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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**REGISTRATION OPENS FOR 2008
NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES IN OMAHA**

OMAHA – February 19, 2008 – Registration is open for the largest annual wheelchair sports event in the world, the 28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games. More than 500 veterans from across the United States, Puerto Rico and Great Britain are expected to compete in the Games, taking place for the first time in Nebraska, July 25-29, 2008.

Presented by the 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 VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System and the Great Plains Chapter Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) are hosting the Games.

Wheelchair sports can play an important role in the lives of disabled people and have a lasting importance on their lives. For many newly injured veterans, this event is their first exposure to wheelchair athletics. Veterans interested in competing in the Games may register on the event's web site, www.wheelchairgames.va.gov.

Competitive events will be held at the Qwest Center Omaha, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Northwest High School, the Henry Doorly Zoo and other venues in and around the Omaha area. The 2008 Games will include competitions in track and field, 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 and trapshooting. Sled hockey will be offered as an exhibition event. The athletes compete in all events against others with similar athletic ability, competitive experience or age.

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Registration Opens for Wheelchair Games 2/2/2/2

In addition to the competitions and the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the event will include a "Kids Day at the Games" on Sunday July 27, when local children 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. The theme for the Omaha Games is "Quest for the Best." Admission is free.

According to Craig Enenbach, local coordinator for the 2008 Games, the event will require some 3,000 volunteers. There are numerous opportunities to volunteer at the Games. 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 (402) 995-3283, or register on line.

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About VA: The Department of Veterans Affairs is a world leader in rehabilitation, with recreation therapy programs at each of its medical facilities. VA's goal is to provide excellence in patient care, veterans' benefits and customer satisfaction. VA employees continue to offer their dedication and commitment to help veterans get the services they have earned. To learn about VA and programs for veterans, visit VA's web site at www.va.gov.

About PVA: Founded in 1946, Paralyzed Veterans of America is the only congressionally chartered veterans service organization dedicated solely for the benefit and representation of individuals with spinal cord injury or disease. PVA is a dynamic, broad-based organization with more than 21,000 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.va.gov