

Great Games GAZETTE



A Publication of the 27th National Veterans Wheelchair Games

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Saturday, June 23, 2007

Volunteers Make the Games Happen

It's only natural to focus on the remarkable athletes competing in the 27th National Veterans Wheelchair Games, but we must also take a moment to notice the unsung heroes – more than 4000 volunteers who helped out this week. Without them, the Games could not happen.

The task of recruiting and coordinating the volunteers fell to Denise Jashinsky and Bruce Chmielewski from the Milwaukee VA Medical Center. After observing volunteer coordination at past Games, Jashinsky and Chmielewski decided to computerize all steps of the volunteer process. This led to an innovative idea and a first for the Games – anyone interested in volunteering could sign up immediately online.

“The option of signing up online gave people the chance



(left to right) Volunteer Breck Magill from Elkhorn, Wis., volunteer Jeff Bruce from Ft. Atkinson, Wis., athlete Roy Joy from Tucson, Ariz., and volunteer Evie Bruce from Ft. Atkinson, Wis., visit while Joy prepares to board the bus to his event.

community was overwhelming. “We know the people of Milwaukee and Wisconsin are very generous and giving, but we were amazed at the way people responded with open arms to our appeal for volunteers,” Chmielewski said. With local veteran’s service organizations leading the way, support has also come from large corporations, churches, schools, nonprofit groups, sponsors and individuals.

Before the Games, larger groups were encouraged to ‘adopt a venue,’ which allowed friends to stay together and have more fun volunteering. Breck Magill from Elkhorn, Wis., is an adult leader here this week with approximately 130

to commit to being a part of the Games while they were excited about how much fun the Games would be,” said Jashinsky. “I am sure our volunteer group is the largest it has ever been because it is so easy to just say ‘yes’ to signing up.”

Once recruitment began, the response from the

youth group members from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The volunteers have been assisting veterans with their transportation needs and event assistance.

“Our youth conference theme this year is ‘Honored to Serve’ and I can’t think of a more perfect fit than to have our youth serving these veteran athletes who, in turn, have given us so much by serving our country,” Magill said.

The variety of volunteer assignments at the Games is too long to list, but included registration, transportation, scoring, timing, site set-up, serving meals, escorting veterans, being “fans in the stands” and assisting the athletes wherever needed. This year, the oldest volunteer is 96 years old and the youngest is eight. Anyone under 12 needs a parent accompanying them, but the experience is sure to make a positive impression on the youngest volunteers, so Girl and Boy Scout troops as well as school groups were encouraged to sign up.

Erich Inglin is a 16-year-old volunteer from Eagle, Wis. He has volunteered every day during the Games helping veterans and staff at a number of events. “Volunteering has been great and the athletes are really inspiring,” said Inglin. “I will encourage my friends to volunteer in the future based on my experiences this week.”

Jashinsky and Chmielewski are proud to be a part of the Games at Milwaukee and especially proud of the generosity of the community. “One of the things we hope will happen is that the people who volunteer for the Games will be inspired to continue serving our veterans and think about volunteering at their local medical center,” said Jashinsky. “After all, volunteering is one of those rare activities where even though you don’t get paid in money, you are richer for just taking part.” A *million* thanks to all our volunteers!



(Right) Volunteer Erich Inglin from Eagle, Wis. assists Loren Strong from Elgin, Iowa, during his table tennis game.

Wheelchair Curling Makes its Debut

It's new, it's cool and it's a first time exhibition sport at the Games.

One of the interesting facets of this event is the willingness of the athletes to try something new. Each year, new sports are introduced as exhibitions and sometimes eventually added as scheduled competitions. Today in Milwaukee, wheelchair curling makes its debut as a new exhibition at the Games.

While curling is a sport growing in popularity worldwide, wheelchair curling only recently received full medal status at the 2006 Paralympic Games. Local organizer Steve Brown couldn't wait for the 35 athletes who signed up to try their skills on the ice. "Curling isn't just about strength," Brown says. "It's a combination of feel, touch, eye and hand coordination, finesse and strategy. It's like a big game of chess on the ice. All of these attributes make curling perfect for people of varying ages and athleticism. It is a lifelong sport, and women can compete as well as men. What's best is that it's everyone's chance to participate in an Olympic sport."

Curling starts at 9 a.m. at the Pettit National Ice Center, a U.S. Olympic training venue on Milwaukee's west side. In curling, two four-member teams launch a 40-pound stone with a delivery stick down the ice toward a bull's-eye 125 feet away. Opposing teams take turns launching their stones, trying to knock the opponent's stone farther from the bull's-eye. In the end, the team earns a point for each stone closer to the center than the opponent's. Curling has six "ends" (like innings in baseball) and the winner is the team with the most points at the finish.

