

Milwaukee, Wisconsin ~ June 19 – 23, 2007

Great Games GAZETTE



A Publication of the 27th National Veterans Wheelchair Games

Volume 1, Issue 1



Tuesday, June 19, 2007

Welcome from Your Hosts!



Glen W. Grippen, Director of Milwaukee VA Medical Center

Glen W. Grippen, Director of the Milwaukee VA Medical Center, and Phillip E. Rosenberg, President of the Wisconsin Chapter of PVA, welcome you to the 27th National Veterans Wheelchair Games. Representing our 2007 co-hosts, they know that all athletes will have a *Great Games on a Great Lake* experience. The prelude to these Games has been embraced by the Milwaukee community, and you will soon come to learn how very welcome you are here! Enjoy the Games, enjoy Milwaukee, enjoy Wisconsin – we know you will experience that special feeling we call “*gemütlichkeit*,” the coziness that comes when you are among friends. If you have any questions or need assistance any time this week, just contact a local staff member wearing the bright yellow scrubs – we are all here to assist and ensure that you have a wonderful week in Milwaukee. Enjoy the Games!



Phillip E. Rosenberg, President of the Wisconsin Chapter of PVA

Don't Miss Tonight's Opening Ceremonies!



The 27th National Veterans Wheelchair Games officially begin this evening. Be sure to attend the Opening Ceremonies in the main ballroom of the Midwest Airlines Center (MAC). It is sure to be a memorable event for athletes, family members, staff, volunteers and visitors. Athletes are asked to arrive for staging at 5 p.m. Seating for spectators and guests begins at 5:40 p.m., with the program commencing promptly at 6 p.m.

Athletes should come to their staging areas as early as possible. The parade of athletes is taking

a new course this year, with state contingents entering the ballroom not alphabetically, but according to the year in which that state entered the Union (or otherwise became associated with the United States.) Historical re-enactors from each era will guide the teams into the ballroom. Competitors will be grouped by state in the staging area, and only athletes and qualified coaches will be permitted in this area. (Family and friends may proceed to the general seating area to wait for the festivities to begin.)

After registration today, plan to have something to eat before the Opening Ceremonies begin. The welcome recep-

tion does not start until around 7:30 p.m. As you wait for the ceremonies to start, you will be treated to some great local entertainment.

Jim Paschke, voice of the Milwaukee Bucks, is serving as the master of ceremonies at tonight's event. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson and PVA President Randy Plevah, Sr., will also welcome the athletes, along with other special guests. Our 2006 Spirit of the Games winner Charles Allen will read the Athlete's Oath, and local Wisconsin veterans will light the Games torch at the conclusion of tonight's event.

Immediately following the formal program, a festive welcome reception will be held right outside the convention center on Wells Street. At the reception, your favorite German, Irish and Italian foods will be served. (The same food items will be served at every station.) Volunteers will guide you to the different food stations to decrease your wait time. A cash bar will also be available. Enjoy a sampling from the City of Festivals!

We look forward to seeing you at tonight's event, where our *Great Games on a Great Lake* will finally begin!

Presented by the Department of Veterans Affairs and Paralyzed Veterans of America.

VA, PVA Leaders Visit the Games

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson is in Milwaukee today, visiting with veterans, sponsors and Games staff as they arrive. “The National Veterans Wheelchair Games are a chance for disabled veterans to share in the camaraderie of friendly competition,” Nicholson said. “The determination, stamina and competitive spirit on display are an inspiration.”

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 Vietnam veteran.

As Secretary of Veterans Affairs, he is the principal advocate for veterans in the U.S. government, ensuring that they receive the care, support, recognition and dignity they deserve. Nicholson hopes to speak with as many veterans as possible before returning to Washington on Wednesday.

Randy L. Pleva, Sr., National President of Paralyzed Veterans of America, is also here at the event and will greet the audience at tonight’s Opening Ceremonies. Elected to his position in 2004, he previously served in many other PVA leadership positions.

Also a veteran of the Vietnam War, Pleva joined the Marine Corps in 1971, serving with the Task Force Delta Unit in Southeast Asia. He was discharged in 1974, became employed as a coal miner and United Mine Workers mediator. In 1982, he sustained a spinal cord injury in a coal mining accident.

“Our association with the National Veterans Wheelchair Games helps fulfill our promise of improving the quality of life for veterans with disabilities,” Pleva said. “As the wheelchair athletes assemble, the intensity of competition will be exceeded only by the fellowship of veterans united together.”

Many other VA, PVA and community leaders are attending the Games this week. Thank you all for coming!



Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson



PVA National President Randy Pleva, Sr.



