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OCTOBER 2015



Mount Vernon Gazette




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Senior Living 819 Compete in

Pickleball closes out two-weeks of Olympic events

By Emily Rabbit t
The Gazette

With more than 40 events ranging from Scrabble to shotput, the Senior Olympics was conducted across Northern Virginia at two dozen locations ranging from Loudoun County to Arlington and around Fairfax; 819 Northern Virginia seniors participated in this year's games.

Volunteers met with parks and recreation staff in Arlington County, the City of Alexandria, the City of Fairfax, Fairfax County, Falls Church, Loudoun County, Fauquier County, and Prince William County nearly year-round to plan and execute the games.

Pickleball singles at the Thomas Jefferson Recreation Center in Arlington was one of the final events concluding the two-week Northern Virginia Senior Olympics on Sept. 25.

Volunteer Irene McDonnell explained the appeal of pickleball: "Tennis players love to switch to pickleball when they've had a few joints replaced."

Judy Aw started that way: "I was a tennis player, but after I had rotator cuff surgery I wasn't able to serve overhead. My neighbor plays pickleball, so that's how I started." Aw took first prize in the over 60 age group, and talked with her opponent, Charlotte Hicks, at length after their match, trading information on their favorite places to play. Pickleball combines

the challenge and athleticism of tennis in a badminton-sized court with wooden paddles similar to table tennis. The ball used is akin to a wiffle ball. Depending on the players, it can look like leisurely volley, or a heated court battle.

Alease Brooks and Betty de la Cruz, both of Arlington, faced off for the 80 and up singles competition, but earlier in the week they took the gold for doubles together. Brooks loves pickleball, walking, and anything else that gets her out and moving around. On exercising into her golden years Brooks said, "It's done wonders for me — it keeps my mind clear, gets me doing things for other people. I don't take any medication but an aspirin. Exercise is the key to everything. Do it while you can, that's what I say."

USA Pickleball Association Mid-Atlantic Ambassador Helen White can't say enough about the game. A court sport enthusiast who splits her time between facilitating pickleball and basketball for all ages and especially the 50 and up set, White is passionate about finding ways for mature adults to play — from piloting a seated pickleball league for patients at Walter Reed to lobbying to get underutilized outdoor courts lined for pickleball use. She's always advocating that senior citizens and pickleball are a great match.

"It's a great way to stay active, have fun, get some fitness, and make friends," White said, pointing out that it's a relatively low cost sport to get involved with, with paddles costing \$15 and up, depending on the seriousness of one's level of play. Senior centers and community centers across Northern Virginia include accessible options for people to partici-



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NVSO Gold Medalists

Bridge, Cribbage, Mah Jongg, Scrabble, Wii and Ten Pin Bowling

Gold medal winners in duplicate bridge, cribbage, Mah Jongg, scrabble, Wii bowling and ten pin bowling, which took place during the 2015 Northern Virginia Senior Olympics, Sept. 12-25: **Duplicate bridge** winners of gold medals are (North-South Pairs), Lucy McCoy, Annandale, Martha Lackey, McLean; (East-West Pairs), Carol Aitken, Sterling, Fern Wallmer, Potomac Falls. Winner of a gold medal in **cribbage** was Mark Wever, Springfield, and in **scrabble**, Jennifer Frum, Arlington.

Wii bowling gold medalists were (women) 60-69, Fran Dudick, Arlington, 70-79, Sara Mason, Springfield, 80-89, Helen Mool, Springfield, 90-99, Vivian Mitchell, Springfield; (men) 60-69, Joseph Simpson, Alexandria, 70-79, Ed Ladd, Potomac Falls, 80-89,

Lawrence Earl, Springfield, and 90-99, Henry Stawicki, Burke. (Note: 99-year-old Ray Kaminski, Springfield, won a silver medal.)

Gold medalists in **10 pin bowling** were (women), 65-69, Audrey Huthwaite, Springfield, 70-74, Sandra Graves, McLean, 75-79, Lourdes Rosales, Reston, 80-84, Barbara Williams, Herndon, 85-89, Winnie Tegge, Alexandria, 90-94, Eve Sorensen, Alex; (men) 60-64, Allan Dosik, Arlington, 65-69, Edward Dizon, Springfield, 70-74, Jesse Barron, Woodbridge, 75-79, Marvin Smyth, Woodbridge, 80-84, Robert Layne, Springfield and 85-89, Leonard Kalkwarf, Springfield.

