities that match their interests and abilities. Your feedback and participation are the driving force behind what we do. Reach out to anyone on our team to learn more about ongoing programs and how you can get involved.

Let's keep the momentum going — on the road to Minnesota and beyond!



Big Fish, Bigger Spirit: Dan Loyal Lands a 47-Pound Catch

On a peaceful spring day in Lincolnton, Georgia, the PVA Southeastern Chapter gathered for a fishing trip filled with fresh air, flat water, and even flatter-out fun. Veterans, staff, and volunteers came together not just for the fishing — but for connection, healing, and a healthy dose of laughter.

But it was Dan Loyal who turned the day into legend.

With a quiet confidence (and a cooler packed for success), Dan rolled near the pond with one mission: catch a fish worth bragging about. He did that — and then some.

With skill, strength, and patience, Dan reeled in a massive 47-pound flathead catfish.

Beyond the big catch, the day was a reminder of what makes our chapter special: resilience, support, and the joy of shared experiences. Whether you're hauling in giants or just enjoying the breeze, there's nothing better than time spent with those who understand the road we've traveled.

Thank you to all who joined us, supported us, and made this trip unforgettable. And to Dan — your fish tale just became chapter history.



Big Catfish



National Director PVASE

Rick Evans

National Director's Report

Greetings Troops,

Our Chapter President, Linda Hutchinson, Executive Director, Hollis Bush, and I recently had the honor of attending the 79th Annual PVA Convention in Austin, Texas. It was a productive and inspiring event that brought together leaders from across the nation.

We're pleased to share that the PVA Executive Committee welcomed two new officers: Marcus Murray has been appointed as Vice President, and Matt Peeling as Secretary. The remaining members of the Executive Committee will continue in their current roles, providing continuity and strong leadership.

I'm proud to report that the National PVA fully supports the Southeastern Chapter and our ongoing efforts. As we continue to grow and strengthen our impact, I encourage all members to consider serving on one of the many National PVA committees. If you or someone you know is interested, please reach out directly to me so we can submit their name for consideration.

As always, if you have any questions or need more information, don't hesitate to contact me.



Paralyzed Veterans of America Southeastern

Newsletter Advertising Pricing & Deadlines

Effective May 2024

(Each publication is mailed to approximately 2,500 unique address throughout the southeast)

AD SIZES	ANNUAL RATE	SINGLE ISSUE RATE
BUSINESS CARD	\$110.00 B&W \$132.00 color	\$27.00 B&W \$33.00 color
QUARTER PAGE	\$220.00 B&W \$265.00 color	\$38.00 B&W \$46.00 color
HALF PAGE	\$330.00 B&W \$395.00 color	\$60.00 B&W \$72.00 color
FULL PAGE OTHER	\$550.00 B&W \$660.00 color	\$115.00 B&W \$125.00 color
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BACK COVER/HALF PAGE	\$550.00 COLOR ONLY	\$125.00 COLOR ONLY

SPECIAL ISSUE RATES (AD WILL BE PUBLISHED IN JUNE/JULY & DEC/JAN ISSUES ONLY)

HALF PAGE \$99.00 B&W \$119.00 color

FULL PAGE \$155.00 B&W \$185.00 color

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

DECEMBER/JANUARY

FEBRUARY/MARCH

APRIL/MAY

JUNE/JULY

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

AD COPY DUE DATE

NOVERMBER 15th

JANUARY 15th

MARCH 15th

MAY 15th

JULY 15th

SEPTEMBER 15th

Supporting Our Communities, One Wheelchair at a Time

The Paralyzed Veterans of America – Southeastern Chapter proudly donated a generous number of wheelchairs—graciously provided to us by **Penske**—to several incredible organizations serving those in need of mobility and care in Augusta, Georgia.

These donations were presented to:

- **Healthcare Resources**
- **Augusta Technical College**
- **Heavenly Hands Personal Care Home**
- **Allean's Personal Care Home**
- **United Cerebral Palsy of Georgia**
- **Christ Community Health**



Our Chapter President, **Linda Hutchinson**, had the honor of making a presentation on May 8th at **Christ Community Health** to **Elizabeth Merritt**, Director of Development and Communications, **Kevin Horne, RN** - Director of Medical Operations & Risk Management, and **Will Jackson III**, CEO.

