



# NATIONAL VETERANS

SUMMER SPORTS CLINIC

September 17, 2012

**FEATURES:**

- From Wheels to Waves
- Soak it Up



U.S. Marine Corps Veteran  
John Dunbar  
Team Nautilus

ALL BUSES WILL DEPART FROM  
MARRIOTT HALL DRIVE



**My HealtheVet** offers Veterans anywhere, anytime internet access to trusted and secure health care information, resources and tools. My HealtheVet is the gateway to web-based tools, empowering Veterans to become active in their health care. With My HealtheVet, users access trusted, secure and informed VA health and benefits information at their convenience. So what are you waiting for? Not only can you monitor health statistics, view schedules and previous appointments, and refill prescriptions, but you can send non-emergency related questions and information to your Patient Aligned Care Team (PACT) through secure messaging. That way, you don't have to wait until your next appointment to get advice! To register:

1. Type [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov) in the address bar on your web browser, and then select enter.
2. On the right-hand side, click the "Register Today!" green button.
3. Complete all the information, review and accept the Terms & Conditions and the Privacy Policy for using the My HealtheVet website.
4. Log into your My HealtheVet account and begin to create your Personal Health Record.
5. Begin using My HealtheVet to better manage your health and access VA health care at your convenience. Bookmark [www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov) so you can keep coming back, quickly and easily!

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

NAUTILUS	PHOENIX
TITAN	VULCAN
POSEIDON	MERCURY
OLYMPUS	CALYPSO
NEPTUNE	APOLLO

7:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.  
**TRACK & FIELD /  
ROWING / ARCHERY**  
USOC

8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.  
**SURFING**  
La Jolla Shores

11:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.  
**SAILING**  
San Diego Marriott Marina

9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.  
**KAYAKING**  
Mission Bay Yacht Club

9:30 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.  
**CYCLING**  
Tideland Park

5:00 – 5:30 P.M.  
**MANDATORY  
TEAM LEADER  
MEETING**  
Santa Rosa Room

7:00 – 8:00 P.M.  
**VETERANS  
WRITING CLASS**  
Author of "Jarhead"  
Anthony Swofford  
Santa Rosa Room

TRANSPORTATION SCHEDULE SSC 2012  
DEPARTING

**Surfing** - La Jolla Shores, Lifeguard Tower #33  
La Jolla Shores, San Diego, CA 92037  
Buses begin loading at **7:00 a.m.** and will depart at **7:30 a.m.**

**Kayaking** - Mission Bay Yacht Club  
1215 El Carmel Place, San Diego, CA 92109  
Buses will begin loading at **8:00 a.m.** and will depart at **8:30 a.m.**

**Track & Field, Rowing, Archery** - U.S. Olympic Training Center  
2800 Olympic Parkway, Chula Vista, CA 91915  
Buses will begin loading at **6:45 a.m.** and will depart at **7:00 a.m.**

**Sailing** - San Diego Bay  
Behind the San Diego Marriott Marquis & Marina  
- dock # 3.  
Begin loading sailboats at **9:15 a.m.** departing at **10:00 a.m.**

**Cycling** - Tidelands Park Coronado  
Mullinex Dr, Coronado, CA 92118  
Buses will begin loading at **8:30 a.m.** and will depart at **9:00 a.m.**

RETURNING

**Surfing** - La Jolla Shores, Lifeguard Tower #33  
La Jolla Shores, San Diego, CA 92037  
Buses will begin loading at **4:00 p.m.** and will depart for hotel at **4:15 p.m.**

**Kayaking** - Mission Bay Yacht Club  
1215 El Carmel Place, San Diego, CA 92109  
Buses will begin loading at **4:00 p.m.** and will depart for hotel at **4:30 p.m.**

**Track & Field, Rowing, Archery**  
- U.S. Olympic Training Center  
2800 Olympic Parkway, Chula Vista, CA 91915  
Buses will begin loading at **4:00 p.m.** and will depart for hotel at **4:15 p.m.**

**Sailing** - San Diego Bay  
Behind the San Diego Marriott Marquis & Marina  
- dock # 3  
Begin loading afternoon sailboats at **4:45 p.m.** returning at **5:00 p.m.**

**Cycling** - Tidelands Park Coronado  
Mullinex Dr, Coronado, CA 92118  
Buses will begin loading at **4:00 p.m.** and will depart for hotel at **4:15 p.m.**



# FROM WHEELS TO WAVES



“I couldn’t walk two blocks.”

