



Hampton, Virginia ~ May 7 - 12, 2006

Bay Reflections



A Daily Publication of the 20th National Veterans Golden Age Games

Tuesday, May 9, 2006

The Unsinkable Franklin Hall

In 1985, Franklin Hall joined 114 other veterans in Albany, Ga., to compete in the very first National Veterans Golden Age Games. At 72, the Air Force veteran was older than many of the other competitors that year, when he won his first silver medal in tennis. Now,



Franklin Hall of Chula Vista, Calif., is the oldest veteran competing at the Games.

20 years later, Hall is the oldest veteran competing at the 2006 Games – but he plans to leave Hampton with other honors of distinction. Hall hopes to celebrate the 20th year of the Golden Age Games with gold.

He'll get his chances in the 25-meter (freestyle) swimming event and the air guns competition this week, and if past performance is any indicator, he won't leave Hampton empty-handed.

In 20 years of competition, Hall has racked up two gold medals, two silvers and a bronze in swimming at past Golden Age Games. Although he had to give up tennis and some other sports he dearly loves, Hall has proven to be the picture of the soldier's motto to adapt and overcome.

"I'm dealing with vertigo now so I had to drop tennis," Hall said. "I just had to find a way to compete without needing to be on my feet."

Hall has stayed fit for the competition by using a rowing machine he keeps in his home at the Veterans Center in

Chula Vista, Calif. He also swims occasional laps at his local YMCA, but the spry 92-year-old was disappointed when he discovered the age brackets had been moved up.

"When I won all my other medals at past Games, I was competing against guys who are 10 and 12 years younger than I was," Hall said. "Now, they have moved the brackets up to 85, so I will only be competing against guys that are eight years younger than me!"

While Hall does look forward to the competition of the Games from year to year, his real challenge has been writing. "I've been playing tennis, skiing, sailing, swimming and participating in sports all my life. That stuff just always came naturally to me," Hall said. "I challenge myself with writing screenplays, stage plays and books."

Even where Hall feels challenged, he has enjoyed success. He recently received a DVD from one of his grandsons who found a movie he scripted during the height of popularity for mafia movies titled, "Ma Barker's Killer Brood."

Though Hall has plenty of individual achievements he could bask in, he said his primary reason for coming back to the Golden Age Games is the time he enjoys with his fellow veterans.

"I just go now for the trip. A lot of these guys go for the camaraderie. It's what I enjoy most about the Games," Hall said. "It's a good time. You meet other veterans and we all go out on the town after the competition."

While Hall hasn't been to every one of the Golden Age Games, he did compete in the first and is competing again this week for the historic 20th

occasion of the event. As for his chances of taking a medal in the 40th anniversary? "I just might make it there," he said. "No kidding."



By Ryan Steinbach, Chicago Regional Office of Public Affairs

Wayne Miller, an Inspiration to All!

Wayne Miller, from Silver Spring, Md., had dreamed of attending this year's National Veterans Golden Age Games and competing along with his father, a disabled World War II veteran. When his father passed away in 2003, Miller, who turned 55 last August, vowed to take part and compete in the activities his father loved most, nine-ball and horseshoes. Miller feels motivated by others participating in the Golden Age Games, especially the veterans who served in World War II, for what he calls "their can do attitude and putting a letter "g" in front of old."

A Vietnam veteran who enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1968, Miller became an amputee at age 19. At that time, he would not have believed that he would be able to participate in sports again. Miller says he has since learned that the most important things in life are simple. His philosophy for life has three components:

1. Breathe
2. Be Third (put God first, everyone else second, and yourself third)
3. If the first two don't work, it really doesn't matter.

As a child, Miller dreamed of becoming a professional athlete and participating in the Olympic Games. He feels his dream came true in 1995, when the Paralyzed Veterans of America and VA gave him the opportunity to attend the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. He participated that year in swimming, basketball and bowling, and since then has attended the event through 2005, missing only one year.

Over the years, Miller has also competed in softball, basketball, swimming, table tennis, nine-ball, javelin, shot-put and handcycling at the Wheelchair Games. In 2003, he was chosen to receive the event's highest honor, the Spirit of the Games Award.

In addition to sports, Miller has notable talents in the performing arts. In 1998, his vocal skills were first recognized when he was selected to attend the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. He has participated twice since, winning medals in both singing and dancing. He feels that music makes him a calmer person.

