



## "Swim Stubbies" put Navy Vet Back in the Water

Jim Dyess thought he lost the joy of swimming when he lost his legs. A native of Dickinson, Texas, Dyess grew up on the Dickinson Bayou and learned to swim when he was two or three years old. "I just kept jumping into the water, so it was swim or sink," said Dyess. Unique prosthetic stubby swim legs, made by the prosthetics staff at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in Houston, have allowed him to regain his sense of independence and freedom while enjoying a hobby he thought he had lost. That all changed when he got his "swim stubbies."

"Swim stubbies" have rarely been made; however, a pair was fabricated by the medical center to fit Dyess' specific needs and abilities. "Stubby" refers to prosthetic sockets that do not have knees attached. An adjustable ankle is attached to a socket, connected to a prosthetic foot. In this case, a swimming fin was then placed on each foot. The adjustable ankle can be used to adjust the angle of the fin and for ease of transport.



*Jim Dyess proudly displays the "Swim Stubbies" that allow him to enjoy swimming again.*

While containing titanium, stainless steel and carbon fiber, the sockets are heavy duty to prevent buoyancy, resist damage from pool chlorine and ocean salt water, and sturdy enough to handle weight bearing on land if different feet were attached to it.

When Dyess found out the VA Medical Center had a pool, he talked with his kinesiologist, Laura Lawhon, RKT, about his desire to swim again. "I have been a swimmer since I was a kid. I knew it was great exercise for my legs and thought it would help me with my weight management," said Dyess.

"I thought this would be a great way for him to exercise, work on range of motion and use those large muscle groups," said Lawhon. Mark Benveniste, VA prosthetist, was consulted about potential options for Dyess. "Since he has limited ability to extend his hips because of tightness in his muscles from sitting in a wheelchair, he needed a way to get his hip muscles

stronger and get more range of motion at the same time, in addition to improving his overall cardiovascular health," said Lawhon. "All of this will help him with his goal of walking  
*continued on page 6...*

### Our Apologies...

As Robert Burns wrote, "The best laid plans of men and mice often go awry," and so it seems was the case of our Tuesday newsletter. Unexpected problems at the printer's production facility delayed delivery until mid morning. We sincerely apologize for the tardiness. The printer has assured us that future newsletters will arrive on time. ★

*A heartfelt thank you to*



*all of our Co-Sponsors!*

# Competition Keeps this Participant Fit - One Competitor's Story

As a self described “Dennis the Menace” for being a bit of a prankster, Wayne Field, at 81, still enjoys an adventure. In 1991, Field, a combat wounded Army veteran of WWII, competed in his first Golden Age Games at the age of 65, bringing home all gold medals. Still a strong competitor at 81, Field continues to enjoy the challenge of sports and is proud of his results in the swimming events, in which he competes in the wheelchair division.

Field tried to join the Air Force at a young age and was turned down as a pilot because of his vision. After completing high school at 17, he was accepted into the Army's specialized training program in 1943. Field was sent to basic training in Macon, Ga., joking that he “took a cruise across the Atlantic at the government's expense.” He joined Patton's Third Army, 6th Armored Division as a jeep driver and infantryman traveling across Europe. In December 1944, he arrived in Luxemburg on the third day of the Battle of the Bulge.

During the War, Field, who now lives in Colorado Springs, Colo., had many risky adventures. One was when he was crossing a field on a mission to take a town and was shot in the leg, forced to lay in the freezing snow before being taken to the hospital. As soon he recovered, he went back to his unit. Another harrowing experience was in April 1945, when Field was helping direct traffic through the countryside. After the last jeep had passed, he waited a few minutes and gunned his jeep, racing to catch up with his unit. As he started down into Hesisch Lichtenau, he saw what he believed to be an abandoned tank with some kids playing but then the turrets suddenly turned and started firing.

Field and two fellow soldiers ran and hid in an



*Wayne Field, 81, maintains his strong competitive spirit.*

apartment house, right next door to S.S. Headquarters. Occasionally, the SS soldiers would search the building and fire a few shots. For several days, Field was trapped in the basement until one night when they managed to escape, making it back to the abandoned jeep which had been stripped except for the glove compartment. He decided to send his fellow soldiers ahead and then he rolled the jeep down the hill. Fortunately, the vehicle started and did not explode. Through some luck and smart maneuvers, they made it back to their unit.