**Nafiz Mohammed is a quiet spoken man, fiercely proud of his accomplishments. And he’s accomplished quite a bit.**

The 48-year-old Veteran medically retired from the Navy in 1996 due to migraine headaches and was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS) a year later.

“It put me in a wheelchair for years,” he said. “I couldn’t walk two blocks.”

Mohammed rolled his wheelchair into the Spinal Cord Injury unit

at the Bruce W. Carter VA Medical Center in Miami in 2009. There he met Brooke Westmoreland, an occupational therapist, and his life started to change.

“She wouldn’t let me slack off. Brooke will push you until you fall... then she picks you up,” he said.

MS tends to diminish physical abilities. Mohammed decided to turn the curve around and build up his strength to fight the disease, Westmoreland said.

“We challenged his body,” She explained. “We do a lot of pilates, stretching, and strengthening. I use



a holistic approach, finding out what’s most important to the Veteran and then working on it together,” she added.

Mohammed has a slow-rolling, cowboy-like gate as he walks over to the pilates device. “I call it the torture machine,” he said with a grin. “I’m walking again because of Brooke,” he said.

“Some people take what you have to offer and some leave it. Mr. Mohammed took it. That’s what makes my job rewarding... I made a difference,” explained Westmoreland.

“Brooke told me about the Summer Sports Clinic and I signed up. I want to go and try everything,” Mohammed said. He’s looking forward to

meeting and talking with other Veterans, to share experiences and “...maybe help another Veteran.”

This is Mohammed’s first adaptive sports event. He’s joining five other Veterans from the Miami area attending the Clinic. And, he has already filled out his application for next year’s Winter Sports Clinic.

“My goal for the (Summer) Clinic is to get stronger. It will make me a better person. And it’s going to be a whole lot of fun,” he said.



**Photos and Story by Larry Gilstad**

# SOAK IT UP!

That's the motto for Salt Lake City Veterans plunging full on into this year's Summer Sports Clinic. The experience is helping them to realize disabilities don't have to be a disadvantage.

*"If it takes two hands I'm the first one involved,"*

said Army Veteran David Pyper, who is attending his second straight Summer Sports Clinic. Pyper is missing his right arm from a sawmill accident back in 1980, but for 32 years he's been proving to himself and others that he can do just about anything his two-handed counterparts can.

Pyper found the inspiration to attend the Clinic from his coach, Salt Lake City VA employee Brad Howe. Howe

quickly transformed Pyper from a VA groundskeeper into surfer extraordinaire. He hopes it inspires other Veterans to



take advantage of programs like this. "It's good therapy and I'm doing something worthwhile if it helps other Veterans," Pyper said.

Pyper served in the Army from 1974 to 1976 as a track vehicle mechanic.

Like many Veterans, he struggled to get his life back on track after

being discharged. Alcoholism and unemployment eventually led him to seek help from VA.

**"This is my opportunity to give back some of what VA gave to me."**

He found work, support, and a fresh outlook on life; now he wants to return the



# "THIS IS MY OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE BACK"

favor by representing VA in a positive way. Army Veteran Jim Huber is legally blind, but can paddle with the best of them in a kayak. He says he started simple with VA Salt Lake City's Recreation Therapy Program.

First, it was equine therapy, and that quickly led to the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, downhill racing and cross country skiing.

**"This is my opportunity to do things and not be at home pouting about my disability,"** Hubert said.

Retinitis pigmentosa gradually stole Huber's eyesight over the years and today he only sees shadows and flashes of color. However, this Vietnam-era Veteran is determined to stay active, and is anxious to yell "Surf's up!"