When another veteran, Bill Demby, asked Miller if he would like to learn to ski, he said, "Yea right, I only have one leg!" Demby, an Alpine ski champion, then raised his pant legs to reveal that he was a *double* amputee. Miller thought, "If I could overcome the mountain, I could also



Wayne Miller, Silver Spring, Md., is one of the athletes here this week who has participated in all four of VA's Special Events.

overcome my traumas of life and war." Not one to pass up an opportunity, he took Demby up on his offer to teach him to ski and learned in less than three hours. In 1998, Miller attended his first National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic and has participated several times since. Miller's experiences at the Clinic include Alpine and Nordic skiing, as well as snowmobiling, basketball, rock climbing, martial arts and scuba diving.

Having now attended the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, Winter Sports Clinic, Creative Arts Festival and Golden Age Games, Miller is one only three or four veterans ever to claim the "grand slam" of VA events. (Another is Lee Williams, 68, of Antioch, Calif., who is also here this week.) Their challenge now is finding new events to try at all four of VA's national programs!

By Barbara Sellon, Buffalo, N.Y., VA Medical Center

"Survivor" Rudy Boesch Visits the Games Today



Celebrity "Survivor" and former Navy Seal Rudy Boesch visits the swimming events today and assists with the distribution of swimming medals. A contestant on the first "Survivor" television series, Boesch was later called back to appear on the "Survivor All Star" series.

Look for Boesch today at the swimming venue. He is looking forward to meeting all of our gifted competition survivors!

The Sun Will Come Out Tomorrow!

The Games have begun, or at least checkers did, as a steady rainfall forced the postponement of two of three events on Monday. The first day of competition began with a rain so hard that it was difficult to talk over the noise from the rainwater gushing from the gutters, while veterans from across the nation assembled together to huddle in the downpour and make new plans.

The veterans in the hotel lobby did not want to be deterred from their mission – to participate in their areas of competition. On the contrary, each said they saw worse weather in the military and were ready to compete. All was not lost, however. While activities were being re-scheduled, competitors enjoyed the camaraderie with veterans from around the country.

George Guilford from Alaska laughed as he gave the weather forecast for Anchorage Monday – sunshine and 55 degrees. John Ames from Waxahachie, Texas, is trying to come up with a clever way to “box up the rain and take it back home to Texas.”



Feigning infinite foresight, Steve Palmer from Livermore, Calif., claimed he didn't schedule any activities Monday because he knew it would rain. Not that he minds. “Rain brings us together for fellowship and general fun,” he said.

Bob Gilmore of Livermore, Calif., didn't miss any events yesterday but the weather still challenged his expectations for the Games. “I left California to get out of the rain,” he said.



Robert White of Baltimore, Md., enjoys his ride through the rain.

Some were able to see the sliver lining among all the clouds. Various veterans took the time to plan last-minute field trips with new and old friends. Others were happy for a chance to relax and catch up with fellow veterans they had not seen since last year's Games in Oklahoma City.

“I noticed the Wal-Mart bus was still keeping a busy schedule,” said Art Motz of Boise, Idaho. “I'm disappointed of course. The rain doesn't stop a lot of people. I hope the golfers get another chance at the course.”

Today, a new day dawns and each veteran stands ready to start anew. Rain or shine, the Games will go on. Golf, by the way, begins at 1 p.m.!

By Norma Byrd from Fayetteville, N.C., VA Medical Center



Did You Know?

Commemorating 75 years of service

As VA celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, here are today's historical facts.

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (GI Bill of Rights) recognized VA “not only as an important post-war agency, but as an exceedingly important post-war agency.” This legislation may be the greatest piece of social legislation in the 20th century because of the impact it made on the U.S. economy and lifestyles. It gave VA overall control of veterans affairs so that veterans have one central agency to ensure their rights. In that year, World War II veterans treated at VA hospitals rose from 5,132 to 13,707; from nine percent of patients at beginning of year to 21 percent at year's end.



Veterans History Project (VHP) interviews continue through Friday, May 12, in the Quality Inn,

Room 113, but you must schedule an appointment. Once scheduled, don't forget that appointment!

If you were unable to make an appointment during registration and would like to participate in the VHP, stop by the Quality Inn, Room 113, at the top of each hour to see if there are appointments still available.



Jerry Braun and Bill Braun of Augusta, Ga., show their patriotic spirit.

Opening Ceremonies



VA Deputy Secretary Gordon Mansfield: Director of National Veterans Service, VFW William Bradshaw; and Jim Donahoe Director of Veterans Canteen Service



James Flanders of Fayetteville, N.C., smiles as he comes to the podium to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.



