

*New Mexico Senior Olympics*

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THE LAS CRUCES  
**Bulletin**



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## Welcome to Las Cruces

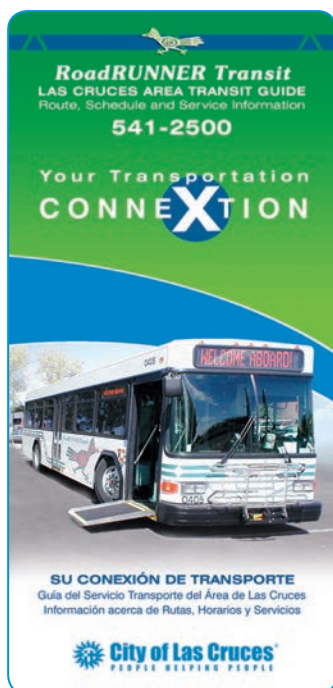
Dear Senior Olympians,

I am very pleased to welcome you to our city. Las Cruces is honored to once again host the 2009 Senior Olympics and the City of Las Cruces is proud to be an official sponsor. This is a wonderful achievement for each of you. I hope you enjoy your stay and visit the many beautiful attractions our city has

to offer. Las Cruces is full of rich history and culture, from the fantastic food to the amazing view of our Organ Mountains. The Convention and Visitors Bureau is a great place for you to find the best places to visit. Relax at any of our beautiful parks and on Sunday evenings at 7pm, we have our free Music in the Park series with local, regional and national acts. The City of Las Cruces wishes you the best of luck on your games and we hope to see you again soon!

– Mayor Ken D. Miyagishima

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Join local vendors and area residents at the Farmers and Crafts Market every Wednesday and Saturday from 8:00 am until 12:30 pm in the Las Cruces Downtown Mall. Approximately 200 vendors sell handmade goods.

Since 1971, the Farmers and Crafts Market has provided a forum for local talent to display and sell their prized creations. Vendors sell a variety of goods including baked delicacies, garden grown produce, jewelry and crafts. Everything sold at the market is locally made or grown by the person selling it. This makes it the ideal place to pick up photographs, pottery, jewelry and décor with authentic Las Cruces character.



## City of Las Cruces Museum System

The City of Las Cruces Museum System consists of the Branigan Cultural Center, the Las Cruces Museum of Art, the Las Cruces Museum of Natural History and the Las Cruces Railroad Museum.



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# Board of Directors



Board members from left: Ceci Acosta, Dick Griffith, LoriAnn Keith, Bill Mitchell, Karin Roth, Dorothy Terrazas, Joe Quintana, Gloria Analla, Dee Harris, Vernon Dyer, Joanne Sprenger and June Decker.

## THE LAS CRUCES Bulletin

### President

Jaki McCollum

### Publisher

David E. McCollum

### Editor

Bethany Conway

### Design

Rachel Courtney,  
production manager  
Theresa Montoya Basaldua,  
art director  
Marissa Barrio  
Ray Gonzalez

### Contributors

Todd G. Dickson  
Jenna Frosch  
Jim Hilley  
John Keith  
Kristine Sandrick  
Beth Sitzler  
Marvin Tessneer  
Gabe Vasquez

### Advertising

Claire Frohs, manager  
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# From the President

Dear Senior Olympians,

It is my privilege to welcome you to the campus of New Mexico State University for the 31st annual New Mexico Senior Olympics.

It doesn't matter if it's the balloon popping relay or the triathlon, we are proud of you for your commitment to lead a healthy, active lifestyle.

The volunteers, sponsors, staff and board of directors are here to make this the best Olympics possible, and your suggestions for improvement are always welcome. Please, display good sportsmanship while participating in the games. Good luck to each one of you in your chosen events.

To those of you participating in nationals in August, good luck and make New Mexico proud!

Sincerely,

*Dick Griffith*

Dick Griffith  
Board Chairman

# From the Mayor

Dear Senior Olympians,

Welcome to Las Cruces. This year we welcome you again to our fair city for your annual state games. We are pleased to be one of the official sponsors for the 2009 games. We remember fondly the excitement generated last year with your activities, highlighted by the ceremonies at the New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum. I congratulate each of you on your personal achievement and desire to participate in healthy, competitive physical activity, and I wish you the best of luck in the games.

While you are here, I invite you to explore our multi-cultural and multi-faceted city. Stop by our Convention & Visitors Bureau for information on Las Cruces and the surrounding area and explore our historic neighborhoods. You can visit the Las Cruces Downtown Farmers and Crafts Market on Wednesday and Saturday mornings, and while you are Downtown, drop in our Branigan Cultural Center for a visit to the history exhibit there. I hope you'll take a look at the exciting construction projects going up in the Downtown area. One is the new City Hall and also a new Federal Courthouse. I'm sure you will enjoy visiting our various businesses, as well as our beautiful parks and recreational facilities.

The City of Las Cruces wishes to thank all participants, sponsors, event managers, volunteers and city staff who are helping make this year's games a success. We also wish to thank New Mexico Senior Olympics Inc. for bringing this event back to Las Cruces. We hope you will all join us in a heartfelt thank you as you visit with all the people who make the games a reality.

Sincerely,

*Ken D. Miyagishima*

Ken D. Miyagishima  
Mayor



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# What to do in Las Cruces

## Entertainment around every corner By Beth Sitzler

Las Cruces has a wide range of unique museums, galleries, shops, restaurants and events that will satisfy anyone's sense of adventure.

Even though game participants will be busy competing, everyone should take time out to explore the City of the Crosses and all it has to offer.

### New Mexico State University

Not only is the New Mexico State University campus the destination for the Summer Games, it is also home to various arts and recreation activities.

Along with a professional theater and 18-hole golf course, NMSU also has two art galleries. The Corbett Center Art Gallery, located on the second floor of the Corbett Center Student Union, features art exhibitions by undergraduate and graduate students. Gallery hours are 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. The University Art Gallery, located in D.W. Williams Hall, is the largest visual arts facility in southern New Mexico and showcases regional art. The gallery is open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and noon to 4 p.m. Saturday.

As for museums, the University Museum showcases the Southwest and the border region's history, culture and

natural science. It is located in Kent Hall and is open from noon to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

NMSU is also home to the Zuhl Collection, which features numerous pieces of petrified wood, fossils and minerals. The collection is located in both the NMSU Alumni and Visitors Center, open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and the Zuhl Library.

### Downtown Las Cruces

Downtown Las Cruces has a variety of shops, restaurants, theaters, museums and activities for guests to enjoy. One of the most popular events is the Downtown Farmers & Crafts Market, held from 8 a.m. to noon every Wednesday and Saturday. With approximately 230 local vendors participating, guests can pick up fresh produce, arts and crafts and a variety of other items.

"(The market) is a place where you can find unique gifts and see musicians and performances," said Olivia Hennessey, Downtown events coordinator, who described the area as "the heart of the city."

### Old Mesilla

Jewelry, chile shops, antique stores, art galleries, clothing stores, old cantinas, restaurants, theaters and a 100-year-old church can be found in Old Mesilla, a place once visited by

well-known outlaw Billy the Kid.

"(Mesilla) is a step back in time. It's still that charming little community it's always been," said Kathleen Foreman, president of the Old Mesilla Association and co-owner of Josefin's Old Gate Café. "And now there is such a nice variety of things to do here."

Whether it's shopping, eating or taking in the sights, visitors will have fun while learning the area's history.

### The New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum

The only state museum in Las Cruces, under the direction of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, offers many activities for families. The 90,000-square-foot main building, built in May 1996, sits on 47 acres and features live animals, an outdoor amphitheater and permanent and changing exhibits and galleries.

"New Mexico's agricultural history is very unique and long, going back about 3,000 years," said Craig Massey, communications manager for the museum. "We're not a stagnant museum. We're very hands on, especially for children."

Activities include milking, blacksmithing, sewing, weaving and quilting demonstrations as well as various shows and classes for visitors of all ages.

The museum is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven days a week. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors age 60 and older and \$2 for children ages 5 to 17.

### White Sands National Monument

Found approximately 60 miles east of Las Cruces, north of U.S. Highway 70 on the way to Alamogordo, the 275 square miles

of white gypsum sand dunes are the largest in the world.

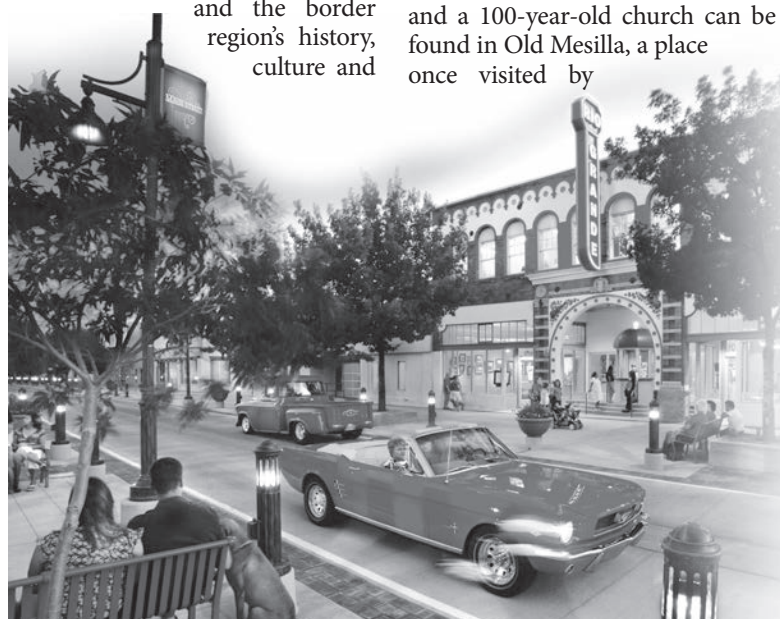
An eight-mile scenic drive and hiking trails let guests explore the area. Guests can also cook out with provided grills, sled down the dunes and participate in park events, such as the Sunset Stroll, a one-hour, ranger-guided walk.

"White Sands is a unique area, there is no place like it," said John Mangimeli, chief of interpretation for the park. "It's the most beautiful place in the world."

There is an entrance fee of \$3 for adults 16 years and older. Mangimeli said guests should call ahead for hours of operation because the park occasionally closes during missile testing.

## Thunder on the Rio Grande Air Show

The first annual Thunder on the Rio Grande Airshow will take place Saturday and Sunday, May 30 and 31, at the Las Cruces International Airport. Tickets cost between \$4 and \$15 and can be purchased by calling 800-745-3000.



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# Make a difference with the Senior Olympics

## A year of firsts at the 31st annual summer games By Beth Sitzler

The benefits of staying active are the focus of the 31st New Mexico Senior Olympics (NMSO) Summer Games, held Wednesday, May 27 through Saturday, May 30.