During the time he was trapped in the building, Field came upon a German civilian who risked his own life by not turning in the American soldiers. In 2004, he returned to

Hesisch Lichtenau where he had been trapped more than 60 years before and narrowly escaped becoming a prisoner of war.

After his military service, Field graduated from Syracuse University where he earned a degree in management. He went on to work in sales until 1969, when he went to work for Wolfe Research and Development Computer Programmers. In the early years of information technology, he learned computer programming, wrote training manuals and later wrote computer programs for the North American Aerospace Defense Command.

As the years have passed, Wayne Field continues to compete in both this event as well as the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, inspiring and coaching fellow veterans at both programs. He continues to demonstrate the same spunk and determination that led him to fight for the freedom of our country. He credits staying active with helping him maintain his physical fitness and keeping him as healthy as he is today.

“The National Veterans Golden Age Games improves my mind and body and gives me a reason to exercise regularly,” he said. “I love to travel and visit new places and the Games allow me to do that. My favorite Games memory involves being beaten by someone who I had previously coached.” 🌟

**BINGO NIGHT!**

Come join in the fun and win lots of great prizes at Bingo Night, Thursday, August 30 beginning at 7 p.m., in the George R. Brown Convention Center, Exhibit Hall B. Competitors must wear bibs to win bingo prizes. This event is sponsored by the Veterans Canteen Service.



# Dominoes - A Game for the Ages



*National Veterans Golden Age Games participants relax after a day of competition with a friendly game of dominoes in the lobby.*

Take a walk through the lobby of the hotel at any point during the day and you'll see several intense games of dominoes being played. While appearing simple, dominoes are a game of strategy and intelligence with a long and rich history.

Kings and presidents throughout the ages have played the game of dominoes. The oldest known domino set is from 1355 BC and was found in Tutankhamen's tomb, among the ruins of Thebes. The set is now on display in King Tutankhamen's Museum in Cairo, Egypt. The Chinese, however, are credited with the invention of the modern incarnation of the game, and is thought to be the forerunner of mahjong. The exact dates of the invention by the Chinese still remain a bit unclear, but according to historians, a Chinese set of 32 pieces existed in the year 1120 AD. Modern dominoes, as most of the Western world knows them, however, appear to be a Chinese invention. Over time, Chinese dominoes also evolved into the

tile set used to play mahjong, a game that swept across the United States in the early to mid 1920s and is currently undergoing another rise in popularity.

The history of dominoes indicates that they were probably first played in the Western world in Italy, Venice or Naples, and from there in France. French prisoners of war then brought the game to England. In more recent times, President Lyndon B. Johnson was a devotee of dominoes and routinely played with friends in Texas. Many different domino sets have been used for centuries in various parts of the world to play a variety of domino games. Grown ups and young people throughout the world play dominoes for fun and competition.

While fat domino pieces nowadays are rectangular and made of ceramic or heavy plastic, they were historically carved from ivory or animal bone with small, round pips of inset ebony. The game's name comes from the pieces' resemblance to Venetian Carnival masks known as domini, which

## Services and Room Locations

**Wheelchair Repair** is located in room 3029.

**Medical Assistance** is located in room 3031.

### Second Level of Hyatt:

- Cyber Café: *Arboretum 2*
- Hospitality: *Arboretum 3*
- Recreation: *Arboretum 4 & 5*
- Support Group Meetings (AA): *Arboretum 1*

### Third Level of Hyatt:

- Administration: *Mesquite*
- Awards Ceremony Tuesday through Thursday 3 - 5 p.m. : *Westside of Imperial Ballroom*
- Command Center: *Cottonwood A/B*
- Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner: *Imperial Ballroom*
- Media Center: *Dogwood A/B*

## Happy Birthday!

If you have the opportunity to meet the following competitors today, please wish them an extra special happy birthday! Those of you celebrating birthdays this week are invited to stop by the Media Center to pick up a special gift. Happy birthday to:

*Gilmore A. Schmidtman  
Don Starler*

were white with black spots. These masks were so named, in turn, because they resembled French priests' winter hoods, being black on the outside and white on the inside. The name ultimately derives from the Latin *dominus*, meaning "lord" or "master."

So when you stop and watch a game of dominoes today, know the deep history behind the game and that the players are playing one of the oldest games in the world. ♣

# Photo Scrapbook



## **“Swim Stubbies” put a Nav Vet Back in the Water** *continued from front page*

with prosthetic legs and returning to work.”

“I can hardly wait to get to the VA on Thursdays,” said Dyess, “That’s my day in the pool when I feel like I have legs again.”

