

# Arch Dispatch

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Tuesday, 5 June 2012 | The 26th National Veterans Golden Age Games | St. Louis, MO

## Model Athlete Racks ‘Em Up

Evangeline Conley, Public Affairs Officer, Buffalo VAMC

When Jack Wiseman lost his left arm at the age of 18 from gunshot wounds in Vietnam, that didn't stop him from doing everything he wanted to do in life. A true athlete and Army Veteran from Lutz, Fla., who served in the 101st Airborne and 82nd Airborne Division, Wiseman has a number of prosthetic devices to assist him in each of the sports he participates in.

He received his newest device, a custom prosthetic pool arm built by the VA, to improve his nine-ball game that he's been playing with one arm his whole life. The adaptive arm resembles a pool cue from just above the elbow area and has a fiberglass circle that holds the actual pool cue.

He said he hasn't worn a prosthetic device in 45 years but now has unique adaptive devices to assist him while kayaking, weightlifting and plank. Plank is best described by doing pushups while on your elbows. He's an avid golfer who swings freehand and a fisherman who is participating in the National Veterans Golden Age Games for the first time.

He retired two years ago as clinical director from an adult substance abuse and mental health facility in Utah and moved to the Tampa area where his sister lives.

A MOVE! participant, one of VA's weight management programs at the James A. Haley Tampa VA medical center, Wiseman lost 47 pounds.

Everything people said he couldn't do, Wiseman told them, "bite me and I'd go and do it." He's worked construction, run water and sewer lines, unloaded semi-trucks; all with one arm.

Jennifer Day, Adaptive Sports Coordinator at the James A. Haley Tampa VA medical center and National Official at the Games, said "Wiseman is one of the most dedicated competitors. He works closely with the prosthetics and amputee teams so he can participate at his highest level."

Irene Jiminez, a Recreation Therapist at the site said, "he doesn't let anything keep him down. He is an inspiration to all."

Wiseman not only exhibits his own perseverance in improving his athletic ability but also serves as a model for St. Petersburg School of Prosthetics students who have to build a prosthetic arm and leg as part of their graduation requirements. His dedication to improving the skills of these students will help future generations of amputees all over the United States.

# Getting Back in the Water

John Farrell, Voluntary Service Specialist, VA St. Louis Health Care

During his high school days, Marine Corps Veteran Lester Kushner was quite the swimmer. He was equally fast in both the freestyle and breaststroke events and loved to be in the pool. After a four-year enlistment in the Corps, including service in Vietnam, Kushner lost touch with the sport.

Fast-forward 40 years. Kushner attended the Golden Age Games last year in Hawaii, and it was there that he began thinking about getting back into the pool and competing again.

“I thought about it last year,” recalled Kushner, now 65. “But there was no pool available (in his home town of Angelus Oaks, Calif.) to practice. I was a pretty good swimmer in my youth, and in the pool, my legs don’t bother me.”

Kushner has neuropathy in both legs that makes it hard for him to exercise. The condition is typically the result of nerve damage and it often causes numbness and pain in the hands and feet. Pain comes in the form of tingling or burning and can be quite unbearable.

Fortunately, certain types of low impact activity can bring temporary relief to the disorder’s painful symptoms. Getting back in the pool and swimming again, says Kushner, is having a positive effect on his physical condition.

“I’ve been in the pool quite a bit lately and it’s really helping my neuropathy,” said Kushner. The pool time he referred to was during a recent Caribbean cruise. Kushner says swimming at the Games last year inspired him to try swimming at some of the beaches, in addition to time in the pool on board the ship.

Kushner thinks that all this time back in the water will help his chances of earning a medal in his first Golden Age Games swimming event, the 25-yard freestyle, Kushner remarked, “I think I have a decent chance, but I hear there are some pretty good swimmers here.”

Kushner also competed in nine-ball Monday morning and is looking forward to cycling on Tuesday. He credits the Golden Age Games for helping him get back into a more active lifestyle, which he enjoys.

“I like getting exercise because I was an avid backpacker and scuba diver. The swimming made me feel really good and I’m hoping to get back in shape. I think I’ll join the Y(MCA) when I get back home so I’ll finally have a pool I can keep swimming in.”

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## Closing Ceremonies

Be sure to attend the Closing Ceremonies tonight beginning at 7 p.m. at the America’s Center America’s Ballroom.

