

Summit Newsletter

Sunday Issue, March 25, 2012

Welcome from the Director

Welcome to Snowmass! On behalf of myself and the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic steering committee, it is a privilege and honor for all of us to have you here this week.

As a team we have prepared what we hope to be one of the best weeks you experience this year in your life. It will be time of new experiences, challenges, and a vision of new possibilities. We hope you take away a new lease on life and a desire to seek out all the opportunities available to you in your local community when you return home. Continue to pursue your dreams and desires and all the adventures you felt you could no longer obtain. We will do whatever we can to make sure this experience meets or exceeds your expectations.

I think you will find the camaraderie at the Clinic second to none. Each year we grow into a bigger family, and I personally feel very blessed to have the opportunity to be a part of this family and hope all of you leave Snowmass feeling the same way. For those of you returning, I have no doubt you will embrace all of our new Veterans and commit to making sure they have a remarkable week.

This is a week of discovery for us all, but more importantly this is your week to excel, to challenge yourself and push into uncharted territory; anything is possible!

As I welcome you I cannot help but acknowledge the commitment of the two presenters of this adaptive program the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Disabled American Veterans, as well as the Snowmass Village community and the sponsors, staff and volunteers that truly are committed to making sure this is the best possible rehabilitative program you attend.

Thank you all for participating; stay strong, be determined, overcome the adversities you will encounter this week and live your life to the fullest. This is your time, take advantage of the opportunities!

Sincerely,

Teresa Parks,
National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, Director

Opening Ceremonies

The 26th National Veterans Winter Sports Clinic officially kicks off during Opening Ceremonies.

Join everyone at 6:30 p.m., in the Conference Center Ballroom. Tonight's ceremonies will give you a chance to welcome new participants and hear from some of VA and DAV's senior leadership who are excited to be with us this week. Special guests include Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shineski as our keynote speaker, and Disabled American Veterans National Commander, Donald Samuels.

After the ceremony, participants will meet with their team leaders and get to know their fellow team members a little better. You will also be provided with additional directions and instructions to help you in the upcoming week.

Welcome to the Clinic! This week will be the experience of a lifetime.

Ties that Bind

There is a brotherhood among Veterans that crosses generations, branches of service, race and religion. It's a brotherhood born in the shared experience of boot camp, deployment and separation from family, friends and loved ones. In a sense, the brotherhood becomes your family while in uniform.

Here in Snowmass Village this week, new brotherhoods will be forged between Veterans who share similar experiences — both in uniform and in adjusting to life after injury, illness or disease. These bonds can extend beyond the one-week here on the mountain and can be a source of encouragement and accountability for Veterans as they re-discover their potential.

A Jan. 17, 2012, post to the VA blog Vantage Point written by military moms Cheryl Lynch and Rosie Babin addressed the ties that bind their son's Alan Babin and Chris Lynch – both served with the Army's 82 Airborne Division and both are here this week at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic.

But they also addressed the bonds that unite families of injured Veterans in the following excerpt:

“As family members, we are part of a very small population of Americans — parents caring for their brain injured service member, who may need assistance for the rest of their lives. However, each year at the Winter Sports Clinic, we have the privilege of cheering our sons on as they continue to beat the odds by skiing, rock-climbing, snowmobiling and scuba diving surrounded by the best instructors and volunteers a family could wish for.

The week is one which is filled not just with activities and challenges for the Veterans, but time for respite, reflection, healing and camaraderie for all bound by the ties of family and patriotism. The true “Miracles on the Mountainside” that happen each year at the Winter Sports Clinic reminds all of us that anything is possible with the right support,” they wrote.

That is why the Clinic organizers have gone to such lengths to create an atmosphere that promotes healing — both physically and emotionally — for Veterans as well as their caregivers and loved ones.

So as you take time this week to learn a new sport, or brush up on your skills, be sure to seize the moment and get to know the men and women here with you in Snowmass. Some may be at the beginning of their journey, while others have had their share of spills on the mountainside. Sharing and learning from one another can be a valuable part of the healing process.

Veterans who are experiencing physical or emotional difficulties while in Snowmass should contact the Medical Team for assistance.

Alternate Activities

You have traveled across the country to be part of Miracles on a Mountainside and these miracles happen all over the Winter Sports Clinic. The downhill skiing is awesome and well worth the trip here, but there are a wide variety of Alternate Activities you can also participate in this week.