It takes a while for Dyess to get in the pool, though. First, he lies on a mat table in the pool area so Lawhon can stretch each leg. After he puts a gel liner on his stubs, a Velcro strap is inserted through a slot in the socket and then attached to a metal ring where it is secured onto the socket. After he puts on the sockets, he wraps an additional one piece belt that looks like a pair of shorts made of wet suit material around his waist. The belt, which is attached to both sockets, is adjustable and stabilizes the sockets to his body.

Once the legs are on, he gets back into his wheelchair and proceeds to the ramp in the access area of the pool. He lowers himself into a sunken area designed specifically for patients to sit or stand on a ledge at the wall of the pool. Benveniste makes any adjustments needed for a better fit while Dyess is actually in the pool.

Lawhon has seen many positive changes in Dyess since he started his pool therapy. Since the legs weigh approximately eight to 10 pounds each, they took Dyess some getting used to. His hip range of motion improved as he built up strength in those large muscles. He can swim for longer periods of time. This translates into improved standing tolerance on land and improved walking ability important

features for a bilateral, above the knee amputee whose energy needs for walking are exceptionally high. The best change is that Dyess feels more independent. He is also highly motivated to get in shape so he can attend the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic.

A new member of Houston’s Silver Eagles Golden Age Games team, Dyess is ecstatic to be able to compete again. “I have been a competitive person all my life. Just the thought of competing again is exhilarating. I hope to win every event I am involved in,” he said. “I want to bring home the gold!”

Dyess is also competing in golf, air rifles, and 9-ball. Beginning in 1994, he won the Texas State 8 Ball Tournament six years straight, and went on to the Nationals in Las Vegas. ♣

## **Information on Today’s Activities**

### **Houston Zoo**

The Houston Zoo provides a fun, unique and inspirational experience fostering appreciation, knowledge and care for the natural world. In early 2007, the Houston Zoo announced the birth of pied tamarin twins, critically endangered monkeys and a giant eland calf, the first such birth at the Houston Zoo.

### **Battleship Texas/San Jacinto Battleground Tour**

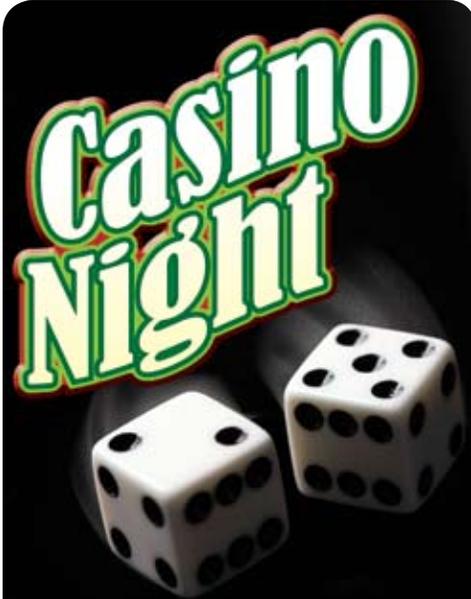
The primary purpose of the 1,200 acre site is to commemorate the battle and to preserve the battleground on which Texian troops under General Sam Houston achieved the independence of Texas by defeating a Mexican Army led by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna on April 21, 1836. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s San Jacinto Battleground State

 Historic Site consists of the battleground, monument

and Battleship Texas. It is located within minutes of downtown Houston and a short distance to the beaches of Galveston Island.

### **Downtown Aquarium**

Houston’s first public aquarium was designed to entertain the masses. The 38 million world class complex, perched on the redeveloped 400 block of Bagby, boasts 500,000 gallons of visible underwater tanks with more than 200 species of marine life. At this classy carnival, expect rides and amusements for the entire family. The Shark Voyage is a highlight. Ride the 100 foot Diving Bell Ferris wheel for an incredible view of the city, or the aquatic carousel if you’d rather be grounded. See educational exhibits of themed underwater environments like the Rainforest. Quell your hunger at the Marina Matinee café or Aquarium restaurant; then quench your thirst at the Dive Lounge.



Come try your luck at table games and slot machines at Casino Night, Wednesday, August 29 beginning at 9 p.m., in the George R. Brown Convention Center, Exhibit Hall B. Competitors must wear bibs to participate in casino games. This event is sponsored by the Veterans Canteen Service.



