

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE 2008 NATIONAL VETERANS GOLDEN AGE GAMES

# Women VETERANS

54 GAMES COMPETITORS  
UNITED BY MORE  
THAN A UNIFORM.



There's plenty of talk about camaraderie at the National Veterans Golden Age Games. With the event now well underway, the talk has become much more than mere words. It is visible – veterans bonding, competing and sharing stories of yesterday.

There are certainly brotherhoods among the branches of military represented here, as evidenced by the various cheers and calls during Opening Ceremonies. There is a sisterhood here as well though, with 54 women veterans competing in this week's Games, equally united by service to their country.

Each woman joined the military for her own reasons. Martha Marie Halcomb, 85, from Largo, Fla., signed up for the Marine Corps at the urging of her uncle, also a Marine. Franketta Zalaznik, 58, from Lexington, Ky., decided that the Kentucky Army National Guard was a good way to put herself through nursing school and travel, and ended up making a 26-year career from that decision. Emma Flonsbee, 72, from Grand Junction, Colo., joined the

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**SATURDAY**  
**AUGUST 23, 2008**

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## WEATHER

**TODAY**



Some Clouds with Rain Showers

High: **86°** Low: **70°**

**TOMORROW**



Some Clouds with Rain Showers

High: **83°** Low: **62°**

Thank you to our co-sponsors!



[www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov](http://www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov)

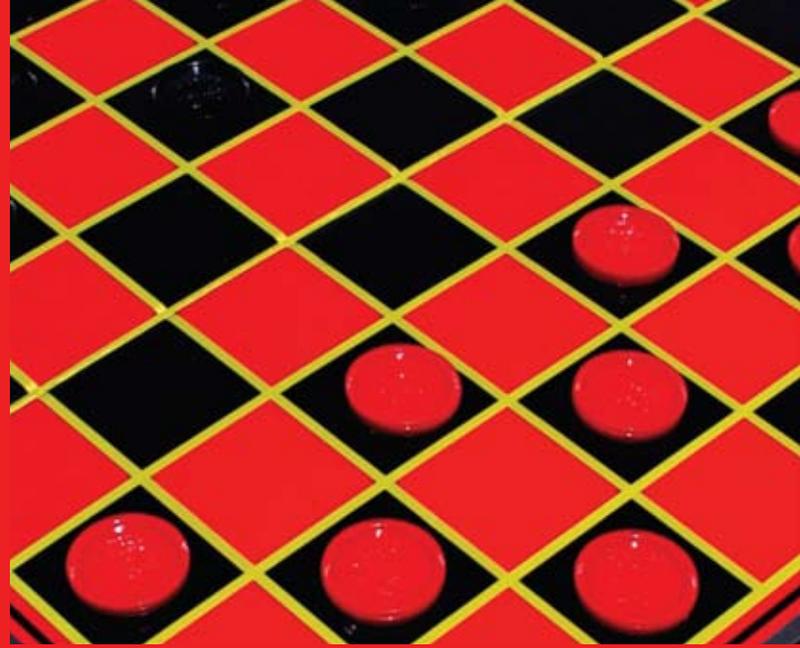
## Checkers: A Timeless Game

Checkers, according to the American Checkers Federation, is the oldest game in the history of the world, dating back more than 4000 years. In fact, the earliest known published book on the game was written in 1547 by author Antonio Torquemada from Valencia, Spain. Over the years, the rules have evolved and the name has changed many times, giving checkers quite a wordy history.

“I came to the Golden Age Games to compete in air rifles, but chose checkers as one of my events because I’m familiar with it,” said Steve Ham, 62, a Marine Corps veteran from Evergreen, Colo. “I used to play checkers with my great granddad.

It is known as checkers only in Northern America; in most other countries the game is called draughts. An ancient form of this popular board game was played in Egypt and referred to as Alquerque or Quirkat. Remnants of those boards have been discovered in archeological digs dating all the way back to 400 BC.

“Checkers is a great game,” said Ira Walton, 85, of Waco, Texas, a long time competitor. “It requires concentration and special moves in order to put pressure on your opponent.” Walton believes that blocks 14 and 19 are the two



best spots on the board. Having won an impressive 19 gold medals in checkers over the years, he should know.