This year's theme, "Making a difference," celebrates how the Senior Olympics makes a difference in the lives of its participants, staff and volunteers.

"It's not making a difference with money, but with your own physical and mental ability," said Vernon Dyer, vice chair of the NMSO board of directors. "We're trying to keep people healthy and active."

Dyer said there are medical benefits to staying active, explaining that one participant from Santa Fe who has Parkinson's disease has seen improvements in his health since joining the track competition.

Dyer, an active participant in the

1500-meter and 5K race walk and triathlon, also credited his staying active as a reason for his ability to remain healthy. At the age of 66, Dyer's doctor told him he had the heart of a 19-year-old during his last physical.

"The most gratifying part is seniors telling you that (the Senior Olympics) is everything to them," said Ceci Acosta, NMSO executive director. "They look forward to our event. Some of them plan vacations around our game dates."

The Senior Olympics, which Acosta said were conceived in Las Cruces, are being held on the New Mexico State University campus, much to the delight of several participants.

"All the participants really like coming to Las Cruces," said Dick Griffith, chair of the NMSO

Board of Directors.

"We appreciate all the hospitality from the city and NMSU."

"The NMSU campus has everything we need right there, so we don't have to bus people all over the city," Dyer added.

While this isn't the first year the Senior Olympics have been held at NMSU, this is a year of firsts for the games.

Along with being held in May instead of July, this will be the

*Continued on following page*



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Continued from previous page

first year the Senior Olympics have been open to all New Mexico residents ages 50 and over as well as the first time they are offering on-line registration.

Griffith said every other year is a qualifying year for the National Senior Olympics, making this a non-qualifying year since the nationals will be held in the San Francisco Bay area Aug. 1 through 15.

Because the national competition is being held in August, the same month the state competition is usually held, Dyer said, the Senior Olympics were moved to May, which cuts into the time allotted for the county games.

"Usually (NMSO competitors) have to place at the county games to go to state," he said. "This is a one-time thing. We're trying to see if it works." He added that if things go well they might continue this format every year the national competition is held.

Along with being open to more participants, the NMSO office hopes online registration will encourage more participation in the Senior Olympics.

"We had 150 people at the first state games in Albuquerque," Acosta said. "Last year we saw 1,230 at our games."

Another exciting event for competitors is the appearance of former Cincinnati Reds catcher and Major League Baseball Hall of Famer Johnny Bench, who will speak during the Senior Olympics dinner banquet at 6 p.m. Saturday, May 30, at the Ramada Palms de Las Cruces.

With more than 26 events in which to participate, Acosta said there is "something for everybody."

"It's fun to compete with your peers and it's fun to be there to support your peers. It's overall a healthy thing to do," she said.

The goal of the games, said Griffith, is to keep people active and healthy and to hopefully improve the participants' quality of life.

Along with maintaining one's physical health, Dyer said NMSO is a great social program, giving participants the opportunity to make friends and travel.

"It really makes a difference," he said. "As long as you're active, you'll be fine."

After all, the NMSO's motto is "You don't stop playing because you grow old, you grow old because you stop playing."

The games officially begin Wednesday, May 27, with the opening ceremony planned for 7 p.m. that night at the NMSU Activity Center.

# Registration now just a click away

## Electronic registration makes signing up quick and easy

Online registration has hit the games. Qualified participants can now register for the New Mexico Senior Olympics Summer Games on the web at [www.nmseniorolympics.org](http://www.nmseniorolympics.org).

This year is the first that the service has been incorporated, which makes registration fast and convenient for all athletes.

Although registration is closed for the 2009 summer games, seniors can log onto the NMSO website next year to find all the information they need regarding the schedule of events and requirements to participate, and can immediately sign up for the event of their choice by clicking on the registration link on the main page.

Simply follow the instructions on the registration page to access

your existing account or to create a new account. Click on the "Games Registration" link at the top of the next page, scroll down to find the "Senior Olympics Summer Games" link and click on the button labeled "Register Now." This will take you to the list of events, times and venues available for the summer games. Scroll to the bottom of the page and register for the appropriate events.

The staff at NMSO will receive participants' registration information instantly and be processed as quickly as possible.

Also available online at [www.nmseniorolympics.org](http://www.nmseniorolympics.org) are electronic versions of the 2009 State Game Rules, the 2009 Senior Olympics Summer Games Schedule of Events and the 2009

Senior Olympics Summer Games Volunteer Form.

Other features available on the website are the 2007 and 2008 summer games results, NMSO's official newsletter "The Senior Flame" and a schedule of Senior Trek to Healthy Fitness events, which catalogues the year-round fitness programs offered by the NMSO.

This year's NMSO banquet in Las Cruces will feature former Cincinnati Red and Major League Baseball Hall of Famer Johnny Bench. Pre-order tickets online or purchase at athlete check-in.

For more information on online registration or creating or accessing your account, contact NMSO's main office in Roswell at 575-623-5777 or at [nmso@nmseniorolympics.org](mailto:nmso@nmseniorolympics.org).

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# Games bring guests to Las Cruces

## Revenue increase anticipated for local businesses By Kristine Sandrick

The Las Cruces hospitality industry can anticipate a quarter of a million dollars in revenue as a result of the games being held in town again this year, said Chris Faivre, media/publications manager for the Las Cruces Convention & Visitors Bureau.

"This definitely is one of the larger events in town," Faivre said.

This is the fourth consecutive year the state games have been held in Las Cruces, and the committee hopes to hold it here

again next year.

While managers at both the Ramada Palms de Las Cruces and Days Inn & Suites Mesilla Valley Hotel & Conference Center reported that reservations were coming in slowly, Stephanie Nebhan, New Mexico Senior Olympics Inc. event co-coordinator said she anticipates a great turnout.

She said the anticipated increase is due to the games being open to everyone 50 and over, and the fact that prequalification was not required for participation in

this event.

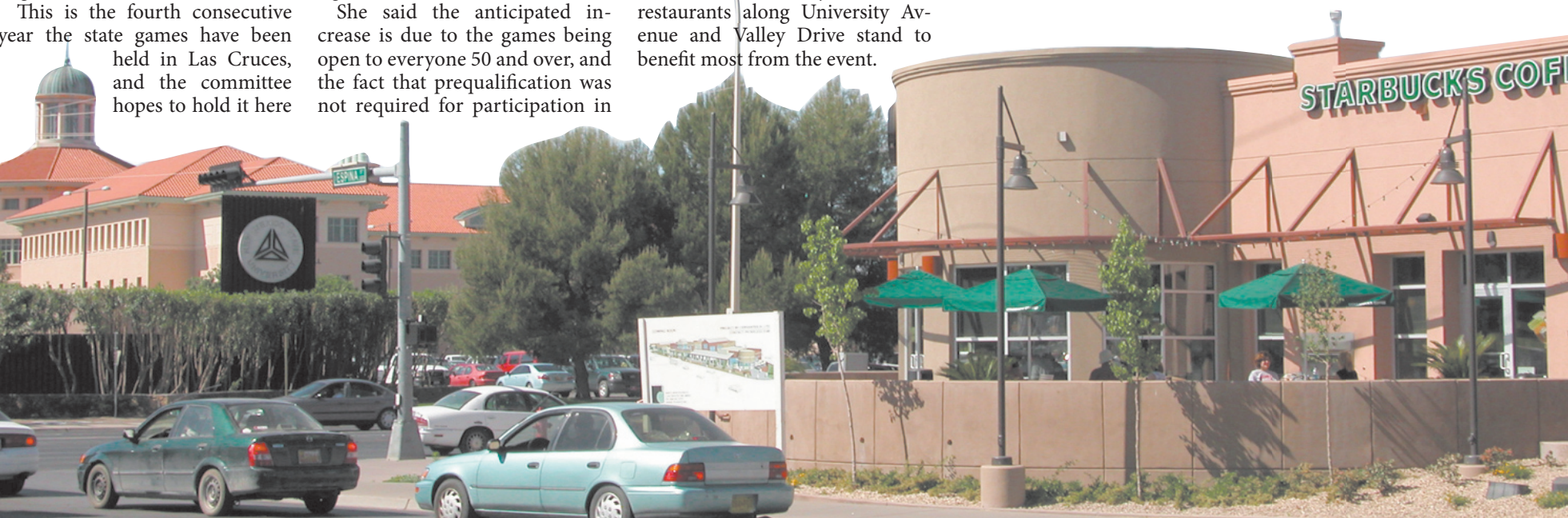
Nebhan said of the 1,230 participants last year, 300 stayed in the dorm rooms at New Mexico State University and 200 commuted, leaving 730 participants booking hotel rooms for an average three-night stay.

Because most of the events are held at the university, hotels and restaurants along University Avenue and Valley Drive stand to benefit most from the event.

### New Mexico Senior Olympics 2008 economic impact

Participants	1,230*
Staying in dorm rooms	300
Commuters	200
Hotel nights	2,190
Estimated hotel revenue	\$175,200
Estimated restaurant revenue	\$45,600
Total revenue – 11.5% increase	\$220,800

Source: New Mexico Senior Olympics



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# Schedule of Events

W = Women, M = Men, Age Divisions: 50 = 50-54, 55 = 55-59, 60 = 60-64, 65 = 65-69, 70 = 70-74, 75 = 75-79, 80 = 80-84, 85 =85-89, 90+

