

Meet Local Athlete Roy Gantt



By Grant Thurott, St. Louis Volunteer

Roy Gantt is a fighter. An Air Force combat veteran of the Korean War,

Gantt, 69, battled back from the injuries he sustained in a plane crash in 1953. The crash broke most of the bones in his body, hospitalized him for more than six years, and required that his right leg be amputated from the knee down. Now, Gantt is battling again, this time from the severe burns he received in a fire last year that put him in a coma for six weeks. Still, Gantt is ready to compete in this year's Games.

Another reason Gantt worked so hard to be ready for the Games, was because this year they are being held so close to home.

"St. Louis has never hosted the Games before," he said. "There is a lot of pride in our city. Plus, friends and families will be able to attend and cheer for the local athletes." On hand this year are Gantt's own biggest fans – his wife and daughters. It is the

first time one daughter has seen him compete.

Gantt first became interested in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games five years ago, when back problems required that he give up his prosthesis and begin using a wheelchair. Around that time, his doctor recommended that Gantt begin working out at the VA Medical Center gym, where he was encouraged to compete in the Games. Since then, he has competed in the last four. "Competing in the Games not only gets you in great physical shape and helps you feel better about yourself, but it also gives you the chance to catch up with old friends and make new ones," Gantt said. "Competing keeps us young!"

Since competing in the Games and in wheelchair sports in general, Gantt has learned a lot about physical limitations. "Wheelchair sports help you gain more dexterity," he said. "You find out that you are able to do things you didn't think you could do." Apparently, his perseverance and 'no quit' attitude has rubbed off on the people in his life as well. Gantt proudly lets it be known that his two daughters finished their first triathlon in California this year.

"A 'cripple' is a person who hasn't learned to deal with their handicap," Gantt said. "Being 'handicapped' is when you begin to deal with your handicap, and having an 'inconvenience' is when you go on to do your best and live your best life."

Power Soccer Becomes a Medal Event

Athletes participating in Power Soccer will compete for medals for the first time at this year's games. Tom Brown, director of the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, described the way this event moved from exhibition to medal status. Early on, Brown spoke with Steve Kaliszewski, who had coached some Power Soccer teams in San Diego. "We looked for the number of athletes showing an interest in the event, and whether that interest is sustained," Brown said. More than 50 athletes registered for the event while

it was an exhibition event in Cleveland and Long Beach. Brown also noted that this event was suited for athletes using sip and puff, chin, and hand controls. Steve Kaliszewski is the lead official for the event, assisted by Kelly Kaliszewski, Tim Davis and Kevin Baker.

The event makes use of a ball built to withstand the rigors of the competition. Athletes make minor changes to their chairs, using plastic shields installed at the event, to protect their legs.

Local Artist Honors Troops with The Veterans War Memorial Mural



A St. Louis DaimlerChrysler employee has taken his love of country to new heights by painting a mural to honor veterans of our nation, which is on display at the America's Center this week at the Games.

DaimlerChrysler has actively supported community veterans over the past 10 years by coordinating fundraisers to benefit the Spinal Cord Unit at the St. Louis VA Medical Center and volunteering at the local Wheelchair Games each May. In 1997, they took their support one step further by holding an

employee competition to paint a mural. Clober Broussard won the competition and began his four-month journey shortly after.

The mural, which was airbrushed and stands 9 feet tall and 85 feet long, follows a timeline of wars, beginning with World War I, and ending with the Persian Gulf War. It is adorned with images of Colin Powell, Norman Schwarzkopf and the Vietnam Memorial among others. For Broussard 'The Veteran's War Memorial Mural' was a labor of love. "I hope others find inspiration in it," Broussard said. "I painted it not only for my family members who are veterans, but with all veterans in mind. I learned a lot while researching wars to prepare myself for the work, and I became fascinated by the different people who contributed their skills and sometimes their lives."

Broussard featured the Flying Aces

prominently in the World War I section for this reason. "I want to always show my support for troops risking their lives for our country," he said.

The mural hung at the DaimlerChrysler plant for several months after the unveiling and was later donated to the St. Louis VAMC, Jefferson Barracks Division.



Dr. Dr. Dan:

"Summers in St. Louis can be very hot and humid. What tips do you recommend to beat the heat during the Games?"