Ozzie Smith, Major League Baseball Hall of Famer, will serve as Master of Ceremonies for tonight’s program. Special guests include Rocky Sickmann, Director, Military Sales, Anheuser-Busch, Inc. (former Iran hostage, 444 days of captivity 1979); and Dr. William Patterson, Department of Veterans Affairs Network Director, VA Heartland Network.

Presented tonight will be the Secretary’s Awards, Help Hospitalized Veterans Awards, the VCS Challenge Award, the William “Bill” Givens Award, and the George Gangi Inspiration Award

# Dirty Harry

Laura Schafsnitz, Public Affairs Specialist, Marion VAMC

Air Force Veteran Philip Kempland knows about competition. He's been shooting for years.

"I grew up in North St. Louis and back then you could buy guns pretty much anywhere," he stated. "I went to Western Auto when I was 12 or 13 years old and bought my first gun for 12 dollars. I've been shooting ever since."

Kempland served during the Korean War as an Aircraft Instrument Specialist. He was stationed in Japan and flew to Korea when needed to fix planes. After his discharge, Kempland returned to St. Louis and worked for McDonnell Douglas in their space programs. He had continued to go to local ranges and shoot for fun, when one of his buddies from work made him an offer he couldn't refuse.

"A friend of mine told me that a group of people from work were on an official team that shot in competitions," Kempland said. "So I started shooting on a McDonnell pistol team in 1961. It was like a bowling league, but we shot to 300."

The 81 year old says he doesn't shoot competitively as much as he used to, so he was excited to have the opportunity to shoot at the Golden Age Games this year because "anytime I'm burning gun powder I'm having a ball."

"It gives you a rush," Kempland explains. "In spite of all the anti-gun talk, sometimes it's better than baseball because you're competing against yourself to do better every time. It's relaxing. It can take your mind off things that are bothering you."

Kempland shot 20 out 25 at the trapshoot exhibition. Not his best day at the range, he says, but it did win him the Clint Eastwood Award. He hopes to improve on that tomorrow when he comes back to compete again. Because as Kempland says, competing is "a satisfying thing."

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## Question of the Day:

**What do you do to keep yourself in shape for the Golden Age Games?**

**Charles Brownlow 62**

Army

Missouri City, TX

"I started working out at least 2 times per week and walk 2-3 miles every day. I've been able to stay at the same weight for the last 35 years."

**Jules Barkalow 58**

Air Force

Kodiak Island, Alaska

"I use a lot of portion control. I also do CrossFit. It is a great 20 minute workout that gets you ready for life!"

**John Stevens 78**

Navy

Cincinnati, OH

"I volunteer at the VA in Cincinnati 10 hours a day, 5 days a week...that keeps me busy walking all over the hospital."

**Terry Roberson, 69**

Marine

Thomaston, Maine

"Diet is very important. Exercise is mandatory. I work out 4-5 days per week for at least 2 hours each day."

**Dallas Ricker 77**  
Marine Corps  
Birmingham, AL

“I eat less and exercise more. I don’t drink and I don’t smoke and have always tried to live a good life.”

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# She Served Too

Sandy Franks, Public Affairs Office, Overton Brooks VAMC

Seventy-nine women Veterans are attending the National Veterans Golden Age Games. They range in age from 55 to 86 years old and represent the Army, Marines, Navy and Air Force. They are unique; no two are exactly alike but they share a common bond, they served their country with honor and distinction.

World War II Navy Veteran Maxine Bodman is the oldest female competitor at the Games. A native of West Palm Beach, Fla., Bodman enlisted in the Navy at age 17 and served from 1943 – 46 as a yeoman in Mobile, Ala. She said, “I was in 11th grade when Pearl Harbor was bombed. I knew then I wanted to go in the Navy. I grew up on the water and was a Mariner Girl Scout so it seemed the natural thing to do.”

Jo A. Nicholson served in the Army National Guard from 1983 – 2004. She deployed to Desert Storm and Iraq earning a Bronze Star and was the first female Commander of the 151st Military Police Company. Nicholson, who is attending her first Golden Age Games, leads a “Vet to Vet” group at the Martinsburg VA Medical Center which helps other Veterans work through issues with PTSD and substance abuse. To remain fit she walks and works out in the gym and is a firm believer that exercise can help decrease stress and anxiety.