EVENTS	WEDNESDAY, MAY 27	THURSDAY, MAY 28	FRIDAY, MAY 29	SATURDAY, MAY 30
<b>AIR GUN</b> Las Cruces High School Aux Gym 1755 E. El Paseo Road Mike Dixon, 575-649-3602	<b>Pistol Supported Position</b> 8 a.m. W 55 <b>Pistol Standing</b> 10 a.m. W 50 <b>Rifle Supported Position</b> 8 a.m. M 70; 10 a.m. M 80, W 60, M 50, 55; 3 p.m. M 65 <b>Rifle Standing</b> 1 p.m. W 55, 60, M 50, 55, 60, 65; 3 p.m. M 70, 80, 85, 90+	<b>Pistol Supported Position</b> 8 a.m. W 50, 60; 10 a.m. M 50, 55; 1 p.m. M 60, 65 <b>Pistol Standing</b> 10 a.m. W 55, 60; 3 p.m. M 50, 55, 60, 65 <b>Rifle Supported Position</b> 8 a.m. W 65, 70, 75, M 85, 90+; 10 a.m. M 75 <b>Rifle Standing</b> 1 p.m. W 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+; 3 p.m. M 75	<b>Pistol Supported Position</b> 8 a.m. W 65, 70; 10 a.m. M 85, 90+, W 75, 80, 85, 90+; 1 p.m. M 70, 75, 80 <b>Pistol Standing</b> 8 a.m. W 75, 80, 85, 90+; 10 a.m. W 65, 70; 3 p.m. M 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+ <b>Rifle Supported Position</b> 8 a.m. W 50, 55; 10 a.m. M 60; 1 p.m. W 80, 85, 90+ <b>Rifle Standing</b> 1 p.m. W 50	
<b>ARCHERY</b> NMSU Upper Intramural Fields Bob Duke, 575-524-0106				<b>M &amp; W</b> 8 a.m. All Ages
<b>BADMINTON</b> NMSU Activity Center, Main Gym June Decker, 575-590-2350			<b>M &amp; W Doubles</b> 8 a.m. <b>Mixed Doubles</b> 1 p.m.	<b>M &amp; W Singles</b> 8 a.m.
<b>BASKETBALL FREE THROW</b> NMSU Activity Center Main Gym Jo Anna Salsberry, 505-239-8139	<b>M</b> 8 a.m. All ages <b>W</b> 10 a.m. All ages			
<b>BASKETBALL 3 POINT SHOT</b> NMSU Activity Center Main Gym Jo Anna Salsberry, 505-239-8139	<b>M</b> 9 a.m. All ages <b>W</b> 11 a.m. All ages			
<b>BOWLING</b> Ten Pin Alley, 1201 E. Amador Ave. Gary Tuttle, 575-649-6356	<b>Teams</b> 8:30 a.m. 50, 55 11:45 a.m. 65, 70, 75, 80 3 p.m. 60	<b>M &amp; W Singles</b> 8:30 a.m. 65, 70 12:15 p.m. 75, 80, 85, 90+ 4 p.m. 50, 55, 60	<b>M &amp; W Doubles</b> 8:30 a.m. 55, 65 12:15 p.m. 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+ 4 p.m. 50, 60	<b>M &amp; W Mixed Doubles</b> 8:30 a.m. 50, 55, 60 12:15 p.m. 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+
<b>CYCLING</b> NM National Guard Armory, W & I-10, Exit 132 Frances De La O 575-640-8342 or 575-647-2524	<b>M &amp; W</b> 7 a.m. Check-in 8 a.m. 20K Road Race 9:30 a.m. 10K Time Trial 10:30 a.m. 5K Time Trial	<b>M &amp; W</b> 7 a.m. Check-in 8 a.m. 1 Mile 9 a.m. 40K		
<b>DANCE</b> NMSU Hershel Zohn Theatre Eric Fierro, 575-680-2200		<b>Dance Practice and Line Dance Practice 7 to 9 p.m.</b>	<b>Dance Practice and Line Dance Practice continued</b> 10 a.m. - noon <b>Line Dance Competition and Dance Competition</b> 7 p.m.	
<b>8-BALL POOL</b> Q-Time, 1201 E. Amador Ave. Susan Pearson, 575-527-2604		<b>Practice</b> 8 - 11 a.m. M 12 p.m. M 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+ 4 p.m. M 50, 55, 60, 65	<b>Practice</b> 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. W 2 p.m. W All Ages	
<b>FIELD</b> NMSU - Track Josefina Mata 575-521-9814		<b>M &amp; W</b> <b>Pole Vault</b> 7 a.m. 50, 55 ; 9 a.m. 60, 65; 11 a.m. 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+ <b>Standing Long Jump</b> 7 a.m. 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+; 9 a.m. 50, 55; 11 a.m. 60, 65 <b>Shot Put</b> 7 a.m. 60, 65; 9 a.m. 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+; 11 a.m. 50, 55 <b>Exhibition Triple Jump</b> <b>M &amp; W</b> 1 p.m.	<b>M &amp; W</b> <b>Discus</b> 7 a.m. 50, 55; 9 a.m. 60, 65 11 a.m. 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+ <b>High Jump</b> 9 a.m. 50, 55; 11 a.m. 60, 65; 1 p.m. 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+ <b>Long Jump</b> 7 a.m. 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+; 11 a.m. 50, 55; 1 p.m. 60, 65 <b>Javelin</b> 7 a.m. 60, 65; 9 a.m. 70, 75, 80, 85, 90+; 1 p.m. 50, 55	
<b>FUN EVENTS</b> NMSU Corbett Center, Level II			<b>M &amp; W</b> 10 a.m. Walk-ins welcome	
<b>GOLF</b> NMSU Golf Course Doug Hammond, 575-646-3219		<b>M</b> 7 a.m. All ages	<b>W</b> 7 a.m. All ages	
<b>HORSESHOES</b> Meerscheidt Park, 1600 E. Hadley Ave. Stephanie Vargas, City of Las Cruces	<b>M &amp; W</b> 7 a.m. 75, 80, 85, 90+ 10 a.m. M 70; 12:30 p.m. W 65 2 p.m. M 60	7:30 a.m. M 65 10:30 a.m. W 60, 70, M & W 50, 55		
<b>PICKLEBALL</b> NMSU Activity Center, Main Gym June Decker, 575-388-4876		<b>Singles, Doubles, M &amp; W</b> 10 a.m. <b>Doubles, M &amp; W</b> noon <b>Doubles, Mixed</b> 2 p.m.		
<b>RACE WALK</b> NMSU Track Paulette Caron, 575-522-4455	<b>M &amp; W</b> 2 p.m. Meeting @ Corbett Center Auditorium level II	<b>M &amp; W</b> 8 a.m. 1500M	<b>M &amp; W</b> 7 a.m. 5K	
<b>RACQUETBALL</b> NMSU Activity Center Monica Reynolds, 575-526-6361		<b>Singles, Doubles, Mixed M &amp; W</b> 8 a.m.		
<b>RECREATION FRISBEE ACCURACY</b> NMSU Activity Center, Main Gym LoriAnn Keith, 505-927-4671		<b>M &amp; W</b> 8 a.m. 65 ; 9 a.m. 60; 10 a.m. 80, 85, 90+; 11 a.m. 50, 55; 1 p.m. 70; 2 p.m. 75		
<b>FRISBEE DISTANCE</b> NMSU Upper Intramural Field		<b>M &amp; W</b> 8 a.m. 80, 85, 90+; 9 a.m. 75; 10 a.m. 70; 11 a.m. 65; 1 p.m. 60; 2 p.m. 50, 55		



# Schedule of Events

Age W = Women, M = Men, Age Divisions: 50 = 50-54, 55 = 55-59, 60 = 60-64, 65 = 65-69, 70 = 70-74, 75 = 75-79, 80 = 80-84, 85 = 85-89, 90+

EVENTS	WEDNESDAY, MAY 27	THURSDAY, MAY 28	FRIDAY, MAY 29	SATURDAY, MAY 30
<b>HUACHAS (Washers)</b> NMSU Aux Gym Wally Hill, 575-382-9758				<b>M &amp; W</b> 9 a.m. 70-90+; 11 a.m. 50-69
<b>SOCCER ACCURACY</b> NMSU Upper Intramural Field Dorie Sandoval, 505-285-3922			<b>M &amp; W</b> 8 a.m. 65; 9 a.m. 60; 10 a.m. 80, 85, 90+; 11 a.m. 50, 55; 1 p.m. 70; 2 p.m. 75	
<b>SOFTBALL DISTANCE</b> NMSU Upper Intramural Field Francesca Smith, 575-639-1722			<b>M &amp; W</b> 8 a.m. 80, 85, 90+; 9 a.m. 75; 10 a.m. 70; 11 a.m. 65; 1 p.m. 60; 2 p.m. 50, 55	
<b>ROAD RACE RUN</b> NMSU Williams Avenue David Nuñez, 575-644-1321		<b>M &amp; W</b> 6 a.m. 10K Run	<b>M &amp; W</b> 6 a.m. 5K Run	
<b>SHUFFLEBOARD</b> Corbett Center, Level III	<b>M &amp; W Singles Begin</b> 8 a.m.	<b>Singles continue</b> 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. <b>Doubles begin</b> 6 p.m.	<b>Doubles continue</b> 8 a.m.	
<b>SWIMMING</b> NMSU - Natatorium Jack Welch, 575-524-2160	<b>Practice</b> 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	<b>M &amp; W warm-up</b> 7 a.m. <b>Competition</b> 8 a.m. 200 Free, 100 Fly, 50 Breast, 200 IM, 100 Back, 50 Free, 200 Breast	<b>M &amp; W warm-up</b> 7 a.m. <b>Competition</b> 8 a.m. 100 IM, 200 Back, 100 Free, 50 Fly, 100 Breast, 50 Back, 200 Medley Relay, 500 Free	
<b>TABLE TENNIS</b> NMSU Aux Gym Marv Sommers, 505-239-1443	<b>Practice</b> 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.	<b>M &amp; W</b> 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.	<b>M &amp; W</b> 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.	
<b>TALENT SHOW</b> Hershel Zohn Theatre Harry McCaffrey, 575-522-0861			<b>M &amp; W Practice</b> 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. All talent events	<b>M &amp; W Competition</b> 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. All talent events
<b>TENNIS</b> NMSU Tennis Courts Don Ball, 575-646-1942	<b>M &amp; W</b> 7 a.m.	<b>M &amp; W</b> 7 a.m.	<b>M &amp; W</b> 7 a.m. (if necessary)	
<b>TRACK</b> NMSU Track Dick Griffith, 505-285-3542	<b>M &amp; W</b> 9 a.m. 800M Estimated Run/Walk 10 a.m. 400M Powerwalk			<b>M &amp; W</b> 7 a.m. 1500M; 8 a.m. 800M; 8:30 a.m. 100M; 9:30 a.m. 400M; 10 a.m. Intergenerational Relay; 10:30 a.m. 200M; 11:30 a.m. 400M Co-Ed Relay

# Special Events

EVENTS	MONDAY, MAY 25	TUESDAY, MAY 26	WEDNESDAY, MAY 27	THURSDAY, MAY 28	FRIDAY, MAY 29	SATURDAY, MAY 30
<b>Athlete Check-In</b> <b>Corbett Center Level II</b>	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.	8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	
<b>Dorm Check-In</b> <b>Garcia Hall Lobby</b>		10 a.m.	10 a.m.	10 a.m.	10 a.m.	
<b>Sport Tables</b> <b>Corbett Center Level II</b>	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.	
<b>Opening Ceremony</b> <b>NMSU Activity Center</b>			6:30 p.m. - Lineup 7 p.m. - Program			
<b>Athlete Social</b> <b>NMSU Activity Center</b>			After opening ceremony			
<b>Results Posting</b> <b>Corbett Center Level I</b>				Posting	Posting	Posting
<b>Sports Health Fair Expo</b> <b>Corbett Center Level II</b>					9 a.m. - 4 p.m.	
<b>Banquet</b> <b>(TICKET REQUIRED)</b> <b>Ramada Palms</b>						6 p.m.
<b>Fiesta Final Dance</b> <b>(FREE)</b> <b>Ramada Palms</b>						8 p.m. - 11 p.m.