The wheelchair version has a few modifications making it different from traditional curling. The stones are delivered with the wheelchair locked in a stationary position by a second curler, and there are no "sweepers" on the ice – team members with brooms who help direct the stone to the bulls-eye. This makes accuracy and strategy even more important in wheelchair curling. Brown points out, "Given equal ability, the team with the better strategy will always win out." So wheelchair curling could be an ideal sport for those with more brains than brute strength. While some countries have advanced quickly to the point of using specialized wheelchairs, the United States is still using standard wheelchairs for curling. Before taking the ice, the tires have to be scrupulously cleaned so that no debris makes its way onto the competition surface.

Brown and U.S. Paralympic coordinator Marc DePurno hope that by offering veterans the opportunity to experience curling, they will pursue it recreationally in their own communi-



Members of the U.S. 2006 Paralympic Games curling team demonstrate how the game is played.

ties and encourage other wheelchair athletes to do the same. Of course they also have an ulterior and very exciting motive – to find and develop future members of the U.S. Wheelchair Curling Team who can participate in international competition.

For anyone living in a climate where finding ways to keep active in the winter can be a challenge, curling may just be a great way to keep in shape. Then, when the warm weather returns, it will be a great place to be cool.



Eat Your Cheerios!

In February of 2008, you may see the faces of four National Veterans Wheelchair Games athletes on boxes of Cheerios sold in military markets around the country. In recent months, the Veterans Canteen Service, a local host sponsor of the Games, has been working with General Mills on this special project, which will feature four athletes on the back of Cheerios boxes in a sports card design. Selected athletes will be gold medal winners in their events this week, but will also be role models for others, exhibiting a winning strength of spirit and sportsmanship.

VA, PVA Leaders to Speak at the Closing Ceremonies

We have two very special guests at the Games today.

Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Gordon H. Mansfield, is here from Washington, D.C. He will speak at tonight's Closing Ceremonies, beginning at 7 p.m. The Deputy Secretary has competed in the Games in the past, and has enjoyed meeting with fellow veterans while he has been here.

Deputy Secretary Mansfield is an Army veteran who served two tours in Vietnam as a company commander with the 101st Airborne Division. He sustained a spinal cord injury during the Tet Offensive of 1968. For his actions while his unit was under fire, Mansfield was decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross. He was medically retired by the U.S. Army at the rank of Captain. Mansfield's other combat decorations include the Bronze Star, two Purple Hearts, the Combat Infantryman's Badge and the Presidential Unit Citation.



VA Deputy Secretary
Gordon H. Mansfield

Deputy Executive Director of Paralyzed Veterans of America, Maurice L. Jordan will also speak at the Closing Ceremonies tonight. Prior to this appointment he was the executive director of Michigan PVA, where he coordinated board orientation and governance training programs and developed strategic alliances to increase the chapter's recognition throughout the state. He also served as the chairman of the Association of Chapter Executive Directors for two years.

Jordan is a U.S. Army veteran, serving from 1984-1991. As he rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant in the Army's Quartermaster branch, he received many service medals including Army Commendations and the National Defense Service Medal. He was also recognized as Non-commissioned Officer of the Quarter.



Deputy Executive
Director of PVA
Maurice Jordan



On behalf of all those involved with the Veterans History Project, we sincerely thank you for sharing your stories with us this week. Your commitment to making history come alive for future generations through your stories is deeply appreciated. We are honored and America is honored by your sacrifices and your selfless service to our nation. Thank you!



Dear Dr. Dan,

Oh, my aching back!!! Need I say more? Please help.

~ Pain in the Back

Dear PITB,

Here are a few words of advice:

To the Athletes: Try to do pressure relief activities at least two to three times an hour. These are not only for skin protection, but also to help keep you

from getting stiff and sore while waiting or watching. Ask for assistance to reposition yourself from volunteers if necessary – they are here to help.

To the Volunteers, Staff and Caregivers: Don't try to lift a person or object that you would not move on your own at home. Get help from others. If you are observing an event, try to move around periodically. This will reduce stress on your spine. If you are standing, try to sit down or lean against something to give your back a break. Remember to lift from your legs and not your back. Wear comfortable shoes, as many surfaces like concrete or asphalt are especially hard on the back.

