



# The Pacesetter

*14th National Veterans Golden Age Games*

A Daily Production of the National Veterans Golden Age Games • Wednesday, September 6, 2000

## D.C. Cruisers Drive a Winning Streak

"A lot of people think that after you've had a triple bypass that's the end, but that's not the case," explains Bernard Gibson. "I jump rope, do 200 sit-ups every night and lift weights in the morning." The Washington, D.C. Army veteran takes his training very serious, not only to stay in shape, but also to stay on top of his game.

His game is table tennis, and he's ranked number 633 in the nation. He showcased his talents on Monday in the Table Tennis competition, winning his second gold medal in the National Veterans Golden Age Games. "I won the silver my first year at the Games (1998), then a gold last year in Geneva, N.Y.," he said. A recent birthday pushed him up to the 65-69 age group and he was anxious to return to the Games to test the new competition. "I think these Games are a wonderful thing," he remarked. "They keep you active and give you a chance to exercise and compete, and it's just like a family reunion here."

Gibson started playing table tennis when he was 11 and has amassed an impressive collection of medals and trophies ever since. "I thought the bypass might slow me down, but seven months after the operation, I was playing in the



*Bernard Gibson drives home another gold medal for the Capitol Hill Cruisers in Table Tennis.*

Senior Olympics and won the entire thing," he said. "Bernie is fantastic," agreed Navy veteran Stan Levy and former paratrooper James (Bubba) March, two of his teammates on the Capitol Hill Cruisers, the Washington, D.C. team. "We're going to Baltimore in November to give him our support." (Gibson will be competing on November 23 in the North American Table Tennis Championships held in Baltimore, MD.)

Levy and March also agree that the Games are a great event and both are happy to be here. "They do a great job here," said Levy. His teammate March added, "When you think about what goes on behind the scenes here, it's incredible. We should give all these volunteers a medal!"

Gibson isn't the only medal winner on the D.C. team. Teammate Ted Moore, an Army veteran, is back in the competition after missing last year's Games following a mild stroke. And he's wasted no time in making his presence felt. Moore took the gold in the 9-ball wheelchair event—a medal he won last time at the Games—a gold in horseshoes,

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### Attention Coaches

Please provide your flight departure times to the dispatcher in Emerald Room IV **by noon today**. Your departure times are needed to create a shuttle schedule and make sure all participants arrive at the airport in time for their flights. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Gregory McCrimmon, the transportation coordinator in Emerald Room IV.

# On The Menu...

for Wednesday, September 6

## BREAKFAST

6:30 to 8:30 am in both hotels

Scrambled Eggs  
Breakfast Potatoes  
Ham  
French Toast/Syrup  
Oatmeal & Grits  
Donuts  
Fresh Fruit  
Beverages

## LUNCH

11 am to 1:30 pm

Garden Greens with Dressing  
Fruit Salad  
Fried Chicken  
BBQ Brisket  
Baked Beans  
Whipped Potatoes & Gravy  
Green Beans  
Rolls and Butter  
Desserts/Ice Cream  
Beverages

## DINNER

4:30 - 6:30 pm

Garden Greens with Dressing  
Broccoli Salad  
Baked Cod with Tartar Sauce  
Grilled Steak  
Wheat Berry Rice Pilaf  
Country Fried Potatoes  
Sauteed Squash Medley  
Rolls and Butter  
Desserts/Ice cream  
Beverages