## There's a First Time for Everything...

Otis Dorsey, a 70 year old former Marine from Los Angeles, California stepped on a plane for the first time in over 40 years to keep a promise to the rest of his group to attend the Golden Age Games. For the *first* time. Dorsey, the star checker player at the Los Angeles ambulatory care clinic, is hoping for a gold medal in checkers. Dorsey said he is enjoying the events, competing in checkers, dominoes and horseshoes. Dorsey says, "I cannot believe what I have been missing. I will be back!" 🌟



*Otis Dorsey contemplates his next move during his checkers match yesterday.*

## Much Ado about a Bell

Visitors often arrive in Texas with a lot of preconceived notions: All Texans say "howdy" and "y'all." All Texans are long and tall. They wear cowboy hats, cowboy boots and spurs that jingle jangle jingle. Why, shucks, they may even expect tumbleweeds to roll down Main Street!

Well, even though Houston isn't "Cowtown" that's Ft. Worth, the coaches from Oklahoma City VA Medical Center must have thought cows roamed the streets, because they arrived in Houston searching for a cow bell. That's right, a big loud, clanking cow bell.

Seems those little ladies misplaced their own cow bell and thought there would be a feed store nearby. In Downtown Houston.

According to Oklahoma City co coach April Reynolds, she was so afraid of losing the cow bell last year en route to the Games in Hampton, that she packed it in her carry on luggage. TSA officials stopped her at the screening checkpoint at the Oklahoma City airport, and delayed

passengers while they conferred with a supervisor and made sure the cowbell wasn't a suspicious item. This year, she and co coach Stephanie Welch decided the cow bell should be packed in their checked baggage.

Unfortunately, the cow bell was accidentally left behind in Oklahoma City, which is why they needed a replacement cow bell in Houston.

Jerome Moore, 58, an athlete from Oklahoma City, is competing in the 25 yard freestyle swim Wednesday evening. "We clang the bell really hard against the edge of the pool, so he can feel the vibrations and hear the sound when he's in the water," said Welch. The vibration and noise of the clanking cow bell serve as a guide for the blind veteran, according to Reynolds.

The coaches came to the Command Center seeking information about a local feed store or pet supply company. Theresa Riha, LCSW, a Houston volunteer, thought she had a cow bell at home and was on her way to check, when another volunteer suggested she stop at a local

hobby store. In their crafts section, was a large cow bell.

Moore is competing in his third Golden Age Games, after previously medaling in shot put and dominoes. This year, he's competing in shot put, discus, dominoes and freestyle swimming. He'll be the one in the lane with the coaches making a ruckus, clanking that cow bell against the side of the pool. 🌟

## Texas Hospitality

Volunteers are excited to share their famous Texas hospitality with veterans, coaches, visitors and staff attending the 21st National Veterans Golden Age Games. The Hospitality Room is located on the second floor of the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Arboretum 3. Snacks are available through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The Hospitality Room in Arboretum 3 adjoins the Recreation Suite, where a big screen television, crafts, puzzles and games are available for all to enjoy. Stop by, socialize, and get to know your fellow participants in the midst of true Texan hospitality! 🌟



**Today's Weather**

Low **75°** High **87°**

**Thursday**  
Low: 75° High: 88°

**Friday**  
Low: 75° High: 89°

## Important Info

### Today's Menu

All meals are served in the Hyatt Imperial Ballroom located on the 3rd level of the hotel.

#### Breakfast Buffet, 6 to 8:30 a.m.

Assorted Chilled Juices  
Fruit, Danish, Muffins, Cake  
Scrambled Eggs  
Oatmeal  
Hash Browns and Bacon  
Starbucks Coffee and Herbal Teas

#### Lunch Buffet, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Mixed Greens and Romaine Lettuce with assorted Dressings  
Beef Stroganoff with Egg Noodles  
Roasted Rosemary Rotisserie Chicken  
Green Beans and Carrots  
Roasted Red Bliss Potatoes  
Apple and Cherry Pies

#### Dinner Buffet, 5 to 7 p.m.

Mixed Greens and Romaine Lettuce with assorted Dressings  
Meat Lasagna  
Turkey Lasagna  
Summer Vegetables, Garlic Bread  
Assorted Desserts