Use common sense. Don't move the athletes without help from others, or while using a lift. Bend at the knees, not the waist. Push or pull objects instead of carrying them. Put those heavy backpacks, purses and shopping bags down while watching events – take a load off! Follow the instructions for repositioning. Take a break and move around – even five minutes can help. These short breaks can allow you to feel better (and sleep better) at the end of the day.

~ Dr. Dan

Photos from the Games

Photos from the Games



(Above) Joseph Lewis from Hampton, Va.



(Below) Claire Brou from Ocean Springs, Miss.



(Above, left to right) Donald Plunkett from New Windsor, N.Y., and John Braco from Acton, Mass.

Strive to Excel

John Register, Associate Director of the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC), was at the Games this week. He wanted to remind our athletes to keep pushing forward and try to qualify for the country's Paralympic team. A division of the USOC, the U.S. Paralympics is dedicated to becoming the world leader in the Paralympic sports movement and promotes excellence in the lives of people with disabilities. Since its formation by the USOC in 2001, U.S. Paralympics has been inspiring Americans to achieve their dreams.

"The National Veterans Wheelchair Games offers a great starting point for many veterans, and utilizing USOC partners in local communities, the Games don't have to stop at the close of the event," Register said. "Vets can continue to participate in their local communities." Register, who is a Desert Storm veteran, is also a two-time Paralympic athlete.

The UOSC Paralympics military program provides post-rehabilitation support and mentoring to American servicemen and women who have sustained physical injuries. Veterans are introduced to adaptive sport techniques and opportuni-

ties through clinics and camps and are also connected with ongoing Paralympic sports programs in their hometowns.

The program isn't just about sports: it's also about attitude, camaraderie and promoting healthy, active lifestyles. A huge role in that process is played by mentors, made up of Paralympic athletes – athletes who've gone through similar experiences by overcoming their own physical disabilities to achieve excellence. U.S. Paralympics hosts Military sports camps, multi-day events for veterans with physical disabilities.

Paralympic summer sports offered include archery, boccia, cycling, equestrian, fencing, goal ball, judo, power lifting, rowing, sailing, shooting, sitting volleyball, soccer, swimming, table tennis, track and field, basketball, rugby and tennis.

Winter sports include Alpine and Nordic skiing, biathlon, sled hockey and curling.

For more information about the Paralympics and its programs, check out their Web site at www.usparalympics.org.



First Timers Speak Out

This year, 513 wheelchair athletes participated in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, with 86 being novice, or first-time, participants. This year's



David King

"rookie" class range in age from 22 to 76 and represent every branch of military service.

Although Coast Guard veteran David King, of West Columbia, Texas is a first-time participant at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, he attended and fully enjoyed the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic earlier this year in Colorado. "At that time, I could only imagine how much

fun the Games would be," King said. "I have really looked forward to this trip – spending time with old friends and making new ones."



Brian Wofford

Brian Wofford, an Army veteran from McCloud, Okla., is another novice athlete. Combat wounded in Iraq, he has competed in the nine-ball, basketball, weightlifting, softball and handcycling events. "The Wheelchair Games provide a great outlet for people like myself," said Wofford. "Being able to continue in competitive sports is an important part of my recovery process."

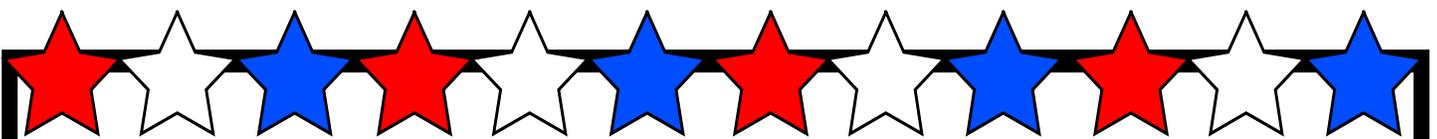
Vietnam veteran Jack Howell, a Marine Corps veteran from Newberg, Ore., competed this week in nine-ball, air guns, bowling, archery, softball and trapshooting. "I am just ready to meet new people at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games," said Howell. "Well, that and also to be competitive."

Many of our first-timers were athletically active before they were injured and have been sharpening their athletic skills for the competition in Milwaukee. Army veteran Kirk Black said, "This is my first time competing in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. As an athlete, I raced in motocross for 20 years and have been very excited about returning to sports competition." Black, who lives in San Antonio, has been going for the gold in weightlifting, softball and three field events here in Milwaukee

Navy veteran Kerry Howell of Bremerton, Wash., sums up the feelings expressed by many of the 2007 novices. "This is my very first Wheelchair Games, but hopefully one of many. The chance to just compete again is a reward far better than a medal," he said.