— Sweltering from Seattle

Dear Sweltering:

Whether you are competing in the Games, volunteering or just watching, it is important that you protect yourself from the sun and the heat. Make sure that you apply sunscreen or sun block (SPF 30 or more) to prevent sunburn. It is also very important to keep your body hydrated, so be sure to drink plenty of water. Don't wait until you are thirsty before taking a drink. Thirst is an indicator that you are already becoming dehydrated. Also, try to avoid alcohol and drinks with caffeine, which tend to dehydrate the body. Another tip is to wear light-colored, loose fitting clothing. Wear materials, such as cotton, that are cool and breathable. Finally, whenever possible seek shade or use an umbrella to avoid being in the direct sunlight for long periods of time. If you follow these tips you'll stop sweltering and start smiling in St Louis!

— Dr. Dan

For Our Bowling and Baseball Fans: Special Attractions to Visit in St. Louis!

Bowling events begin today at the Games. For anyone with a special interest in this popular sport, there is a 'must see' attraction for any bowling enthusiast located right across the street from Busch Stadium, just a few blocks away. The International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame displays the 5,000 year history of bowling. The 50,000 square foot museum chronicles the history of the sport from its early origins to today's latest technology. Inside the Hall of Fame you will find stories and biographies about the game's greatest players and ambassadors.



For our baseball fans, the building also is home to the St. Louis Cardinals Hall of Fame. Here is your chance to experience more than 100 years of St. Louis baseball history and tradition. You can also take a tour of Busch Stadium, open to the public daily at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. (Tours are not given on days of daytime baseball games.)

The hours of operation for the International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Price for admission to either the museum or the stadium is \$7.50 for adults, \$7 for seniors (66 years and older) and \$6 for youth under 16. Admission to both the museum and stadium is \$12 for adults, \$11 for seniors, and \$10 for youth.

Today's Schedule

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.	Late Registration		America's Center (data mgmt. room 255)
8:00 a.m.	Bowling	IV-V	North Oaks Bowl
	Bowling	II-III	St. Clair Lanes
	9-Ball	IA, IB	America's Center
	Table Tennis	IC	America's Center
10:00 a.m.	Air Guns		America's Center
	Table Tennis	IA, IB	America's Center
	9-Ball	IC	America's Center
1:00 p.m.	Air Guns		America's Center
	Swimming		Shaw Aquatic Center
	Slalom	motorized (hand control)	America's Center
	Weightlifting		America's Center
3:00 p.m.	Air Guns		America's Center
	Slalom	motorized (head/mouth)	America's Center
6:30 p.m.	Bowling	IA, IB, IC (stick/handleball)	St. Clair Lanes
	Bowling	(ramp)	North Oaks Bowl
	Basketball	Games 1, 2, 3	America's Center
	Quad Rugby	Game 1	America's Center
7:00 p.m.	Air Guns		America's Center
8:00 p.m.	Basketball	Games 4, 5, 6	America's Center
	Quad Rugby	Game 2	America's Center

Don't Forget the Block Party Tomorrow!



The local organizing committee in St. Louis has been working very hard on a special event taking place tomorrow. A block party will be held on Washington Ave. (between Tucker and 13th Street) from 5 - 9 p.m., with food, entertainment, drinks, music, and fun for all. From America's Center Washington Street exit, turn right and walk three blocks. With a midway theme modeled around the 1904 St.

Louis World's Fair, the block party will feature the music of Johnny Johnson on the main stage, booths with food and drinks, games for both adults and children, and a German beer garden – complete with an authentic German band!

This is the only dinner meal for Thursday. No other dinner meals will be provided at the convention center tomorrow evening, so stop by the

block party for as long as your schedule allows. If you are competing in basketball or air guns at 7 p.m., you will need to come to the block party early to allow enough time to eat and get back to the America's Center in time for your event. Quad rugby participants do not compete Thursday night until the 8:30 p.m. game.

