24th National Veterans Golden Age Games

News Release

Virginia Veteran Competes in National Games

Des Moines, Iowa – May 29, 2010 – Air Force Veteran Gianfranco Matassa, from Richmond, Va., is one of more than 700 Veterans in their golden age who are in Des Moines, Iowa, May 26-31, 2010, competing in the 24th National Veterans Golden Age Games, the largest sporting event in the world for senior Veterans. All athletes are U.S. military Veterans from across the country age 55 and older, receiving medical care through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Matassa, 62, is competing in the following events:

Dominoes, Bowling-WC-ADP

This event is sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Help Hospitalized Veterans (HHV) and Veterans Canteen Service (VCS). Hosted this year by the VA Central Iowa Health Care System, the Games demonstrate the value of regular exercise, recreation and friendly competition for all Veterans, especially those dealing with age-related illnesses. Veterans compete in seven age categories in ambulatory, wheelchair or visually impaired divisions. Events include swimming, cycling, table tennis, dominoes, shuffleboard, horseshoes, nine-ball, bowling, checkers, golf, croquet, shot-put, discus and air rifles. The Games serve as a qualifying event for competition in the National Senior Games in a number of the competitive events.

Sports and fitness are vital ingredients of VA's national rehabilitation special events. Physical activity and friendly competition engage the mind as well as the body, and recreation therapy fills a special need in the lives of older patients at VA health care centers across the country. This event encourages VA patients over the age of 55 to make physical activity a central part of their lives, and supports VA's comprehensive recreation and rehabilitation therapy programs. It is a national showcase for the preventive and therapeutic value of sports, fitness and recreation.

The National Veterans Golden Age Games are one of the most progressive and adaptive rehabilitative senior sports programs in the world.

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Note to Editor: Information provided by Veteran. If you would like to interview Matassa, contact Kristi Bell at (757) 768-6689 or (757) 726-6016.