We were thrilled to have **WFXG Fox 54** on-site to cover and air this meaningful event, helping us shine a light on the importance of community partnerships and support for individuals with mobility needs.

This donation is a small step in our ongoing mission to support veterans, enhance mobility, and give back to the community. We're grateful to our partners and proud to serve alongside those who care for others every day.

Veteran's Artwork Featured in Local Gallery



Mr. William Culley, a patient in the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) unit at the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center, has been expressing his creativity through painting during his inpatient stay. His artwork is currently on display at Gallery 523 in Augusta, a unique space that showcases pieces exclusively created by individuals with disabilities.

Mr. Culley recently had the opportunity to visit the gallery during a community outing organized by Recreation Therapists Mackenzie Snider and Suzanne Kenrick. He was joined by fellow veterans from the SCI unit as they explored the inspiring collection of art — including Mr. Culley's own contributions.

This outing highlights the importance of creative expression and community connection in the rehabilitation process, and we are proud to see our veterans celebrated for their talents.

Smyrna Thrift Store supports Southeastern Paralyzed Veterans!



Your donations of clothing and household items to this charity provide funding to support their many programs to enrich the lives of those veterans who have dealt with paralyzing injuries during and or after their service in the military.

Smyrna Thrift Store offers a wide variety of used merchandise including clothing, household items, kitchen utensils, wall hangings, furnishings, yard equipment, tools, sporting goods, fishing equipment and more.

**Stop by at 3150 S. Cobb Dr, Smyrna, Ga
to see what great deals you can find!**





Lifting Each Other Up: Women Veterans Leading the Way

Efforts to launch and grow the Women's Empowerment group within the Southeastern Chapter are continuing to move forward. While scheduling has been a challenge, we're committed to building a strong, supportive community for the women of our chapter. Due to busy calendars and upcoming events, our next Zoom meeting will be scheduled after we return from the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG).

At last month's PVA National Convention, Vice President Anne Robinson emphasized the importance of women's representation and encouraged our chapter to send three delegates to the upcoming Women Veterans Empowerment Retreat (WEVER) in September. We're proud to announce that Joann Dickson-Smith, Amy Dotson, and I will be representing the Southeastern Chapter at this important event.

Please stay tuned for details about our next Zoom meeting, which will be shared in the August/September edition of the newsletter.

Justin Hall

Government Relations



Rolling Strong: Advocating for Veterans' Rights in Washington

and Justin Hall.

We're proud to announce that the Southeastern Chapter will be well represented at this year's Roll on Capitol Hill in June—Paralyzed Veterans of America's premier legislative and advocacy event. Representing our chapter will be Amy Dotson, Linda Hutchinson, Rick Evans, Charles Outlaw,

This vital event provides a powerful platform to engage directly with lawmakers, share the lived experiences of veterans with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D), and advocate for policies that safeguard and enhance their care and quality of life.

We encourage all members and supporters to add their voices by signing petitions to protect and expand care for individuals with SCI/D at www.votervoice.net/PVA/Petitions/5455/Respond.

Stay tuned for updates from Capitol Hill as our team works to make your voice heard.

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Veterans Responsibilities of Correct Mailing Address

Every veteran has certain responsibilities if he or she is in receipt of Service Connected or Non-service connected benefits.

One of the first responsibilities is to report any change of address as soon as possible so that any sent VA correspondence is properly received by you. Address changes to the VARO can be reported by using the VA Form 20-572, REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS, or a VA Form 21-4138, STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF CLAIM, by a direct letter from you to your local VARO, or by calling the VA 1-800 827-1000 number. Remember if you call in an address change you must back it up with written correspondence.

If you are service connected at 30 percent or greater and are receiving payments for any of your dependents such as your children, stepchildren and or a spouse you must notify the Veterans Administration Regional Office, VARO as soon as possible of any dependent changes. Such changes as to a child leaving your household, death of a dependent, divorce of spouse; are just a few that needs reported quickly, so as not to cause you as the veteran any possible overpayment.

Under compensation or Pension benefits, dependent changes such as your children or stepchildren attending school at age 18 through 23 are reported by using a VA Form 21-674, REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE. This VA Form is sent to the veteran when the child is close to the age of 18. This VA form must be read completed and return to the VARO so that any adjustments can be made. This is one reason why your correct mailing address through the VA is important to keep updated. The VARO also every few years will verify your current listed dependents. This is done when the VARO will mail out a VA Form 21-0538, Mandatory Verification of Dependents. This VA form has to be reviewed, completed and returned within 60 days. If this form is not returned after 60 days, the VA could start to review your claim file for a possible overpayment action.

