

# Ski Gram Newsletter

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Monday March 28, 2011

## **Adaptive Sports & Recreation Equipment Provided by VA**

This week, you'll get to check out a bunch of adaptive sports and recreational activities ranging from downhill and cross-country skiing to ice hockey, rock climbing, curling, snowmobiling, shooting, scuba and more! Depending on your diagnosis and unique needs, you may be using adaptive equipment to participate in some or all of these events. As examples, you might use a sit-ski and outriggers for skiing or an ice sled for hockey. Every year, we get many questions similar to, "I love this sport! How can I get my own equipment, so I can do this back home?" We'll attempt to answer some questions here and let you know where you can get more information.

First of all, good thing you're a Veteran receiving your care through the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) because availability of adaptive sports and recreation equipment through VHA is unparalleled compared to any other healthcare system. Within VHA, the Prosthetic & Sensory Aids Service (PSAS) provides adaptive equipment that is prescribed by your clinical team (i.e. doctor, PT, OT, Recreation Therapist, etc). Here are a few additional points of clarification:

Equipment provided by VHA must be ADAPTIVE for the individual. As an example, a handcyle or tandem bike may be "adaptive" but a 2-wheel road or mountain bike is not. If you do not require adaptive equipment, we can direct you to some other great resources.

Adaptive equipment requested must be specific to the Veteran's disability related impairments, as determined by the clinical team. The equipment must be prescribed for you.

At minimum, the Veteran must demonstrate consistent exercise/activity to be considered for adaptive sports or recreation equipment. The number of sports/activities supported is not identified; criteria must be met for each activity of interest.

Trial of the adaptive sports equipment being considered is required. VHA cannot provide an item that you saw on the internet or have never used before.

For seated athletes, SEATING interventions must be coordinated to address skin protection, postural support, comfort, joint preservation & performance.

Replacement equipment is provided when existing equipment is worn out or no longer meets Veteran's needs based on a change in medical status. Replacement equipment is NOT provided simply because a new model is available or the Veteran prefers something different.

PSAS does not provide all the non-adaptive accessories needed for a given sport. Examples of items that are the Veteran's responsibility include clothing, shoes and gloves for sports participation, spare/alternative components such as "extra" wheels or skis, tool kits and repair kits, helmets, face masks, goggles, glasses, hydration packs and water bottles.

If you're interested in more information, there are a number of options available this week. Today and Tuesday we will have an information table at meal times and at the vendor information event in the Convention Center Monday @ 6:15 pm. Beyond this week, excellent resources are your clinical team and PSAS staff at your VA facility. Also see the Clinical Practice Recommendations for Recreation & Sports Equipment on our website [www.prosthetics.va.gov](http://www.prosthetics.va.gov).

Come see us and pick up a PSAS water bottle. Have a great week!

## **Goal Ball Clinic Tonight**

Learn how to use your senses during the annual goal ball competition. Goal ball is a team sport that was developed in 1946 for blind athletes to help with the rehabilitation of visually impaired World War II

Veterans. Over time, the sport evolved into a competitive game and became a part of the Paralympics during the 1980 Summer Games.

Athletes compete in teams of three, attempting to throw a ball with bells or electronic tones into the opposing team's goal. Sighted players will be blindfolded so that they can play on equal footing with visually impaired players.

This is a great opportunity to make new friends and experience what it's like to be without sight, while enjoying a great competitive sport. Goal!

Come to the conference center ballroom at 7 p.m. Monday night for the game and clinic. stories, we hope to reach out to other Veterans like you, and perhaps inspire them to sign up next year!

## Local Flair

At the end of the day or during a much-needed break, Snowmass Village features a wide variety of restaurants and shops you may want to explore.

### FOOD

If you are in search of that perfect Cup of Joe in the morning, or need a quick bite to eat, stop by one of these local establishments below. All of which accept the meal vouchers.

**Snowmass Bakery & Café** Snowmass Bakery is a great place in town to pick up your morning pastry. They offer fresh baked cookies, muffins, croissants, cinnamon rolls and bagels. They also have fresh brewed coffee and cappuccinos, lattes or mocha lattes from the espresso bar! For lunch, the bakery has fresh sandwiches, soups and salads.

**Fuel** Fuel serves a wide variety of hot beverages from their fine espresso, tea and smoothie bar. Stop by for gourmet take-out foods and breakfast including sandwiches and fresh fruit. Fuel also serves lunch and early dinner, featuring a unique menu with farm fresh local organic ingredients.

**Pastore's Taste of Philly** Specializing in cheesesteaks, the name says it all. Taste of Philly also has a large variety of Italian foods, pizza, sandwiches, steaks and soups. Skip the morning lines at other establishments and come here for your morning coffee, breakfast sandwiches and breakfast burritos.

