



YOU CAUGHT THE SPIRIT...NOW

CATCH the NEWS

JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2005

Issue 4

Thursday, June 30, 2005

Curtis Hobbs: A Winner at Any Age



Bowling a strike? At the ripe young age of 83, Curtis Hobbs is the oldest competitor at this year's Games.

Curtis Hobbs never thought he was good enough to participate in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. A Boston resident and member of the New England Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America since 1967, Hobbs remembers hearing about the Games in the early 1980s but chose not to participate. "I didn't do any sports when I was younger, so I didn't think I could compete," Hobbs recalls.

It's true—as a young man, Hobbs didn't have any time for sports. His parents died when he was relatively young, and his after-school hours and weekends were spent working multiple jobs. A fiercely independent man, Hobbs continued to work long days, leaving little time for recreation. "I didn't want anything given to me," he remembers.

That same sense of independence continues to serve him well today. A combat veteran of the Korean War, Hobbs lives alone, does his own shopping and cooking, and takes care of business errands, all at the ripe young age of 83.

In fact, there is probably only one value, one mindset, that Hobbs places higher than being independent and self-sufficient. "I don't give up, and I never stop trying." Because of that, and a rather significant birthday, Hobbs decided to listen to his swimming instructor and enter the Wheelchair Games in Long Beach two years ago. "I guess when I turned 80, I realized that you should enjoy life, enjoy what you've got left."

This week in Minneapolis, Hobbs is enjoying his third consecutive National Veterans Wheelchair Games, where he proudly

holds the distinction of being this year's oldest participant. Watching Hobbs at the bowling event on Tuesday afternoon, his early scores were relatively low, but they got better with each and every game. He kept trying, and he kept improving. "Maybe one day I'll be a good bowler," Hobbs chuckled. "I'm going to keep trying."

Curtis Hobbs has discovered that he really can compete, and regardless of his final scores, he is a winner in every sense of the word.

Today is Kids Day

The fifth annual "Kids Day at the Games" takes place today. Kids Day activities will be held at the Minneapolis Convention Center in Hall C from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. An evening Kids Day session will be held at the quad rugby and basketball events at the Convention Center from 7-8:30 p.m., where we welcome athletes and their children, as well as the children of staff and volunteers. Check it out!

Today's Weather

Afternoon thunderstorms

High: 73 Low: 58



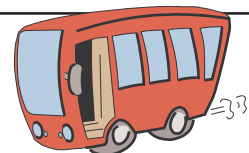
Schedule of Events for Today

THURSDAY, JUNE 30*

6–8 a.m.	Breakfast	Ballrooms A/B
8 a.m.	Track (Pwr 220 & Relay)	University of St. Thomas
	Slalom (IV-V)	Hall B
	Table Tennis (II-III)	Hall D
9:30 a.m.	Track (IA-IB-IC)	University of St. Thomas
10 a.m.–2 p.m.	Kids Day	Hall C
	Slalom (II-III)	Hall B
	Table Tennis (IV-V)	Hall D
11 a.m.–1 p.m.	Lunch	Ballrooms A/B
1 p.m.	Power Soccer (Games 3 and 4)	Halls B/C
	Golf Exhibition	Braemar Golf Course
2 p.m.	Track (II-V)	University of St. Thomas
3 p.m.	Power Soccer Games 5 and 6	Halls B/C
4:30–6:30 p.m.	Dinner	Ballrooms A/B
5:30–9:30 p.m.	Music in the Park	Park Plaza
6:30 p.m.	Basketball (Games 7 and 8)	Halls B/C
	Quad Rugby (Game 3)	Halls B/C
8 p.m.	Basketball (Games 9 and 10)	Halls B/C
	Power Soccer (Consolation Game)	Hall B/C

*All events are at the Minneapolis Convention Center unless otherwise noted.

Bus Schedule for Today



Time	Departure Site	Event	Destination
6:30 a.m.-12 noon	Convention Center	Track	University of St. Thomas, St. Paul
11:30 a.m.-5 p.m.	Convention Center	Golf	Braemar Golf Course, Edina
12 noon-5 p.m.	Convention Center	Track	University of St. Thomas, St. Paul

Note: Buses will line up directly in front of the Minneapolis Convention Center. Banners identifying their destination will be hung on the ramps.