## Today's Schedule

8 AM	9 AM	10 AM	11 AM	Noon	1 PM	2 PM	3 PM	4 PM	5 PM
<b>Quarter Mile Bicycle Race</b> All Ages Colmery-O'Neill VAMC		<b>Half Mile Bicycle Race</b> All Ages Colmery-O'Neill VAMC							
<b>Croquet</b> (Ages 60-64, 70-74) Colmery-O'Neill VAMC		<b>Croquet</b> (Ages 65-69, 80+) Colmery-O'Neill VAMC			<b>Croquet</b> (Ages 55-59, 75-79) Colmery-O'Neill VAMC				
<b>Bowling</b> (Ages 55-59, 75-79) Gage Bowl		<b>Bowling</b> (Ages 60-64,) Gage Bowl			<b>Bowling</b> (Ages 65-69, 80+) Gage Bowl		<b>Bowling</b> (Ages 70-74) Gage Bowl		
<b>Adaptive Bowling</b> (WC, Ramp, Push, Handle Ball, Visually Impaired) All Ages Southwest Bowl									

## Tomorrow's Schedule

8 AM	9 AM	10 AM	11 AM	Noon	1 PM	2 PM	3 PM	4 PM	5 PM
		<b>Golf</b> All Ages Lake Shawnee Golf Course							
<b>Dominoes</b> 75-79, 80+ Maner Conf. Ctr., Shawnee Rm		<b>Dominoes</b> 60-64, 70-74 Maner Conf. Ctr., Shawnee Rm			<b>Dominoes</b> 55-59, 65-69 Maner Conf. Ctr., Shawnee Rm				

## Medical Assistance

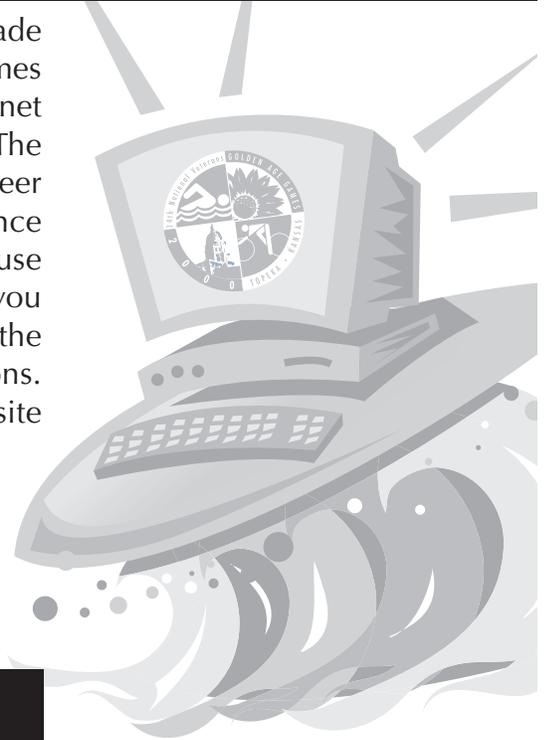
Medical Assistance is available at both hotels. If you would like to speak with someone about an existing or recent health concern, don't hesitate to call or stop by the medical room in either hotel. At the Ramada Inn Hotel, the medical room is located in room 833. To call, dial 7 and then 833 from any hotel (house) phone. At the Capitol Plaza, the medical room is on the second floor in room 203. To call, dial 7 and then 203 on any house phone.

## Surfing Added to Golden Age Games

A computer has been made available to Golden Age Games participants to use the Internet and check their e-mail. The computer is located in the Pioneer Room of the Maner Conference Center and is available for use from noon to 5 pm. Also, you can get online and check out the results of each day's competitions. The Golden Age Games Website is available at:

[www.va.gov/vetevent/gag](http://www.va.gov/vetevent/gag)

So sign on and start surfing!



## A Return to the Games

Nate Helman is back. The Barstow, Calif., veteran first attended the Games in 1997, when the event was held in Leavenworth, Kan., but decided to sit out in '98 and '99. Why? "I thought I should let someone else go," he says, smiling. "Everyone should have the opportunity to come to the Games." It was a decision he doesn't regret.

Helman lives in the Veterans Home of California-Barstow and says that vets there must face off in preliminary competitions to determine who gets to go to the Games. "You get points for how well you do," he explained. "So the one with the most points gets to go." This year, he won a spot on the seven-man roster and is here with Coach Bruce Miller. He's glad to be back. "It's amazing to see so many vets together. It really makes you think about the huge

price we all paid in preserving freedom."