Here at the National Veterans Golden Age Games, a game of checkers can provide some fierce competition. Checkers champions this year are: Gary Freedom (55-59); Roger Leblanc (60-64); Ely Dela Cruz (65-69); William Randall, Jr. (70-74); Robert Valway (75-79); Claire Brou (80-84); and Ira Walton (85+). Congratulations to you all!

## Veteran Helping Veteran

Kenneth Levels of Escondido, Calif., knows how important the Golden Age Games are for senior veterans. He also knows there are plenty of obstacles out there, particularly financial ones, that can keep some veterans from attending VA-sponsored events like this one. With that in mind, Levels, an Army veteran who is attending the Games for the third time, decided that someone should do something about this all too common occurrence. He then realized the calling was his – and with his background as a college professor and his know-how in grant writing, he was a shoe-in to get the job done right. Plus, the cause is one that’s especially close to his heart.

“There are a lot of mental aspects to the Golden Age Games that I don’t think people realize,” he said. “The Games make us feel good. I’m sure many senior veterans are alive today because of this event.” Levels knows several local veterans whose participation in the Golden Age Games has improved their health and helped them realize the benefits of staying active. Once they’ve competed and discover what they can do, they go home and start training for the next year’s event.

Friends of War Fighters & Disabled Veterans is a nonprofit group created by Levels to raise funds for California veterans needing financial assistance to attend the Golden Age Games. The organization may, in the future, widen its scope to include veterans from other states, but the focus for now is on Levels’ home state of California. The organization is a federally recognized nonprofit, which allows donations and

gifts to be tax deductible.

With a board consisting of five volunteer members (each a disabled veteran), Friends of War Fighters & Disabled Veterans has charged full steam ahead in its full year, raising more than \$6,000 for veterans attending the 2008 Games. The board includes Ken Levels as president; Beatriz Dominguez as treasurer; Steve Katzmann as secretary; and Chuck Ore and Ken Burkey as members. No positions are paid, and not more than two percent of all money raised goes toward administrative costs such as mailings or supplies. For membership and donation information, call (760) 807-0697.

“There’s a lot of patriotism out there,” Levels said. “People want to help and contribute, but they also want to know what is going on with their funds. We can give them that information.”

Levels comes from a family dedicated to military service. He is a Vietnam era veteran who receives care at the VA San Diego Healthcare System. No stranger to athletics and competition, he was an Olympic alternate in 1976 and has also coached two world championship wrestling teams. This year at the Golden Age Games, he is competing in shot-put, discus, horseshoes and swimming.

“There’s never enough involvement with veterans,” he said. “I can’t say that enough. I have freedoms today that I would not have if my father hadn’t served. It’s time to give back. It’s always time.”

## Lost!

The San Diego team needs your help in a major way! A digital camera that contains all of the team's personal photos from the events has been lost. The team desperately wants to find the camera and all the mementos that it contains. The camera is a silver Canon brand and is in a black carrying case. If you've found the camera, please drop it off at the Command Center in room 120 or the lost and found in the Volunteer room in room 122. The San Diego team would really appreciate any assistance you can offer in retrieving the camera, and more importantly the sentimental photos that it contains.

## Arrive Early to Events

In order to stay on schedule and have a smooth and trouble-free Games, Games officials ask that all competitors and participants arrive at the venue at least a half-hour before the scheduled start time of an event. The event schedule lists the times that a competition is actually slated to start, not the time that competitors should be arriving. Officials also ask competitors to be especially mindful of arriving early for today's contests of horseshoes, dominoes and billiards. With your cooperation regarding the time, everyone will have a great experience at the Games.



## Happy Birthday!

Happy birthday to Douglas Carpenter, Joseph Pacholski, Charles McClain, and James Williams. All of whom are celebrating their birthday today!

Make sure to stop by the Media Center in room 124 and pick up your birthday surprise.

## Women Veterans *(...continued from page 3)*

Women's Army Corps simply because she felt the desire to serve her country. Sandra "Su" Carroll, 68, from Martinsburg, W. Va., joined the Navy to live a different life than the one that had been planned for her. What else do our women veterans have in common? Probably a lot, but for this week, it's the Games.

