

Victory Lane

RACING FOR INDIANAPOLIS THE GOLD

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE 2008 NATIONAL VETERANS GOLDEN AGE GAMES



The 23rd National Veterans Golden Age Games will take place June 1-5, 2009, in the sweet south - Birmingham, Alabama. As host of the next year's Games, several members of the Birmingham VA Medical Center's local organizing committee, have been here all week taking notes and developing strategies to make the 2009 Games the best ever!

"It is fitting that Birmingham has been selected as the host city of the Games because it holds the unique distinction of being the birthplace of what is now known as Veterans Day. In addition, we hold the oldest and largest Veterans Day parade in the entire country," said Rica Lewis-Payton, Director of the medical center.

Birmingham is known for its monuments and exhibits dedicated to veterans. The Alabama Veterans Memorial is a beautiful 21-Acre Park, dedicated to the 11,000 Alabamians that lost their lives defending our freedom. A visit to the Southern Museum of Flight features exhibits from early aviation to a newly dedicated Tuskegee Airmen exhibit. The Alabama Sports Hall of Fame features Alabama sports legends from Paul "Bear" Bryant to Jesse Owens to Willie Mays. The memorabilia and memories of Alabama's sports heroes are enshrined at this Hall. Renowned throughout the country as one of the most attractive state showcases of its type, this three-story, 30,000 square-foot structure

(...continued on page 3)

**SUNDAY
AUGUST 24, 2008**

In today's issue:

- pg. 2 Volunteers
- pg. 2 Horseshoes
- pg. 2 Right Place & Time
- pg. 2 Lost & Found
- pg. 3 Closing Ceremonies
- pg. 3 Heading Home
- pgs. 4-5 Photo Gallery
- pg. 6 Words from You
- pg. 6 Kathie Lowery
- pg. 6 Senior Olympic Champ
- pg. 6 Happy Birthday
- pg. 7 Family Reunion
- pg. 7 First Medals
- pg. 7 Words from You
- pg. 8 Schedule

WEATHER

TODAY

Some Clouds with Rain Showers

High: **85°** Low: **62°**

TOMORROW

Sunny

High: **82°** Low: **60°**

Thank you to our co-sponsors!

www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov

Volunteers Make the Difference at National Veterans Golden Age Games



Bryan Tipton (right) with Sandi Lyle (left), one of the many wonderful volunteers making the difference during the Games.

Throughout the week you have no doubt seen those wonderful smiling faces that belong to the most enthusiastic and warm individuals at the Games – the volunteers! More than 1200 volunteers have been working in every facet of the Games. Among those is Sandi Lyle who is not only a volunteer at the Games but also volunteers at the medical center in Indianapolis. This week she has responded to the hundreds of questions that have come her way as she has sat in the

volunteer central command center. “I just love volunteering,” said Lyle. “I just don’t think we could do these events without volunteers.”

Other volunteers can be seen at the venue sites, at the dances and alternate activities, as well as making sure water and ice are available for competitors. Where would we be without them? Just ask Bryan Tipton of the local organizing committee whose responsibilities extended to the recruitment, training and placement of volunteers. “I feel these volunteers are so wonderful, and I am absolutely amazed at how willing they have been to commit their time to come out and help with this incredible event.”

Volunteers from various veteran service organizations have been tirelessly conducting sales and fundraisers for the past two years in order to help defray the costs of the “special” touches that are part of this year’s Games. Their efforts did not stop there as you will find several of these generous individuals working the event as well. Some of the volunteers are up from sun up to well past sun down every day, putting their hearts into making sure that those in attendance have the best time possible.

If you see a safety green shirt during your stay, be sure to give them a smile and a thank you. We couldn’t have done it without them!

Lost and Found

The volunteers in room 122 are making a final push to get items in the lost and found recovered. The kitty contains several items that the staff wants to make sure get back to their owners before the Games end. Jackets, a disposable camera, prescription sunglasses, golf accessories and a medical alert bracelet are among the items waiting to be recovered. If you think any of these items may be yours, make sure to stop by the volunteer room in room 122 in the convention center.