The Alternate Activities:

Kayaking - New to the Clinic this year, Kayaking will be hosted each day at the pool at Wildwood Lodge. Kayaking is a great sport and something that can be done almost anywhere in the country. Take the opportunity to learn this new skill.

Scuba Diving - Key West meets Snowmass every year at the Silvertree Hotel pool. How can you beat floating and diving in warm water, the sun shining down on you and music to keep you going? Just make sure you watch out for sharks!

Cross Country Skiing/Snowshoeing - A beautiful and invigorating way to experience the Rocky Mountains. This event occurs at the Top of the Village each day with an Elks Lodge lunch barbeque. Catch a VA shuttle at the convention center or take the Snowmass bus to the top.

Sled Hockey - You can't have winter sports without including Sled Hockey. Keep your eyes on the puck and be ready for some fast-paced action. Stand up hockey rules played from a sled position. This event occurs in the Lewis Ice Arena in Aspen. You will work up a sweat playing ice hockey, so please bring an extra shirt to change into after the game.

Curling - This also takes place at the Aspen Ice Arena each afternoon. This is your chance to find out what Curling is all about. When you are done you will have hands on knowledge of the 42-pound granite stone, a broom and a bull's-eye.

Glenwood Springs with lunch at Elks Lodge - Take a dip in the geothermically heated water. Four quarters will get you a great water massage at the Hot Springs Pool in Glenwood Springs, a treat you shouldn't miss. Bring a couple more quarters and you can leave your belongings in a secured locker and they will stay dry and warm. Make sure you have your swimwear with you; towels will be provided.

Shooting Sports/Archery - The Basalt Trap Club will host the event; you can pursue your shooting interests with a bow or rifle. All skill levels are welcome.

Gondola Trip to Aspen - Your first stop is lunch at Elks Lodge, then you jump into the Snow Cat, transfer into the Gondola and then up the mountain you go. Veterans need to be able to independently transfer for this event. Bring your camera and get ready for some beautiful scenery.

Rock Climbing - Each day in the Conference Center Circle you can test your climbing skills. It looks pretty simple until you start your ascent. Ring the bell loudly when you get to the top.

Snowmobiling - The T Lazy Ranch is the host for this popular activity. Hold on tight and get ready to feel the wind in your face as you open up the throttle.

Veterans can register for two alternative activities at the beginning of the week. This gives all Veterans an opportunity to sign up. If you find yourself with extra time later in the week you check with the alternative activities desk to see if there are any empty seats. They can also put Veterans, coaches and family members on the waiting list to fill in cancellations.

Load times are published to help coordinate transportation and get Veterans to their event in time. Once all Veterans are loaded the bus will leave. We don't want to leave any one behind, so please be at the bus at the beginning of the load time so you don't miss out.

Any questions you have about these events can be answered at the alternate activities desk Monday through Thursday in the conference center.

A Few Tips:

Dress Accordingly - The weather changes rapidly in the mountains. It could be sunny and 55 degrees one minute and then cloudy and 30 degrees the next. You have to be ready for anything, so make sure you stay comfortable, dry and warm.

Space permitting - Please show up for an event if you are scheduled for it. If you know you cannot make it please alert the staff at the alternate activities desk.

Family and Friends - The event staff is always try to accommodate family and friends, but it is dependent on space. Veterans attending the Clinic are always the first priority.

Please tell Sponsors "Thank you" - You might be having a conversation with a representative of a company that is one of our Winter Sports Clinic Sponsors. We value all of the Sponsors, their support is critical to the success of the Winter Sports Clinic.

Taste of Snowmass

By now you know the ski conditions and views at Snowmass Village are among the best in the world. But one of the best-kept secrets of Snowmass Village is the world-class cuisine and award-winning chefs featured at the local restaurants. For a small Colorado resort town, this place can really pump out some incredible food, from mouth-watering pizza and juicy steaks to sushi, stews, seafood, artisan salads – and everything in between!

Today, from 3:30–5:30 p.m. on the Snowmass Village mall (lower level), you can try a little bit of everything during the 2012 Taste of Snowmass. Each year at this popular event, the Village opens its hearts and its kitchens to welcome the Veterans and their families, staff, coaches, instructors and volunteers taking part in the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic.