Basketball, Eight & Nine Ball Pool
 Basketball free throws, field goals and 3 on 3 games took place at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center in Arlington as part of the 2015 Northern Virginia Senior Olympics. Eight ball pool and nine ball pool (new event) were

Local Senior Olympics



Above: Judy Aw of Falls Church takes gold as Charlotte Hicks looks on for 60-plus pickleball singles.

Photos Contributed



Alease Brooks (left) and Betty de la Cruz, both of Arlington, take the gold medals in 80-plus pickleball singles.

held at The Revolution Darts & Billiards Grille in Fairfax.

Gold medalists in **free throws** were (women) 50-59, Erin McKenney, Annandale, 70-79, Mary Lou D'Alessandris, Falls Church, 80-89, Sheila Gildea, McLean; (men) 50-59, Philip Martinson, Fairfax, 60-69, Robert Smith, Gainesville, 70-79, Peter McGuirk, Arlington, 80-89, George Arvan, Fairfax. **Field goals** gold medalists were (women), 50-59, Erin McKenney, Annandale, 70-79, Mary Lou D'Alessandris, Falls Church, 80-89, Sheila Gildea; (men), 50-59, Peter Martinson, Fairfax, 60-69, Sam Slowinsky, Gainesville, 70-79, Allan Kellum, McLean, 80-89, George Arvan, Fairfax.

Four men's **basketball teams** competed. Winning gold medals were 50-59, Metro All Stars, Richard Suggs, Alexandria, Charles Harris, Alexandria, George Hall, Woodbridge, Adrian Lewis, Quantico, Eugene Thomas, Woodbridge, Jose Lechuga, Dumfries; 70+, Virginians, Paul Peck, McLean, Peter Stackhouse, Alexandria, Sam Kountoupes, McLean, Peter McGuirk, Arlington and Leonard Upson, Washington.

Record-Breaking Registration

"For the fourth year in a row, the Northern Virginia Senior Olympics can report a substantial increase in registration," said Northern Virginia Senior Olympics chairman David Jerome of Burke.

The total registration is 815, up from 772 in 2014 and up from 75 in 1982, when the event first started.

The opening ceremony of the 2015 Northern Virginia Senior Olympics, Saturday, Sept. 12, took place at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center, in Arlington. Taking part in the opening ceremonies were T.C. Williams High School Army JROTC Color Guard, Alexandria; Debbi Miller, 2013 Ms. Senior America-Virginia, who sang the National Anthem; and torch bearer, Dr. Charles Toftoy, Arlington.

Mary Hughes Hynes, Arlington County Board chairman, welcomed athletes from the sponsoring jurisdictions. Jerome recognized William Bouie, chairman, and Ken Quincy, vice chairman, Fairfax County Park Authority and Jennifer Collins, acting program manager, Office of Senior Adult Programs, Arlington's Department of Parks and Recreation plus gold and silver sponsors who support and promote NVSO throughout the year.

Winning gold medals in **eight ball pool** were (women) 50-59, Danita Moses, Alexandria, 60-69, Shelly Wade, Arlington, 80-89, Elizabeth Roadcap, Ashburn; (men) 50-59, Mike Moon Fairfax, 60-69, Carroll Howard, Leesburg, 70-79, Clifford Nolan, Bristow, 80-89, Joseph Clement, Springfield; **nine ball pool**, (women) 60-69, Shelley Wade, Arlington, 80-89, Edwina Shelahl, Arlington; (men) 50-59, Kevin Cooper, Fairfax, 60-69, Vic Bukowski, Fairfax, 70-79, James Westray, Arlington and 80-89, Joseph Griffin, Springfield.

Handball, Racquetball and Pickleball

The Audrey Moore Recreation Center, Annandale, was the site of the 2015 **handball and racquetball** competition in the 2015 Northern Virginia Senior Olympics. Three days of pickleball competition was held at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center in Arlington.

For more results, see www.connectionnewspapers.com

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Senior Living

It Takes a Village

Local groups help seniors socialize, manage everyday tasks.

By Marilyn Campbell
The Gazette

When Penelope Roberts, 73, of Alexandria, Virginia, had knee replacement surgery last month, she knew she would be out of commission for several weeks. Although Roberts is divorced and doesn't have any children, she had a network of support in place to drive her to medical and physical therapy appointments, pick up prescriptions and even return a library book.

Several years ago Roberts joined At Home In Alexandria (AHA), a local not-for-profit group, built on the "village" model of community-based aging. Villages are membership-based, nonprofit organizations, run by both volunteers and paid staff, that offer access to services from a network of volunteers like technical support, household maintenance and repairs, social activities and educational opportunities.