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# Jerrett Koenigsberg

## It all started on the farm

### Teacher finds companionship in Senior Olympics By Todd G. Dickson

When Jerrett Koenigsberg was a boy growing up on an Iowa farm, he and the other kids would pull out a large piece of plywood, set it on sawhorses and play table tennis.

Years later, after a successful career in teaching – Koenigsberg still does some teaching in a retirement community in Albuquerque – it was at a local competition

for table tennis he first heard about the Senior Olympics and decided to give it a try.

Originally, he was just interested in playing table tennis. Then, at one of the competitions, he heard a commotion coming from one of the other rooms. He followed the noise to find people playing a more active form of badminton he never knew existed, and he watched enthralled.

“It was played with an increased intensity ... it was so much faster than what I was used to,” he said. “I wanted to play,

but I didn’t know what the etiquette was, so I sat down and watched.”

Koenigsberg was hooked, so he got a badminton racket and watched the others fling the shuttlecocks back-and-forth, waiting for someone to ask him to play. Then, a woman came up to him and gave him the invite he’d been

waiting for: “Let’s hit some.”

The woman was Hanniah Morgan, who would later become his wife.

Though table tennis brought him into the Senior Olympics – he also plays pickleball – badminton has become a revelation to Koenigsberg.

Despite the competition of the badminton matches, there’s a spirit of congeniality and comradery that he has found in no other sport – or walk of life, for that matter. Not even the half-jesting “trash talk” between contestants that some senior athletes enjoy.

“There’s just such kind cooperation, even during competition,” he said. “And after the games, the other players are always willing to help you.

“I truly believe if I drove into a strange town and my car broke down, I could look up through the Yellow Pages someplace where they play badminton, call and I would get help. It’s just incredible how it works.”

Badminton has become such a central part of their lives that he and his wife are now certified to teach badminton and “spread the news” about badminton to others.

“We try to help newcomers as they somehow just appear on courts here in Albuquerque,” he said. “It is a lot of fun and offers great exercise. Soon, one learns about the friendly nature of most of the players.

“Our Level 1 coaching certification from USA Badminton came about through this desire. The certification required attendance at a coaching clinic supervised by Andy Gouw, our regional coaching director with USA Badminton, documented practice coaching hours and a background check.”

Most of the people they teach are adults, he said, but the couple is trying to reach out to the schools to get more young people interested in playing badminton, and Koenigsberg said he would like the sport to be a regular part of physical education programs.

“The sport does not require the strength of football players or the height of basketball and volleyball players,” he said. “All students can find that this is a lifetime sport. We find

that some adults come to badminton as they are tired of beating up their joints in other games. Our love of this game makes us want to help PE teachers



### Jerrett Koenigsberg

Age: 64

Profession: Semi-retired teacher

Events: Badminton, single, doubles and mixed doubles; pickleball

How I make a difference: “Our love of this game makes us want to help PE teachers and students become better acquainted with badminton.”

and students become better acquainted with badminton.”

After finding an activity he loves in badminton and the love of his life through the Senior Olympics, it is easy to see how the games have made a difference in Koenigsberg’s life. But when asked the question, Koenigsberg adds that competing in the games also has helped him stay more active and he’s much more careful about what he eats – though he is quick to add that his

wife would also have steered him clear of his farm-boy eating habits.

Koenigsberg also said he enjoys meeting new people through participating in the state and national games. Locally, Koenigsberg said he finds himself playing the same people and too easily learns their style of play. It’s refreshing, he said, to play someone new and learn how to play against their style.

“You end up playing more alertly,” he said.

## Game Shuttle

Game shuttle vans and volunteer drivers are provided by Senior Programs statewide. **Your patience is appreciated.**

### Hours of Operation

Wednesday, May 27 ..... 6 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Thursday, May 28 ..... 6 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Friday, May 29 ..... 6 a.m. – 10 p.m.  
Saturday, May 30 ..... 6 a.m. – 7 p.m.

### Daily Destinations

8-Ball Pool / Bowling • Horseshoes • Activity Center • Natatorium  
Air Gun - Las Cruces High School • Track & Field  
Corbett Center - South • Tennis Courts • Garcia Hall  
Upper Intramural Fields • Hershel Zohn Theatre  
NMSO reserves the right to make shuttle changes

### Senior vans and volunteer drivers provided by:

City of Las Cruces Senior Programs • Rio Arriba County Recreation Department  
Concilio Campesino – FGP Program Las Cruces • Ancianos/Taos Senior Programs  
SER Senior Services – Mesilla • Sierra Joint Office on Aging • City of Grants

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The Average Senior Olympian...

...is 65 to 69 years old.



# Opening Ceremony

**Wednesday, May 27 • 7 p.m.**  
**NMSU Activities Center – Main Gym**

## Parade of Athletes

Chris Cruz, Master of Ceremonies

## Presentation of Colors

Oñate NJROTC Cadets

## Invocation

Dr. Maurice Hollingsworth, Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church

## Game Welcome

Dick Griffith, Chairman of the New Mexico Senior Olympics

## Eternal Flame Remembrance

## Recognition of the Eldest Athlete

## Recognition of 2008 Golden Athletes

Linda Weathers, Roswell  
 Wally Hill, Las Cruces

## Presentation of the 2009 Courage Award

Fern Harrison, Las Cruces

## 2009 Spirit Athletes Honorees

Escorted by Oñate NJROTC Cadets

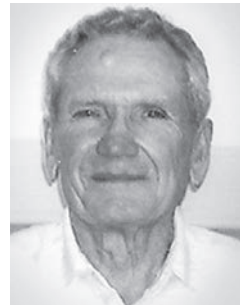
## Entertainment

Voz Vaqueros, the Singing Men of Las Cruces

# Celebrating the Golden Athletes

## NMSO honors New Mexicans for their participation By Beth Sitzler

Every year, the New Mexico Senior Olympics (NMSO) honors a male and female athlete for their participation in and service to the games with the Golden Athlete award. This year, Wally Hill of Las Cruces and Linda Weathers of Roswell, N.M., have been named as the 2008 award recipients.



Hill began participating in the Olympics in 1993, after he was invited to join a 3-on-3 basketball team. Now, at the age of 74, he not only competes in tennis, badminton and table tennis, but also is the sports coordinator for the Huachas event. Plus he takes the time to help other coordinators with their events.

"I'm totally at a loss for words. I never would have considered it in my wildest dreams," he said about winning the Golden Athlete award. "It's hard to think of yourself as exceptional."

WALLY HILL

Nominated for the award by local games coordinator Genevieve Garcia, Hill said that the volunteers and staff should be recognized for all the hard work they put in to make the games a success.

"The whole group makes it really easy for all participants," he said. "They work very hard throughout the year."

Weathers is an active participant in the dance competition and has danced all her life. After retiring from a career in education, she was asked to teach tap classes at the Roswell

senior center.

Her group, RAC-A-Tap, consisting of 25 women ages 48 to 86, formed in 2001 and has entertained the Roswell community in various free performances. The group has also won numerous gold medals from the senior games.

"We have fun sweating to the oldies," said Weathers, who has also won gold in the dance solo event.

She said she didn't know that Sarah Hall, the Roswell games coordinator, nominated her for the award.

"I'm not sure I deserve this award, but I will do my very best to live up to it," she said. "I think it's a terrific honor."

As a life-long dancer and teacher, Weather said staying active is the key to longevity and staying happy, and the Senior Olympics is the best thing for aging adults.

Both athletes will be honored during the 2009 opening ceremony at the NMSO Summer Games and will be presented with a personalized satin letter jacket.

The Golden Athlete award is for athletes that have been nominated by their peers or local coordinator and are selected by the NMSO ad-hoc committee. Nominees must be NMSO athletes at least 50 years old and have actively contributed to two or more of the following areas: outstanding personal accomplishments, outstanding professional contributions, outstanding community contributions and outstanding contributions for enhancing the quality of life of seniors.



I'm not sure I deserve this award, but I will do my very best to live up to it.

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...competes in 1-3 events throughout the year.



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## Recreation & Education

Activities include instruction in jewelry, ceramics, painting, crochet and more; aerobics, yoga, tai chi and swimming; folklorico, square and line dancing; pool; bridge; pinochle; cooking, computer and Spanish classes; health checks and support groups; day trips; and more!

## Resource Center

Assists seniors in need find local resources that can help. Provides unbiased information and aid. Also has Benefits Counselors who help seniors get health insurance and medical benefits.

## In-Home Services

Offering a range of Homemaker Services (including Home Care Aides); Caregiver Respite Services; and High-Risk Case Management

# Go for the Gold!

## Congratulations & Good luck to our Doña Ana County Senior Olympians!

Activities and programs at our centers are open to all who are 50 years and older. (Age 60 and older for the Nutrition Program.) There are no income or residency requirements to participate in Senior Programs!

**Senior Programs is on the Web!**

[www.las-cruces.org/public-services/Senior-Programs/](http://www.las-cruces.org/public-services/Senior-Programs/)

Visit our site for the latest in program news, activity calendars, volunteer opportunities and special information for Las Cruces senior citizens and family care givers.

### SENIOR CENTERS

#### BENAVIDEZ COMMUNITY CENTER

1045 McClure Rd. (Phone calls directed to Munson Center)

#### EASTSIDE COMMUNITY CENTER

310 N. Tornillo Phone: 541-2304 or 541-2305

#### MUNSON SENIOR CENTER

975 S. Mesquite Street Phone: 528-3000

#### MESILLA PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

304 W. Bell Phone: 541-2455

#### SAGE CAFÉ

5589 Porter Drive (Phone calls directed to Munson Center)



# Edward and Dolores Mose

## Dancing couple takes over the Senior Olympics

Socializing important to Edward and Dolores Mose of Medanales, N.M. By Beth Sitzler

With recent TV shows "Dancing with the Stars" and "So You Think You Can Dance" hitting the airwaves, ballroom dancing has experienced a surge in popularity. However, one New Mexico couple was dancing before TV made it all the rage.

Edward and Antoina "Dolores" Mose, 68, from Medanales, N.M., each had dance experiences in their childhoods. For him, it was in junior high school. For her, it was watching her father.

Originally from Hagerstown, Md., Edward Mose participated in soccer and wrestling in high school. Dolores Mose, who was born and raised in Medanales, was also active in high school sports with softball and basketball.

After high school, Edward Mose joined the U.S. Army, where he was trained to conduct maintenance on nuclear warheads.

When he was stationed in Albuquerque, he met his future wife on a blind date. Dolores Mose at the time was training to be a nurse at St. Joseph's Hospital.

After they married, they moved from New Mexico to the East Coast.

Once his three years of service was complete, he went on to have a career with several different telephone companies, including Western Electric and AT&T. He began as a craftsman, worked his way up to an equipment engineer and finally ended up in the accounting department.

After he retired in 1991, he worked for the National Science Teacher Association.

