

## A Note from John



Dear Friends;

As BVL celebrates our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary we are encouraged and committed, yet concerned...

- Encouraged because we have seen an uptick in associations, bowling centers, and industry partners interested in supporting our very important mission. To each of you -- our deep and sincere thanks.
- Committed because we are determined to keep the promise our sport made to America's troops: "We will NOT FORGET your sacrifice." We appreciate our freedoms because of the dedication of our nation's military men and women.  
BUT we are:
- Concerned because the level of giving is not keeping pace with the needs of our veterans. Applications for BVL grants continue to pour in from VA Medical Centers from coast-to-coast, however we cannot fulfill all the requests.

At our formation in 1942, the field of recreation therapy was in its infancy. As bowlers themselves, our founders detected they saw a difference in our wounded warriors when bowling with their comrades. They sensed that sharing a card game with "the guys" helped pass the lonely hours in the hospital.

Much has changed in recreation therapy over the last 75 years.

Today, we know that recreation therapy is often the key to successful recuperation and a return to a healthy, happy lifestyle. We are *confident* that BVL's mission is critical to the welfare of our veterans; we *see* we are making a difference.

What's more, with a budget of just under \$1 million, and an overhead of just over 6%, we're making a difference efficiently and effectively.

How can you help us celebrate our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary?

Consider this:

For \$75 we can provide a vet with an arts and crafts kit which can be the ticket she needs to try her hand at painting or weaving or jewelry making. With some guidance from her rec therapist, she can develop a life-long skill that guides her out of her shell, keeps her mentally fit, and brings her a source of pride...Which is just what we did for 80 veterans recently at the Ann Arbor VAMC alone and veterans in more than 40 other VA facilities across the US last year.

For \$750 we can engage dementia patients with variations of the successful "Music and Memories" program which surrounds patients with visual stimuli along with music to cue cognitive/memory stimulation, reminiscing, conversation pieces, and one-on-one activities with staff. Recreation therapists report that surrounding our aging population with pleasant reminders of their past can

produce heart-warming results...Which is just happened at the Canandaigua, Amarillo, and Washington, DC facilities along with dozens of others.

For \$7500 we can transform a drab hospital day room, adding colorful art on the walls, purchasing new billiards and foosball tables, installing a TV, gaming systems, and more to create a welcoming environment for patients awaiting treatment, providing a safe haven to build camaraderie with fellow vets and a chance to have *fun*... which is just what was constructed at the Augusta VAMC as well as several others.

Join us.

Here's a suggestion to all associations: Make a donation in the 75 denomination (\$75, \$750, \$7500) to allow us to continue to Brighten Veterans' Lives. <http://bit.ly/2nKwW44>

Make a difference today!

Warm Regards,

*John*

John LaSpina, Chairman  
BVL Board of Directors