The volunteer room is staffed from 7

Horseshoes Origin

The origin of horseshoe pitching is uncertain but the roots can be traced to the old Grecian game of discus throwing. It was during the Revolutionary War that rules were actually created to govern the game of horseshoe throwing. The United States played by these rules for many years but no records were kept until the year 1909. Horseshoe pitching became widely popular with American soldiers during various war times. In 1910, the first world tournament for horseshoes was held in Bronson, Kansas. Over the years the rules have changed and evolved to govern stake heights, shoe weights and sizes. In 1914, the Grand League of American Horseshoe Pitchers Association was established. Soon after in 1919, The National League of Horseshoes and Quoit Pitchers was also established. Eventually these two organizations merged into the National Horseshoes

Pitchers Association of America. This organization is still the ruling body today and continues to govern the sport through rules, procedures and standardizing equipment.

Right Place, Right Time

One of the regional veteran volunteers, Michael Lyles, was in the right place at the right time for veteran participant, Jackie Collins from Metamora, Indiana. At the Coffin Golf Course, Mr. Collins, a blind veteran, was left by his partner. Mr. Lyles stepped in and carried golf clubs for Mr. Collins as well as helped spot the ball and told him how far the hole was and walked all 18 holes. Going the extra mile, Mr. Lyles made sure that Mr. Collins’ clubs got back to the hotel, so that Mr. Collins could get to the Bowling competition.

Closing Ceremonies

Tonight, a special celebration of friendship, fun and recognition will conclude this week's activities for the than 673 participants who competed in the 22nd National Veterans Golden Age Games.

Festivities begin at 5:00 P.M. in the Sagamore Ballroom of the Indiana Convention Center. While the medals ceremony may still be in progress, be assured that everyone will have a place at the table!

The evening begins with a Welcome by Eric Halvorson, News Anchor, WISH TV, Channel 8, Indianapolis, followed by dinner. Dinner music is being provided by Kathy VanDenburgh, an employee of the Indianapolis VA Medical Center.

The Ceremony portion of the evening begins at 7:00 p.m., with Eric Halvorson serving as master of ceremonies. Paige L. Watson will sing the National Anthem. Special guests include, Marilyn Iverson, Director, Veterans Canteen Service (VCS); Mike Lynch, Executive Director, Help Hospitalized Veterans (HHV); and Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security and Management, the Honorable Charles L. Hopkins, III.

Several special awards will also highlight the evening. These include HHV's Volunteer and Coach of the Year awards, VCS Challenge Award, Secretary's Award to the local host site and the Bill Givens Award. Since 1990, one competitor has been selected for the George Gangi Inspiration Award. This award is presented in recognition of athletic excellence, sportsmanship and strength of character demonstrated during the Games. This very special recipient is also being named this evening.

It is time to pass the torch to the Birmingham VA Medical Center, host of the 2009 Games. Concluding the evening's celebration is the ever-popular video highlighting this year's Games.

Thank you everyone, and see you at the Indiana Convention Center.

Next Stop: Birmingham

(...continued from front page)

features a 75-seat Bryant-Jordan Theater, over 4,000 pieces of spectacular memorabilia, six life-size dioramas and interactive audio-visual touch-screens.

The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute features permanent exhibitions that are a self-directed journey through the Civil Rights Movement and human rights struggles of today. Located in the historic Civil Rights District surrounded by the 16th Street Baptist Church, Kelly Ingram Park, which is named for Osmond Kelly Ingram, who was the first sailor in the United States Navy to be killed in World War I, and the Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame.