Only you can tell your story in your own way. So, why not be a part of an important national effort—the Veterans History Project (VHP)? Make an appointment at the VHP registration table today. The VHP interviews will be conducted Wednesday, June 20 through Friday, June 22, between the hours of 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.; and on Saturday, June 23, from 8 to 11 a.m. in Room 203D, on the second floor of the Midwest Airlines Center. This project is meant to honor you, our nation’s veterans, by creating a lasting legacy of your military experience. We need your story. Share it with us and help make history come alive! Your interview will be recorded on a DVD. One copy will be given to the Library of Congress, and another copy will be given to you. What happens next? You and your story become part of our Nation’s official historical records.

Sign up today and when your interview is completed, you’ll receive a VHP tote bag and a one-of-a-kind VHP Challenge coin.

Games Kick-off

Be sure to come to this year’s Games Kick-off today at 11:30 a.m. at Red Arrow Park, just a few blocks east of the Midwest Airlines Center. The park is located at 420 N. Water St., between Kilbourn Ave. and State St. Transportation is available from the MAC; however, it is less than a mile away and volunteers can direct you if you wish to go on your own. Directions are available at the nearest hospitality desk. At this annual event, athletes and local officials will demonstrate wheelchair basketball to the citizens of Milwaukee. Marquette University men’s basketball coach Tom Crean will do the play-by-play. In case of inclement weather, the Kick-off will be held on the third floor of the MAC.



Athletes’ Welcome Reception

Welcome to the City of Festivals! The Welcome Reception will set the pace for the exciting week to follow. Following the Opening Ceremonies, all athletes and coaches will exit the Midwest Airlines Center and proceed outside onto Wells Street, a covered two-block area. There, you will sample some of our great ethnic festival foods. Jazz music will be provided by the 132nd Army Band. Bring your meal vouchers and enjoy!



Daily Bulletin Board

DME & Wheelchair Repair



Durable Medical Equipment (DME) is located at the Hilton Hotel, Mitchell Room, 4th Floor; Hyatt Hotel, Pere Marquette Room; and Courtyard by Marriott, Board Room 1.

ell Room, 4th Floor; Hyatt Hotel, Pere Marquette Room; and Courtyard by Marriott, Board Room 1.

DME Hours of Operation

Tues., June 19	5 a.m. - Midnight
Wed., June 20 - Fri., June 22	On-call (Please call (630) 270-0567)
Sat., June 23	11 a.m. - Midnight (Except during Closing Ceremonies)
Sun., June 24	5 a.m. - Noon

Wheelchair repair will be available at the Hilton Hotel in the Walker Room today through Saturday from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. Staff will also be available at the event venues and at the MAC.



Transportation

All buses to events load and unload on Wells Street (on the north side of the MAC.) Please be at the bus loading area *at least* one hour before your event.



Medical Details

Medical suites are available at the Hilton, Hyatt and Courtyard by Marriott hotels. They will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily for treatment of injuries and illnesses, closing at 8 a.m. Sunday, June 24. If any athlete has a medical emergency after the medical suites are closed, the hotel operator should be contacted. The operator will take the veteran's name and room number, and communicate with the physician or nurse on call.

The medical suite at the Midwest Airlines Center will be open each day at 7:30 a.m. and will remain open until the last event in that location has ended.

Do not call 911 unless there is a life-threatening emergency! If this should occur, please have the hotel operator contact 911.

Only registered athletes or registered volunteers on duty may be treated by Games' medical staff. A list of local emergency clinics and hospitals will be available for family members who need medical assistance.

Purchase your Closing Banquet tickets during Registration today. The cost is \$15 for athletes and qualified coaches, \$25 for all others. Any remaining banquet tickets will be sold tomorrow in the Games command center (MAC, Room 102 D/E).



Food, wonderful food... for the week!



Meal services begin with breakfast on Wednesday, June 20 and end with lunch on Saturday, June 23 at the Midwest Airlines Center (MAC) Ballroom, or at Concession Stand B.

The Ballroom is located on the first floor of the MAC. Meals will be served cafeteria style, with hot and cold entrees as well as à la carte items such as salads, grilled sandwiches, and an assortment of desserts and beverages. Athletes and others receiving complimentary meals will use their meal voucher provided during registration. *Family members and guests may pay cash for each meal, and will not be required to purchase a meal pass for the entire week.*

Hours for Meals in the Ballroom

Breakfast: 6 - 9:30 a.m.

Lunch: 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Dinner: 4 - 7 p.m.

Concession Stand B is located on the third floor in the main walkway of the MAC. It has a more limited choice, such as hamburgers, fries, pretzels, nachos, salads, pizza, deli sandwiches, candy, chips and soda. Meal vouchers or cash will be accepted as payment.