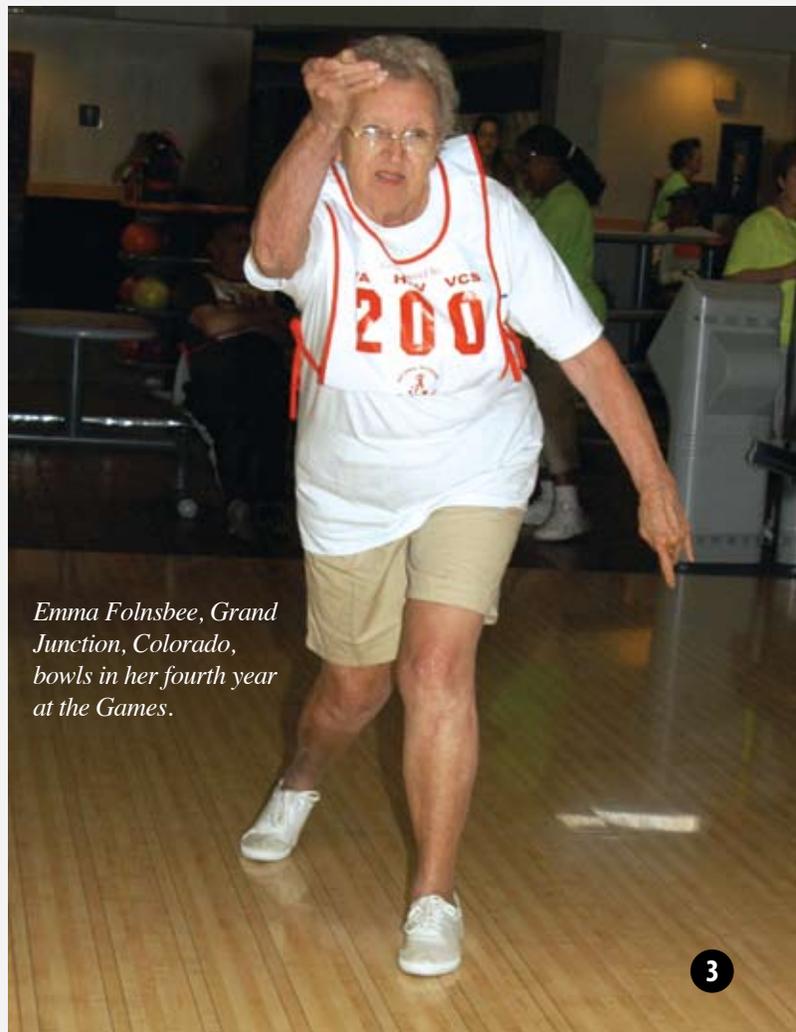
"This is my first time participating in the National Veterans Golden Age Games," said Zalaznik, who served in the first Gulf War. "One of my 'Nam sisters got me to volunteer with her to help in the Games, and also to participate. I've been very excited about seeing other vets and exchanging stories." Zalaznik chose to compete in swimming and air rifles this week.

Flonsbee has been attending the Golden Age Games for four years. She likes to spread the word about the event to the other women veterans she meets at her local VA medical facility in Grand Junction, Colo. "I would like to encourage all women veterans to join the Games," she said. "It's so fulfilling to see all the people who were in the services and listen to some old war stories." Flonsbee is competing in horseshoes, shuffleboard, bowling and dominoes.

Halcomb is participating in wheelchair horseshoes, air rifles, shot-put and discus. "This is my 15th year at the Games," Halcomb said. "This keeps me active and I enjoy being a competitor. It gives me some new goals each year and helps me keep in better physical condition. It also gives me something to look forward to every year."

Carroll's events this week are swimming and checkers. "More important than competing in a favorite sport,

more important than winning a medal or two, is the love and camaraderie shared between veterans," she said. "There's nothing like it. It's like a great big family hug."



*Emma Folnsbee, Grand Junction, Colorado, bowls in her fourth year at the Games.*

2008 NATIONAL VETERANS GOLDEN AGE GAMES  
**PHOTO GALLERY**



# Now a Word From... You!

We wanted to know what is on your mind and what you think of the Games this year. So we went out and asked, and this is what we heard.

## Melanie Downing

Santa Monica, California

Navy

"This is my 17th consecutive year and I thoroughly enjoy it. Every year is like a family reunion."

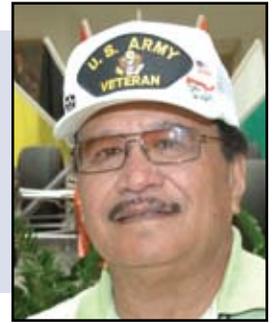


## Robert Sandoval

Fresno, California

Army

"The Speedway museum is fantastic — I've never seen anything like it!"