Unfortunately, Dolores Mose's nurse training didn't transfer when they moved. But after the birth of their five children, she began a new career in accounting. They both retired in 1996.

Over the years, they danced together, but never had any formal training. Then in 1998, the couple took their love of dance to the New Mexico Senior Olympics.

"We got involved because my father-in-law was so involved in the Senior Olympics and we went to watch him," Edward Mose said.

Dolores Mose explained that after some encouragement from other NMSO participants, they decided to give the games a shot.

"Dancing to us is fun," Edward Mose said. "It's fun exercise and keeps you physically fit."

They especially enjoy the jitterbug, which allows them to dress up and revisit their youth.

Along with participating in polka, jitterbug and waltz ballroom, they also have taken part in other events. Edward Mose competes in standing and running long jump, basketball free throw and table tennis, Dolores Mose competes in javelin and both compete in badminton.

"I've been throwing the javelin for several years," she said, adding that it was the perfect track and field sport for her since "it didn't involve any running."

After Dolores Mose had triple bypass open-heart surgery in April 2004, the couple tried shuffleboard for the first time at the NMSO held that August.

"She felt comfortable giving and being around everyone," Edward Mose said. "It was something she wanted to do."

Since joining, they have won numerous gold, silver and bronze medals and a fourth-place ribbon.

This summer, they will venture to the national Senior Olympics competition for the first time, where they will compete in shuffleboard doubles and Dolores Mose will throw the javelin.

They both enjoy the competition, but that isn't the reason they continue to participate.

"I just like being around all the people," Dolores Mose said.

"The Senior Olympics, first of all, is more than just participating in sports, it's socializing," Edward Mose said. "It's getting with people with similar ideas. It's a really good social gathering, especially at state where you get to meet people from all over."

For the past six years, the couple, who will celebrate their 49th wedding anniversary in July, have been actively involved with Sociedad Colonial Española de Santa Fe, a group that performs colonial dances to preserve them for future generations.

They also are involved in the Rio Arriba County Senior Games Office, where Edward



### Edward Mose

**Age:** 68

**Profession:** Retired telephone equipment engineer, accountant

**Events:** Shuffleboard; polka, jitterbug, and ballroom dance; standing and running long jump; basketball free throws; table tennis; and badminton

**How I make a difference:** "The Senior Olympics, first of all, is more than just participating in sports, it's socializing. It's getting with people with similar ideas."

### Dolores Mose

**Age:** 68

**Profession:** Accountant

**Events:** Shuffleboard; polka, jitterbug, and ballroom dance; badminton; and javelin

**How I make a difference:** "Hopefully, people around our age we know see how involved we are and see that you don't have to be an athlete to participate. Hopefully, we will be enough of an example to encourage others to join."


Mose is the treasurer. They both help with fundraising efforts.

By staying active in their community and NMSO, they are not only contributing to their physical and mental health, they're also encouraging others to follow in their footsteps.

"Hopefully, people around our age we know see how involved we are and see that you don't have to be an athlete to participate," Dolores Mose said. "Hopefully, we will be enough of an example to encourage others to join."

"I encourage anybody over 50 to get involved," Edward Mose said.

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# Leave your running shoes at home

No excuse, there's something for everyone at the Senior Games By Kristine Sandrick

Seniors don't have to be able run, jump or ride a gazillion miles to participate in the New Mexico Senior Olympics (NMSO). With events such as the potato-carrying and balloon-popping relays, pickleball and huachas, one might need more skill and finesse than strength or stamina.

Potato carrying requires concentration. Conducted as a relay, team members must carry a potato on a spoon over a defined course and then hand it off to the next teammate. The team that gets its people through the course first wins.

Balloon popping is also a relay. One by one, team members take an inflated balloon to a chair, sit on it until it pops, go back to the next person on their team and so on. The first team to pop all of its balloons wins.

"This game encourages a lot of excitement with people urging their partners – and the element of surprise of popping balloons," said Angela Jaramillo, co-coordinator for NMSO, who added that these fun events do not require advance registration.

"It's fun. We give out ribbons to

the teams that win. It's good for walk ins, and since it's on level two at the Corbett Center, it encourages people to come and see what's going on," she said.

Huachas, Spanish for washers, was introduced to the Senior Games in 2008. There are many ways to play, but generally participants use an ordinary metal washer, about 2.5 inches in diameter, from the local hardware store. Player A pitches four washers, one at a time, toward a board 18 feet away and tries to sink each huacha in a hole that is three inches in diameter. Then player B takes a turn.

Players get one point for being on the board, three points if the huacha is leaning over the edge of the cup and five if it goes into the cup.

At age 73, Las Cruces' Don Medina is a long-time huachas pro.

"We used to play on dirt," he said. "You make a little hole and put a piece of pipe in it, now they made a board 24 by 24 inches with a 3-inch hole in the middle."

Medina said there has been a lot of interest with the Indian tribes getting together to play huachas, and he helps organize the events.

"We had 120 women and 80 men registered (at All Indian Game Day) at the Isleta Pueblo. They're very interested in playing," he said.

When asked who is the biggest huachas winner, he laughs, "Most of the time, I win. We used to get together and play in Deming, Silver City – I think I'm one of the best." His strategy is to throw huachas "like a little flying saucer, spinning them so they land flat on the board. Once you get that going, it doesn't roll," he said.

Pickleball is another fairly new sport, Jaramillo said. It's a cross between badminton, tennis and table tennis, and played on a badminton court except the net is about 3 feet off the ground, she said. Players use a white plastic whiffle ball, about the size of a softball and a big table tennis paddle – about 8 to 9 inches across.

"We find there are such diverse backgrounds in our seniors and what they have access to. A lot of the multi-generational centers and senior centers have shuffleboard courts and pool tables but not a gym so they don't have access to all the sports. So we include

these games to encourage as many seniors as possible to come out and get involved," Jaramillo said.

The non-traditional games allow participants to have fun without using a lot of muscle or training, or having to get someone to play along, she said. "These games and others make it easy for people to join in," Jaramillo said.

People also learn about all the game options during TREKs – one-day health education events held across the state, which include physical activities and demonstrations of at least three senior games sports.

Other options just for fun, and perhaps a bit of competitive nature, include Frisbee throwing for accuracy and distance and a soccer accuracy kick. Several

of the non-traditional games don't require registration, so if you're not participating in an event, put this paper down and get involved, right now!



Wally Hill, 2008 Golden Athlete and huachas coordinator, shows how to sink a washer.

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# Las Cruces resident honored with Courage Award

Recognizing those who overcome adversity By Beth Sitzler



Every year, the New Mexico Senior Olympics bestows the Courage Award upon a participant who continues to compete in the games despite a physical or medical handicap. This year's Courage Award recipient is Fern Harrison of Las Cruces.

As a lung and breast cancer survivor, Harrison has proven that there are benefits to staying active and encourages others to get involved by her example.

"I feel very honored," she said about being the 2009 award recipient. "A lot of other people deserved it, so I'm honored they chose me."

Recently fitted with a pacemaker, Harrison continues to compete and doesn't allow anything to slow her down.

"Everything went good," Harrison said of

the surgery. "I was able to compete (during the Doña Ana County Senior Games) in bowling, shuffle board, air gun and, on the last day, track."

Harrison became involved in sports at a young age, including playing basketball for her high school in Iowa.

After high school, she went on to a 41-year career in accounting before retiring in 1996.

Following her retirement, Harrison and her husband, Kenneth, moved to Las Cruces for the warm weather. They soon discovered the Senior Olympics and began participating not only as competitors but also as volunteers.

As a volunteer, she helped with the talent and dance show as well as various bowling events. As a competitor, she participated in air gun, volleyball, basketball free throw, shuffleboard and bowling.

Over the years, she and her husband have won more than 100 medals and ribbons from the county and state games. They have also competed in the local Senior Games in El Paso and Tucson, Ariz.

Competing in the National Senior Olym-

pics at Louisville, Ky., in 2007, Harrison placed 11th in the 200-meter track run.

Harrison has also set the New Mexico state record in the 200-meter run with 50.58 seconds, a goal she wanted to accomplish since she first became involved with the Senior Olympics.

Through the Senior Olympics, she has been able to remain busy, travel the country and make new friends.

"We don't have any family down here. The people in the Senior Olympics are like our family," she said.

Harrison was nominated by local Doña Ana County games coordinator Genevieve Garcia and was selected by the NMSO ad-hoc committee.

"Because I'm a cancer survivor, I thank the good Lord for being able to retire and do things like the Senior Olympics," she said. "It's good for people to stay active and enjoy life."

This is the first special award Harrison has received through the NMSO. She said she hopes to continue to participate in the games for years to come and to hopefully one day bring home a national medal.

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# Vernon Dyer

## Navy veteran far from putting out an anchor

NMSO Board member coaches track and cross country, marches in memory of slain soldier By Jim Hilley

When Roswell resident Vernon Dyer competes in the triathlon during the New Mexico State Olympics, it won't be the first time he has been in a grueling physical challenge in the Las Cruces area this year. In late March, the 67-year-old Dyer and a friend took part in the annual Bataan Memorial Death March on White Sands Missile Range.

Not the 15-mile short course, which is difficult enough for most people, but the long arduous march over 26 miles of desert dust, rock and sand.

"I've been doing it with a couple of friends every year since they let civilians in 13 or 14 years ago," Dyer said. "Sometimes we put a team together, sometimes we do it as individuals."

Dyer, a Navy veteran, didn't do it just for the fun. This year he marched in memory of Sgt. Christopher Sanders, a 22-year-old Roswell native killed in Iraq on Jan. 9, 2008.

"We are good friends with his grandmother," he said.

Dyer was born in Oklahoma, but his family moved to Hobbs, N.M., when he was in second grade.

During part of his time in the Navy, Dyer worked as a radio operator on an airborne early-warning plane that flew off of aircraft carriers. Most of his tour of duty was during peacetime, he said, but he was on a ship in the support and withdrawal of the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in April 1961. In October 1962, Dyer said he was on board a ship that captured a Russian submarine during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

"That part of the

crisis wasn't made public," Dyer said. "In those days, we didn't have to tell everything we did."

After Dyer's tour of duty, he used his G.I. benefits to go to school, earning degrees in business management, history and geology. He then went to work for Texaco in the oil fields. Eventually, he earned a law degree and continued to work for Texaco in its land department.

Dyer now owns his own land management company, negotiating agreements between ranchers, farmers and oil companies. His company also does work for the Bureau of Land Management.

To say that Dyer remains active would be an understatement. Not only is he actively involved in Senior Olympics as vice chairman of the New Mexico Senior Olympics, he's cross-country coach at Goddard High School and the head track coach for Mesa Middle School.

The Senior Olympics make a difference for Dyer in more ways than one, he said.

"The first way is socially. There is a lot of socialization going on. It brings people together of the same age, with the same view," he said.

