

# Ski Gram

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## What A Week It Has Been



When thinking about this week's highlights, how can you overlook the beauty, grandeur and majesty of the mountains themselves? The awesome views from the top of the mountain have left many of us breathless (both literally and figuratively) this week, and deeply moved by it all. The emotional reactions of some veterans as they experienced the incredible high of skiing for the first time touched the hearts of the ski instructors, who shared some inspirational stories about the veterans during their meetings. Despite a few bumps, bruises and wipe-outs, sun-kissed cheeks and smiling faces reflected a sense of victory over the mountain's challenges and the thrill of it all.

How about the snow! What can you say about a picture-perfect week on the slopes? This late in the season, it's not at all unusual for ski conditions to be icy or slushy, but this year, frequent dumps of fresh powder followed by sunny skies made the slopes even more beautiful, enticing and interesting for the skiers.

Of course each and every event and activity were highlights of the week for someone. Every Clinic event brought about its own sense of accomplishment; each alternate activity

offered its own unique experience; and the educational sessions provided practical take-home information to improve individual lives.

First class entertainment, lively conversation and great cuisine have all enhanced the Snowmass Village experience and created special memories that will last a lifetime. The memories weren't solely for the veterans though – volunteers, staff and guests who were here this week all benefited as well. Special guests and first-time visitors to the Clinic, including those from the military, VA, DAV, the news media and others, were truly amazed and inspired by the athletic ability and determined spirits of the veterans, and will undoubtedly treasure their experience here long after returning home.

By the time we wind up the week with this evening's closing ceremony, each of us will have experienced another day of special memories and personal experiences. We'll think about them as we head home tomorrow, share them with friends and family when we arrive, and recall them throughout the year as we look forward to another spectacular National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in 2009!

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### WEATHER



TODAY

Mostly Sunny

High: 46°

Low: 23°



TOMORROW

Clouds with Rain & Snow Mix

High: 41°

Low: 21°

# *Snow Snaps!*



# More Snow Snaps!



## Thanks, Local Organizing Committee!

Thank you to the 2008 local organizing committee at the Grand Junction VA Medical Center for coordinating and hosting the 2008 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. Your hard work, enthusiasm, energy and dedication permeate the event. Some of you have been involved for all 22 years! We know that the Clinic is the culmination of a whole year's work, and appreciate everything you do to make this event a success.

### Thank You!

Dennis Abens, Host Room Coordinator  
Allen Baugh, Team Leader Coordinator (22 years)  
Henry Bullock, Transportation Coordinator  
Jill Cordova, Continuing Education Coordinator  
Shane Elliott, Communications Coordinator  
Dr. John Hunter, Medical Director  
Mary Lane, Food & Beverage Coordinator (22 years)  
Gig Leadbetter, Cross Country Instructor Coordinator  
Matt Lucas, Equipment Co-Coordinator  
Lori Mead, Medical Room Co-Coordinator  
Wendy Shingleton, Medical Room Co-Coordinator  
Annie Tuttle, Alternate Activities Coordinator  
Pat White, Ski Instructor Coordinator (22 years)  
Richard Wright, Equipment Co-Coordinator (22 years)  
Teresa Parks, Clinic Operations Director  
Sandy Trombetta, Director, Winter Sports Clinic (22 years)

## A Fond Farewell

Grab your beads and masks and head over to the conference center ballroom for tonight's closing ceremonies, followed by the ever-popular victory celebration. The fun begins at 7 p.m., when Dr. Michael Murphy, Director of the VA Medical Center in Grand Junction, kicks off the evening as master of ceremonies.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs James B. Peake will serve as tonight's keynote speaker. Although he is still new to VA, this is not his first trip to the Winter Sports Clinic. Secretary Peake visited the event last year and we're so glad he's back again to close out this wonderful week of skiing. DAV National Commander Robert T. Reynolds will also deliver remarks to the participants this evening on behalf of DAV.

Other special guests include Dr. Michael Kussman, VA's Under Secretary for Health, and many other top officials from both VA and DAV. Special awards will be presented by Sandy Trombetta, Clinic Director and Ed Hartman, DAV's National Director of Voluntary Services to outstanding participants, instructors and volunteers.