**Goodfellows Pizza** If you want a quick slice of delicious pizza then hit up Goodfellows! They have slices, whole pizzas, subs, sammys and salads.

**The Stew Pot** A great place to warm up after a long day on the mountain. The Stew Pot features home cooked meals of old fashioned beef stew, vegetarian chili and dinner specials which include pot roast, lamb shank and short ribs. Bring your friends and family for good spirits and great times.

**Big Hoss Grill** Burgers, Beer and BBQ need we say more? Big Hoss Grill is a family friendly joint that has been the best place to find pub fare in Snowmass Village since 2006. Open until 2 a.m., it's a great place to grab some beers with friends or cure your late night hunger.

**Mountain Dragon** This longtime favorite among Winter Sports Clinic participants offers Chinese cuisine that is too good to pass up. It's the only place in Snowmass Village that serves sushi, and is a great place to hang out and play pool, darts and foosball. If you're too tired to dine-in, Mountain Dragon also offers take out and delivery.

**Brothers' Grille** American food and gorgeous mountain views. Chef Alan Sirull serves classic dishes along with seasonal specialties from their rotisserie grill. Brothers' Grille is the perfect place for families and is conveniently located inside the Silvertree Hotel.

### SHOPPING

Looking for that perfect souvenir to take home? Several local shops feature apparel and gifts to commemorate your trip to beautiful Snowmass Village. Make sure you take advantage of the end of season savings most stores are sure to offer. For retail skis, snowboards and accessories: Aspen Sports, Stein Eriksen, Surefoot, Four-Mountain Kids, Gene Taylor Sports, and Incline Ski Shop.

Other shops you may want to visit are: Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, the North Face Summit Shop, Local Color, Daily Bottle Shop, Grain, Bright and Shiny Things, Cool Dog Sunglasses and Goggles.

Whatever your taste, Snowmass Village offers lots of fun and food to add to your experience at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic.

## **VA Announces Paralympic Sports Program**

In the dawning of a new era for Paralympic sports, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has recently awarded two grants totaling \$7.5 million to the U.S. Olympic Committee for the enhancement of recreation and sporting activities for Veterans with disabilities and disabled members of the Armed Forces.

“Many of our Veterans have experienced traumatic injuries while at the peak of their physical conditioning,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Our partnership with the U.S. Olympic Committee will aid in their recovery by allowing them to engage in therapeutic sporting events and competition right in their own communities.”

Under terms of the grant agreements, funding will be provided to the Olympic Committee’s member organizations, Paralympic sports clubs and Veteran and military organizations nationwide to implement community-based, physical activity programs for disabled Veterans and disabled members of the Armed Forces. Disabled Veterans can locate adaptive sporting events in their communities by visiting the U.S. Paralympics Web site: [www.usparalympics.org](http://www.usparalympics.org).

Public Law 110-389 authorized VA to award grants to the U.S. Olympic Committee to plan, manage and implement an adaptive sports program.

“This support from Veterans Affairs will have far reaching impact in communities around the country,” said Charlie Huebner, Chief of Paralympics, USOC. “We know that sports and physical activity can have a transformative effect on those with a physical disability.”

“These funds will help our community partners to expand and provide greater access to sports programs for injured Veterans, disabled members of the Armed Forces and all living in their local area with a physical disability,” Huebner added.

## **Past Participant Named Director of VA Paralympics Program Office**

Christopher J. Nowak, a disabled Veteran and past National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic participant has been selected as the new director of the VA Paralympics Program Office.

“As a former participant at the Winter Sports Clinic I am very excited to be attending this year as the National Director of VA Paralympics Program,” said Nowak. “And to share with my fellow Veterans the new opportunities that are available for them to continue their rehabilitation through sports.”

Since 1999, Nowak has served as a prosthetics manager for VA Healthcare Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 4, which includes Pennsylvania, Delaware and parts of West Virginia, New Jersey and New York. A 17-year veteran of VA, he previously directed a \$92-million budget and all prosthetics operations for 10 VA medical centers.

Nowak joined the Marine Corps in 1983. His military career ended in 1987, when the then-infantry squad leader lost his right leg to friendly fire during a routine training exercise. He is a passionate champion of sports rehabilitation for wounded soldiers and Veterans. He has developed and co-chaired “First Swing” and “Next Step” golf clinics for amputee Veterans. Nowak has also worked alongside VISN 4 executive leadership to organize an annual football skills clinic and connect newly returned Veterans with the Pittsburgh Steelers franchise. Nowak is also a former member of the USA Amputee Hockey Team. He will be here all this week to meet with fellow Veterans and discuss this new partnership.