Dyer said the contacts he makes in the Senior Olympics are a great help when he travels. "When I'm in Albuquerque, I have 30 people I can call if I need help," Dyer said. "If I'm in Las Cruces, there's a whole bunch of them I can call."

The games also make a difference by getting people active, Dyer said. "It gets people away from sitting there alone, it makes them healthier and the social aspect gets their mind active."

"A lot of older people are isolated," Dyer said. "We try to get them 'un-isolated.'"

"Many seniors are on a fixed income, so we have to do it as cheap as we can. Everybody can't run, but if we can just get them active, they can



### Vernon Dyer

Age: 67

Profession: Owns a land management company

Events: 1500 meter race walk, 5K race walk

How I make a difference: "I am a high school and middle school cross country and track coach, and the kids see me doing it and they all want to beat me. They see you do it and they want to get into it."

meet people of their same age."

Dyer said he first participated in the Senior Olympics in 1997 and has been doing it ever since.

"I have always qualified for nationals," Dyer said, "but I haven't always been able to go." He said he attended nationals in Tucson, Ariz., Baton Rouge, La., Disneyland and Virginia Beach, Va. Dyer was stationed at Virginia Beach in his Navy days.

"It made me remember why they called it Breezy Point," he said. "The water was so rough they had to stop the triathlon halfway through the swim."

He has been married to his wife Wanda for 44 years and has two grown children. His wife

doesn't compete in the games because of knee trouble, but Dyer said she stays active planting trees, gardening and walking.

At this year's games, Dyer will compete in the 1500-meter and 5K Race Walks as well as the triathlon.

A veteran of the New York and Houston marathons, Dyer said he enjoys the running leg of the triathlon because "you get time to think." He said that running is easiest if it's first, but the hardest if it's last.

"I do it because I enjoy it," he said. "I do the best I can, but I know it's not as good as last year."

And Dyer's favorite part of the triathlon? "The finish line," he said.

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# Celebrating Senior Health and Fitness Day

## There's something for everyone at the Sport Health Fair By Bethany Conway

Aside from all the fun, the main goal of the local, state and national Senior Olympics is to keep the country's seniors active and healthy. Though in previous years the New Mexico Senior Olympics were held in late July and early August, due to this year's early commencement, the games begin on an important date for the senior population – National Senior Health and Fitness Day.

Occurring on Wednesday, May 27, National Senior Health and Fitness Day is entering its 16th year and is the nation's largest older adult health and fitness event.

Aside from bringing seniors out to compete on this special day, one event through which the NMSO brings important information to seniors on staying active and healthy is through the annual Sport Health Fair, held this year from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, May 29, on the second floor of Corbett Center. With booths from a number of businesses marketing everything from the latest in health care to sports activities such as gymnastics and Taekwondo, the health fair serves as a well-known resource for seniors.

For the staff at Mesilla Valley

Hospice, New Mexico's only free-standing hospice facility, located at 299 Montana Ave., the health fair is a great way to make its presence known.

"Last year, it was packed," said April Anaya, marketing coordinator with Mesilla Valley Hospice. "We had a great turnout, there were a lot of people wanting information and we were able to make a lot of face-to-face contact and explain our services."

Because the majority of seniors are retired, she said the expo offers them an opportunity to recruit volunteers, which is something for which all nonprofits are in need.

Along with recruiting volunteers, it's also a way to stand behind the volunteers they already have.

"Our volunteers actually participate in the New Mexico Senior Olympics, so aside from bringing awareness to our services we also support them," she said.

It also gives them a chance to get the word out about some of the services they offer that southern New Mexicans may not be aware of.

"A lot of people don't think they can use our services until they are ready for hospice, but we actually

have the center for grief services, which provides grief and bereavement counseling free of charge to the entire community," Anaya said.

For Physicians Health Choice, located at 2100 Triviz Drive, the health fair also works to make their Medicare Advantage plans known to local seniors.

"Last year, not a lot of people knew who we were. Now they see us and they see our name and they know they have seen us before," April Villa said. "The more familiar they are, the more we can help them."

With clinics in Texas and Florida, Physicians Health Choice has been in Las Cruces since Jan. 1, 2008, and offers services above and beyond those covered by Medicare.

"We usually have informational pieces. Anything they want to know about who we are and what services we provide," she said. "With more information, they can make better choices for themselves."

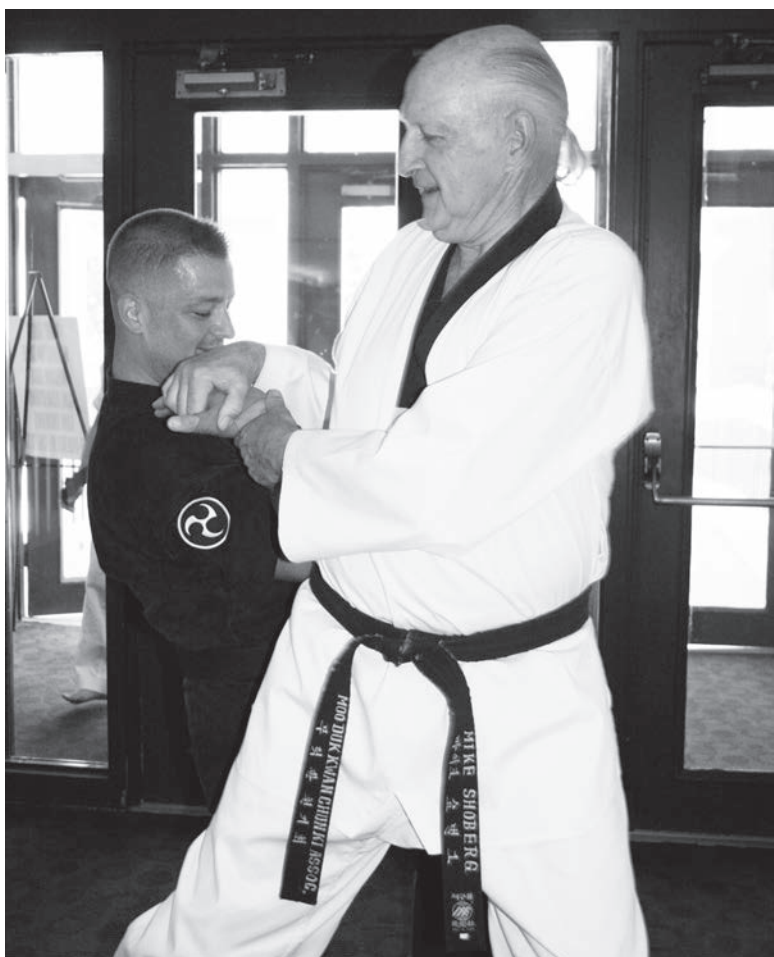
"We want to be out there helping the community in any way we can," she said. "We find that this is a way to give back and be where seniors are."

At the booth for Humana, seniors will be able to learn about a wide array of Medicare plan choices include a PPO, Gold Choice/PFFS, prescription drug coverage, final expense and long-term care.

Participating every year the games have been held in Las Cruces, Amy Hobbs of Humana Corporate Communications said the health fair is a great way to encourage healthy living.

"Wellness and physical activity are important to healthy lifestyles for everyone at every age. Humana is proud to sponsor the New Mexico Senior Olympics and see athletes of all ages engaged in an active lifestyle," she said. "In fact, the chairman of our board, David Jones Jr., will be competing in the triathlon at the national games in Palo Alto (Calif.) this year."

"The New Mexico Senior Olympics' focus on staying healthy through competition fits perfectly with Humana's core values. Like the Games, we believe people of all ages need to become more engaged in their health, and we celebrate those who do. Participation in the Games, be they in New Mexico or the National Games later this summer in Palo Alto, keeps us connected to our 3.5 million Medicare members nationwide."



Mike Shoberg, right, of Gold Medal Taekwondo and Christopher McDermott, owner of Las Cruces Krav Maga, showed off their self-defense skills at the 2008 Sports Health Fair.

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# Johnny Bench

## Baseball great speaks at NMSO banquet

Former Cincinnati Red still maintains active lifestyle **By John Keith**

At age 55, they say, we reach senior citizenship. If so, Johnny Bench joined the rest of us six years ago.

Which further legitimizes his presence as the keynote speaker at the 2009 Senior Olympics dinner banquet at 6 p.m. Saturday, May 30, at the Ramada Palms de Las Cruces.

Bench, of course, was the catcher for the Cincinnati Reds from 1967 until his retirement in '83. He was smart enough to retire in good health. There is life after baseball.

Bench won a suitcase full of awards. Among them was National League Rookie of the Year in '68 and the National League's Most Valuable Player in 1970 and '72. He was World Series MVP in 1976 and a 14-time All Star. In

late 1998, Sporting News called him the best catcher of all time and the 16th greatest player of all time.

He was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in January 1989.

Physically, Bench was unbelievable, catching 100 or more games for 13 consecutive seasons.

"I figured out that I squatted behind home plate 400,000 times during my career," he said. Consequently, Bench had his left hip replaced five years ago. "I may have the other one done in a year

or two," he said.

Bench said he will elaborate on knee, hip and shoulder replacements in his speech. He said he will be accompanied by an orthopedic surgeon to answer questions from the audience on that subject.



**BENCH**



Johnny Bench, a 14-time Major League All-Star for the Cincinnati Reds, will speak to local seniors at a dinner banquet at 6 p.m. Saturday, May 30, at the Ramada Palms de Las Cruces.

"Just because you are growing old, you can still live a healthy, active life," Bench said. "As far as having a knee, hip or shoulder replaced, you'll know when it's time. I retired when I did, so I could live a normal life physically and in good health."

Bench has used his fame to help charitable organizations, lending his name to help the Heart Association and the American Cancer Society. He was the past National Chairman of Athletes vs. Cancer.

He worked with the Kidney Foundation, the American Lung Association and the "Catch the Cure" program of the Children's

Hospital of Cincinnati.

Bench supports the Cincinnati Symphony and actually sang with the Cincinnati Pops. He's toured with Bob Hope's Christmas shows and visited troops in the far east during Desert Storm.

These days, he lives out of a suitcase, traveling from 80,000 to 100,000 miles a year for personal appearances and speaking engagements. He owns homes in Florida and Palm Springs, Calif. "Where it's warm," he said. "I can't stand cold weather."

When time allows, Bench plays golf.

"I keep my golf cart in the garage," he said. "The golf course is only a short iron away."

Asked if the replaced hip bothers his game. "No," he said "I play with a two handicap."

"Better put down four, in case somebody out there wants to play."

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# Ceci Acosta

## Meet the NMSO executive director

### Acosta earns award from N.M. Department of Aging and Long Term Services By Bethany Conway

No one knows more about the New Mexico Senior Olympics than the organization's Executive Director Ceci Acosta.

Occupying the post since 1990, Acosta is only the second person to hold the position, and has watched the games grow significantly since she first got involved with NMSO in the 1980s.