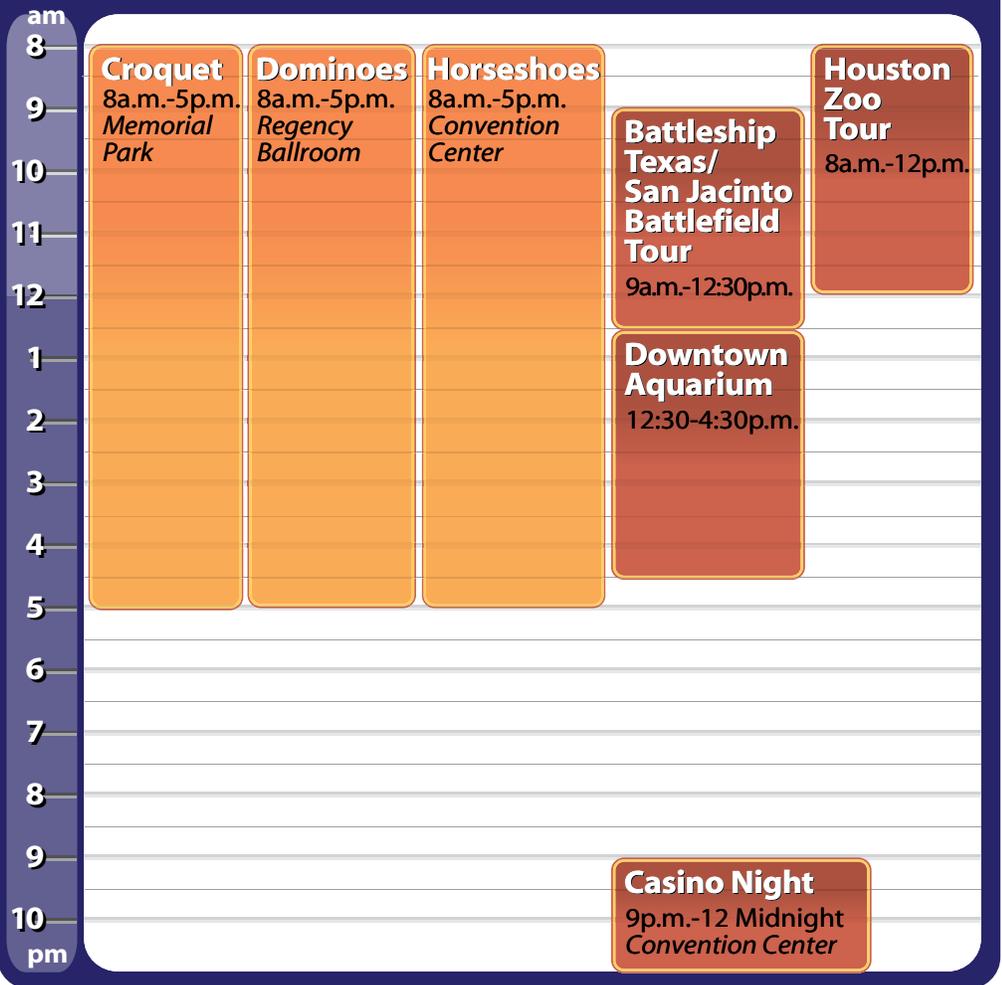
### Transportation Information

Coach America provides bus service from the Hyatt Regency Hotel to and from all events and activities from the Dallas and Louisiana Street entrance. Riders should be at the pick up point 90 minutes before the start time of the competitive event, and 60 minutes before the departure time of alternate activities.

Volunteer parking at the Toyota Center's Tundra Garage corner of Bell and La Branch, at 1515 Jackson Street, is free on

## Today's Schedule

Wednesday, August 29



the 4th, 5th and 6th levels. Shuttle pick up is on Bell Street under the skybridge. Shuttle and bus stops at the George R. Brown Convention Center are posted. VA shuttle service from the medical center run every two hours from the west entrance Transitional Care Center, daily through Friday.

### Durable Medical Equipment

Some durable medical equipment items are available for use by veterans at the Hyatt Regency Hotel during the Games, including shower chairs, tub benches, and raised toilet seats. Veterans in need of emergent items such as crutches, canes, manual wheelchairs and other miscellaneous items will be evaluated by the medical staff and items will be issued on an as needed basis.

### Wheelchair Repair

Wheelchair Repair is available 24/7 from local vendors. Medical staff will be available to contact the vendors from any venue. Veterans can contact the medical staff directly at extension 3030 or 3031 to request repair services while at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

### Medical & Emergency Information

Medical staff are available 24 hours a day in Room 3030. Medical staff are also on-site at all venues in bright red shirts. If you experience a medical emergency, please do not wait to find a medical team member. Call 55 within the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Give the nature and exact location of the accident or medical emergency. To prevent further injury, do not move the injured/ill unless necessary.