## **Sign Up for eBenefits**

This evening only, you can complete your registration for eBenefits here at the Winter Sports Clinic’s Vendor Night! If you bring two official forms of identification (drivers license, military ID card, VA Medical Center card, DD214, birth certificate, etc.) we can sign you up for Level 2 access of eBenefits right

then and there. “In-person proofing” is required for this Level 2 access, so save yourself some time and head over to the Denver VA Regional Office’s information table. Then you won’t have to make a trip to your local VA office. It takes only minutes to sign-up for this amazing tool that helps you and your family access your all of your specific VA benefits information.

The eBenefits web portal is an online resource for tools and benefits related information. The portal serves Wounded Warriors, Veterans, Service Members, their families and their caregivers. EBenefits provides two main services:

- A catalog of links to military and Veteran benefits on other sites.
- A personalized workspace giving quick access to online tools that enable you to apply for benefits, download your DD-214, see your benefits status online, and much more!

The eBenefits portal enables you to take charge of your own life and make sure you’re getting everything you deserve from the VA. Get signed up tonight! Visit [www.ebenefits.va.gov](http://www.ebenefits.va.gov) for more information or scan the image to the right with your smart phone.

## Vendor Night

Make sure you stop by the Conference Center Ballroom tonight, 6:15 - 7:30 p.m. for Sponsor Night. Information and giveaways will be available from various NDVWSC sponsors. Veterans Canteen Service, the U.S. Olympic Committee Paralympics, My HealtheVet, Vet Center, Prudential and more will be on hand. An Apple iPad and a Sharp 52” LED TV will be given away courtesy of the Veterans Canteen Service. Make sure to stop by and visit with the sponsors who help make the Clinic possible.

## Oorah! Calling All Marines

If you’re a Marine, Venga Venga is the place to be tonight! The Cirque Bar, located in the Snowmass Mall, is the location for a private party tonight at 9 p.m. for all Marines and their guests. Favorites Cowgirl Peggy Malone and “Senior” D.I. Dan will make appearances.

Even though it’s every Marines duty to attend the party tonight, there’s an extra incentive in a free t-shirt for the first 60 Marines through the door. The party is also a great opportunity to meet other Marines and keep the “gung ho” spirit alive and is guaranteed to be a lot of fun with a few special surprises in store.

Donations to help cover the costs of the event will be very appreciated. Free drinks and finger foods will be available for as long as the funds hold out. Embroidered vests and jackets will be for sale as well. Contact John Devine at (516) 698-0588 or by email at [jjd1906@aol.com](mailto:jjd1906@aol.com) for more information.

## Prosthetics Post

The Prosthetics Post is the place to get the answers for your most frequently asked prosthetics questions.

Dear PDP: I saw in your last post that VA can provide adaptive sports equipment. Now that I’m here at the WSC, I am totally motivated to get back into shape! Does VA also provide home exercise equipment like stationary bikes, treadmills, weights, and exercise balls? I’m ready for a home gym!

– Heavy Vet

Dear Heavy Vet: Unfortunately, the VA Prosthetics Service does not provide equipment for a home gym so we can’t get you that treadmill you’d like to use to lose some weight. Under special circumstances, adaptive equipment specifically designed for folks with disability may be considered when the Veteran’s needs cannot be addressed through other available options. Your best bet is to make an appointment with your primary care provider at your VA facility to review your exercise goals. An excellent resource is the VA MOVE! Program - they will have an informational booth in the convention center tonight. One idea is to join a local fitness center to access aerobic fitness equipment and weights to get back on track.

## MASSAGE

Complimentary massages are available by scheduling an appointment. Massage is located in the Elbert room in the Silvertree Hotel. Please call (970) 980-7772 for an appointment beginning today at 1 p.m., and then Monday beginning at 9 a.m. until all slots are full.

## WHEELCHAIR AND PROSTHETICS REPAIR

Located at the Host Room in the Conference Center.

Hours are:

6:30 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.

11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

4 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

In between these hours this person (Don) can be reached @ 970-430-9417. Please do not call after 6 p.m. unless it is an emergency. If you need to contact the Prosthetics Repair person (Joe) please call 970-430-9415.

## Medical Room

**For emergencies dial 911**

Medical room phone:

(970) 923-8330

### Location

The medical room is located in the Bedford A conference room, one level below the mall, across the street from the Mountain Chalet Hotel. Stairway access from the mall is next to *Christy Sports*. Wheelchair access is by elevator at the far end of the mall above the bus terminal.

### Transport

Van transport is available from the Silvertree Hotel to the medical room. Find the medical van in the front of the hotel or call the medical room to arrange transportation.