A native "Roswellite," Acosta earned her associate's degree in business from Eastern New Mexico University. She began working in her field in 1981 as a bookkeeper for the Roswell Area Agency on Aging.

“They truly understand what I work so hard for every year.

CECI ACOSTA

”

One of 11 siblings, taking care of those around her is what first led Acosta to the post she occupies today.

“It has always been in my blood to take care of our older population,” Acosta said. “It was just second nature for me.”

That's why she didn't hesitate to accept the position of treasurer when she was asked to volunteer on the NMSO Board of Directors. Her immediate supervisor was the president of the organization.

In 1989, NMSO received a grant to hire its first official staff person – an executive director. The initial person selected to fill the position was a single mother with a teenager, and because the job required her to travel a great deal in order to attend the games, which were held in Portales, N.M., that year, she quickly found that she did not have enough time to spend at home.

“She would travel through Roswell, and as a board member of the organization I would go with her to Portales and I would attend some of the local planning meetings,” Acosta said. “She did that for about six weeks and then it got to be too much for her, so it fell into my lap.”

At first Acosta did the job as a volunteer while the board tried to fill the position. In

the end, they offered it to her. From there, she said, the rest is history.

She now spends a great portion of the year organizing the yearly NMSO, thinking of ways to constantly improve it.

“It's a real team effort,” she said. “The whole board gets behind the planning.”

Every January, the National Senior Games organization brings together executive directors from across the nation to exchange ideas.

“We meet in our regions and exchange successes and challenges and stories of what happens in our communities,” she said. “I have to say that we are probably one of the top-three places that has statewide participation. Many of the games throughout the country are organized within a region of the state and don't see statewide participation.”

Over the years, she has watched the event grow and change, and always for the better.

“It is more competitive. I think that's where we have seen the growth,” she said. “It started out as a recreational event. Some of the fun events we did were potato sack relays, pie-eating contests – just fun things for interaction. Now, everything has escalated to be more competitive. We all have a little of that in us.”

And the NMSO is not only important to Acosta. It has also become a regular event for her family.

“My sisters come and volunteer. My brother comes to the games,” she said. “It's just a real family event for everybody. They truly understand what I work so hard for every year.”

After working with the New Mexico Department of Aging and Long Term Services for almost 26 years, Acosta received an award in August of 2008 for her service.

“It surprised me tremendously because there are many dedicated individuals who work statewide with aging, so I felt truly honored,” she said.

This year, along with many seniors from New Mexico, Acosta will travel to the San Francisco Bay area for the 2009 Summer National Senior Games. She has been to the national games almost every year they have taken place since she became the executive director.

“We are excited about going to nationals,” she said. “You feel so proud of our New Mexico athletes when they participate on the national level.”



Ceci Acosta, NMSO executive director, has been leading the organization since 1990.

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# Robert "Lu Hon" Shendo

## Treading water with the 'frogs and the toads'

Decorated senior Olympian shares his love for the games By Gabriel Vasquez

Robert "Lu Hon" Shendo is decorated – decorated for his time in service, for his achievements with the New Mexico Senior Olympics, and best of all, decorated by his family for being an outstanding father and grandfather.

Shendo, a lifelong athlete who lives in Jemez Pueblo in northern New Mexico, once feared that his athletic career was over. Five years ago he was diagnosed with a tumor and underwent surgery that left him wondering if he could ever get back to the sporty days of his youth.

That's when the Senior

Olympics presented the opportunity to renew Shendo's passion for sports and for helping others in similar situations.

"When I was recovering, I worked at the senior center in Jemez Pueblo," Shendo said. "It was my first year there, and I wanted to check out what they did. Slowly, I started becoming more involved with them."

On doctor's orders, Shendo began to swim as part of his physical rehabilitation treatment. He quickly fell in love with treading water, and soon decided to put his aquatic

skills to the test by competing in the New Mexico Senior Olympics.

"When I was swimming, there were some seniors watching me and they asked if I would compete," Shendo said. "They saw I was good and they asked me where I had practiced. I told them, 'I swim in the rivers and compete with the frogs and the toads.'"

Shendo is the first Native American to qualify for a Senior Olympics swimming event in New Mexico.

Although swimming is now his forte, Shendo is a seasoned athlete who has stepped on many playing fields throughout his life.

"I mostly played ball in my growing up years," he said. "My dad pitched for a semi-pro Indian league. I got involved with my dad and uncle who both played sports. During high school I played all sports – basketball, football, baseball and track. I lettered in all of those."

After graduating from Taos High School, Shendo enlisted in the military.

"Thanks to the Army, I got to travel to different countries around the world," Shendo said. "I am very appreciative of that. If not for the Army, I wouldn't have seen the world. I've lived in many cities here in the states."

Shendo, a Vietnam Air Veteran, played football for the 7th Army in Germany as part of an armed forces inner-service league.

After leaving the service and working for the veteran's hospital in Albuquerque, Shendo joined the senior center in Jemez Pueblo and began to rekindle his love for all sports.

"I can't run very well because of my health, so I mostly do basketball (free-throw and three-point), swimming and shuffleboard," Shendo said. "I also play 8-ball pool and stuff like that, I participate in the local games they have here."

Shendo is instilling the



### Robert "Lu Hon" Shendo

Age: 67

Profession: Retired health care worker (Albuquerque Veterans Hospital)

Events: Swimming, basketball, horseshoes, 8-ball pool and shuffleboard

How I make a difference: "Come see what I'm doing.' That's the type of attitude I have with the seniors."

same values and love for the game in his granddaughters, who he helps care for every day.

"My two oldest (granddaughters) play basketball," he said. "I coached them in third and fourth grade. I mostly teach them the fundamental stuff."

Shendo also helps his daughter Bobby Jean coach the local softball team.

"I help her out. They're mostly in sports because of me," he said.

Shendo's two oldest sons, Robert and Pat, are Indian Grammy award winning musicians.


"Robert just came back from the New Orleans Jazz Festival," Shendo said, "and they both have just returned from South America. They've also been in a couple of movies. Robert, the oldest, has three kids – all girls – and Pat just made me a grandpa."

Meanwhile, at Jemez Pueblo, Shendo is pushing to have a public swimming pool built for the local children and seniors to practice and develop their aquatic skills.

"In the senior program, I emphasize to them to participate," he said. "I met a gentleman with a heart problem. I told him, 'Hey, come with me to the swimming pool, you can do it and you don't have to pull weight. Come see what I'm doing.' That's the type of attitude I have with the seniors."

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## The Average Senior Olympian...

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# William Mitchell

## Swimming to good health

Purple Heart recipient has fought more than one kind of battle By Marvin Tessneer

William Mitchell keeps involved in the New Mexico Senior Olympics both as a contestant and an organizer, because he believes that participating in sports programs is good for senior citizens.

"And we like coming down to Las Cruces very much," said Mitchell, who lives in Albuquerque. "People treat us very nice. They're very helpful and help us get things done."

Mitchell, at 80 years old, competes in swimming events: 50-yard butterfly stroke; 100-yard and 200-yard individual medley; and three backstroke events, in-

cluding the 50-yard, 100-yard and 200-yard.

**“**  
I believe that swimming is the best conditioning sport for people my age.  
**”**

WILLIAM MITCHELL

Competing in the Olympics for 12 years, he also is involved on the administrative side and has served on the NMSO Board of Directors for four years.

He works with the Albuquerque City Park's Senior Sport Foundation and encourages senior citizens to get active in sports programs. He also is active with the New Mexico Veterans Memorial Park programs.

Mitchell's wife, Gloria, had her hand in the games in the past, competing in the field events, including

the discus, javelin and shot put.

She had to give up Olympic competition because she injured a knee in a broad-jump competition, but it turned out to be a godsend.

"One fortunate thing about the knee injury was that while treating it, the doctors discovered that she had bone cancer," he said. "And they have been able to clear it up."

Mitchell never faltered in his participation in the games, and even took home one silver and three bronze medals in the National Senior Olympics swimming events. He is looking forward to the Las Cruces contests to keep up his competitive-style of swimming and to maintain his good physical condition.

"I believe that swimming is the best conditioning sport for people my age," he said. "I had recovered from colon cancer in 2005, and the doctors felt that I recovered because of my good physical condi-

### William Mitchell

Age: 80

Profession: Retired contractor with the Department of Energy

Events: 50-yard butterfly stroke, 100-yard and 200-yard individual medley and three back-stroke events – 50-yard, 100-yard and 200-yard

How I make a difference: "I feel that by competing at my age, I offer an example to other seniors that they can do the same thing."



tion from swimming. I even kept swimming through chemotherapy. But I had to give up softball because it was getting to be a little too much."

He firmly believes the Olympics competition makes a difference in senior citizens' life styles.

"I think that it gives them incentive and motivation," he added. "I exercise frequently to keep myself in shape. My story sets a good example for senior citizens my age."

Mitchell is retired from a mixed career of military and business. He retired from his last job with Jacobs Engineering of Pasadena, Calif., after working in Albuquerque for 13 years in scheduling, budgeting and cost performance.

He earned a master's degree in business administration at Syracuse University. Before he moved

to Albuquerque, he worked for Computer Science Co. in the Washington, D.C., area.

He graduated in 1952 from the West Point Military Academy and served 23 years in the Army. He became interested in competitive swimming while he was at West Point, where he swam on an intramural team.

After his West Point graduation, he served mostly with the paratroopers and Green Beret Special Forces, which included two tours in Vietnam.

During the first tour, 1965 to 1966, he served with an infantry combat division, and in the second, 1971 to 1972, he was with an advisory unit.

After his Vietnam service, he was awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart and Legion of Merit.

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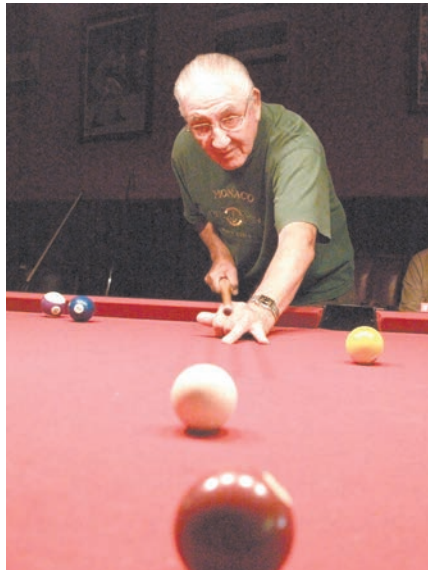
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# Jose Guzman

## 'The Baby' competes for the second year

From air gun to track to basketball, this Olympian does it all By Beth Sitzler

"You don't stop playing because you grow old, you grow old because you stop playing," is the motto of the New Mexico Senior Olympics and a great way to describe its participants.