The delectable aromas will fill the air, and the food will delight your taste buds with a multitude of fantastic flavors. Come and enjoy some of the wonderful foods highlighted at today's event. Vouchers are offered for two entrees and a dessert, which serve as your dinner meal before the Opening Ceremonies begin at 6:30 p.m. So enjoy the sights, sounds, smells and flavors of Snowmass Village, decide which places you want to visit again later on this week – and be sure to browse the local shops while you're there. Didn't get to try everything you wanted? Don't worry...a second Taste of Snowmass will take place at lunch time on Friday!

The End of Hometown News & How to Get Photos

Hometown News is a thing of the past, but now you can get better photos, and get them faster. Every day, the public affairs team will load photos onto an HP Touchscreen computer located in the conference center lobby. You can use that computer to search for photos and email them to yourself.

Want to use your own computer? Get new photos every day on VA's Flickr account. Find it by clicking the Flickr icon on the www.va.gov main page, then search for Winter Sports Clinic sets.

And don't forget to follow us on Twitter at @VAadaptiveSport, and share your own photos and stories with one another by using the hashtag #NDVWSC.

Connect with the Clinic

Be a part of the conversation!

There's a new way to keep in touch and share information about the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic and it's called a hashtag. A hashtag allows you to post your own photos, videos, stories and experiences about the Winter Sports Clinic on Twitter! All you have to do is create a Twitter account, and then write a post about the Clinic with #NDVWSC at the end. After you post you can click on #NDVWSC to see what everyone is saying about the Clinic. Post your experience for everyone to see, and follow @VAadaptivesport for great updates and fun photos. Stop by the media center if you have any questions or need help!

To sign up go to: <http://www.twitter.com>

Have a smartphone?

Then keep an eye out for this symbol in the newsletter.

It's called a QR, or "quick response code".

These codes will take you to exclusive Winter Sports Clinic videos created throughout the week, as well as other important links.

Search your Android Marketplace, or App Store to download one of the free apps listed below, and then use the app to scan these codes wherever you see them.

Hint: Scan the code above to see where it takes you!

QR Code Scanner Apps

iphone, Blackberry and Palm: Neo Reader
<http://getneoreader.com>

Windows Phone:
Microsoft Tag
<http://tag.microsoft.com>

Android:
Barcode Scanner

Go to Android Marketplace and search for "Barcode Scanner"

The Week Ahead

When you attend the Winter Sports Clinic you rarely find yourself saying "What can I do next?" In between world class downhill skiing, kayaking, scuba diving, cross country-skiing and so many other events every day can be an exhilarating experience. At the Winter Sports Clinic, there is always a sense of energy and excitement. That level of energy continues beyond the daytime; we keep you shaking at night too.

There will be entertainment on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights in the Conference Center Ballroom. Each night the music will get rolling around 8 p.m. and will keep the beat going until 11 p.m.

On Tuesday we have the pleasure of a hearing a band named Trez Equis, they feature the songs of ZZ Top. It won't take the crowd long to get moving to the sounds "La Grange," "Tush," "Sharp Dressed Man," "Cheap Sunglasses" and so many more. Can hear the guitar riffs in your head yet?

Wednesday brings us a piece of classic rock, this time it is Mark Farner, formerly of Grand Funk Railroad. Farner is the songwriter, guitarist and the unmistakable voice that powered Grand Funk Railroad to 12 platinum and 15 gold albums with hits like "Some Kind of Wonderful," "I'm Your Captain," "The Loco-Motion" and of course "We're an American Band."

The band Jakarta will be packing the dance floor on Thursday. For the past 35 years, Isaac Points has been creating the groove that gets people on the dance floor. Isaac has opened for Stanley Clark and Herbie Hancock, played bass with Chuck Berry and Tony Bennett and performed USO tours with Joe Clemons. Issac joined up with Jakarta many years ago and they have bringing it ever since.

How about shaking hands with former UFC Middle Weight Champion and IFC Light Heavyweight Champion Rich "Ace" Franklin? Ace indicates his favorite fighting move is the one that ends the fight. He was a Coach on Season 11 of the Spike TV Show "Ultimate Fighter."

Erik Stolhanske overcame being born without a fibula, has utilized a prosthetic leg for many years and has become one of Hollywood's most popular comedians. He surprised many of his fans with his appearance in the popular exercise program "P90X." Stolhanske has written, produced and starred in all of the comedy troop "Broken Lizards" films - including the hit comedies "Super Troopers" and "Beerfest." He has also appeared in popular HBO sitcoms "Curb Your Enthusiasm" and "Six Feet Under."