Awards Schedule for Today

All awards will be presented inside Halls B/C. Today's award presentations:

Slalom	9:30 a.m. (IV-V)
Table Tennis	9:30 a.m. (II-III)
Air Guns	11 a.m. (All)
Field	11 a.m. (All)
Table Tennis	11 a.m. (IV-V)
Slalom	11:30 a.m. (II-III)
Power Soccer	Immediately at site following game

Signs and Graphics: Cut-off for signage is Friday noon.

What's Where?



Durable Medical Equipment: Located in the Hilton Hotel, Carver Room, second level. **CLOSED** today (available by phone—contact the hotel operator for assistance). Open again on Friday, July 1, noon–10 p.m.; and on Saturday, July 2, from 5–11 a.m.

Hospitality: Be sure to stop by the hospitality table at the Convention Center between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. for more information about special activities, drawings for prizes, downtown maps, newsletters and other general information. The hospitality team is located right inside the Grant Street entrance, in front of Ballroom A.

Internet Café: The Internet Café is located in Room 101G at the Convention Center. Café hours are 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Ten computers and one printer are available, compliments of longtime Games sponsor Hewlett-Packard. Be sure to tell your friends and family back home about the Games web site. Results, news releases and photos will be posted at www.wheelchairgames.org, starting today.

Medical Emergencies and Assistance: The medical suite is located in Room 101F of the Convention Center. It is open from 7 a.m. until all events are completed. The medical staff treats athletes for minor injuries or illnesses. A life-threatening emergency requires an emergency call to 911. Medical support at the Hilton Hotel is in Room 1636 from 7:30 a.m. to midnight. It will not be open on Saturday, July 2. Please note, there are no “house calls” to athletes’ rooms. A Games physician and registered nurse are on call each night *for athletes only* and can be reached by calling the hotel operator. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, ask the hotel operator to dial 911. Medical staff are also present at each Games venue, easily identified by their red shirts with a white cross on the back. Severe injuries or illnesses will be referred to the Minneapolis VA Medical Center or a local emergency facility, if necessary.

Wheelchair Repair: Located at the Hilton Hotel, Hennepin Room, second level, through tomorrow, from 8 a.m. until all events are over, and on Saturday, July 2, at the hotel and at the airport until all athletes have departed.

Adaptive Golf

Golf is a challenging, rewarding sport for people of all ages and abilities, and it will be offered as an exhibition event today at 1 p.m. Adaptive golf individualizes the sport to best suit a person’s physical status. Whether golfing from a wheelchair, using one arm, having assistance with balance, or using a special glove to improve your grip, adaptive golf can help improve endurance, balance, strength, socialization, self-esteem, mobility and coordination.

Special thanks to Braemar Golf Course for holding the golf exhibition event for the first time in many years at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. (It was last offered in 1983 in Long Beach.) This will be a non-medal event, beginning with a one-hour clinic with national golf professionals Mike Grube (Hazeline Golf Course) and Mike Barge (Braemar Golf Course). Following the clinic, chipping and putting events and a “best of all scramble” will take place, with 79 veterans participating. According to Susan Hagel, local golf exhibition co-chair, the hope is for participating veterans to go home and continue to pursue this fun and challenging sport.

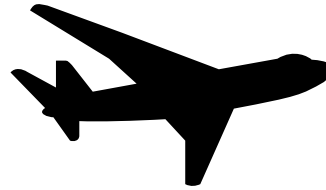
Ticket Sales for Closing Ceremonies

The Closing Ceremonies will be held on Friday, July 1, from 7-9:30 p.m. in Hall D at the Convention Center. The banquet entree is a chicken and steak combination. If you have not yet purchased your tickets to this event, stop by the hospitality table before this evening to pick them up. Prices for the event are \$15 for athletes and qualified coaches, and \$25 for everyone else.

Reminder

Please remember that service dogs are working dogs. We should all be respectful of these animals and not approach them as pets. The actions of these dogs are the responsibility of their owners.