One item to remember is most VA mail is not allowed to be forwarded by a Post Office. If an address on the VA correspondence does not match. The correspondence is then to be returned by the Post Office to the VARO. Any return mail could cause your current VA benefits to be delayed until your mailing address is verified.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your current VA benefits, feel free to contact your local PVA Service Office for assistance.

SCI Unit Courtyard Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

May 30, 2025



VA - Augusta Downtown

SCI Unit Courtyard Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

May 30, 2025



VA - Augusta Downtown

PVA Southeastern—Stories in Pictures



PVA Southeastern Chapter members, staff, and volunteers enjoyed a day of camaraderie, calm waters, and big catches during a memorable fishing trip in Lincolnton, Georgia — where the stories (and the catfish) were larger than life!

SCI/D COORDINATORS

Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center, Augusta, GA

SCI Clinic Coordinator: (800)836-5561, ext. 33778 or 33710
SCI Outpatient Clinic Nurse, (800)836-5561, ext. 32245
SCI Home Care Coordinator
SCI Fee B&B: Shavondria Davis, (800)836-5561, ext. 32242

Atlanta/Decatur VA Medical Center

SCI/D Coordinator: Ebony J. Stuckey, 404-321-6111, ext. 202475

Birmingham VA Medical Center

SCI/D Coordinator: Nazaren Hartman, 205-933-8101, ext. 6453

Central Alabama Veterans Healthcare System (Montgomery/Tuskegee)

SCI/D Coordinator: Tammy Davidson, 334-727-0550, ext. 53219

Charleston VA Medical Center

SCI/D Coordinator: Cheryl Jefferson, 843-789-6456 or 843-577-5011, ext. 206456

Columbia VA Medical Center

SCI/D Coordinator: Rosland Sims, 803-869-0122

Dublin VA Medical Center

SCI/D Coordinator: Kierra Allen, 478-274-5459

Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center

SCI/D Coordinator: James Smith, 205-554-3542

Asheville VA Medical Center

SCI/D Coordinator: Amy Pike, 828-298-7911, ext. 15384

Mountain Home VA Medical Center

SCI/D Coordinator: Marcy Fleenor, 423-979-2647 or 423-926-1171, ext. 2746

Salisbury VA Medical Center

SCI/D Coordinator: Alice Gatewood, 704- 638-9000, ext. 3144

**WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS**

David M. Senters
Oliver B. Smalls Jr.
Miquel F. Perkins

**WELCOME
TRANSFERS**

**CONDOLENCES
TO THE FAMI-
LIES OF OUR
DECEASED MEM-
BERS**

COUNT BY STATE

AL: 71
GA: 681
NC: 177
SC: 341
TN: 58

**SERVICE
CONNECTED
TOTAL**

Yes: 783
No: 694

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Total Membership: 1,477

Period of Service Total

World War II: 1
Korean Conflict: 21
Vietnam Era: 581
Peacetime : 805
Gulf War: 380
Iraqi Freedom: 185
War in Afghanistan: 217

Age Range Total

25-34: 16
35-44: 67
45-54: 152
55-64: 352
65-74: 470
75-84: 354
85-94: 63
95 and Over: 2
Not Available: 1

TRANSFERRED OUT THE CHAPTER

None

REINSTATED

1

Southeastern Chapter Membership Leaders

Chapter Membership Director: Michael Bishop

Membership Leads:

Asheville, NC: Dewayne McGowan

Atlanta, GA: Jason Dills

Augusta, GA: Michael Bishop

Birmingham, AL: Vacant

Charleston, SC: Joseph Gethers

Columbia, SC: Joseph Gethers

Dublin, GA: Keith Thompson

Montgomery, AL: Vacant

Mountain Home, TN: Dewayne McGowan

Johnson City, TN Membership Meetings

December 4, 2024

April 18, 2025

August 22, 2025

December 5, 2025

Time:

12:00 noon—2:00pm

Location:

Golden Corral,
3104 Browns Mill Road,
Johnson City, TN 37604
423-854-9400

Asheville NC meeting has been suspended until future date.



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