Anthony Swofford served in a U.S. Marine Corps surveillance and target acquisition/scout-sniper platoon during the Gulf War. After the war, Swofford's acclaimed 2003 memoir "Jarhead" documents his time spent in Saudi Arabia. The book led to a movie of the same title, widely released in 2005. Swofford will be teaching a creative writing workshop Wednesday, from 6-7:30 p.m., in the Aspenwood Fall Lane meeting room.

Former American League Umpire Larry Barnett will also be here this week. Barnett is well known among Veterans in VA Medical Center's across the country thanks to his visits sponsored by the Disabled American Veterans.

Don't forget to check the newsletter every day and enjoy every minute of your week as it passes by so quickly.

Prosthetic Daily

Dear PDP:

This is my first Winter Sports Clinic and I can't wait to ski, play sled hockey, go snowmobiling and scuba diving! I heard the VA provides equipment for recreation and sports. Where do I sign up?

Signed - Ready to Rip

Dear RTR: Welcome to the WSC! Yes, you can work with your clinical team and the prosthetics service at your local VA medical center to pursue adaptive sport and recreation equipment. The key word is "adaptive." The VA can provide equipment that specifically compensates for your physical disability...like a mono-ski, handcycle, tennis wheelchair, etc. There is a list of specific eligibility criteria that you must meet to receive equipment. The best place to start is to talk to your VA doctor who can refer you to professionals who can help with specialized equipment. Your local prosthetics service is also great resource. For more information visit www.prosthetics.va.gov.

Schedule for Sunday, March 25

- 8:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. Registration Team Leaders, Alternate Activities, Medical, Transportation, Tech Team, Communications, Ski Instructors & Volunteers: Host Room Conference Center
- 8:00 a.m. Registration Sponsors: Campground Room, Wildwood Hotel
- 8:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Registration Participant: Conference Center Ballroom
- 8:30 a.m.–9:30 a.m. Mandatory Downhill Ski Instructor Safety Refresher Course: Eldorado Room in the Silvertree Hotel (Must attend Saturday or Sunday Session)
- 9:00 a.m. Mandatory Transportation Team Meeting: Max Park
- 9:45 a.m.–12:00 p.m. Mandatory Downhill Instructor Orientation Clinics: Eldorado Room, Silvertree Hotel
- 9:00 a.m. Cross Country Orientation Clinic: Top of the Village Lobby
- 12:45 p.m.–1:45 p.m. Mandatory Downhill Ski Instructor Safety Refresher Course: Eldorado Room in the Silvertree Hotel (Must attend Saturday or Sunday Session)
- 2:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m. Downhill Instructor Orientation Clinics: Eldorado Room, Silvertree Hotel
- 3:00 p.m. Boot loader Mandatory Meeting: Silvertree Hotel Lobby
- 3:00 p.m. Tech Team Mandatory Meeting: Equipment Truck
- 3:00 p.m. Team Meetings: See Listing at Bottom of Schedule
- 3:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m. Taste of Snowmass: Snowmass Village Mall
- 5:30 p.m. Transportation Meeting: Janss Room 2nd Floor Conference Center
- 6:30 p.m. Opening Ceremonies: Conference Center Ballroom
- 7:30 p.m. Ski Instructor Mandatory Meeting: Eldorado Room, Silver Tree Hotel – Following the regular scheduled meeting there will be a brief Mandatory 1st Time Instructors Orientation for First Timers Only
- 8:00 p.m. Team Meetings: See Listing at Bottom of Schedule

Odds and Ends

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 at 970-430-9417. Please do not call after 6 p.m. unless it is an emergency. If you need to contact Prosthetics Repair 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. successful, call the hotel operator.

TRANSPORTATION

Event	Load
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Snowmobiling

First Trip	7:00 a.m.
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Second Trip	9:00 a.m.
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Please make sure to load at the correct time for your assigned trip.

Sled Hockey	7:45 a.m.
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Cross Country Skiing

First Trip	8:20 a.m.
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Second Trip	1:00 p.m.
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Buses will run up and down the mountain throughout the day. The 1 p.m. bus will also pick up any participants from the first trip who wish to return to the Conference Center. All remaining participants will be picked up at 3 p.m.

Hot Springs	9:30 a.m.
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Shooting Sports	10:00 a.m.
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Aspen Gondola	10:00 a.m.
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Curling	12:45 p.m.
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