



News Release

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Registration open for the 27th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Milwaukee

Milwaukee, Wis. – Registration is open for the largest annual wheelchair sports event in the world, the 27th National Veterans Wheelchair Games. More than 500 veterans from across the United States, Puerto Rico and Great Britain are expected to compete in the *Great Games on a Great Lake* June 19-23. This is the second time the Games will be held in Milwaukee. In 1982, about 140 athletes competed in the second competition held at the Milwaukee VA Medical Center.

“Wheelchair sports can play an important role in the lives of the disabled and have a lasting importance on their lives,” said Brian Walker, local coordinator. “For many newly injured veterans, this event is their first exposure to wheelchair athletics.”

Veterans interested in competing in the Games may call the PVA Sports Department to receive an application – (800) 424-8200. It is also available on the event’s web site www.wheelchairgames.org

Presented by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), the Games are open to all U.S. military veterans who use wheelchairs for sports competition due to spinal cord injuries, certain neurological conditions, amputations or other mobility impairments. The Milwaukee VA Medical Center and the Wisconsin Chapter of the PVA are hosting the Games this year.

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Registration Open for Wheelchair Games – add 1

Competitive events will be held at the Midwest Airlines Center, AMF Bowlero, Whitnall Park, Boxhorn Shooting Club, Milwaukee County Zoo, Greendale High School, Uihlein Soccer Park, Pettit Ice Center and the Milwaukee Lakefront. The Games will include competitions in track and field events, swimming, basketball, weightlifting, softball, quad rugby, air guns, 9-ball, bowling, table tennis, archery, handcycling, a motorized rally, power soccer and wheelchair slalom, which is a timed obstacle course. The athletes compete in all events against others with similar athletic ability, competitive experience or age. Exhibition events this year are trap shooting and curling. Also a first-time amputee track and field clinic will be held at Wisconsin Lutheran College.

In addition to the competitions and the opening and closing ceremonies, the event will include “Kids Day” on Friday, June 22 at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Local children, including some with disabilities, will interact with the athletes, participate in some sports events and watch the veterans compete.

The public is invited to attend any or all of the sports competitions throughout the week of the Games. Admission is free.

According to Denise Jashinsky, volunteer coordinator for the 2007 Games, the event will require more than 2,500 volunteers. There are numerous opportunities to volunteer. Assignments include serving as greeters, setting up venues, assisting with meals and transportation or helping the athletes get ready to compete. More information about volunteer opportunities is available by calling (toll free) 888 469-6614, extension 41803 or on the Games web site, www.wheelchairgames.org

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About VA: A cabinet-level department, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is a world leader in rehabilitation, with comprehensive recreation therapy programs at its medical facilities. VA provides excellence in patient care, veterans benefits, memorial programs and customer satisfaction. VA employees continue to offer their dedication and commitment to helping veterans get the services they have earned. To learn more about VA programs and benefits, visit VA’s web site at www.va.gov

About PVA: Founded in 1946, Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) celebrated its 60th anniversary last year. During the past six decades, PVA has helped paralyzed veterans attain the benefits they earned and provided these veterans with the programs and services to improve their quality of life. PVA is a dynamic, broad-based organization with more than 19,000 members in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. To learn more about PVA, visit its web site at www.pva.org

For more information about the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, or to follow events as they happen, visit the Games web site at www.wheelchairgames.org