



# SOONER SPIRIT



*A Daily Publication of the 2005 19th National Veterans Golden Age Games*

*Sunday, May 22, 2005*

## Welcome to the Sooner State and the University of Oklahoma in Norman!

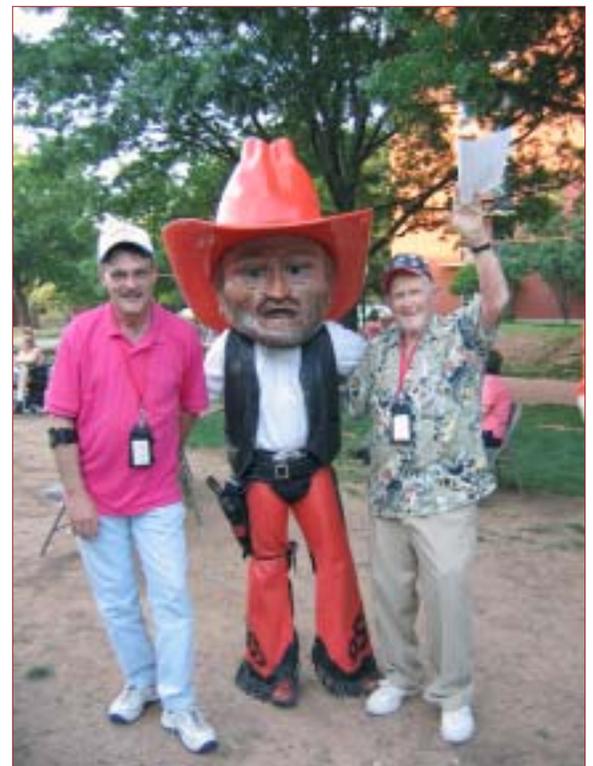
by Nita McClellan, PAO, Muskogee VA Medical Center

As host of the 19<sup>th</sup> National Veterans Golden Age Games, the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center is proud to welcome the 500-plus veterans participating this year. Staff and volunteers have worked hard to make sure the week is filled with friendly competition, fun activities and lasting memories. For most veterans, the Games mean seeing old friends, making new ones and engaging in some great competition. Twenty-five of the veterans registered this year are from the state of Oklahoma themselves, and like everyone else, they have been looking forward to this week.

Just ask U.S. Army veteran of Vietnam (and Ex-POW) Ron Moses, 61, from Muskogee, who is competing in his seventh Games. "I look forward to the Games every year," said Moses, who is entered in dominoes, 9-ball, horseshoes and shot-put. "It's like a big family reunion." Known as "Chief" to other Games' participants, Moses said the event develops a closer relationship between veterans who fought alongside each other.

World War II Army Air Corps veteran Adrian "Bud" Gould, 82, also from Muskogee, agrees. Participating in his sixth Games, Gould said, "It's about the camaraderie, not the competition. I look for friends I've made each year, and this is what keeps me going." Despite what he says about the competition, Gould did manage to take the gold medal in dominoes at last year's Games in Fresno, although he's not defending the title this year. "To me, dominoes are a game a chance," Gould said. "I didn't even know I had the table blocked last year until someone told me!"

New to the competition this year is Cris Ford, 58, another Muskogee resident and Army veteran who served in Vietnam. "I'm looking forward to seeing what the atmosphere is like," said Ford, who routinely plays golf with Gould. "Bud kept after me about

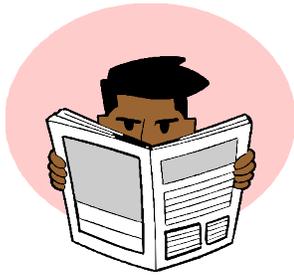


**Oklahoma veterans Cris Ford (left) and Bud Gould (right) welcome veterans to the Games along with Pistol Pete, mascot of the Oklahoma State University, rival of the University of Oklahoma.**

**See "Welcome," page 2**



## Hometown News at the Games



For many years at the National Veterans Golden Age Games, the public affairs team has operated a “Hometown News” program to let your local newspapers know about your participation in the Games. Through this effort,

we prepare an individual news release for any veteran requesting one, which is placed on the Games web site later in the week to make it available to your local media. For anyone who asked for a news release, we hope to have them posted on the web site by Wednesday or Thursday on the “Participant Information” page at [www.veteransgoldenagegames.org](http://www.veteransgoldenagegames.org). All week, our photographers will also be taking action photos of as many competitors as possible. If you requested a news release, our goal is have your best photo on the web

site by the time you leave. We also hope to provide you with one 4x6” print of that photo, along with a copy of your personal news release.