A visit to Birmingham would not be complete without a visit to Vulcan Park and Museum. It is home to the world's largest cast iron statue and features spectacular panoramic views of Birmingham. Located atop Red Mountain, Vulcan Park and Museum tells the story of Birmingham's past, present and promise for the future. Vulcan, the Roman god of fire and forge, was originally built in 1904 and has stood as a symbol of Birmingham for over 100 years. In its early days, Birmingham was known as the "Pittsburg of the South" due to its booming steel industry. The park has an observation deck that pro-

vides a beautiful view of Birmingham.

Other attractions of interest are the Birmingham Museum of Art, the Sloss Furnace National Historic Landmark, the McWane Science Center, with its IMAX theater, the Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum, the Birmingham Zoo, the Alabama Adventure theme park and much more.

The hotels selected for the event are located downtown. All meals will be served at the host hotel. Shuttles will provide rides to the Southside entertainment district, which is the host of many restaurants.

"Making the journey to Birmingham will be well worth it for our veterans. We will be providing an exciting set of games, as well as, a forum for all of the participants to make new friends, reunite with old friends and foster a sense of camaraderie that events like this tend to offer," said Lewis-Payton. "For all of the sacrifices our veterans have made, it is our pleasure in Birmingham, to give back in this fun and meaningful way to America's heroes and heroines."

Check the Golden Age Games Web site for next year's registration forms beginning in early January, at www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov.

Things to know before you go...

Monday departures:

Shuttles will be looping the area beginning at 4 a.m. and continuing all day. During each loop, the shuttle will stop at all host hotels and then head to the airport. Most hotels have a designated area in the lobby for participants luggage. Make sure to check with your hotel for the location. The recommended arrival time at the airport is at least 90 minutes before your scheduled flight. Plan on catching a shuttle at least two hours before the scheduled departure time of your flight. Also of note, the hotels will start serving breakfast at 5:30 a.m. to accommodate early

travellers. If there are funds available on your card, please know that the cards are valid after the event and can be used at the airport.

Tuesday departures:

If you are scheduled to depart on Tuesday, please note that the shuttle loop will *not* be available. The Administration Department at the Games has your itinerary and has made special transportation arrangements for you. Transportation to the airport will be made available to every Games participant. Again, the recommended arrival time at the airport is at least 90 minutes before your scheduled flight.

2008 NATIONAL VETERANS GOLDEN AGE GAMES PHOTO GALLERY



Games and Traveling Make Competitor Happy

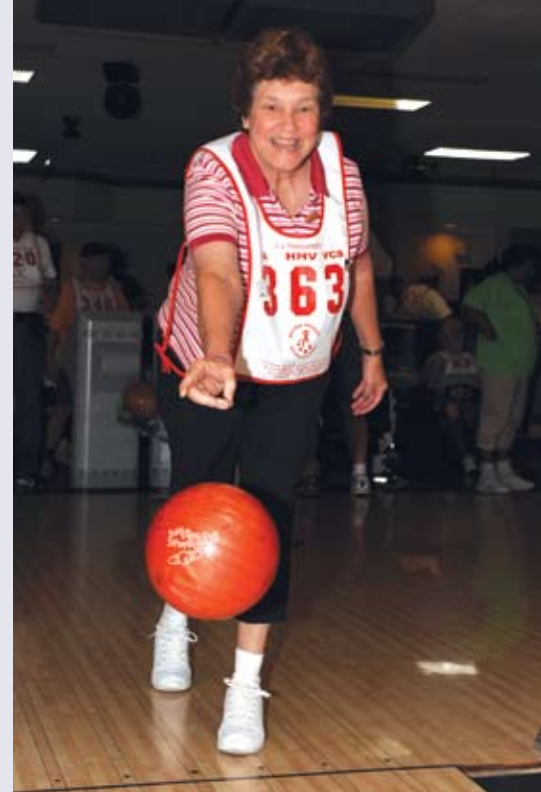
Kathie Lowery has many loves in her life, like reading a good book, going to church, traveling and dining on Italian food...or enjoying Italian food while in Italy! "Their pizza—oh, we don't even know what pizza is!" she exclaims. Lowery, a Navy veteran from Fort Worth, Texas, has been to Australia, New Zealand and Turkey as well as Italy and many other places. The latest excursion for Lowery is coming to Indianapolis to compete for the first time in the National Veterans Golden Age Games.

