



WELCOME!

to the 21st National Veterans Golden Age Games!

Competitors:

On behalf of the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center, it is an incredible honor and my pleasure to welcome you to the 21st National Veterans Golden Age Games in Houston.

Houston is a unique and special place to hold the Games because it captures the spirit of Texas with its exciting blend of vibrant cultures and history, dynamic business and medical community, wide variety of popular sports activities, and many great local restaurants and attractions. As the host of this exceptional event, we look forward to an exhilarating week of camaraderie, competition and celebration.

We would like to express our deep appreciation for the support and generosity of the sponsors of the 21st National Veterans Golden Age Games: the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Veterans Canteen Service, and Help Hospitalized Veterans.

Whether this is your first National Veterans Golden Age Games or you are an annual competitor, the staff and the volunteers of the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center look forward to cheering you to the finish line.

Heroes in Houston! Welcome!

EDGAR L. TUCKER
Medical Center Director



Let the Games Begin!

Opening Ceremonies Tonight!

Come one, come all to the Opening Ceremonies of the 21st National Veterans Golden Age Games, taking place this evening at the George R. Brown Convention Center, Exhibit Hall A. Competitors should assemble with their teams in the Exhibit Hall at 6:15 p.m. Seating for spectators opens at 6:30, with the program beginning promptly at 7.

Tonight's agenda includes a musical prelude by the University of Houston Band. Houston's KPRC Local 2 News anchor and Marine Corps veteran of Vietnam Bill Balleza will serve as tonight's Master of Ceremonies. One veteran from each of the 39 states expected to be here this year will participate in the Parade of Competitors, carrying in each state flag. VA Chaplain Clarito Rara will deliver the invocation. Also on the agenda are the presentation of colors by the Joint Services Color Guard from the Houston

continued on page 2...

A heartfelt thank you to



all of our Co-Sponsors!



During the 21st National Veterans Golden Age Games in Houston, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Library of Congress invite you to be part of an important national effort – The Veterans History Project VHP .

This project is meant to honor you, our nation’s veterans, by creating a lasting legacy of your military experience. Regardless of your branch or period of service, age, military career or experi

ence, we need your story. Share it with us and help make history come alive!

Your 45 minute interview will be recorded on DVD. One copy will be given to the Library of Congress, and another copy will be given to you. You and your story will then become part of our Nation’s official historical records. In appreciation, you will also receive a VHP tote bag and a one of a kind VHP Challenge coin.

Your VHP interview will be scheduled at your convenience during the 21st National Veterans Golden Age Games. Make an interview appointment at the VHP Registration table today or tomorrow. VHP interviews will be conducted Tuesday, August 28, through Friday, August 31, between the hours of 8 a.m. until noon, and 1 p.m. until 5 p.m.

Interviews will be held in the Ebony Room in the Hyatt Regency Hotel on the fourth floor. Look for our VHP signage while at the National Veterans Golden Age Games.

Only you can tell your story – your own way! Yours is a story worth preserving and sharing with future generations!

For more information, visit www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/

Let the Games Begin! *continued*

area; the pledge of allegiance, led by local competitor Raymond Jarmon; and the National Anthem, sung by Beverly Roberts of Brookhollow Baptist Church.

Special guests welcoming our competitors include Edgar Tucker, Director of the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center; Rica Lewis Payton, Acting Network Director of the South Central VA Health Care Network; Marilyn Iverson, Director of the Veterans Canteen Service; Mike Lynch, Executive Director of Help Hospitalized Veterans; and from VA Central Office, Joseph A. Williams, Deputy Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Management and Operations.

The Athletes’ Oath will be led by long time Games supporter, competitor and athlete liaison Joe Velasquez of Turlock, Calif., followed by the ceremonial lighting of the torch by 2006 George Gangi Award winner Charles Wynder of Williamsburg, Va.

“The Opening Ceremonies sets the tone for an exciting, challenging and fun filled week,” said Michael Mitchell, Coordinator of the 2007 Games. “Tonight’s event is sure to be one you don’t want to miss!”

After the ceremony, be sure to come to tonight’s dance, also taking place at the Convention Center. *Collector’s Item*, a local band that plays a variety of music, will help you get your groove on as you dance the night away. The dance takes place from 9 p.m. – 12 midnight in Exhibit Hall A. ★

Happy Birthday!

Best wishes to NVGAG participants celebrating a birthday on August 27! Stop by the Media Center in the Dogwood room to pick up a special gift.