The web site makes your information much more accessible to local media in your area. We will also be calling hundreds of media outlets all week to let them know that you are here and competing in the National Veterans Golden Age Games. Unfortunately, we can never guarantee that a story will run, but we do our best to make the information available to local media throughout the country.

Don’t forget to check out the Games web site when you get home so you can see your news release and photo, along with your event results. Also, please help us spread the word to the newspapers and other media back home about this great story – all about you!



### “Welcome,” continued from page 1

going to Norman this year and I finally gave in!” Ford will compete in 9-ball, golf and horseshoes.

Danny Proctor, 58, is a combat wounded Vietnam veteran who served in both the Marine Corps and the Army. Proctor had this to say, “I want to experience renewed life like other senior veterans are doing and the Golden Age Games provide a wonderful opportunity. I have come to understand over the past few years that continuous physical exercise is great for my overall mental, emotional and spiritual well-being.”

Perhaps John Waddell, 81, of Oklahoma City, who is an Army Air Corps veteran of WWII said it best. “This is my first year competing in the National Veterans Golden Age Games,” he said. “I have looked forward to make new friends. Staying active is very important, and sitting on the couch all day gets rather boring!”

You won’t be bored this week, John, and the city of Norman is ready for the competition to begin. As home to the University of Oklahoma and its Oklahoma Sooners, sporting events are way of life. The school’s athletic teams have delivered 24 team national championships, 205 conference titles and more than 700 All-Americans.

This year’s Golden Age Games will be just as challenging and rewarding to the participants, who are already considered *All-Americans*. Good luck to all of you as you shoot for “Sooner Gold!”



## Nineteen Years of Memories

by Jeanne Miserendino  
National Programs and Special Events

This year in Norman, Okla. the National Veterans Wheelchair Games celebrates 19 years of competition, camaraderie, and memories. It is those memories that keep participants returning to the Games year after year.

In speaking with some of this year's competitors, it is evident that one theme dominates the rest. "I sometimes forget their names, but I sure remember their faces," said Lawrence Brister, a 74-year-old Air Force veteran from Dallas, Texas. "My fondest memories of the last three years at the Games have always included the wonderful people I have met."



**Bett Simmons,  
Chicago, Ill.**

For Bett Simmons, an 82-year-old veteran from Chicago, Ill., her favorite memories also lie with the friends she has met over the years. "I didn't know a soul my first year as a competitor," said Simmons. "The group from New York took pity on me and adopted me as a member of their team. Now, I get more and more hugs and kisses each year I return to the Games."

Some like Sam Sansone, a 60-year-old veteran from Chicago, Ill., remember specific events that make the Games special. "I had the opportunity to participate in the Veterans History Project," said Sansone. "It was a wonderful thing to be able to give my niece a piece of my life history."

William Reed, a 60-year-old veteran from Chicago, Ill. has attended the last five Golden Age Games. His fondest memories are of the celebrities that often come to show their support for America's heroes. "When Lou Diamond Phillips came to the Games, I couldn't believe it," said Reed. "It was so great to see how the Games reach far beyond the immediate family of veterans, coaches, volunteers, staff and sponsors."

Betty L. St. John from Orono, Maine recalls a trip she took last year to Yosemite during the Fresno Games. "I love to travel," said St. John. "Being able to tour such wonderful places as Yosemite really makes the Golden Age Games experience much more memorable."



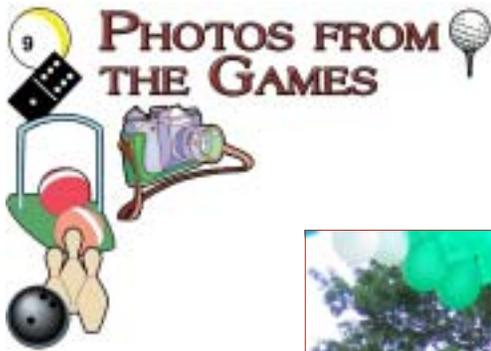
**Betty L. St. John,  
Orono, Maine**

For others, memories of the Games have been a bit more dramatic. Willie Brown, now a 68-year-old Air Force veteran from Leavenworth, Kansas, remembers a past trip to Geneva, N.Y. in 1953. While in New York, Brown, as an African American, was subject to segregation and discrimination. He still remembers specific places that turned him away many years ago. In 1999, the Games traveled to Geneva and Brown met up with a past boot camp instructor who recognized him. The instructor decided that Brown should return to the places that had turned him away in the past. "It was a great feeling to walk into that theater as an equal," said Brown. "The Games made this opportunity possible for me and it is something I will never forget."