### After Hours

Call the medical room for recorded instructions on how to contact the "on call" medical provider. If unsuccessful, call the hotel operator.

## Menu

### Today's Lunch

Garden Salad with Vinaigrette

Penne Pasta with Marinara Sauce

Bow Tie Pasta with Alfredo Sauce

Meatballs (without sauce)

Garlic Bread & White Bread

### Today's Dinner

Caesar Salad

Beef Brisket with Mashed Potatoes, Gravy

Pork Chops with Applesauce

Chicken Cacciatore

Vegetable/Rice

Rolls with Butter

## Tomorrow's Breakfast

Fresh Sliced Fruit

Oatmeal with Toppings & Skim Milk

White & Wheat Bread/Assorted Muffins

Ham and Breakfast Sausage

Breakfast Potatoes

Omelet Bar, cooked to order with Ham, Cheese, Mushrooms, Peppers, Fresh Tomatoes, Green Onions, and Salsa

Fresh Ground Coffee, Herbal Teas, and

Assorted Chilled Juices

## Transportation Schedule

### Snowmobiling

First Trip            6:45 a.m.    7:15 a.m.

Second Trip        9 a.m.        9:30 a.m.

*Please make sure to load at the correct time for your assigned trip.*

Sled Hockey        7:45 a.m.    8:15 a.m.

Fly Fishing         8:30 a.m.    9 a.m.

### Cross Country Skiing

First Trip           8:20 a.m.    8:45 a.m.

Second Trip        1 p.m.        1:30 p.m.

*Buses will run up and down the mountain throughout the day. The 1 p.m. bus will pick up any participants from*

Hot Springs         9:30 a.m.    10 a.m.

Shooting Sports   10 a.m.       10:30 a.m.

Aspen Gondola     10 a.m.       10:30 a.m.

Curling             12:45 p.m.   1 p.m.

## Event Schedule

6 – 8 a.m.

6 a.m. – 5 p.m.

6:30 – 8:30 a.m.

8 – 11:30 a.m.

8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

9 – 11 a.m.

9 – 11 a.m.

10 a.m. - Noon

11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

11:15 a.m. – 1p.m.

11a.m. – 4 p.m.

12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

1 – 3 p.m.

1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Late Registration: Host Room

Host Room: Conference Center

Breakfast: Conference Center Ballroom

Snowmobiling: T Lazy 7 Ranch

Downhill Skiing: Bull Run, Glissade, Rocky Mountain High

Fly Fishing Float Trip on the Crystal River: Carbondale

Glenwood Springs, Lunch at Elks Lodge, Hot Springs

Cross Country Skiing, Snowshoeing (Top of the Village);

Elks BBQ Lunch at Top of the Village

Scuba Diving: Silvertree Hotel Pool

Sled Hockey: Lewis Ice Arena, Aspen

Rock Climbing: Conference Center Circle

Aspen Trip, Lunch at Elks Lodge, Mountain Gondola Ride

Lunch: Conference Center Ballroom

Shooting Sports/Archery: Basalt Trap Club

Downhill Skiing: Buckskin, Powder Horn, Longshot

Rock Climbing: Conference Center Circle

Curling: Aspen Ice Rink

2 – 3 p.m. Health Net presents “Veterans’ Circle of Care” Aspenwood, Fall Lane Meeting Room Presented by Nancy Mann, Psy.D, Suzanne Jacobs, LCSW, Heather English, LCSW

2 – 4 p.m. Scuba Diving: Silvertree Hotel Pool

4:15 – 5 p.m. Ski Instructor Meeting: Eldorado Room, Silvertree Hotel

4:30 p.m. Team Leader Meeting: Stone Bridge Inn, Council Meeting Room

4:30 – 5:45 p.m. Dinner: Conference Center Ballroom

5 p.m. Coaches’ Meeting: Max Park Room, Wildwood Hotel

5 - 6:30 p.m. CEU Educational Workshop: “Challenges of Disability Sports Medicine” Bedford Ballroom on Daly Lane (the Medical Room) Presented by, Dr. Kenneth Lee

6 – 8 p.m. Military Order of the Purple Heart Gathering: Cabaret Room, Silvertree Hotel, lower level Hosted by Paul Blais

6 :15 – 7:30 p.m. Vendor Night – Conference Center Ballroom, Information

7:30 – 9 p.m. CEU Educational Workshop: “The Power and Pleasure of Persistence” Aspenwood, Fall Lane Meeting Room Presented by, Sophia Hurley, MSPT and Elaine Stein, Psy.D.

8 – 9:45 p.m. Goal Ball: Conference Center Ballroom