Veterans join in the Pledge of Allegiance.



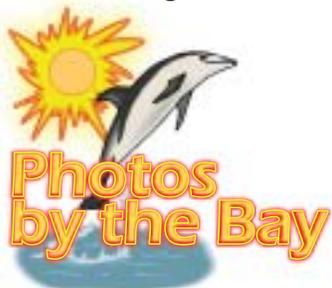
Part of the hundreds at the Opening Ceremonies of the 20th National Veterans Golden Age Games.



Joseph Williams, Director of the Hampton VA Medical Center, and Chester Golembiewski of Largo, Fla., raise the torch to begin the Games.



Edward Thomas (Army) of the Joint Services Color Guard Present Colors at Opening Ceremonies.

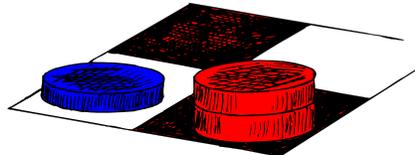




Our first competitive event — Checkers!

Joan Lance of Chireno, Texas, shows her moves on the checkerboard during Monday's competitions.

James Caldwell of Bonham, Texas, shows his smile is pure gold! He won, too!!!



Air Show Highlights



Toni Lopez from Yucca Valley, Calif., expressed her opinion at being placed in the stockade during her visit to Williamsburg on Monday.



Alternate Activities



Gardens, Air, and Space — There is Something for Everyone

Botanical Gardens

Norfolk Botanical Gardens date back to 1938 when the Works Progress Administration (WPA) sponsored 200 African American women to clear the dense, native vegetation and plant 4,000 azaleas.



Today, the Gardens contain 155 acres of colorful landscapes, unusual flowers, mature forests and seasonal plantings with over 20 themed gardens.

Once you visit,

we're sure you'll agree that Norfolk Botanical Gardens is a natural beauty!

Virginia Air & Space Center

The Virginia Air & Space Center invites you to soar to new heights! Visitors can take an aviation adventure from the origins of flight to the future of flight. You can "wing walk" on a recreated Jenny, see



a replica of the 1903 Wright Flyer, take off and land on a U.S. Navy carrier, become an air traffic controller, build an airplane, sit inside the

cockpit of an FA-22, and test your flying skills with a variety of simulators.



Bash by the Bay Held This Evening

Are you ready for an evening of good food, local entertainment and fine conversation by the beautiful Chesapeake Bay at Mill Point Park? Join us for the Bash by the Bay hosted by the Mayor of Hampton today, May 9

from 6 – 10 p.m. The Mayor is excited to host this wonderful event in honor of our nation's veterans.

Transportation will be available in front of the Holiday Inn hotel beginning at 5 p.m. Each competitor and one guest are invited to attend the event. You will receive a wristband as you load the bus. This wristband is your ticket for food and beverages during the evening. We strongly encourage all competitors to attend this event, as dinner meals will be very limited at the Holiday Inn.



The band "Slapwater" will provide entertainment this evening at the "Bash by the Bay."

Slapwater is a local band that has been performing on the east coast for years. The band has a vast collection of songs in a variety of styles from Rock 'n Roll, Motown, Beach, Disco, and Oldies, all of your favorite dance music. We hope that you'll relax and enjoy the party!

Spiritual Services

Chaplains will be available 24 hours a day through May 13. Please dial (757) 722-9961 and press 0 to reach the operator to request a chaplain.



Hospitality

Volunteers from the VFW Ladies Auxiliary are excited to share Virginia hospitality with veterans, coaches, visitors and staff attending the 20th National Veterans Golden Age Games. The Hospitality Room is located in the Holiday Inn Hotel, Jamestown Room. Snacks will be available through Friday from 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.



Medical Assistance

The medical volunteers are committed to helping all participants maintain their optimum levels of wellness. Staff are available to assist with urgent needs in an on-site clinic at the Holiday Inn through May 13 at noon. Medical suite staff can triage veterans if needed 24 hours a day, in Room 4109 on the first floor of the Holiday Inn. Medical and nursing staff are also on-site at all Games venues; you can recognize them by their bright red shirts. If you are having a medical emergency, please do not wait to find a medical team member. Call 911 for immediate assistance.



Lost and Found

Need to find that lost umbrella?
Check with the staff in the
Williamsburg II Room
at the Holiday Inn
between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.



