



Quest Dispatch

Quest for the Best!



Pre-Games Newsletter #3 June 2008

Welcome to Omaha

The employees and volunteers of the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System (VA NWIHCS), represented by clinics and communities of care all across the great state of Nebraska and parts of Iowa, look forward to welcoming you to the 28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games! We are proud to be serving as host this year, in close partnership with the Great Plains Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America. We know you will have a memorable experience in Omaha!

Al Washko, Director, VA NWIHCS

Mark Linquist, Great Plains PVA Chapter President



2008 Exhibition Event: Sled Hockey

Sled hockey (also known as sledge hockey in Canada and Europe) was invented at a Stockholm, Sweden rehabilitation center in the early 1960s by a group of Swedes who, despite their own physical challenges, wanted to continue playing hockey. The men modified a metal frame sled, or sledge, with two regular-sized ice hockey skate blades that allowed the puck to pass

underneath. Using round poles with bike handles for sticks, they played without any goaltenders on a lake south of Stockholm.

In 1989, sled hockey made its way to the United States, arriving first in Minnesota. Since then, it has become among the fastest growing adaptive sports in the nation, with more than 30 different youth and adult clubs playing regularly.

Sled hockey is played like traditional ice hockey on a standard ice rink. Players sit in specially designed sleds instead of wearing skates. They use two short hockey sticks with metal picks on the ends to propel themselves – and the puck – across the ice. The sport is fun and energetic at every level, but is always fast paced and physical.

During the 28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games, sled hockey will be offered as an exhibition event. All veterans are welcome to join the fun on Saturday, July 26 at 1 p.m. at Tranquility Ice Plex. The hockey team from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the Mavericks, will be on hand to help our athletes with the sled hockey exhibition. So breakaway, get the biscuit in the basket, ripple the twine – and stay out of the sin bin!

Don't Miss the Opening Ceremonies!

Be sure to attend the Opening Ceremonies in the arena of the Qwest Center Omaha on Friday evening, July 25. It is sure to be a memorable event for athletes, family members, staff, volunteers and visitors.

Colleen Williams, News Anchor for NTV from Kearney, Nebraska, is serving as the mistress of ceremonies. Our 2007 Spirit of the Games winner

“Rollin’ Joe” Velasquez, will read the Athlete’s Oath, and local Nebraska veteran, Tamara Lawter, will light the Games torch at the conclusion of the event.

Immediately following the formal program (at 7:30 p.m.), a festive welcome reception will be held next door in Hall A of the Qwest Center Omaha, where there will be lots of good food to share, tall tales to be told and memories to be made. We look forward to seeing you at this year’s Opening Ceremonies!

Monday Night at the Social Hall... Memories of a Great Generation

On Monday, July 28 from 7-10 p.m., take a look back in time at this year’s special event, “Memories of a Great Generation,” taking place in Hall A of the Qwest Center Omaha.

Entertainment will be provided by The Avi8ors Ensemble, a popular Omaha-based musical group that performs the music of the 1940s in USO show style. Group members perform in authentic World War II uniforms and remain as true to the period as possible. Since 1999, they have performed for audiences all over the U.S., and were ultimately honored by performing for the WWII Memorial dedication in Washington, D.C.

Desserts and refreshments from the era will be served. In keeping in the spirit of the theme, we encourage you to wear your old military uniform and enjoy the fun!

Arrival at the Omaha Airport (Eppley Airfield)

When you arrive at the airport in Omaha, a transfer team will meet you on the plane to get you to your wheelchair and assist you in getting to the concourse. A technician will be with the transfer team to make sure your wheelchair is operating properly. Volunteers will also be on hand to escort you or provide directions to the bus loading area.



All luggage and equipment that was properly tagged with a Wheelchair Games tag will be collected and delivered to you later in the day.

Dining at the Omaha Games

Dining at the Qwest Center Omaha is sure to be a positive experience. All meals will be served in Exhibit Hall A. There will also be kiosks and concession stands in the sports event areas of Halls A, B and C. In addition to the food items for athletes that come with their Games food vouchers, meals for family or friends can be purchased for cash in the same location.

Cashiers will process all diners so anyone can pay cash for their meals and eat at the same place as those who have vouchers. The food vouchers will be issued at a central location for each meal, and can be used for the dining area in Hall A, the concession stands, kiosks and off-site venues.



A large variety of food will be available in the Exhibit Hall A dining area. The daily menu will be listed in each edition of the on-site *Quest Dispatch*. Bon Appetit!

Meal Hours for Exhibit Hall A are as follows:

Breakfast	6 – 9 a.m.
Lunch	10:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Dinner	4 – 7 p.m.

28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games
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