

## Competitor Profile

### Almadge Newkirk – Competing

#### Keeps Him Fresh

When asked what keeps this veteran competing in the National Veterans Golden Age Games, Almadge Newkirk responds knowingly. “It keeps me fresh,” he says.

Newkirk, who turned 92 in October and lives at the state veterans’ home in Barstow, Calif., has participated in the Games since 1985. He won his first medal, a bronze, in shuffleboard at the age of 82. This year, he competes in both the croquet and nine-ball events. He is one of two 92-years-olds competing in the 2006 Games.

Among his most memorable events were the 1998 Games held in Leesburg, Virginia, outside of our nation’s capital. “It was particularly patriotic and moving,” Newkirk said. “We got to go into D.C. to see the museums and monuments – that was a sight!” He expects much of the patriotism to be evident at this year’s Games as well.

Newkirk keeps coming to the Games every year and encourages other veterans to attend. “I get to enjoy myself and I get to be with a lot of nice people. All you have to do is be there on time.”

When he is not occupied training for the Games, he keeps busy by volunteering at the VA medical center in West Los Angeles, providing assistance to other veterans in the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation department. He helps out by delivering canes and other prosthetics items to veterans hospitalized at the facility.

A combat veteran of World War II, Newkirk served in the Army where he did a little bit of everything and earned the rank of 2<sup>nd</sup> Sergeant. Some of his best moments in the service were meeting actor James Cagney on a USO tour that came through the base. On the same billing were actor Mickey Rooney and singer Dinah Shore. During his time in the military, he was buddies with Fayette Nicolas, of the famous dance troupe from the 30’s and 40’s, who stayed in the neighboring barracks.

Almadge Newkirk has a lot of good memories from his 92+ years, but some of the best came from attending the National Veterans Golden Age Games. “I enjoy competing and mingling with old friends, and meeting new ones at the Golden Age Games,” he said. “The Games provide healthy social contacts.”