Departure Information



HILTON AND HYATT HOTELS NORTHWEST AIRLINES PASSENGER DEPARTURE PROCESS

For those departing on Saturday, July 2, Northwest Airlines agents will be present starting on Friday, July 1, at 6:30 p.m. to affix flight tags to your luggage and to issue you and your traveling party boarding passes. This procedure will ensure that your gear will be brought directly to Northwest Airlines. Once you arrive at the airport, you will be able to go directly to security and the departure gate. So to take advantage of this process, please do the following:

1. Set all of your luggage and equipment outside your door between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Friday, July 1. Hotel staff will take it to the Marquette/LaSalle room at the Hilton Hotel.
2. After 7 p.m. on Friday, July 1, go to the Marquette/LaSalle Room at the Hilton to identify your luggage so that it can be tagged with your flight number and you may receive your boarding pass. You must have identification with you and you must bring all who are traveling with you to receive their boarding pass.
3. On Saturday, July 2, plan to take the bus to the airport to arrive at the Transit Center at least two hours before your scheduled flight departs. With your boarding pass you will be able to go to security for check-in and then go directly to your departure gate.

FOR PASSENGERS FLYING OTHER THAN NORTHWEST AIRLINES, FOLLOW PROCESS BELOW FOR YOUR JULY 2 DEPARTURE:

1. Please have your luggage outside your rooms between 5 and 7 p.m. on Friday, July 1. Hotel staff will pick up your luggage and equipment and take it to the airport.
2. On Saturday, July 2, plan to take the bus to the airport to arrive at the Transit Center at least three hours before your scheduled flight departs. A volunteer will escort you to your airline ticket counter to identify your luggage and issue your boarding pass.

Volunteerism is Alive and Well Here in Minneapolis

Steve Johnson, Volunteer Coordinator for this year's Games, expresses his feelings this way, "When issues arise that make you want to throw in the towel, you just think of the veteran athletes and everything is cool."

More than 2,050 community and VA volunteers are helping make the 2005 National Veterans Wheelchair Games a success. Virgil Smith, a first-time volunteer from Cleveland, Ohio, found that the enthusiasm of his wife, a nurse at the Cleveland VA Medical Center, rubbed off. "I love these guys, and you get hooked on the Games," he said.

For Mary Ann Davis, Reva Swanson and Lois Stodieck, working in the volunteer lounge at the Convention Center is an extension of what they do at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. They all volunteer at the medical center, delivering comfort items and visiting with veterans in the inpatient units. Davis, an American Legion Auxiliary member, finds the Games a wonderful experience. "I give so much credit to these veterans," she said. Swanson and Stodieck, members of the VFW Auxiliary, love helping with the Games and find it very heartwarming. "You do it for the

feeling that you get. It's exciting knowing you're part of it."

The Minneapolis community has shown that the spirit of volunteerism is very much alive here. About 90 members of "The Generators," a volunteer corps from General Mills, mostly retirees, are volunteering. Other community groups come from Wells Fargo, Ford Motor Corporation, Blue Cross & Blue Shield, Johnson & Johnson, 3M Corporation, United Parcel Service (UPS) and the Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers.

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Twenty-five Games and Counting



Leon Thompson is one of two veterans here this week who have competed in all 25 National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

For many of us, it is difficult to remember what we did yesterday, let alone what we did in 1981. However, Leon Thompson, 59, from Englewood, Fla., remembers everything about attending the very first National Veterans Wheelchair Games that year, when the event was held on the campus of the VA Medical Center in Richmond, Va. “Weightlifting was my main event back then,” Thompson said. “Over the years, I have enjoyed the field events, trap shooting, 9-ball, bowling and air guns.”

At the age of 35, Thompson was encouraged by Les Rothman, a recreation therapist at the Tampa, Fla., VA Medical Center, to get involved in the Games. Thompson did more than that, having attended all 25 of the National Veterans Wheelchair Games and receiving a collection of medals through the years of competition. “I wasn’t going to attend this year’s Games due to recently having surgery,” said Thompson, a Marine Corps veteran.

“However, I couldn’t miss or explain why I wasn’t going. Plus, you’ve got to be a Marine to attend all 25 of these Games!” (Jimmy May, an Army veteran and our other 25-year athlete, will undoubtedly disagree.)

Reflecting, Thompson recalls how long it would take for each event to be held in the early years. “Events seemed to be less organized, which would make for a long day of competition,” said Thompson. “However, they’ve come a long way. The staff does a remarkable job! Events are much more organized, which shortens the waiting time.”