Remember also that you could be in the movies – well, the closing video that is. Keep watch for you and your friends at the conclusion of the closing ceremonies. Scott Jackson and his crew from the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System were out there alongside you all week while you were achieving your personal best (or maybe just goofing around). As always, the closing audiovisual presentation is sure to be spectacular.

After the ceremony, stick around for some fun and dancing with tonight's band, the Kickin' Cajuns. Their "Cajun Creole" tune will surely make this a celebration to remember. See you tonight!

## Thanks from Your Public Affairs Team

It has been our honor to share your wonderful stories with individuals across the nation throughout the week. For those of you who gave us permission to tell your stories in the *Ski•Gram* and to the media, we thank you!

We invite you to check out the Web site at [www.wintersports-clinic.va.gov](http://www.wintersports-clinic.va.gov) and be sure to share it with your friends and family. If you gave us permission to develop a news release and we took your photograph, you will see both under Participant Information on the Web. While we were able to get the majority of photos of those of you who wanted hometown news releases, a few of you did escape our cameras.

Please be assured that we did not release any information about your participation if you did not give us permission. If you plan to attend next year, we ask that you consider all owing us the opportunity to tell your story by checking "Yes," on your Hometown News Release form.

We extend our sincerest thanks to all the staff and volunteers who have helped us throughout the week in tracking down participants for interviews and newsletter stories. We have included a self-addressed envelope along with your Release and photo. We simply ask that if you received any local media coverage that you send us a copy of the news clip or a note of your appearance on television or radio.

You were wonderful!! From the entire Public Affairs Team, thank you so much for allowing us to share your experiences and tell the wonderful Miracles on the Mountainside that happened at the 22nd National Disabled Winter Sports Clinic. We leave the Clinic inspired by your courage and commitment and hope to see you next year!

The 2008 Winter Sports Clinic Public Affairs Team: Jenny Tankersley Ballou, Public Affairs Coordinator, VA National Programs, Kim Byers, Public Affairs Director, VA National Programs, Joe Nguyen, Jeff West, Andy Scheller, Richard Olague, Jeanne Miserendino, Susan Varcie, Elaine Buehler, Jeannie Riffe, Mar-ian McConnell, Debbie Brammer, Angela Taylor, Sharon West, Rafiq Raza, Gene Davies, Robin Franklin, Mike Hormuth, Robert Figueroa, Jeff Bowen, John Sokolowski, Bob Pedersen, Eric Eisen, Robin Kerr, Chris Scheer and Steve Hollingshead.

## Share Your Clinic Experience



Share the excitement of the Winter Sports Clinic with friends and family back home by pointing them to [www.wintersports-clinic.va.gov](http://www.wintersports-clinic.va.gov).

Visitors to the site can view all the issues of this year's *Ski•Gram* and learn more about the Clinic itself.



# TODAY'S SCHEDULE Friday, April 4



## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Medical Clinic information

**For life threatening emergencies, dial 911.**

Medical room phone: (970) 923-8330

The medical room opens at its normal time of 7:30 a.m., but will close at 9 p.m. It will be closed all day tomorrow.

Located in the Bedford A Conference Room, one level below the mall across the street from the Mountain Chalet Hotel. Stairway access from the mall is next to Christy Sports. **Wheelchair users must use the elevator at the far end of the mall, above the main bus terminal.**

A transport van is available from the Silvertree Hotel to the medical clinic at the front of the hotel, or call the medical clinic.

After hours: Call the medical room for recorded instructions on how to contact the "on call" medical provider. If unsuccessful,

### TODAY'S MENU

#### Breakfast Buffet

Fresh Sliced Fruit  
 Oatmeal with Granola, Raisins, Almonds, Sliced Bananas and Skim Milk in a Carafe  
 Breakfast Breads, Muffins and Biscuits  
 Breakfast Sausage  
 Bacon  
 Omelet Bar with Cooked-to-Order Omelets to include Ham, Cheese, Mushrooms, Roasted Peppers, Fresh Tomatoes, Green Onions, and Salsa  
 Coffee, Herbal Teas, and Assorted Chilled Juices

#### Lunch

Visit Taste of Snowmass in the Snowmass Village Mall from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**We hope you had a great 2008 Winter Sports Clinic.**

**Have a safe trip home!**

NATIONAL DISABLED WINTER SPORTS CLINIC

2008



Been there.

Done that.

Got the T-Shirt.



DAV