Army Veteran Gordy Ewell was blown up six different times as part

of a mobile operations team looking for improvised explosive devices in Iraq. He has a traumatic brain injury, hearing loss, blindness, and eight fused vertebrae, but he says there's something healing about the water.

**"I thought, 'You all are nuts! I can't walk down the sidewalk let alone surf,' but they talked me into it."**

He has also spent time training with Brad Howe, working mostly on land. When learning to surf, Ewell followed three key steps in order to ensure he would get up on the board and catch a wave.

Ewell says it's the other Veterans that inspire him to keep pushing.

**"There is always an instant bond between Veterans you have never met before, and you miss that after you get out. You are around other**

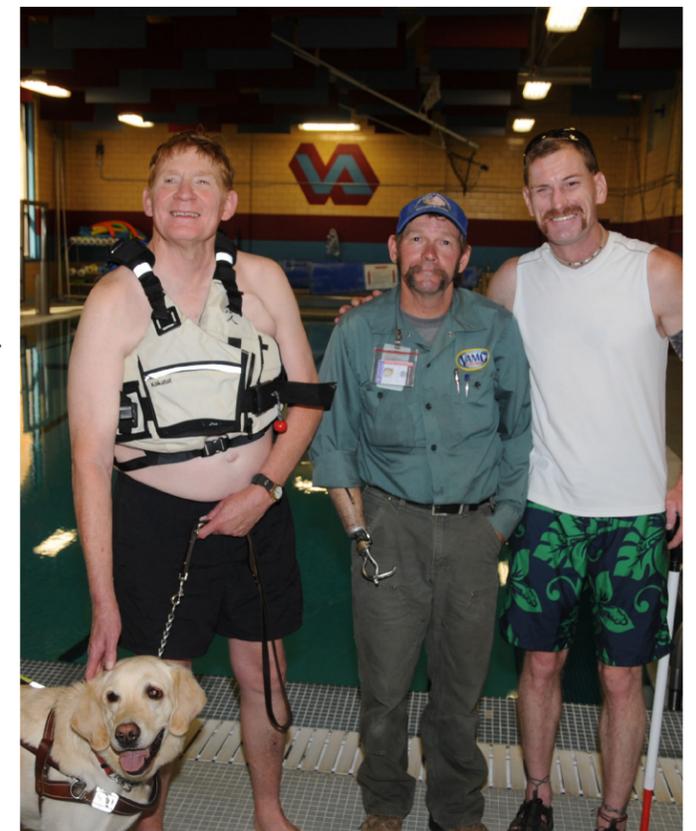
**Vets with similar struggles, but you are all there with a common goal. You are part of an elite group once again and for me there is nothing more therapeutic."**

Ewell says he has always loved the water and now more than ever he says it feels comfortable, safe and spiritually uplifting.

All three of these Veterans train, compete and encourage each

other with the hope of bringing new purpose to their lives and with the promise of inspiring other Veterans around them.

*Photos and story by Jill Atwood*



# QUESTION OF THE DAY

## WHAT EVENT WILL BE YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE THIS WEEK?

We asked Veterans to comment on the week ahead.



"All of it. Probably sailing, but I'm excited about it, too. It looks like so much fun and will be great to work as a team. I mean, I feel like I'm floating already. I think I'm just going to go out and give it my all."

– Jason Poole, Marine  
Team Vulcan



"Track and field, especially because of my joint issues. I only run for my life when I run so this will be quite the challenge."

– Devora Exline, Navy  
Team Neptune



"I have no idea really. Just dabbling in a little bit of everything. Probably surfing because I've never surfed before."

– Ryan Major, Army  
Team Apollo

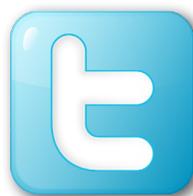


"Rock climbing, because I'm afraid of heights. The last time I did it was in Girl Scouts in the ninth grade. I'm glad those man-made harnesses work."

– Lorrie Lollar-Ray  
Air Force  
Team Mercury



## SOCIAL MEDIA



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