## Isaac Slater

Tuskegee, Alabama

Marine Corps

"I'm having a great time — the facilities are beautiful and the Games are very well organized."



## Tim Daubert

Lindsay, California

Marine Corps

"The Marines have landed!"



## Alvin Sedivy

Boise, Idaho

Air Force

"The Games are fantastic and I am having a great time. I haven't danced this much in years."



## Rena Dugat

Houston, Texas

Army

"This is the first time I haven't minded getting older, because now I'm eligible to compete in the games."



## Kim Virgil

Okeechobee, Florida

Air Force

"I hope to go home with at least one medal. Each year I learn more about the Games."



## Robert Schaney

Boise, Idaho

Marine Corp

"Really a great time, great sportsmanship. It's good for the veterans and VA."



## Bill Bowles

Durham, North Carolina

Army

"I really enjoy participating in the Games. I won a silver medal in golf yesterday."

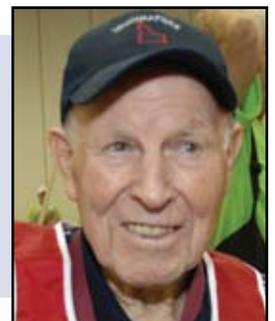


## James Near

Boise, Idaho

Coast Guard

"Fantastic! I'm really enjoying all my events."



## Team Dedicates Performance to Lost Member

Air Force veteran Becky James and her fellow teammates from Sepulveda, Calif., are all wearing black ribbons next to their competitor numbers this week. They've arrived at the event ready to compete and earn medals, but they have no intention of taking full credit for their achievements. Instead, they will be dedicating their honors to a fallen teammate, longtime Golden Age Games competitor Charlie Gray, who lost his battle with cancer earlier this year.

"Charlie was an amazing guy," said James, a first-time competitor. "He was always encouraging everyone and inspiring people to do their best, or even to just give something

a try. He was a heck of a pool player and he could whip just about all of us any time, but he never made a big deal about it. He was fun."

Gray, an Army veteran, lived in North Hollywood, Calif., and would have turned 74 this October. He is remembered by his team for his fun-loving attitude and commitment to helping others succeed. According to James, the weightlifting room in the VA medical facility in Sepulveda, Calif., where Gray spent many hours training and inspiring veterans, has been renamed the "Charlie Gray Memorial Weightlifting Room" in his honor.

Gray participated in the National Veterans Golden Age Games from 2002-2006.

## Spread the Fun

Want to let your family and friends back home in on the National Veterans Golden Age Games fun? You can by sending them to the Games website, [www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov](http://www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov).

At the website, they can read every issue of the "Victory Lane" newsletter. Visitors to the site can also read about the Games itself, and learn about the featured sports and why the Games were originally formed. Competitor information, event results, and photos from every day are also for viewing.

Your fellow veterans can also download the registration form to join in on the fun for the 2009 National Veterans Golden Age Games.

## Eating Right is Even More Important as We Age

How should you eat as you get older? Which foods are likely to keep you the healthiest and which ones should you limit? Is it possible to eat good food and stay within a healthy weight? Along with the decision to stay active, the food choices you make are probably the most important decisions you'll make.

Eating well is vital at any age, but as you get older, your daily food choices can make an important difference in your health. Good nutrition is one component of an overall strategy to stay healthy. Eating a well-planned, balanced mix of healthy foods every day may help prevent heart disease, type 2 diabetes, bone loss, some kinds of cancer, and anemia.

