

Quest Dispatch



Quest for the Best!



Pre-Games Newsletter #1 January 2008

Come to Omaha This July!

Omaha is an original gateway to the Western frontier. The Lewis and Clark Expedition passed by the present location of Omaha on July 21, 1804 as they made their way north on the Missouri River. Local ferry operators from Council Bluffs, Iowa tried to lure the proposed transpacific railroad by offering land. The lure worked but not quite the way the Iowans thought, because while Council Bluffs was chosen as the eastern terminus for the railroad in 1862, major construction began on the western side of the Missouri, insuring Omaha's place as a major transportation center. A present day icon of the reliance of Omaha on the railroad is the beautifully restored art deco Union Station building that houses the Durham Western Heritage Museum.



photo courtesy of Visitors Bureau, Omaha, Neb.

Omaha is also a true ethnic melting pot. Expansion of the Union Stockyards and the meatpacking industry fueled explosive development in the 1880s. Workers came from all over the world to fill the jobs. These workers from Greece, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Italy and Germany formed a network of ethnic communities that contributed to the mosaic of cultures that make today's Omaha such an interesting city. Although those neighborhoods, jostled so close to each other, made for sometimes challenging conditions in the past, today you can experience the food and culture of a dozen ethnic groups in the Omaha area. Every

group is fiercely proud of its role in making the city what it is today.

The Latino community in south Omaha is living out their role in the continuing history of this ethnic diversity. Three generations of conservative Latino culture mixing with new arrivals create a tapestry of brilliant expressive ideas.

Omaha is truly the center of America and the heart of the Midwest. At the crossroads of the country, this city is close to everything. From the minute you arrive, you'll also find it's easy to get around the city. So "Quest for the Best" at the 28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Omaha this summer!



Photo courtesy of Qwest Convention Center, Omaha, Neb.

Come on a quest for success this summer in Omaha, Nebraska. Local organizers are already busy

Questing the Gold!

getting ready for the 2008 National Veterans Wheelchair Games, taking place July 25-29, 2008. Nebraska's Local Organizing Committee (LOC) shadowed the Milwaukee LOC this past year as we participated in the 27th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Milwaukee, and we all learned a lot along the way. *(See Quest on back)*



Photo by John Muir, VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System, Lincoln, Neb.

(Quest continued)

The Nebraska LOC consists of more than 62 committees, ranging from transportation and accommodations, to meals, ceremonies, medical,

and water, towels and ice. This year's LOC members are from the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (which includes VA facilities in Omaha, Lincoln and Grand Island) as well as the Great Plains Paralyzed Veterans of America. Co-chairs of the Nebraska LOC are Teresa Ziska and Christopher Shipp, with Craig Enenbach serving as Games Coordinator for the 2008 event. Many of the LOC are pictured to the left.

Nebraska's planning team members are all looking forward to seeing some of the veterans we met last summer in Milwaukee and meeting some new friends this year as well. We welcome all veterans to this year's Games. You know you will love our Midwest hospitality!

Eating Well in Omaha

Do you live to eat? When you think of Omaha, we're sure you think of steak but there are many delectable choices to make when dining in Omaha. The diverse restaurants and cafés in the city will charm you with either Midwestern simplicity or the exotic flavors of Italy, Asia or Mexico – just to name a few.

Of course if you're thinking beef, picture juicy, sizzling sirloins, aged to perfection and grilled by experts, or "melt in your mouth" prime rib. From traditional Italian steakhouses like Caniglias Venice Inn and Gorat's Steak House (made famous as a favorite of Warren Buffet, an Omaha native) to Jerico's, Omaha has the steak of your dreams waiting on the grill.

If you're craving something different, tastes of the Far East await you at the Old Market. The Indian Oven takes your appetite on a journey of a thousand different destinations with a kaleidoscopic menu from the sweetly mild to the fiery hot, while Ahmad's Persian Cuisine offers the exotic tastes of the Iranian cuisine from the land of the Old Silk Road.

If you prefer American style restaurants, Upstream Brewing Company at the Old Market and the Flatiron Café are two of the best. Or, Rick's Café Boatyard,

located right on the Missouri River, has a winning combination of great food and offers live jazz every night.

Omaha is loaded with unique cafés like the Elevenworth, the Radial Café, and Petrow's to name a few. These are the kind of down home spots that used to be everywhere in America. They're the "Come in, sit down and order a cup of Joe" kind of place where you can peruse a single sheet menu for "to die for" malts and shakes, hand-cut French fries and hamburgers too big to bite. Omaha is also the home of the Runza sandwich shops and Goodrich Ice Cream, local favorites for generations.

Omaha has an interesting colony of artists and performers that provide plenty of off-beat entertainment in the semi-underground nightclubs and dance venues that are sprinkled all around the town. Nationally known artists headline at the Qwest Center (where most of the Games activities will take place) on a regular basis. Painting and pottery shows and festivals are a constant occurrence in Omaha, from cute to controversial, practical to farcical these shows have those perfect things you cannot live without.

Come to the Games this July and experience all that Omaha has to offer. Although the steaks are the best, you may be surprised to discover so much more.

Omaha Attractions

Watch future newsletters for information about: Boys Town, Henry Doorly Zoo, Strategic Air & Space Museum, Historic Old Market - Downtown, Art & Railroad Museums,

28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games
www.wheelchairgames.va.gov
Craig Enenbach, Local Coordinator
(402) 995-3460
craig.enenbach@va.gov