Lowery joined the Navy in 1980 and retired in 2002. During her service, she spent time working in Navy hospitals, and also worked with Reserve Marine, Cargo, Ship and Air wing units. The later part of her career was spent teaching shipmates to be good instructors, providing career information classes and training hospital corpsmen to operate their medical departments in the most efficient way. She is thankful for her well-rounded service career and the opportunities it presented to travel and work with some of the finest and brightest Navy personnel. She is thrilled that the jour-

ney is able to continue, thanks to the Golden Age Games.

"I'm really getting into air rifles," she says. "I bought an air rifle so I could practice and I've been shooting really well. My teammates have started calling me Annie Oakley!" In addition to air rifles, Lowery is competing in horse shoes, bowling and table tennis—all sports she enjoyed years ago before her symptoms of fibromyalgia began.

At home, she is surrounded by the unconditional love of her five dogs and pet bird, all of whom receive the warmest care from Lowery. When Sophie, her Jack Russell terrier, became gravely ill after having a bad reaction to vaccines last December, Lowery put all her travel plans on hold indefinitely. "It was so scary," she recalls. "Sophie spent 10 days in the ICU and received six blood transfusions. It's been a long year, but she's much stronger now." Lowery jokes that Sophie is her "Cadillac dog" because by the time she finished paying for the dog's medical care, she probably could have bought a Cadillac. "She's worth it, though. She's very special to me," said Lowery. Sophie, a nationally certified therapy dog who helps patients



Kathie Lowery, above, loves that the Games allows her the opportunity to visit new places.

at Lowery's local VA medical center in Dallas, is on the mend and will celebrate her fifth birthday this fall.

Between now and next spring, Lowery will keep busy doing the things she loves, like traveling, spending time with her grandkids, and going out to dinner with friends. Since she also loves Mexican food, perhaps a trip to Mexico is in order.

Air Force Vet a National Senior Olympic Champ



George Taplin competes in shuffleboard.

Competition is nothing new to George Taplin, an Air Force veteran from Abilene, Kan. Taplin competed in the 2007 National Senior Olympics, bringing home a gold medal in his age group for table tennis singles. "I met such great, friendly people," he recalls.

That wasn't the first time he earned medals at that event. In 2003, he won the gold in table tennis doubles and the silver in table tennis singles for his age group.

In 2006, Taplin competed in the State Senior Olympics and earned gold medals for table tennis in his age group in four different states. This is Taplin's third time at the National Veterans Golden Age Games; he competed in the 2001 and 2005 Games.



Happy Birthday!

Happy birthday to Jacqueline Beard and Fred Riley who are both celebrating their birthday today!

Make sure to stop by the Media Center in room 124 and pick up your birthday surprise.

Games Sparks Family Reunion

These Games have been an extra special event for Bob Schaney, 84, of Boise, Idaho. Even though he won the silver medal for his division in Shuffleboard, the best prize for him has been the opportunity to reconnect with his sister, Leota Codispoti, whom he had not seen in eight years. When Codispoti found out that her brother, a Marine Corp veteran of WWII, would be competing here in Indianapolis, she decided to take advantage of the relatively short five-hour drive from her home in Ohio to come and cheer him on. "It's really hard for us to get together these days", says Bob, who is visually impaired and can't travel alone anymore. "We're having a great time seeing the city and catching up with each other on what's been going on in our lives these past eight years."



Bob Schaney (center) sees his sister, Leota Codispoti (right) and her husband (left) for the first time in eight years during the Games.