By attending the Games, Thompson has traveled all across the nation. Cities include Brockton, Mass., Ann Arbor, Mich., New Orleans, La., San Antonio, Texas, and

San Diego, Calif. “I enjoy traveling to other states to see and experience new things. For example, the food reflects their state’s ethnic culture. It’s like going to another country.”

Thompson will be competing this year in bowling, air guns and field events. His heart belongs to bowling, though, so watch out for his fierce strikes. After attending 25 Games, Thompson’s advice to new athletes is to keep your eyes open—and your heart—because it is something you’ll never forget.

When asked if he will be going to the 26th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Alaska, Thompson replied, “Absolutely! We’ll be there. My wife of 34 years enjoys these Games as much as I do!”

Volunteers (cont.)



The Games couldn’t happen without the support of volunteers.

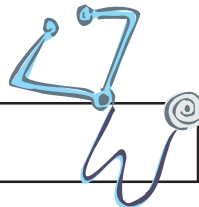
The Minneapolis VA Regional Office has shown the true spirit of “One VA,” providing support from 50 employees. Students from local colleges, including Minnesota Community Technical College, are helping with the Games, as well. Karen Ebey and Katie Werner, both nursing students at Inver Hills

variety of activities in which they participate.”

Steve Johnson is excited that Laura Balun, recently appointed Director of Voluntary Service at VA Central Office, will be arriving to oversee activities and provide support. “She’s a wonderful asset to Voluntary Service,” he said.

Community College, heard about the Games through one of their instructors at the school and volunteered to help with the air guns event. “We’re here to support veterans,” they said. “It’s really neat to see the way they support each other and the wide

Ask Dr. Dan



Dear Dr. Dan:

I've been having some skin irritation around my prosthesis. What is a quick fix so I can keep competing this week in the Games?

-Irritable in Independence City

Dear Irritable:

High temperatures do indeed cause additional perspiration, which has long been believed to be a contributing factor to amputee skin problems. Incidence of skin problems increases dramatically during the humid summer months as opposed to winter months, when humidity is lower.

One simple way to keep irritation to a minimum while competing this week is to be sure your skin is completely dry before donning your prosthesis. Powders and deodorants often leave a residue on the skin that can become a skin irritant within the closed environment of the liner of your prosthetic device. If you use a sheath between the skin and the liner of your prosthesis, there is no direct skin contact and a small amount of air is allowed to circulate around the residual limb. A sheath also serves to wick sweat away from the skin, which also could lead to irritation.

Dr. Dan

Music in the Park

Don't miss **Music in the Park** this evening, featuring Willie Walker and the Butanes, from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. The festivities will be held at Park Plaza, located outside the Minneapolis Convention Center. It promises to be the best catch of the evening.



The Butanes

The Butanes are a rhythm and blues band from Minnesota, where they have backed Louisiana-based musicians Earl King and Zydeco's Al Rapone, among others. According to *People* magazine, "The Butanes keep it simple: play loud, play fast and by all means, keep the dancers moving ..."

In 2004, the Butanes went international, releasing their collaboration with Willie Walker, *Right Where I Belong*, on the

English One on One label. Hailed worldwide as one of the finest soul releases of the year, this tour-de-force has had all 14 tracks played on the radio, and during the week of February 5, 2005, it was the number one blues release on XM satellite radio's Bluesville channel.

Not only are you in for a toe tapping and soulful experience this evening, but you'll also be amazed and entertained by a local magician. Plus, you can have your portrait drawn by a local caricature artist. A cash bar will offer beer, wine and soft drinks.

Tonight's dinner will still be held at the Convention Center at the usual time (4:30–6:30 p.m.) but tonight it will be a barbecue theme, catered by Kelber Catering, serving BBQ pork and grilled chicken breast on a bun, cole slaw, potato salad, baked beans, watermelon, ice cream and soft drinks.

Stop by tonight for this mid-week opportunity to relax and enjoy the **Music in the Park!**

On the Menu ...



Complimentary water is now available in the Ballrooms during meals.

All meals are served in Ballrooms A/B on Level 1 of the Convention Center. Bon Appetit!

Breakfast (6-8 a.m.):

French toast bake with sausage links; oatmeal (with toppings); standard items available every day include assorted pastries and fruit, cereal, yogurt and beverages.