Kirk Black



Celebrate the Games at Tonight's Closing Ceremonies

Tonight at the Closing Banquet is your night to celebrate all your medal winning athletic accomplishments and the new and renewed friendships you've made. The Closing Banquet will begin at 7 p.m. in the convention center ballroom.

The 2007 Spirit of the Games winner will be announced at the banquet. Since 1987, Games officials have been nominating athletes for the award based on athletic excellence, sportsmanship and strength of character demonstrated through the week.

The closing video is always a fantastic part of the evening. This year's video captures your laughter, tears, and smiles from the heart.

Special guests for the night include the Honorable Gordon H. Mansfield, deputy secretary of Veterans Affairs, and Mr. Maurice L. Jordan, national executive director for the Paralyzed Veterans of America. The master of ceremonies for the event is Gus Gnorski from WITI Fox 6.

As the sun sets on the Games in Milwaukee, the torch passes to Omaha, host of the 2008 National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

See you at the convention center ballroom this evening!



**2007
SPIRIT OF THE GAMES AWARD**

Today's the Day!

The 2007 Spirit of the Games Award recipient will be decided today. Each year, this athlete stands out by demonstrating athletic excellence, sportsmanship and strength of spirit at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. Look for tonight's special edition of the *Great Games Gazette* for more information about this year's Spirit of the Games Award winner. The award was first distributed in 1987 at the 7th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Ann Arbor, Mich. Since then, 21 outstanding athletes have received this special honor. A number of them have been here in Milwaukee this week.

**Food,
wonderful
food...**



**for
Saturday, June 23, 2007**

Hours for Meals in the Ballroom

Breakfast: 6 - 9:30 a.m.
Lunch: 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Main Courses for Lunch on Saturday, June 23

Meatloaf with Root Vegetables; Sweet and Sour Pork

Closing Banquet Dinner Menu:

Baby Lettuce with Pear Slices, Bleu Cheese and Candied Walnuts
Bakery Fresh Rolls with Sweet Creamery Butter, Duet of Pom-
mery Mustard and Herb Crusted Tenderloin of Beef , with Port
Wine Jus; and Breast of Chicken Pesto Parmesan, Dauphinois
Potatoes, Fresh Green Beans, Baby Carrots, Chocolate Paradis'



Did you lose something? Lost and Found is located in the Games Command Center, Room 102 D/E, open today from 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. Any items not picked up will be turned over to the MAC security office. They can be reached at (414) 908-6001 x6165. Thank you!



Great Games Weather

**High 80° — Low 58°
Partly cloudy, with possibility
of showers**

Kids Day a Great Success

Yesterday, a special mentoring experience was provided for children with disabilities at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. The 28 children were paired with 14 veteran athletes at the eighth annual Kids Day event, held this year at the Milwaukee County Zoo.

The children tried slalom, T-ball and relay races. The activities were sometimes challenging, but mentors encouraged each child to do his or her best, showing how everyone can enjoy the fun and competition of sports. Vet-



One of the 28 children that participated in Kids Day receives her gold medal from her mentor.

eran Roy Heathcoat said he looked for kids who needed a little boost and challenged them to beat his time in the slalom. He said, "My motivation is to see the smiles and joy on the children's faces."

Kids Day concluded with an awards ceremony where each child was given their own gold medal for participating.

The athletes have been an inspiration for many this week, and the



Joey Avellone from Belleville, Ill., prepares Kids Day participants for the relay races.

impact on these children was clearly shown on the smiling faces of the Kids Day participants. Caleb Heisz a 12-year-old from Monfort, Wis. summed it up best when he said, "I'm here to have fun and win!" The children and their families will always remember the athletes, the sense of accomplishment and perhaps a new perspective about how sports fit into their lives.

Daily Bulletin Board



Transportation

All buses to events load and unload on Wells Street (on the north side of the MAC). Please be at the bus loading area *at least* one hour before your event.

Event	Venue	Shuttle timeframe
Archery	Uihlein Soccer Park	6:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Motorized Rally	VA Medical Center	6:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Curling	Pettit National Ice Center	6:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Hospitality Desk Hours

The Midwest Airlines Center hospitality desk is located in the east concourse of the first floor of the center, open today from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Hospitality desks are also located in the lobby of the Hyatt, Hilton, and Courtyard by Marriott hotels. They are also open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and again from 9 p.m. to midnight.