Wyoming Win First Medals

Team Wyoming is experiencing a windfall of sorts when it comes to earning medals at the Golden Age Games. According to team coach and VA recreational therapist, Kristi Ruben, a team from Wyoming has attended at least eight Games, but this is the first year they've ever brought home medals. As of Saturday morning, team members have won two silver medals.

The first silver medal was earned in bowling by Wendell Wittig, 60, a Vietnam combat-wounded veteran from Cheyenne. Wittig, a first-time competitor at the Games, also competed in horseshoes, air rifles and dominoes.

Also winning a medal from the Wyoming team is Paula Stevens, 68, also from Cheyenne, who took the silver medal for her efforts in horseshoes. "I feel extremely elated," said Stevens. She is a Navy and Army veteran who was practicing dominoes just hours after competing in horseshoes. This is her first time at the Golden Age Games. "It's great fun to be here and I'm so glad I came," she added.

Now a Word From... You!

We wanted to know what you think of the Games this year. So we asked, and this is what we heard.

Melvin Lumpkin
Tuskegee, Alabama
Army

"I'm enjoying myself. It's great for the spirit to be able to come together and spend time with other veterans."



Mel Wyatt
Fresno, California
Army

"This town is absolutely gorgeous! Indianapolis has done a great job organizing these Games."

Carlito Manalili
Clovis, California
Navy

"It is nice to be with all the other veterans and win my events."



Ruben Fair
Dallas, Texas
Army

"This is the best thing ever. I'm having a wonderful time."

Joan Lance
Houston, Texas
Air Force

"This is my seventh year in the Games, and I love getting to see old friends that I've made over the years."



Schedule of Events



Bus and Shuttle Service

Throughout the week continuous shuttle service to the Indianapolis Convention Center will begin early each day. Buses for events and scheduled activities held at venues away from downtown will board in front of the Indianapolis Convention Center. Please pay close attention throughout the day to posted bus departure times as they may change due to unforeseen circumstances. To meet everyone's needs and to ensure timely arrivals, buses will depart promptly as posted.

Shuttles begin service at 5:30 a.m. daily.

- **South Loop** is to/from Embassy Suites (see below), Crowne Plaza, Omni Severin and the convention center.
- **North Loop** is to/from Hilton, Hilton Garden Inn and Hampton Inn and the convention center.
- All stops will be at the front of the convention center and each hotel, with the exception of the Embassy Suites. Participants staying at the Embassy Suites can pick up the shuttle at the corner of Washington and Illinois.

Medical Equipment & Wheelchair Repair

Prosthetics will be available at the Convention Center room 123. Staff will be on site at the Convention Center from 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. daily.

- Extra shower chairs, canes, walkers, elevated toilet seats available at the convention center and will be delivered upon request.
- We will be able to contact vendors for motorized wheelchair issues should the need arise and will have non-motorized wheelchairs for loan to the participant while repairs are completed.

For any other prosthetic or wheelchair issues, please contact Steven Frank or Maura DiMeo at (317) 509-5614 or pager (317) 310-4390.

Places to Know

The below list is comprised of locations that you should know during your time at the Games. All rooms are located in the convention center.

Administrative: *Room 120*

Command Center: *Room 121*

Cyber Café: *Room 120*

Media Center: *Room 124*

Medical Assistance: *Room 123*

Veterans' History Project: *West Lobby Chamber*

Volunteers: *Room 122*

Medical Help

There will be a triage center (or nursing support center) located at the Hilton hotel. This will be for non-urgent needs for participating veterans that may occur during the Games. The triage center can be reached at (317) 822-5845. For emergencies, please dial 911. The Prosthetics Department will be working with Medical Team to meet any needs that may arise during your stay.

If you are not staying at the Hilton, you may call the triage center if you have any questions or concerns. Make sure to look for contact information as well as more detailed information in the daily newsletter.

Notice for Parking

The Soddrell parking lot is not available today. Parking is available at the VA, as well as in the lots across from the track and field location. Parking is free.