



Welcome to the 19th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic!

On behalf of your hosts at the Grand Junction, Colorado VA Medical Center and VA's Rocky Mountain Network, *Welcome to the 19th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic!*

There are lots of activities planned for you this week – some you'll recognize from previous Clinics and others are brand new for 2005.



Tricia Sapp of Rockwall, Texas, is a frequent participant at the Winter Sports Clinic.

As always, you will be able to enjoy expert instruction on both Alpine and Nordic skiing as well as rock climbing, scuba diving and sled hockey. Yoga will be offered twice each day, and shooting sports will be available daily. From Monday through Thursday, trips will be offered to the hot springs pool in Glenwood, and to Aspen for snow cat and gondola rides.

Instructions on some brand new skiing devices will be offered, and educational/instructional workshops will be available each evening through Thursday. The entertainment this week is going to be outstanding, and we know you will enjoy that as well. Check the daily *SkiGram* for updated information.

We are proud to welcome back so many participants who have come here before, as well as a large

group of first-timers. A special welcome goes to more than 60 veterans of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom who registered for this week's Clinic. You will learn a lot this week – from your instructors, your team leaders and especially your fellow veterans. All year, staff and volunteers have been busy preparing a week of exciting and fun events for approximately 350 disabled veterans we expect to be here from all across the country. Whether it's your first time as a participant or you've been here many times before, you are in for one of the most memorable weeks of your life. *Enjoy it!*



Walter Johnson of Rialto, Calif., heads downhill at last year's Clinic.

It is truly our honor to continue this 19-year tradition as we prepare to experience the 2005 version of "Miracles on the Mountainside." Our sincere thanks to the Disabled American Veterans for once again co-sponsoring this Clinic with the Department of Veterans Affairs. See you on the slopes!

Sandy Trombetta
Director,
National Disabled Veterans
Winter Sports Clinic



Secretary Nicholson Visits

Yesterday and today, newly confirmed Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson has been visiting with participants as they arrive in Snowmass for this year's event. "The Winter Sports Clinic is rehabilitation in action," Nicholson said. "These veterans teach all of us about determination, grace and courage."

A graduate of West Point, Nicholson served eight years on active duty as a paratrooper and Ranger-qualified Army officer, then 22 years in the Army Reserve, retiring with the rank of colonel. He is a decorated veteran of the Vietnam War.

Most recently, Nicholson served as U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See. He was knighted by Pope John Paul II in October 2003 for his work representing the United States to the Vatican.

As Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Nicholson is the principal advocate for veterans in the U.S. government, ensuring that they receive the care, support, recognition and dignity they deserve for their service to our country. Last evening, Secretary Nicholson met the 2005 sponsors at the annual sponsor recognition dinner, and he will address the participants at the Opening Ceremony tonight.



**Secretary of Veterans Affairs
Jim Nicholson**

A Taste of Snow Among the Masses

Whether it's local delicacies or traditional American style food you are looking for – Snowmass Village restaurateurs will have something for everyone this afternoon.

From 3:30 – 5:30 p.m., the Village Mall will become a colorful mix of skiing attire and delicious aromas as Winter Sports Clinic participants and guests are treated to a "Taste of Snowmass."

Each year, the local eateries open up their kitchens – and their hearts – to the Clinic participants so they can share in good food and good company. Since it began, the Taste of



Veterans enjoy the 2004 Taste of Snowmass.

Snowmass has become a favorite tradition of the Clinic for participants, volunteers, staff and Snowmass locals alike. Wander through the mall and experience the sights and aromas of Snowmass. Food vouchers for the Taste of Snowmass will be available today during registration (when you receive all of your meal tickets for the week.) This will be the only meal served today. Don't miss out on experiencing the many flavors of Snowmass!





Come Early to Opening Ceremonies Tonight!

The Opening Ceremony for the 19th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic is scheduled to begin in the Conference Center Ballroom

promptly at 6:30 p.m. Because the event begins with a very special treat from Ty Nelson, an up and coming country music sensation, we strongly recommend that you arrive early. Please try to be in your seats by 6:20 p.m., because the entertainment begins at *exactly* 6:30 p.m. and you won't want to miss it!



Dave Gorman, Executive Director of the DAV, will serve as our Master of Ceremonies this evening.

Douglas Mercatoris, the Mayor of Snowmass Village, will be among those welcoming us to the area as will James E. Sursley, National Commander of the DAV, and Jim Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Offering some motivational remarks to get us all geared up for the week is Rudy Ruettiger, whose story of inspiration and overcoming challenges was immortalized in the 1993 movie "Rudy." The evening ends with a special video presentation produced by the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System's Information Technology Center crew. It's sure to get those patriotic juices flowing!

Tonight's Opening Ceremony promises to be the perfect kick-off to the 19th year of the Winter Sports Clinic. See you there!

Guess Who's Dropping In!



Thumbs up for Dana Bowman, 42, of Willow Park, Texas.

Come to the Village Mall area (during the Taste of Snowmass) at 4:00 p.m. today, to witness the arrival of veteran parachutist Dana Bowman. A participant at the Winter Sports Clinic since 1995, Bowman lost both legs to a tragic skydiving accident the year before. The accident occurred while Bowman was practicing a diamond-track maneuver as part of the U.S Army's Golden Knights parachute team. He made his first parachute jump as an amputee only six months after he was injured, and continues to be an active parachutist today.