Just last year, at the age of 50, Jose Guzman decided to see this for himself when he participated in the 2008 NMSO Summer Games.

"I get a kick out of meeting the seniors," he said. "Some of them still act like they're teenagers."

Guzman's athletic career began when he played high school football, basketball and track in Deming, N.M.

"My favorite sport was track and field 100 and 200 (meter) and the relays," he said. "Now, my favorite (sport) is horseshoes because you don't have to run and be in shape as much."

He joined the Marine Corps in 1976, which allowed him to remain active. After he was discharged in 1979, he moved back to New Mexico and attended New Mexico State University, where he received his associated degree in computer electronics.

He moved to Alamogordo, N.M., in 1988 and began working with the New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum for the Department of Cultural Affairs. After 25 years, and a whole lot of commuting, Guzman retired in 2006.

He didn't stay retired for long, and soon began a second career with the Department of Cultural Affairs, but this time with the State Monuments division. Little did he know that his job would lead to greater things.

During a work-related trip to the northern part of the state, Guzman met a man that was training for the Senior Olympics. After discussing the games, Guzman attended a few NMSO meetings and decided to give participating a shot.

In his first year competing, he won gold medals in both air gun pistol and rifle as well as basketball 3-point shot, a silver medal in horseshoes, a bronze in the 100-meter track event and a fourth place ribbon in the 200-meter track event.

He has qualified for the National Senior Games in the San Francisco Bay area in August, but is unsure if he will attend.

"As long as I'm not injured (after the Summer Games) and in good health, I'll attend," he said.

After such a successful first year, he is back for the 2009 NMSO Summer Games, and will compete in rifle and pistol air gun, 100- and 200-meter track run, basketball

### Jose Guzman

**Age: 51**

**Profession: Works for Department of Cultural Affairs**

**Events: Air gun pistol and rifle, 100 and 200 meter run, basketball free throw and 3-point shot**

**How I make a difference: "I keep myself in good shape by competing and enjoying life."**

free throw and 3-point shot.

Sadly, because of scheduling conflict with the freestanding air gun events, he will not be able to participate in his favorite event, horseshoes.

Guzman said he admires people in their 80s who still compete, adding that he wants to follow in their footsteps and continue to stay active and healthy and meet new people.

"I encourage all people over the age of 50 to participate. It's not all about competing, it's about interacting," he said.

Along with the competition, the games offer Guzman friendship and even the playful nickname "The Baby," which he received from his 90-year-old competitors.

"Here I'm 50 years old with two kids going to college and they call me the baby," he said.

The theme of this year's Summer Games is "Making a Difference." For Guzman, the games make a difference by helping him and all its participants remain healthy, active and happy.

"I see a difference in my health from a couple years ago," he said. "I couldn't do what I do now."

While he isn't sure how long he will be able to run track, he is determined to remain healthy like his 80-year-old competitors.

"I do it for health and not so much for the competition," he said. "I am competitive though. I go out 110 percent."

In addition to participating in the games, Guzman is also a member of the Alamogordo Performing Arts Center and is on the New Mexico Humanities Council.

"I've always loved the performing arts," he said. "I want to show off the talent we have here in southern New Mexico."

He and his wife Adelina have been married for 27 years. They have two children, Gina Marie, 25, and Jose Jr., 21.

# Gloria Analla

## From organizing to participating

NMSO board member takes on more sports each year By Jenna Frosch

Each year that Gloria Analla participates in the New Mexico Senior Olympics, she adds another sport to her arsenal of athletics. She began with archery, moved on to horseshoes and air rifle, and is now part of the recreational events including the soccer kick and softball distance throw.

Analla began her NMSO career shortly after becoming a volunteer at the Isleta Pueblo Elderly Center. She became an administrative assistant in the organization, and began working for the prevention of health issues among the reservation's aging population. As a part of the program, she became more involved in the sports she always enjoyed.

"As a kid growing up, I used to play horseshoes with my uncle," Analla said.

Working at the center allows Analla the freedom to participate in various activities for seniors, and the 61-year-old stays active by walking, doing step aerobics, biking and hiking, among other hobbies.

"There's a lot of stress in the world, so at some point we need to do something for ourselves," Analla said. "Seeing our elders, I want to do more for them and with them. Right now, our mission is to actively recruit people in our communities to be more active."

Before joining the staff at the center, Analla worked for the Johnson-O'Malley Program, an assistance program for American Indians enrolled in public schools, for 17 years as the director of education for students attending Albuquerque Public Schools. Her focus was on keeping the Native American students active in their education and giving them the tools they needed to succeed.

Now, she is helping seniors do the same with their health.

"By getting more people involved and making them aware that being active is better for their health overall, I can help the seniors here," Analla said. "I really enjoy getting to know people of different nationalities and working with people's individual needs at the center."

Analla joined the NMSO board this year and attended her first meeting this spring. She said being a part of the NMSO is one of the best things she has done.

"It's not about the competition, but

getting to know the people around you," Analla said. "Being out there and a part of the activities and knowing what each one of us can do, it encourages others to participate and stay fit and healthy."

Although winning isn't the most important thing to her, she has walked away with several medals and opportunities to compete at the state and national level. This year, she will compete in the state games after winning first place in archery and qualifying for the national games in the San Francisco bay area. The competitors that score first, second and third place in the county competitions qualify for the national competition.

At the Isleta Pueblo, members of the community host All Indian Game Day where people from 19 elderly centers come together and host different events for various age categories, and participate in a banquet and social. This event allows Analla to practice her skills in the events in which she participates.

Right now, Analla is working with the 15 others who qualified for the national games from the Isleta Pueblo to raise money to be able to participate.

"We have a lot of talent from this area – and people competing in shuffleboard, bowling and archery," Analla said. "We have a lot of fun at the games."

### Gloria Analla

**Age: 61**

**Profession: Retired director of education, Johnson O'Malley, for 17 years; administrative assistant, Isleta Pueblo Elderly Center**

**Events: Archery, horseshoes, air rifle and recreational events**

**How I make a difference: "By getting people more involved and making them aware that being active is better for their health overall."**



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# 2009 Senior Olympics Summer Games Participants

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Verneta Elder  
Iva Elliott  
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Genevieve Garcia  
Willam Gassert  
Lucille Getz  
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Wally Hill  
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Alice Schwebke  
Niki Sharp  
Tanida Sheets  
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Robert Sherman  
Mark Shervanick  
Betty Silva  
Mary Smith  
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Bill Soules  
Merrie Lee Soules  
Eric Staley  
Bernita Stegall  
Ivan Stubbs  
Jane Taylor  
Mancill Taylor  
Robert Taylor  
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Leroy Thielman  
Larry Tominberg  
Anna Turbett  
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Dino Villani  
Salua Villani  
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Irene Wharton  
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Linda Mitchum  
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James Clark



Larry Johnson has been training in the Albuquerque mountains near his home to prepare for the National Games.



# New Mexican athletes gear up for National Senior Games

## Bay Area is next venue for Senior Olympians By Kristine Sandrick

More than 400 athletes from around the state will represent New Mexico at the biannual National Senior Olympic Games Aug. 1 through 15 at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. They will join more than 10,000 participants from across the country.

"Going to the national games is a lot of fun because you meet people that you've played before," said Kay Cheadle, gold medal shuffleboard winner from Roswell, N.M.

Based on statistics from past games, more than 35,000 visitors will make the trip to California counting athletes, family and friends, according to the National Senior Olympic Games website.

Las Cruces Oleta Salopek qualified for nationals by winning a blue ribbon in archery during the county and state games.

"In early January, I received notification from the National Senior Olympics that I could go - it makes me happy," she said. "I'll be shooting in the stadium at Stanford."

Salopek and a friend plan to drive to the Bay Area so Salopek doesn't have deal with flying and checking her Mathew's switch-back compound bow. She figures she'll be staring down the bull's eye on Aug. 5.

David Yepa, a 68-year-old runner from Jemez Pueblo, N.M., has been a Senior Olympian since 2003 and will be participating in the 800 meter and 1500 meter runs at the National Senior Olympics.

Yepa was rustling up cattle in Cuba, N.M., with horses neighing in the background, when the Bulletin reached him.

"I started running when I was in ninth grade, gave it up for awhile, but I run about four days a week. It's good exercise and it makes me feel happy," he said.

Yepa said he'll probably fly with fellow Olympians from the Jemez Pueblo - Tony Romero, javelin thrower, and Robert Shendo, shuffleboard pro.

"I'm pretty excited about running the track at Stanford University because I've seen it on TV and it's

a big stadium," he said.

Two shuffleboard athletes from Roswell, N.M. also heading to Palo Alto are Kay Cheadle and her partner, Ann Huff. This is Cheadle's eighth National Senior Olympics. "I was too young to participate 17 years ago, so I went to the games in San Antoine (sic) as a volunteer," she said.

Suffering from degenerative joint disease, Cheadle can't jump or run, so she took up shuffleboard, which doesn't require as much motion as it does "finesse."

"I'm hoping to go for the gold in both singles and doubles, and if I make the finals that will be fine. It will be nice just seeing the San Francisco area," she said.

Like most seniors from New Mexico, Cheadle will be flying to San Francisco. "I have my shuffleboard cue in a shotgun case," she said.

An 89-year-old cyclist from Albuquerque, Larry Johnson just came back from a ride up the Foothills Tramway when he returned a call to the Bulletin. "It's a good, stiff workout. I've been riding three days a week, a couple of hours at a time," he said. The former tri-athlete will be competing in four events on the roads west of Stanford University.

"I love the competition, and now I have to show these young guys how to race ... it takes a whole damn week to do those four events," he said.

Asked what kind of outcome he's anticipating at the National Olympics, Johnson laughed and said, "I've managed to win most of my events."

The National Senior Olympics is a non-profit member of the United States Olympic Committee dedicated to motivating senior men and women to lead a healthy lifestyle through the senior games movement.

“

I have my shuffleboard cue in a shotgun case

KAY CHEADLE, SENIOR OLYMPIAN

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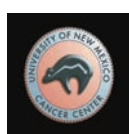
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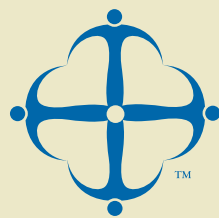
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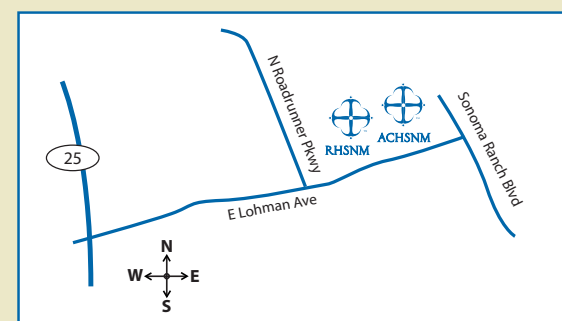
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