Additional concession stands are located inside the event hall and include Pedranos, Pacific Orient, and Maui Wowi. *Meal vouchers cannot be used at these concession stands.*

Special accommodations for meals are being made for athletes and coaches at the following off-site sport venues: bowling, trapshooting, softball and Kids Day. The meal is dependent on the specific location and may include a box meal, cook-out or hot meal. At these locations, an off-site meals assistant will issue and collect your meal voucher or punch your meal ticket.

Hospitality Desk Hours

Hospitality desks are located in the lobby of the Hyatt, Hilton, and Courtyard by Marriott hotels:

Tues., June 19	7 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Fri., June 22	7 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Sat., June 23	7 a.m. - 6 p.m.; 9 p.m. - Midnight

At the Midwest Airlines Center, the hospitality desk is located in the east concourse of the first floor of the center:

Today through Friday, June 22	7 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Saturday, June 23	7 a.m. - 6 p.m.



Great Games on a Great Lake Daily Schedule for...

Tuesday, June 19, 2007

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Games Registration	Midwest Airlines Center (MAC) & Expo
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Family Zone	MAC, Third Floor
11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Games Kick-off	Red Arrow Park
1 – 2 p.m.	Coaches' Meeting	MAC, Room 103 A,B,C
1 – 4 p.m.	Weightlifting Weigh-in	MAC, Exhibit Hall A
2:30 – 3 p.m.	Novice Athlete Meeting	MAC, Room 103 A,B,C
6 – 7 p.m.	Opening Ceremonies	MAC, Ballroom A
7:30 – 9 p.m.	Welcome Reception	Wells Street

Wednesday, June 20, 2007

6-8 a.m.	Breakfast	MAC Ballroom
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.	Late Registration	MAC, Room 101D
8 a.m.	Field — IA, IB, IC, II Standing Track and Field Clinic (for amputees)	Veterans Park Wisconsin Lutheran College Athletic Complex
9 a.m.	Field — III	Veterans Park
10 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Family Zone	MAC, Third Floor
10 a.m.	Air Guns Field — IV	MAC, Room 202 Veterans Park
11 a.m.	Field — V Bowling — II, III	Veterans Park AMF Bowlero Lanes
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Lunch	MAC Ballroom,
1 p.m.	Air Guns Slalom — IA, IB Power Soccer — Games 1, 2	MAC, Room 202 MAC, Exhibit Halls A,B MAC, Exhibit Halls C,D
1:10 p.m.	Milwaukee Brewers Game	Brewer's Stadium
2 p.m.	Bowling — IV, V	AMF Bowlero Lanes
3 p.m.	Air Guns Slalom — IC Power Soccer — Games 3, 4 Table Tennis — II, III	MAC, Room 202 MAC, Exhibit Halls A,B MAC, Exhibit Halls C,D MAC, Exhibit Hall D
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.	Dinner	MAC Ballrooms A, B, C
6 – 10 p.m.	Posh Pampering Party	Martini Mike's
6:30 p.m.	Swimming	Schroeder YMCA Aquatic Center
	Bowling — Ramp	AMF Bowlero Lanes
6:30 – 9 p.m.	River Rhythms	Pere Marquette Park, Third and Kilbourn
7 p.m.	Weightlifting Weightlifting — Quad Air Guns	MAC, Exhibit Hall D MAC, Exhibit Hall D MAC, Room 202

Theme for Tomorrow



POW-MIA Day

Tomorrow is POW/MIA Day at the Games. Wear your wristbands and black shirts on Wednesday to honor all active duty service members and veterans who were held prisoners of war or are missing in action.



Surfin' the Net at the Games Internet Cafe'

Great news for our *Great Games on a Great Lake*! This year, Hewlett Packard (HP) is proud to sponsor two internet cafés at the Midwest Airlines Center for your use. They are already operating and will remain open through Saturday at noon, and are located on the first and third floors in the main corridor areas. Each café will have four computers and a printer. Hours of operation are from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. This is your opportunity to check your e-mail, send messages about your participation in the Games and log onto the Games' Web site for the latest information. *Thank you, HP!*

NVWG Web site

www.wheelchairgames.va.gov

Would you like your friends and family back home to be able to see what you are doing this week? Tell them to log onto the National Veterans Wheelchair Games Web site to check out the daily editions of the Great Games Gazette (on the main home page).



Did you lose something? Lost and Found is located in the Games Command Center, Room 102 D/E, open today from 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. If you find anyone else's lost items, please drop them off there. Thank you!



Great Games Weather

Milwaukee's average temperature for June is 77°, but temperatures can range from 50° to 90° F.