Helman has paid his share of that price. He was among the first U.S. soldiers to hit the beaches of Normandy. The first to walk the streets of a liberated Paris. And was among the first to dig his troops into German soil. His tour began in 1941 when he was drafted with the 4th Infantry Division. He later earned his commission and by 1944, found himself in Germany, serving as executive officer with a rifle company. It was there that he nearly lost his life.

"We were in Hurtgeon Forest and the second battalion was getting beat up pretty bad so we were going in to reinforce them. I was on the walkie-talkie and I said to the company commander, 'Sweeny, let's get moving.' And I haven't seen Sweeny since. A Sergeant came over and started

shaking me. And I said, 'what did you wake me up for?' And he says, 'I wasn't waking you up, I was just checking if you were still alive.'" The attack killed several men under his command and badly injured his left leg, which was later amputated. "Now, my leg is wooden, that's why I use this wheelchair to get around," he explained.

Helman describes his World War II experiences as if they occurred just yesterday and is eager to share his role in making history. "I think it's important for us to get together and tell people about what we did, what we went through," he says. With his name emblazoned on his cap, it's hard to miss Nate Helman. If you see him in the hallway this week, be sure to say hello and welcome him back to the Golden Age Games.

## Golden Moments

"I participate in the Golden Age Games to show others that veterans are still very active. It also shows others that even those with disabilities can be active and are not forgotten."

-Harriet Thackrah

"The Golden Age Games motivate me to do more and take a greater interest in exercising. Staying active allows me to socialize with others and keeps my mind alert, and then I feel good about myself."

-Jerry Braun

At our age, staying active is important because, if you sit down, you might stay down! The Golden Age games helps to keep life going!"

-John Keil

"Participating in the Golden Age Games has been a celebration of life after bypass surgery. I've made many friends whom I've grown to love. The importance of the Games lies in the enthusiasm and excellence of the competition."

-Bernard Gibson

Participating in these Games gives me a sense of belonging to an organization. I love the challenge of the competition and the spirit of the Games. Staying active leads to a better, healthier way of life."

-Wayne Warren

"The Golden Age Games is the most exciting and gratifying experience. It gives me a sense of accomplishment and makes me feel young again! Staying active helps my self-esteem."

-Theodore Brown

## Alternate Events

- **West Ridge Mall**  
12:30 and every half-hour until 4:30 p.m.
- **Ravenwood Hunting Preserve & Sporting Clays**  
8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
- **Lawrence Day Trip**  
8:00 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.
- **Kansas State Capitol & First Presbyterian Church**  
12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

## Did You Know?

How much do you know about your fellow competitors?

- The oldest veteran at this year's Games is 89 years old, and the average age is 68.
- The 426 competitors here hail from 26 different states.
- 58 competitors saw combat in World War II, 46 in the Korean War, 27 in Vietnam and one from the Gulf War.
- 27 women veterans are participating in this year's Games.
- There are seven former prisoners of war. Six are from World War II and one from Vietnam.
- As of Sept. 4, there were 804 volunteers who contributed 9,041 hours at the Games.
- 63 VA medical centers have sent athletes to compete in this year's Games.

## D.C. Cruisers

...continued from front page and a silver in the pentathlon. "It feels great after missing last year," said Moore. "I didn't think I'd make it back this soon, but with the rehab therapy, I made it to the Wheelchair Games in July and now the Golden Games ... I feel great!"

Both Levy and March say the team gets much of its inspiration from team coach Paula Gorman. "She's fantastic, cause she's a fighter," says March, "and that trickles down to us athletes." The team is rounded out by Army veteran Connie Gilbert, who volunteers daily at the Washington, D.C., VA Medical Center, first-time participants Robert Messier, who landed at Omaha Beach on D-Day, and veteran George Lynch.

## Weather