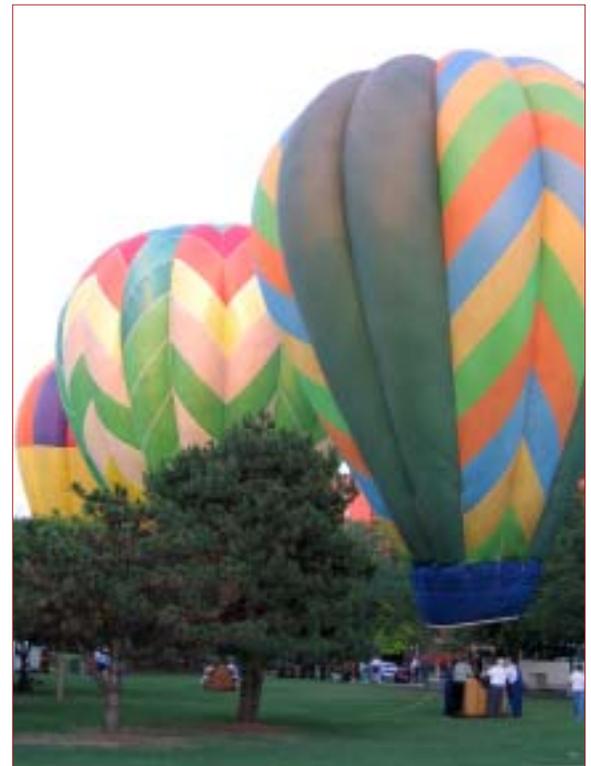
Everyone in attendance seems to know that life long memories and experiences result from attending the Golden Age Games. All are excited to enjoy more wonderful experiences, not just this year, but for many more years to come.



**Sam Sansone,  
Chicago, Ill.**



**Okie Howdy  
at the Walker-  
Adams Mall!**



**Balloon Glow at the Okie Howdy on  
Friday**



**Registration goes A-OK.**

**Transportation at the Games**





**Veteran gets high tech view from the cockpit of a Apache Longbow Helicopter from Fort Hood, Texas.**



**Veterans pose with the Apache helicopter pilot.**



**Oklahoma City VA Medical Center Director Steve Gentling helps out during registration.**



**Veteran receives assistance with his competitor identification.**



**Veteran receives give-aways provided by Veterans Canteen Service.**





## HOSPITALITY SUITE

Volunteers are excited to share Oklahoma hospitality with veterans, coaches, visitors and staff attending the 19<sup>th</sup> National Veterans Golden Age Games. When you enter Walker Tower you will see the distinctive yellow shirts of the volunteers who will not only provide refreshments, but will also have table games, a big screen TV and other activities for your relaxation.

Speaking of relaxation, we will have massage therapists, Jeri Hoover, CMT, and Jody Lawson, LM, CMT, on Monday and Tuesday from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday through Thursday, 1 p.m. - 7 p.m., Praxis College promises to send five student therapists who will bring their tables and will also offer free massages in the Walker Tower lobby.



The hospitality area, located in the Walker Tower lobby will be open 1 p.m. - 9 p.m. on Friday and 8 a.m. - 9 p.m., Saturday through Thursday. For further information, please stop at the Information Station or find a volunteer in the bright yellow shirt.

## Police and On-Site Security

Oklahoma City VA Medical Center Police will provide 24-hour, on-site security in the Forum Building. Police officers are responsible for monitoring the safety of participants at special events as well as safeguarding money, computer equipment and supplies. Contact Officer Tim Collins at (405) 640-0287 if you need police assistance.



## Transportation Schedule

Alternate activities transportation will depart from the front of Walker Tower. Please check at the alternate activities table for more information and departure times.

## Rock & Roll

Join us tonight on the Walker-Adams Mall for an evening of songs and scooters. *Harvey and the Wallbangers* will have you grooving while the bikes on display will get your heart pounding. Harvey and his band of Wallbangers are known throughout Oklahoma for playing all the music you like and getting you up on your feet. All the while, the Oklahoma City Harley Owners Group will have their bikes on display. See you in the mall at 7 p.m. and wear your dancing shoes!



Veterans History Project interviews continue through Thursday, May 26, in the Forum Bldg., Room B6, but you must schedule an appointment.

This historic project is meant to honor our nation's veterans by creating a lasting legacy of their military experience. Regardless of branch or period of service, age, military career, or experience, all veterans are invited to share it with our VHP program staff this week during the Games.

Each participant will receive a VHP tote and a DVD copy of your interview before leaving the event.

Interview times are daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

If you were unable to make an appointment during registration and would like to participate in the VHP, stop by the Forum Bldg., Room B6 at the top of each hour to see if there are appointments still available.

## Things to know!

### Community Trips

Please make sure to check in for Alternate Activity community trips 30 to 45 minutes early! We want to make sure to get you to your destination on time. Check-in will be at the transportation staging area near Walker Tower on Third Street.