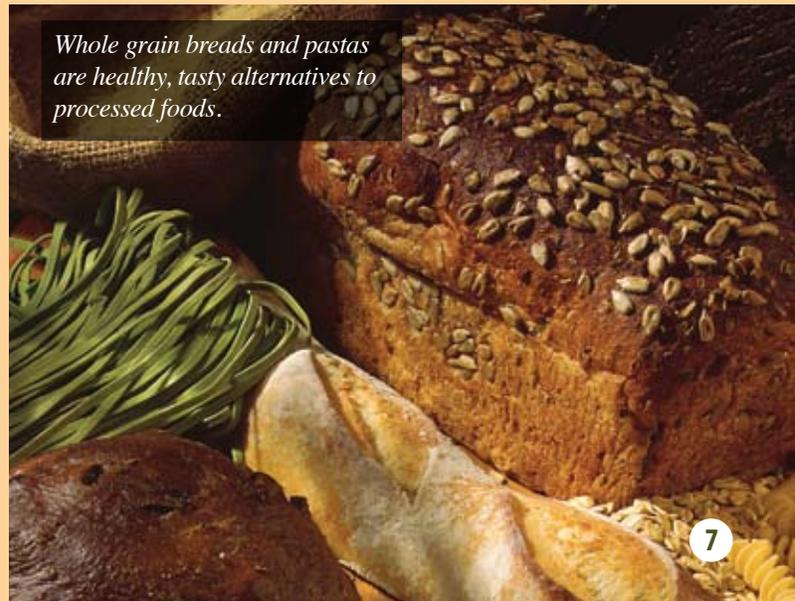
However, eating healthy may not always be easy for older adults. Changing appetites, slowing metabolism, eating alone, buying ready-to-eat meals, and living on a fixed income can affect the quality of one's food choices. Yet our need for healthy foods does not diminish as we grow in years. As we age, our bodies still require essential nutrients to help us maintain function, and most of those nutrients are found in fresh foods.

To eat well, it's best to choose a mix of nutrient-dense foods every day. Nutrient-dense foods are foods that are high in nutrients but low in calories. Look for foods that contain vitamins, minerals, complex carbohydrates, lean protein, and healthy fats. Plan your meals and snacks to include plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables (the more colors, the better!), plenty of whole grains, low-fat or fat-free milk and milk products,

lean meats such as poultry and fish, beans, eggs, and nuts. Limit the amounts of fats (saturated and trans fats should be as low as possible), cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars that you consume daily.

It is important for older adults to select the foods that provide them with the nutrients and energy they need for healthy, active living. Eating well doesn't mean bland tasteless food. Supermarkets today are awash with fresh, healthy, tasty whole grain choices. For a quick switch to healthier eating, buy whole grain pasta and breads instead of regular. Combined with an active lifestyle, healthy food choices can drastically improve your quality of life.

*Whole grain breads and pastas are healthy, tasty alternatives to processed foods.*



# Schedule of Events

Saturday, August 23



## Bus and Shuttle Service

Throughout the week continuous shuttle service to the Indianapolis Convention Center will begin early each day. Buses for events and scheduled activities held at venues away from downtown will board in front of the Indianapolis Convention Center. Please pay close attention throughout the day to posted bus departure times as they may change due to unforeseen circumstances. To meet everyone's needs and to ensure timely arrivals, buses will depart promptly as posted.

Shuttles begin service at 5:30 a.m. daily.

- **South Loop** is to/from Embassy Suites (see below), Crowne Plaza, Omni Severin and the convention center.
- **North Loop** is to/from Hilton, Hilton Garden Inn and Hampton Inn and the convention center.
- All stops will be at the front of the convention center and each hotel, with the exception of the Embassy Suites. Participants staying at the Embassy Suites can pick up the shuttle at the corner of Washington and Illinois.

## Medical Equipment & Wheelchair Repair

Prosthetics will be available at the Convention Center room 123. Staff will be on site at the Convention Center from 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. daily to meet your needs for Wheelchair repair or prosthetic related equipment.

- Extra shower chairs, canes, walkers, elevated toilet seats available at the convention center and will be delivered upon request.
- We will be able to contact vendors for motorized wheelchair issues should the need arise and will have non-motorized wheelchairs for loan to the participant while repairs are completed.

For any other prosthetic or wheelchair issues, please contact Steven Frank or Maura DiMeo at (317) 509-5614 or pager (317) 310-4390.

## Places to Know

The below list is comprised of locations that you should know during your time at the Games. All rooms are located in the Indianapolis Convention Center & Lucas Oil Stadium.

Administrative: *Room 120*

Command Center: *Room 121*

Cyber Café: *Room 120*

Media Center: *Room 124*

Medical Assistance: *Room 123*

Veterans' History Project: *West Lobby Chamber*

Volunteers: *Room 122*

## Medical Help

There will be a triage center (or nursing support center) located at the Hilton hotel. This will be for non-urgent needs for participating veterans that may occur during the Games. The triage center can be reached at (317) 822-5845. For emergencies, please dial 911. The Prosthetics Department will be working with Medical Team to meet any needs that may arise during your stay.

If you are not staying at the Hilton, you may call the triage center if you have any questions or concerns. Make sure to look for contact information as well as more detailed information in the daily newsletter.