Marine Corps Veteran, Judy Noeller, a Native American from Kansas was an air traffic controller in the Corps from 1970 – 74 and is participating in her first Golden Age Games. Noeller enjoys the camaraderie of the Games and the opportunity to compete and be in company of other Veterans. Her favorite event is the air rifle competition.

Linda Hicks served in the Air Force from 1968 – 75 and retired from the Air Force Reserve in 1989. She is attending her 6th Golden Age Games and won silver in bowling. Of the Games she said, “As a little girl I was a tom boy and loved sports. The Games give me the opportunity to be active again. I compete against myself and try to improve my own personal record.”

Hicks, who volunteers at the Long Beach VA, works with Veterans in a photography program.

“We started the program for spinal cord patients but now other Veterans are involved. We have 50 in the program and have scheduled our fifth photography class. I am very proud of what we’ve accomplished.”

The women Veterans of the 26th Golden Age Games blazed trails and shattered barriers for women who followed them into the service of our country. They made history and continue to excel at the National Veterans Golden Age Games – you’ve come a long way, baby!

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## Tuesday Weather

Mostly Sunny, high near 87..

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 68.

View photos online at <http://www.flickr.com/VeteransAffairs>

## Medal Ceremony:

Tuesday's Medal Ceremony will be held from 2 to 5 p.m.

## DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT (DME)

Please return all DME to the Parkview Room on the Mezzanine Level of the Renaissance Hotel. The room will be open on Wednesday at 6 a.m. If this is inconvenient for you, you may also turn in your DME equipment in Room 121 at the America's Center. If you have any questions, contact Alvin at 314-226-8233.

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

The Medical Room is located at the America's Center Room 122 and at the Renaissance Grand Hotel Room 1922

Please let your team leader know of any medical concerns. They will help you.

Medical personnel will accompany each group on activities throughout the week.

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# Schedule, Tuesday 5 June

5:30 a.m. – 8 a.m.	Breakfast	Renaissance Grand Hotel – Landmark Ballroom
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Trapshooting Exhibition Event	Winchester Trap and Skeet Facility Morning: Boarding 6:15 a.m., Departs: 6:35 a.m. Start: 8 a.m., Return: 10:30 a.m. Afternoon: Boarding 11:25 a.m., Departs: 11:45 a.m. Start: 12:30 p.m., Return: 3:00 p.m.
8 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Cycling	gateway Motorsports Park Boarding 6:20 a.m., Departs: 6:40 a.m. Start: 8 a.m., Return: Continuous shuttle.
8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.	Alternate Activities	1.) Arch: Boarding 8 a.m. / 12:30 p.m., Departs 8:20 a.m. / 12:50 p.m., Returns: 10:25 a.m. / 3 p.m. 2.) Stadium: Boarding 9 a.m. / 1:30 p.m., Departs 9:20 a.m. / 1:50 p.m., Returns: 10:50 a.m. / 3:20 p.m. 3.) Brewery: Boarding 8:30 a.m. / 1 p.m., Departs 8:50 a.m. / 1:20 p.m., Returns: 11:20 a.m. / 3:50 p.m.
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Lunch	America's Center 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Atrium
3 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Swimming	St. Peters – Rec Plex Boarding 12:40 p.m., Departs: 1 p.m.
3 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Medal Ceremony	America's Center – America's Ballroom
5 p.m. – 7 p.m.	Dinner at the Casino	Renaissance Grand Hotel – Landmark Ballroom
7 p.m. – 9 p.m.	Closing Ceremony	America's Center – America's Ballroom

# Today's Menu – June 5

## **Breakfast**

Renaissance Grand Hotel

Landmark Ballroom

5:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

## **Lunch**

America's Center

2nd Floor Atrium

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

## **Taste of Southern BBQ Buffet**

Smoked Beef Brisket

Grilled Porksteaks and Grilled BBQ Chicken

Baked Beans

Cole Slaw

Potato Salad

Rolls and Corn Bread

Peach Cobbler and Baked Apple Crisp

Fruit and Sugar Free Dessert

Coffee, Decaf, Iced Tea

## **Dinner at the Casino**

Renaissance Grand Hotel

Landmark Ballroom

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Salad

Fried Chicken

Mashed Potatoes and Gravy

Green Beans

Corn on the Cob

Red Velvet Cake - Apple Pie

Rolls and Butter

Coffee, Decaf, Tea, Iced Tea