Want to share what is going on at the Games with your family and friends back home? The daily *Bay Reflections* is on the Web at:

www.veteransgoldenagegames.org



Hampton's Cyber-Cafe

Drop in to check your e-mail or go surfing... surfing the Internet that is! The Cyber-Café is located in the Holiday Inn, Yorktown Room. The café is open daily through May 13 from 7 a.m. – 10:30 p.m.



Tuesday, May 9, 2006

Hampton Holiday Inn, Regency Ballroom

Breakfast — 6:30 to 8:30 a.m.

Lunch — 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Dinner — 5 to 6:30 p.m.

Breakfast Menu

To Go Station

Fruit, Yogurt, Muffins, Danish and Breakfast Bakery Items

Toasting Station

Assorted Breads, Cream Cheese, Margarine, Jelly

Hot Station

Waffles with Syrup, Scrambled Eggs, Bacon, Sausage, Grits, Oatmeal, Home Fried Potatoes, Buttermilk Biscuits and Gravy

Cold Station

Assorted cereals, 2 % Milk, Fat Free Milk

Lunch Menu

Entrees

BBQ Chicken Breast, Beef Tips Burgundy, Pasta, Corn, Vegetable Medley, Assorted Rolls and Desserts

Salad Bar

Garden Salad with Assorted Dressings, Yogurt, Fruit, Cole Slaw, Potato Salad, Soup of the Day

Cold Deli Station

Turkey, Ham, Roast Beef, Cheddar, Swiss, Mozzarella Breads and Sandwich Rolls, Condiments

Hot Sandwich Station

Hamburger, Cheeseburger, Pizza Pockets

Dinner Menu

Entrees

Sliced Pork Loin with Calvados Sauce, Chicken Breast with Herb Cream Sauce, Potatoes Au Gratin Green Beans, Carrots, Assorted Rolls

Salads

Mixed Green Salad with choice of dressing, Fruit Salad, Spinach Salad, Waldorf Salad

Desserts

Assorted Pies and Cakes, Yogurt, Fruit



Schedule of Events

Tuesday May 9, 2006

8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Bowling (Ambulatory) Spare Times Bowling Center
8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Bowling (Wheelchair & Visually Impaired) Fort Monroe
8:30 a.m. – Noon	Swimming YMCA
9:30 a.m. – Noon	Botanical Gardens Norfolk, Va.
12:30 – 4 p.m.	Air & Space Museum Hampton, Va.
1 - 5 p.m.	Golf Woodlands Golf Course
6 – 10 p.m.	Bash by the Bay Hampton, Va.



Transportation

All transportation for events and alternate activities depart from the Holiday Inn.

6:45 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Bowling (Ambulatory) and Swimming YMCA
6:45 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Bowling (Wheelchair/Visually Impaired) Fort Monroe

Alternate Activities — Departure Times

Please check in at the Alternate Activities table located in front of the Holiday Inn 30 minutes before your trip is scheduled to depart.

8:30 a.m. – Noon	Norfolk Botanical Gardens
Noon – 5 p.m.	Virginia Air and Space Center
5:30 – 10 p.m.	Bash by the Bay (Downtown Hampton)

Rain Plan

Unfortunately, we cannot fool the weather. For events that were rained out on Monday, the rain plan is as follows:

- Golf: Today at 1 p.m.
- Bicycling: Friday at 1 p.m.
- We look forward to sunny skies on Friday!



Wheelchair Repair

Wheelchair Repair will be located at the Hampton Holiday Inn, Peninsula Room. Repair hours are: Tuesday to Thursday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.; and Friday 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. If assistance is needed outside of the designated hours, please call (757) 254-6051 (between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m.).

Durable Medical Equipment

The following items will be available as needed: crutches (forearm and underarm), canes, walkers, wheelchair gloves, disposable nebulizers, wheelchairs (manual and electric), scooters and wheelchair parts. Please stop by the Hampton Holiday Inn hotel, Peninsula Room or call (757) 722-9961 ext. 3649 for further assistance.



Bay Reflections

Want to submit a story idea for the **Bay Reflections**? The Public Affairs Team will be preparing news releases, writing articles for the daily **Bay Reflections**, and working with the news 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 **Bay Reflections**, stop by the Media Center located in the Holiday Inn, Hampton Rooms I and II. We'd love to hear from you!



Weather
AM Cloudy
PM Sunny
High 66° / Low 54°

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