*Photos from
the games*

*New this year — the Martial Arts
Exhibition.*

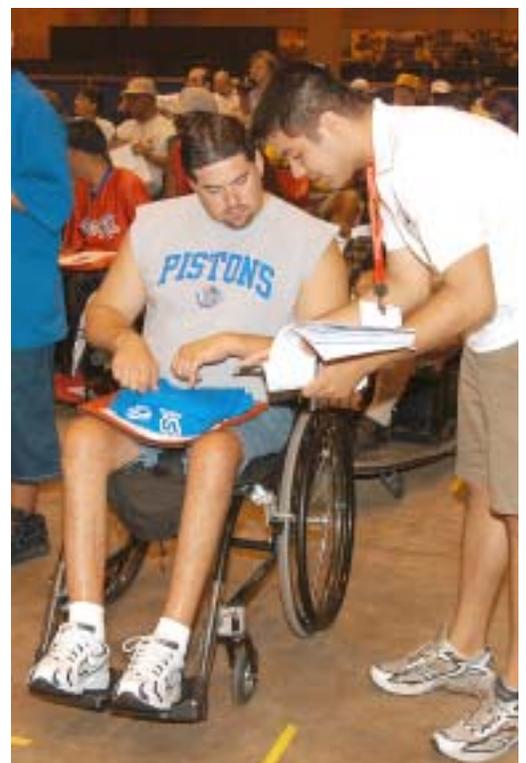


The Games Kick-off basketball demonstration.

Registration begins!



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No Generation Gap at These Games



By Jeff Keener, UPS Kansas City

Curtis Hobbs touched his leg and smiled sheepishly. "I call her my girlfriend," he said, describing a friend he hopes to see next year in Minneapolis. "She's my friend. I have friends all over."

The 82-year-old Hobbs is already planning next year's trip to the 25th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Minneapolis, even as the 2004 events get underway. The oldest veteran at these games, Hobbs will compete this week in 9-ball, bowling (manual), table tennis, and the motorized wheelchair rally.

"Wheelchair rally is the most fun," he said, "I enjoy all of them." Winning two silver and one gold medal in his first Games last year in Long Beach, Hobbs feels much younger than his 82 years. "I don't come here for the medals though," he said, "I enjoy coming."

Sounding strikingly similar yet at the other end of the generational spectrum, is the Games' youngest veteran, the ever smiling Ryan Lindstrom. "I don't come for the medals," Lindstrom explains, "I come to see my friends; to make new

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DME & Wheelchair Repair

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) rooms will be available at the Renaissance Grand Hotel, as will Wheelchair Repair. Should your wheelchair require repairs, go to the Landmark Ballroom, Suite 2, at the hotel. Their phone number is (314) 418-5300. If the repair is an emergency or occurs after hours, you should contact Hotel Team Leader Beverly Franklin, who can be reached by the hotel operator, or on her cell phone at (314) 226-7935. She will contact Wheelchair Repair for you, so they can provide the necessary assistance.

Athletes, this is a reminder to bring your VA identification card in order to receive durable medical equipment. There is a \$10 per equipment refundable deposit when you check out the equipment from the DME room at the hotel, located in the Landmark Ballroom, Suite 3. Their phone number is (314) 418-5349. When picking up the equipment, please inform the DME specialists if you will need to have it dropped off at your room. Also, let

them know if you will be returning the equipment yourself, or if you will need to have it picked up from your room after the Games.

If your pick-up or delivery situation should change, please contact the Hotel Team Leader Beverly Franklin at (314) 418-5349 or cell phone (314) 226-7935. If no DME was requested for you, your name will be placed on a waiting list and it will be issued on a first come, first served basis once all athletes who requested equipment have picked theirs up. Exchanges for equipment can be made, but this will also be first come, first served.

You will be given your DME loan form at the time you pick up your equipment. Please bring this with you when you return the equipment and/or have it attached to the DME upon pick up. If the DME is not returned, a bill of sale will be created and mailed to your Team Coach. Your deposit will be returned immediately if you return the equipment yourself. Your deposit will be mailed to you after the Games if

you choose to have it picked up from your room after your departure.

We hope to provide athletes with the equipment needed to best enjoy the 2004 Games!

Wheelchair Repair Hours of Operation

7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

daily through June 19

DME Hours of Operation

June 16-18

available by contacting Beverly
Franklin at (314) 226-7935

June 19 & 20

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Our Chef's Selections for...



Wednesday, June 16

Breakfast:

Country Scrambled Eggs
 Breakfast Sausage Patties
 Hash Brown Potatoes
 Served with Assorted Juices
 Fresh Muffins, Assorted Cereals
 Coffee or Hot Tea.

Dinner:

Classic Caesar Salad with
 Parmesan Cheese and Garlic
 Croutons
 Baked Lasagna with Meat
 Vegetable, Garlic Bread Sticks
 Tiramisu, Cheesecake
 Iced Tea or Lemonade

Lunch:

Fried Chicken, Mashed Potatoes
 Corn on the Cob, Roll
 Cookie
 Iced Tea or Lemonade

Mealtime Hours:

Breakfast: 6 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
 Lunch: 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
 Dinner: 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Reminder: You must have a meal ticket to enter the dining area.