### Recreation Center Day Passes

Day passes to utilize the workout facilities at the Huston Huffman Center are available for \$5. Passes may be purchased at the front desk of the Center. State-of-the-art workout equipment includes treadmills, ellipticals, recumbent bikes, rowers, Nautilus and Hammer Strength weight equipment. Hours are Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. – 8 p.m. and Sunday from 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

### Swimming Pool

Swimming day passes may be purchased at the front desk of the Murray Case Sells Swim Complex for \$1.10. Hours are as follows:

Sunday: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.; and Monday through Friday: 6 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.; 11:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.; 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

### Recreation Equipment Check Out

Table games and sports equipment will be available in the lobby of Walker Tower all week for use during your free time. Equipment includes volleyballs, basketballs, footballs, bocce ball, table tennis and nine-ball. Available table games include dominoes, cards, scrabble, checkers and Skipbo. *Have fun!*

### Sooner Shindig

Big Dave's Music Factory will be here nightly from 9 p.m. to midnight during the Games. Big Dave has 30,000 songs in his collection so he's sure to have your favorite dance tunes. Saturday and continuing through the week, the Shindig will be happening in the Forum Building, Conference room "A" (the same room as registration). Light snacks will be provided and there will be a cash bar featuring beer and wine. We'll be making memories, so come be a part of them!



Breakfast — 6 a.m. - 8 a.m.  
Lunch — 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Dinner — 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

### Carb Counting and Blood Sugar

Carb counting has gotten a lot of attention over the last few years from weight conscious individuals. Carb counting is also important for people with diabetes to help maintain good blood sugar levels, especially those who are actively involved in sports. Carbohydrates, or carbs, affect blood sugar more than protein or fat, so counting the number of carbs in foods can be a big help when managing blood sugar levels.



The medical support area is located on the third floor of Walker Tower, in Rooms 328 and 329W, just off the elevators. Medical support will be available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. through Thursday, May 26. It will be open until noon on Friday, May 27. Medical staff will be available 24 hours each day, but after 8 p.m., Rooms 328 and 329W are for emergencies only.



Oklahoma got its nickname, the Sooner State, during the Land Run of 1889. On the first day homesteading was permitted, April 22, 1889, 50,000 people swarmed into Oklahoma Territory for free land. One of the rules to claiming a lot was that everyone was supposed to start at the same time – noon. Those who went too soon were called “sooners.”



## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR...

**Sunday, May 22, 2005**

6 a.m. - 8 a.m.	Breakfast, Couch Cafeteria
8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Shot Put, Hal Niemann Field
8 a.m.	Air Rifle, Timberdell Field
8 a.m.	Discus Throw Hal Niemann Field
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Dominoes, Forum Building Rooms C1, C3
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.	Registration, Forum Building A Wing
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Shopping Shuttle, Norman
10 a.m.	Chaplain Service Forum Bldg., Room B2-4
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Lunch, Couch Cafeteria
12:30 p.m.	Redhawks Baseball Game Bricktown Ball Park - OKC
1 p.m.	Remington Park Horse Races Remington Park - OKC
1 p.m.	Thunderbird Wild Wild West Casino, Norman
2 p.m. - 4 p.m.	Swimming, Murray Case Sells Swim Complex
5 p.m. - 7 p.m.	Dinner, Couch Cafeteria
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.	Sponsors Dinner University Club
7 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Harvey & the Wallbangers with Motorcycle Show Walker-Adams Mall
9 p.m. - 12 a.m.	Sooner Shindig, Forum Bldg. Conference Room A



**Partly Cloudy**

**High 94° / Low 70°**

**Southerly Winds 10 - 20 mph**



Do you have a wheelchair or scooter that needs to be fixed? The Wheelchair Repair room is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Walker Tower to handle repair needs. Staff working in Wheelchair Repair want to make sure you get back to the Games quickly. For after hour emergencies, call Greg Rosales at (405) 409-7082.

## For Your Spiritual Health

During the Games, the Chaplain's office is located in Walker Tower, 2 East Study Lounge. Chaplains will be available daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. until Friday, May 27 at noon. Or, you can call (405) 606-9218. For after hours or emergencies (from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m.), please call (405) 606-9220.

## SOONER SPIRIT

Want to submit a story idea for the daily *Sooner Spirit*?

The Public Affairs Team will be preparing news releases, writing articles for the daily *Sooner Spirit*, and working with the media to publicize the events of this week.

If you have ideas for news stories, photographs or something you'd like to see in the *Sooner Spirit*, stop by the Media Center located in the Forum Bldg., B Wing.

We'd love to hear from you!



Look for the daily *Sooner Spirit* on the Web at:

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