*Raymond E. Carlson
Walter H. Evans, Jr.
Basil D. Morehead
Joseph Pellouso
Kenneth Schwartz*

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*



Silver Eagles Welcome Heroes to Houston

As the biggest city in Texas and fourth largest in the U.S., Houston, known as Space City, offers each veteran competing in the 21st National Veterans Golden Age Games an out of this world experience and an outstanding chance to win gold.

The Silver Eagles, the local Houston Team, is 37 members strong and made up of military veterans from across southeast Texas. Team members will do whatever possible to ensure each competitor participating this year enjoys as exciting week of camaraderie, competition and celebration.

“On behalf of the Silver Eagles, I’d like to give a great big Texas welcome to our friends visiting Houston,” said Gloria Morris, an Army veteran. “We want you to have fun and enjoy our town.”

Houston’s warm climate encourages year round recreation, but participants in this year’s Games will mostly compete in indoor, air conditioned venues such as the George R. Brown Convention Center.

Fellow Army veteran William Van Houten and his teammates know all too well that summers in Texas can be sizzling. At this year’s Games, he and his local teammates will have no problem giving visiting participants a very warm welcome to Houston. “I’ve been around the world and lived in many cities, but Houston is home. We hope our fellow veterans will consider Houston as their home this week as well.”

John Holt, another Army veteran, looks forward to welcoming competitors from across the country. At last year’s event in Hampton, Va., he saw another participant proudly wearing a 9th Infantry Division hat. “I hadn’t seen him in over 40 years,” said Holt. “But that is exactly one of the reasons I participate in the Games to network and visit with fellow veterans.”

The Houston Silver Eagles salute their fellow competitors and welcome everyone to the Lone Star State. Heroes in Houston! ⬠



From left to right, front row kneeling: Stacey Spicer Coach and JeMarques Handy Coach ; 2nd row wheelchair participants left to right : Gloria Morris and John Sedillo; 3rd row standing left to right : John Holt, George Henry, William Hill, James Davis, Andrew Burks, Alton Dacus, Bilal El amin, James Williams and Marvin Sims; 4th row standing left to right : Joseph Bartholow, Mack Thrash, Joseph Robert, Billy Lacy, Robert Lambus, Jack Woodard, William Smith and Basil Morehead

Meet Miss Texas and the University of Houston Cheerleaders



Miss Texas 2007, Molly Hazlett

Be sure to meet Miss Texas 2007, Molly Hazlett, as she greets competitors and signs autographs at the Hyatt today from 4:30 – 6 p.m. A junior at Sam Houston State University, Hazlett is majoring in mass communication. Drug and alcohol awareness is her focus as she makes more than 350 appearances as this year’s Miss Texas. She will also be available to meet with veterans after the Opening Ceremonies tonight.

Also here to support our competitors at the Opening Ceremonies are the University of Houston UH cheerleaders. Steeped in tradition, the cheerleading squads not only cheer for the UH Cougar sports teams, but also compete at regional and national cheer competitions. Watch them cheer for our Golden Age competitors today – go vets! ⬠

Important Info

Durable Medical Equipment

Some durable medical equipment items will be 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.

Meal Information

All meals will be served in the Hyatt Regency Hotel's Imperial Ballroom, located on the third level of the hotel. Breakfast is served each day from 6 8:30 a.m. Lunch is from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and dinner is served from 5 7 p.m.

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 committed to helping all participants maintain their optimum levels of wellness. Please report to NVGAG staff any injuries you or any competitors sustain. Medical staff will triage veterans, if needed, 24 hours a day, in Room 3030 in the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Medical staff will be on-site at all Games venues; you will recognize them by their 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

Schedule of Events



medical emergency. To prevent further injury, do not move the injured/ill unless necessary.

Transportation Information

Coach America will provide bus service from the Hyatt Regency Hotel to and from all events and activities.

The Hyatt Regency Hotel pick up and drop-off location is the Dallas and Louisiana Street entrance. Participants should be at the pick up location 90 minutes before the scheduled start time of competitive events, and 60 minutes prior to the departure time for alternate activities.

Volunteer parking at the Toyota Center's Tundra Garage (corner of Bell and La Branch, at 1515 Jackson Street), is free. Shuttle pick-up is on Bell Street, under the skybridge.

Pick up locations at the George R. Brown Convention Center will be posted. VA shuttle service from the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center MEDVAMC will run every two hours from the West entrance Transitional Care Center, Monday through Friday only.

Hot in Houston!

August is one of Houston's hot test months, with an average high temperature of 93°F and an average low of 75°F. Heat advisories, high humidity and a high UV index are expected.