Awards...

For sports events with a clear winner, medals are awarded at the venue immediately after the event. Today, these include the finals in basketball, power soccer, quad rugby and slalom super G.

For other events, medals will be presented at the MAC, Exhibit Hall D during the following times today.

Awards Presentation	10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Ballroom D	Track [including the Power Chair 220 and Power Chair Relay]
Medal and photo pick-up	2 to 5 p.m. MAC, First floor lobby near hospitality desk	Medal Pick-up for Archery and Motor Rally

Pick up your medals early today, don't wait till this evening. If you do, you may find a long line!



Surfin' the Net at the Games Internet Cafe'

Today is the curling (exhibition), archery, the slalom "Super G" and

championship games for basketball, power soccer and quad rugby. There's so much to tell, so do it by e-mail. Come by one of the two internet cafés and let your friends and families know what you'll be doing today. Also, check out your results and other information on the Games Web site. The two internet cafés will be open until noon. We extend our special thanks to HP for once again making the internet cafés possible for everyone all week.



Medical Details

Medical suites are available at the Games hotels: Hilton, room 950; Hyatt, room 1704; and Courtyard by Marriott, room 303. They remain open from 7:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. today, closing at 8 a.m. tomorrow, June 24. If any athlete has a medical emergency after the medical suites are closed, the hotel operator can contact the physician or nurse on call.

The medical suite at the MAC will open at 7:30 a.m. and will remain open until the last event has ended today.

DME & Wheelchair Repair



Durable Medical Equipment (DME) is located at the Hilton Hotel, Mitchell

Room, 4th Floor; Hyatt Hotel, Pere Marquette Room; and Courtyard by Marriott, Boardroom 1.

DME Hours of Operation

Today	11 a.m. – Midnight (Except Closing Ceremonies)
Sun., June 24	5 a.m. – Noon

Please return your equipment Saturday before midnight or early Sunday morning.

Wheelchair repair is available at the Hilton Hotel in the Walker Room today from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. Staff will also remain available at today's venues and at the MAC. Additional wheelchair repair support will be provided at the airport on tomorrow.

NVWG Web site
www.wheelchairgames.va.gov

The daily editions of the *Great Games Gazette*

are posted on the main page of the Games Web site, and individual news releases and photos are located on the "Athlete Information" tab. Final results and other updates will continue for the next few days. Look for a great photo gallery from the Games (see the Photo Gallery tab on the main home page). What an easy way to share the *Great Games on a Great Lake* with family and friends!

Oliver Skov . . .

... long time Games participant, passed away in October 2006. He was past president of the Minnesota Chapter of PVA. He is well-known for bowling a perfect 300 during the 22nd Games in Cleveland. He is missed by all who knew him!





Great Games on a Great Lake Daily Schedule for...

Saturday, June 23, 2007

6 – 9:30 a.m.	Breakfast	MAC, Ballroom
8 a.m.	Archery	Uihlein Soccer Park
	Motor Rally	VA Medical Center
9 a.m.	Slalom Super G - Finals	MAC, Exhibit Halls A,B
	Curling - Exhibition	Pettitt National Ice Center
10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Lunch	MAC Ballroom
1 p.m.	Basketball - Consolation Game	MAC, Exhibit Halls C,D
	Power Soccer - Championship Game	MAC, Exhibit Halls C,D
3 p.m.	Basketball - Championship Game	MAC, Exhibit Halls C,D
	Quad Rugby - Championship Game	MAC, Exhibit Halls C,D
7 – 10 p.m.	Closing Ceremonies and Banquet	MAC, Ballroom

Sunday, June 24, 2007
Departures all day!

Transportation to the Airport

The shuttles transporting veterans to the airport start running at 3 a.m. tomorrow until 12:30 a.m. on Monday. Please be ready to depart from your hotel at least 3 hours before your flight time.



Correction:



A photo in Friday's edition was misidentified as Gary McDermott of Clinton, Iowa. Clinton plays power soccer in the photo above.



Departure Information

UPS will transport your luggage from the hotels to the airport. The four departure tags you received during registration on Tuesday MUST be attached to your luggage or it cannot be delivered from your hotel to the airport.

There are specific luggage instructions for the three primary Games hotels - the Hilton, the Hyatt and Courtyard by Marriott. Pick them up at any of the hospitality desks and read them carefully. Have a safe trip home!

Kudos to . . .

Jerry Hull from Milford, Texas, for all the special efforts he has made this week to be at the Games and compete. Congratulations on your hard-won medals, Jerry!