Veterans History Project is at the Clinic!

During the 2005 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Library of Congress invite you to be part of an important national program – The Veterans History Project (VHP).

This project is meant to honor our nation's veterans by creating a lasting legacy of your military experience. Regardless of your branch or period of service, age, military career or experience, we need your story. By sharing it with us, you can make history come alive.

Your 45-minute interview will be videotaped and given to the Library of Congress. You and your story will then become part of our Nation's official historical records. In appreciation, you will receive a VHP tote and a DVD copy of your interview before leaving the event.

Your VHP interview will be scheduled at your convenience through Friday morning. Make an interview appointment today during registration. Interviews will take place beginning tomorrow, April 4 through Thursday, April 7, between the hours of 8:00 – 11:00 a.m., and from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. On Friday, final interviews may be scheduled between the hours of 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Interviews will be held in the Janss Auditorium on the second floor of the Snowmass Conference Center. Look for the VHP signage to locate the room.

We hope you will tell your military story and be a part of the Veterans History Project. Only you can do it, and it's a story worth preserving and sharing with future generations!



For your reading pleasure...

Zodi Yak

Preparer of horoscopes and predictor of your future



Medical Assistance

Bedford A Conference Room

A medical room is available each day during Clinic operation hours (from approximately 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.) for non-emergent care. The Bedford A Conference Room is located one level below the mall, across the street from the Mountain Chalet Hotel. There is stairway access from the mall next to Christy Sports. For wheelchair access, please use the elevator above the main bus terminal (at the far end of the mall) to get to the medical room level.

Transportation to Bedford A Conference Room

Van transportation is available from the Silver Tree Hotel to the Medical Room.



Catch the medical van in front of the hotel, or call the Medical Room for transportation.

After Hours Medical Help



Call the Medical Room for recorded instructions on how to contact the on-call medical provider, or dial the hotel operator.

Medical Room Phone (970) 923-8330

(extension 8330 on conference center phones)
For life threatening emergencies, dial 911.



We have looked to the skies to find the horoscopes for all twelve astrological signs, which will appear in each edition of the *SkiGram* this year. They may not match the ones you'll find in the newspaper, but they should fit in nicely with your week at the 19th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. Have fun this week!

— *Zodi Yak*

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 – Feb 19)

It is the dawning of a wonderful new adventure this week.

PISCES (Feb 20 – March 20)

Be sure to hit the scuba pool and swim like a fish!

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

Enjoy a "Taste of Snowmass" today, and a taste of fun all week!

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

It's no bull – you really can ski quite well (just wait and see)!

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

Since you like to be involved in everything, we plan to see you everywhere this week!

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

No need to feel "crabby" this week – you'll just keep smiling here!

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

Once King of the Jungle, you'll soon be King of the Mountain in Snowmass!

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

You're going to make hundreds of new friends this week!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 – Oct. 23)

Strike a careful balance – between Alpine and Nordic, scuba and sled hockey, water and beer...

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 – Nov. 22)

You will strike a powerful pose in the snow as you conquer new challenges at the Winter Sports Clinic!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 – Dec. 21)

Remain optimistic – you're going to have the best time ever!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 – Jan. 19)

May your "Miracles on the Mountainside" begin today!





Today's Schedule

SUNDAY, APRIL 3



| | |
|------------------------|--|
| 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. | Participant Registration Conference Center Ballroom |
| 8:45 a.m. to 12 noon | Downhill Instructor Orientation Eldorado Room, Silvertree Hotel |
| 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. | Participant Registration Conference Center Ballroom |
| 12:45 to 4:00 p.m. | Downhill Instructor Orientation Eldorado Room, Silvertree Hotel |
| 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. | Taste of Snowmass Snowmass Village Mall |
| 6:30 p.m. | Opening Ceremonies Conference Center Ballroom |
| 8:00 p.m. | Late Registration for Participants Max Park Room, Wildwood Hotel |

Note: All participants must be registered before they can ski!

Important Meetings Today

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 5:00 p.m. | Coaches Meeting Max Park Room, Wildwood Hotel |
| 5:45 p.m. | Transportation Meeting Kearns Room 2 nd Floor of the Conference Center |
| 8:00 p.m. | Ski Instructor Meeting El Dorado Room, Silver Tree Hotel |
| 8:00 p.m. | Team Meetings Conference Center Ballroom Note: All Participants Must Attend! |

Monday's Meal Schedule

Conference Center Ballroom
(Check tomorrow's SkiGram for Monday's menu)

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| 6:30 to 8:45 a.m. | Breakfast |
| 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. | Lunch |
| 5:00 to 6:15 p.m. | Dinner |



Want to submit a story idea for the daily SkiGram?

The Public Affairs Team will be preparing news

releases, writing articles for the daily *SkiGram*, and working with both local and national media to publicize the events of this week.

If you have ideas for news stories, photographs or something you'd like to see in the *SkiGram*, please stop by the Media Center located in the Erickson Room of the Convention Center. We'd love to hear from you!



SkiGram is on the Web

Look for the full-color edition of this newsletter on the Web at: www.wintersportsclinic.org