Convention Center: A medical suite will be fully operational in the America's Center, Rooms 116-117, from 1 p.m. daily until the Closing Ceremonies conclude on Saturday, June 19. The room will be open for treatment of minor injuries and illnesses from 7 a.m. until each event is over, at approximately 10 p.m.

Hotel: Medical support at the Renaissance Grand will be located in room 1531, and will be open June 15-20, from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. There will be no 'house calls' to participants' rooms. A Games physician and registered nurse will be on call each night (for participants only) at the hotel and can be reached by calling the hotel operator. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, ask the hotel operator to call 911.

Events: Medical staff will also be present at each Games venue. They can easily be identified by their red shirts with the white cross on the back.

Questions concerning wheelchair repair or durable medical equipment are not addressed by personnel in the medical suites. Please check with staff working in those areas. Medical personnel can care for minor injuries only. Severe injuries/illnesses will be referred to the St. Louis VA Medical Center.



9-Ball	IA-B	10:00 a.m.
Table Tennis	IC	10:00 a.m.
9-Ball	IC	11:30 a.m.
Table Tennis	IA-B	11:30 a.m.
Slalom (Motor/Hand)	ALL	2:30 p.m.
Weightlifting	ALL	4:00 p.m.
Weightlifting	QUAD	4:00 p.m.
Slalom (Motor/Head)	ALL	4:00 p.m.



Veterans History Project (VHP) interviews continue through Friday in the VHP taping room, Room 113 at the America's Center, from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. Special arrangements can be made if you would like to be interviewed in the evening. Sign up for your interview with Butch Miller in the VHP taping room. 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 at the Games and help make history!



Veterans' interviews will be taped and given to the Library of Congress. Each participant will also receive a video-taped copy of their interview after the Games. Sign up soon!



Show Your Spirit with a Nomination!

Since 1987, one athlete has been selected each year at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games for the "Spirit of the Games" award. This very

special award is given to an athlete who clearly demonstrates not only athletic competence, but also sportsmanship and strength of character. Do you know someone who meets these qualifications? If so, please nominate him or her for the 2004 Spirit of the Games award. A nomination form is included with this newsletter, and may be given to a national official, a member of PVA's Sports and Recreation staff, or dropped off in the Spirit of the Games ballot boxes located in the Command Center (America's Center, Room 122) or by Hall 3 (where meals are served). All ballots are due by 8:00 a.m. on Friday, June 18. Help us recognize our outstanding athletes by submitting a nomination today!



Team Assignments for Softball, Basketball, and Quad Rugby

Team assignments are made by randomly taking equal numbers of athletes grouped by classification and experience status. Team assignments were available on a flyer at the opening ceremonies. Athletes registering for these events can also find out their team assignments at the venue for the event today, or with newsletter distribution at breakfast, or at the hospitality desk.

Ramp Bowlers

Ramp bowling starts at 6:30 p.m. today at North Oaks Plaza. Please plan to meet at the America's Center at 4:30 p.m.



Closing Ceremony Ticket Sales On Sale

Closing ceremony tickets will be on sale at the hospitality desk in America's Center. You won't want to miss the scrumptious dinner, fabulous ceremony, and fun entertainment on Saturday, June 19! Get your tickets ASAP!!

St. Louis Fast Fact

Did you know? The Gateway Arch, at 630 feet, is the nation's tallest man-made monument.

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friends. And I really learn a lot while I'm here."

As the oldest and youngest veterans at the Games, Hobbs and Lindstrom certainly have a lot in common. Meet them both, and you'll note their inspiration, which comes from within, and a sense of wonder that anyone would find them out of the ordinary.

"I never believed I'd be in a wheelchair the rest of my life," Hobbs said. Doctors in 1966 told him he would never walk again. He did – from 1968 until 1990 when he had to return to wheelchair use at the age of 68.

Lindstrom says the most important thing about the Games for him is learning. "I've learned different techniques for doing things – like getting back into my chair, transferring from my chair to a car, those kinds of things." He will compete this week in 9-ball, slalom (motorized, hand control), field-javelin, quad weightlifting, and quad rugby.

"Last year I was in a phase that I didn't think I could go anywhere. My friends here helped me learn what I can do. I look forward to teaching the younger guys in the future," Lindstrom says.

Both Hobbs and Lindstrom are the present *and* the future of the Games. They also happen to present the youngest and oldest perspectives on the commitment and effort on display this week in St. Louis.

Today's Weather