Lunch (11 a.m.-1 p.m.):

pork stir-fry over white rice and a dinner roll; Chicken a-la-King over white rice and a dinner roll; stuffed pork chop with parsley; standard items available every day include a soup of the day, cold sandwiches, entrée salads, side salads, fruit, desserts and beverages.

Dinner (4:30-6:30 p.m.):

BBQ pork sandwich on a Kaiser roll with baked beans, potato salad or cole slaw and pickle spear; grilled chicken breast sandwich with baked beans, potato salad or cole slaw and pickle spear; standard items available every day include a soup of the day, cold sandwiches, entrée salads, side salads, fruit, desserts and beverages.

What is the Powerchair Relay?

After several years assisting with the "Powerchair 220," Doug Conyers, head official for the event, had an idea for something new at the 24th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in St. Louis last year. Speaking with motorized wheelchair users the year before in Long Beach, Conyers learned that they were excited about his idea of holding a powerchair relay exhibition event, something new for athletes who use power wheelchairs.

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Powerchair Relay (cont.)

At this team competition exhibition event, participants are in a relay race. Last year, each of the 80 teams consisted of three athletes, with each member using a different type of motorized chair, including hand controlled, sip and puff, and chin/mouth controlled. Three competitors raced at a time for a total distance of one-half lap.

Last year's athletes truly enjoyed the competition and we expect the same at the track events this year, scheduled for bright and early Thursday morning at the University of St. Thomas track. Don't miss it!

Veterans History Project

Veterans History Project interviews continue through tomorrow in the VHP taping room at the Minneapolis Convention Center on Level Two, Show Room B, from 8 a.m.–Noon; 1–5 p.m.; and 6–9 p.m. Sign up for your interview with Butch Miller in the VHP taping room. This historic project honors our nation's veterans by creating a lasting legacy of their military experience. Thanks to everyone who has already recorded their stories and shared them with our VHP program staff this week. Please remember to keep your scheduled interview time. If you can't make it, please call Butch Miller at (317) 448-3669.

Deadline is 8 a.m. Today for Spirit Nominations

If you're reading this at breakfast, it's not too late to drop off your nomination for the 2005 Spirit of the Games Award. Hustle yourself over to the ballot boxes, located right in the dining room or at the Command Center and drop off your ballot first thing this morning. We want your voice to be heard when we select this year's award recipient!

Newsletter printing costs donated by Pfizer.

History of the Games Quiz

Think you know your Games history? Test your knowledge by taking the Games History Quiz featured in each day's newsletter this week. Submit an entry form with the correct answers and you could win prizes!

Quiz entry forms will be located in Ballrooms A/B, where meals are served, or you can pick one up in the Media Center, Room 101A. Drop your entry in the box located outside the Media Center. All forms must be submitted by 11 a.m. each day to qualify, and the first forms with the most correct answers win. Winners (and correct answers) will be announced in the next day's newsletter. Good luck!

1. At what Games was there no host VA Medical Center?
2. When and where was the first Kids Day held?
 - a. New York, 2001
 - b. San Antonio, 2000
 - c. San Antonio, 1988
 - d. Cleveland, 2002
3. What was the theme of the 2002 Games in Cleveland?
4. In 1999, the daily newsletter started being named by the local host site, reflecting the area or the theme of the Games. What was the name of all previous Games newsletters prior to that? Bonus: How many daily newsletter titles since 1999 can you remember?
5. How many times have the Wheelchair Games been held in the state of California?

Yesterday's Quiz answers:

1. b. Equestrian sports were an exhibition event at the 18th NVWG in Pittsburgh in 1998.
2. The first Spirit of the Games recipient was Russ Monroe of Davison, Michigan, who was presented with the award at the Closing Banquet of the 1987 Games in Ann Arbor, Michigan.
3. c. There were no billiards events at the Games in San Antonio in 1993 and Kansas City in 1994.
4. Police graciously escorted Games busses in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in 1999.
5. d. Both heavy rains and tornado sightings postponed the completion of the track events at East St. Louis High School last year.

Congratulations to yesterday's winners: Edwardo Dyola, Jim Rieme and Fred Garraway. Please stop by the Media Center to pick up your prize!

Quotable ...

"I might have to sit, but I don't have to sit still!"

- Ronald Smith, Parkersburg, Iowa



*Eyes on
the
Prize ...*