Need a new light bulb in your dining room chandelier? Want to see a play or discuss Jane Austen? A village volunteer can help.

"I bought patio furniture and after I struggled for an hour-and-a-half putting together one chair, a volunteer came out and put together all of my patio furniture in almost no time," said Roberts. "These are small things, but if you can't do them for yourself, you want to feel that you can call upon somebody and not feel embarrassed about it."

AHA is one of more than 48 villages around the Washington, D.C., area, according to the Washington Area Villages Exchange (WAVE). The movement, which began in Boston in 2002 with Beacon Hill Village, is on the rise as more seniors express desires to remain in their homes and communities as long as possible.

Volunteers offer services like home repairs and maintenance, transportation, social health and wellness programs, social and educational activities, and fulfill other day-to-day needs, enabling individuals to remain connected to their communities throughout the aging process.

Patricia Sullivan, interim operations manager for Arlington Neighborhood Villages, reports that the organization is growing and

"We can work on a leaky faucet or short-term pet care, we can take care of short-term plant watering needs."

— Cele Garrett, executive director of AHA

adding services at a slow but steady and deliberate pace. In fact, two new services were added in August, "Walking Buddies" and "Friendly Vis-

tors."

"With the walking buddy service, members can request a volunteer who can take a walk with them around their neighborhood. We had one member who is blind request someone to walk with her and her service dog," said Sullivan. "With the friendly visitors service, a volunteer goes over to someone's house to spend time with them. There was one instance where a volunteer went over to a member's house to

watch a football game with him."

The Fairfax County Long Term Care Coordinating Council provides guidance to those in the county who are interested in setting up villages. Interest in the village concept is on the rise in the county.

"We're definitely seeing growth," said Patricia Rohrer, Village Liaison with the Fairfax County Health Department. "I'm seeing a kind of shift where at one time people came together on their own to form a village, now community associations and other similar groups are becoming interested in the village concept and adding it on as a component of their existing organizations."

"We can work on a leaky faucet or short-term pet care, we can take care of short-term plant watering needs," said Cele Garrett, executive director of AHA. "If they need IT support or if they're trying to get



Photo courtesy of At Home In Alexandria
Tom Crowley, Christena Nielsen and Jack Clopper enjoy an At Home in Alexandria picnic.



Photo courtesy of At Home In Alexandria
Ruth Arnold and May Adams join other At Home in Alexandria members at a recent luncheon at a local Virginia restaurant.

Details

For more information about local aging villages:

- Arlington Neighborhood Villages: <http://arlnvil.org>
- Alexandria: www.athomeinalexandria.org/
- Washington Area Villages Exchange (WAVE): wavevillages.org
- Fairfax County: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/ltccc/villages.htm
- Mount Vernon at Home Village: www.mountvernonathome.org

their DVR set up ... we can help with that." Garrett says the Washington-area has the highest concentration of villages in the country.

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS are one of the most vital aspects of village communities. "It's really important for people not become isolated if you want to maintain a healthy outlook on life," said Sheila Moldover, communications chair, Potomac Community Village in Potomac, Maryland. "Social connections add flavor to your life."

In fact, village officials name the social component as one of the most important aspects of their programs. "Our members want to get out and meet people and enjoy themselves," said Roberts. "That is a critically important role that we play."

Activities include trips to local museums, performances, concerts, and lunch and dinner engagements. For example, the Lake Barcroft Village in Fairfax County, Virginia, hosted an author talk with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Pat Sloyan, who discussed his book, "The Politics of Deception: JFK's Secret Decisions on Vietnam, Civil Rights and Cuba." Later this month, the Arlington (Virginia) Neighborhood Villages Opera Buffs group is hosting a happy hour and discussion of Verdi's "Othello."

THE SERVICES OFFERED vary from village to village and are tailored to meet the specific needs of the local community. For example, in Mount Vernon, transportation is a concern. Barbara Sullivan, executive director of Mount Vernon at Home says that her volunteer drivers provide an average of 100 rides to seniors each month.

"There are virtually no sidewalks and there are hills," said Sullivan. "Transportation is a huge issue for seniors who want to stay in their homes and remain active."

"One day soon we'll be making requests for the same help that we provide," said Steve Nelson of Del Ray, Alexandria, an AHA volunteer. "We've met such incredibly terrific and fascinating people that we never would have met otherwise. That's a great motivator."

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