

THE LONG RUN



National Senior Games Association Official E-Newsletter



2023 | January Edition

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ASSOCIATION NEWS

Astronomical 2023 Personal Best: Making Space for Sports



The NSGA Personal Best athlete feature series, now in its tenth year, exemplifies the many ways that athletes find their path to ongoing fitness and well-being. This time, the story takes us into space with multisport athlete Larry DeLucas, a bioresearch scientist and optometrist who beat out 50 other astronaut hopefuls and launched into space to conduct his experiments onboard Space Shuttle Columbia in 1992.

Enjoy our edited conversation where Larry explains the nature of his research, the grueling astronaut selection process, and his overriding love of sports, especially basketball, that kept him in good shape to be selected and then endure the astronaut training. Larry is a good storyteller and shares some interesting memories and perspectives.

[Larry DeLucas – 2023 Personal Best](#)

ABOUT THE NSGA E-NEWSLETTER

Greetings! Welcome to *The Long Run* monthly e-newsletter where you will be provided with NSGA Association News, National Games Updates, Athlete Features and Health and Well-Being Information. Be sure to check our website, www.NSGA.com, for the most up-to-date information.

NSGA QUICK LINKS

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GAME ON!

2023 Pickleball Registration Begins Monday, Jan. 16th



Registration for the 2023 National Senior Games presented by Humana continues to pick up as most State Games results have now been submitted and verified. Pickleball registration opens tomorrow for the massively-popular sport that maxed out court capacity for the 2022 Games. “Because of the high likelihood of pickleball filling up quickly again, we delayed opening this sport’s registration until all of the qualifying games results were in,” NSGA Interim CEO Sue Hlavacek said. “We need to ensure this is a fair process for the athletes.”

You can check qualifying results status for every state on the Registration Page by clicking on the blue box to get real-time verified information.

2023 Quick Links:

- [Registration Page](#)
- [Competition Schedules](#)
- [Sports Pages](#)
- [Rule Book](#)
- [Hotels and Lodging Page](#)

Village Vendor Opportunities Available for the 2023 National Senior Games

Promote your brand, product or service to the nation’s top senior athletes in 2023. The NSGA offers a variety of exciting vendor and sponsorship opportunities at the National Senior Games in Columbus and Pittsburgh. For detailed information and pricing, please email Business Development.



**Softball Tournament
Columbus, Ohio
May 3-7, 2023**



July 7-18, 2023

Book your room with
Team Travel Source for a chance to
WIN A MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE FOR TWO!



Venue Spotlight: Bowling

Mt. Lebanon Lanes is an AMF facility that sits about 20 minutes south of downtown Pittsburgh. It features 52 lanes, a pro shop, arcade, grill and full-service bar. The venue is fully wheelchair accessible and will accommodate our non-ambulatory division competitors. All 52 wood lanes will be available for the Senior Games, and a house shot will be used for all competition. Parking is plentiful and free for all players and spectators.



[Visit their website here.](#)

Brew Masters and Friendly Spirits

Continually ranked as a best city for beer drinkers by *SmartAsset*, Pittsburgh's craft beer scene is booming. In fact, *American Craft Beer* referred to Pittsburgh as a "craft beer destination" in 2021, and *Fodor's Travel* included the region in its 2021 Best Craft Beer Cities list. Thanks to the more than 50 craft breweries and award-winning distilleries throughout the Pittsburgh region, visitors can easily find high quality, thirst-quenching beverages.

New to the scene in 2021, Nercromancer Brewing Co. in Ross Township and Trace Brewing in Bloomfield made an immediate impact, as both were named to Hop Culture's nationwide Best New Breweries list.

The Pittsburgh Brewers Guild makes it easy for visitors to explore the many area breweries with the Pittsburgh Brewery Guide. The guide includes details like outdoor seating, pet-friendly designations and menu offerings along with a brief



Recently, Aurochs Brewing Co.'s Hazy IPA and Amber Ale earned gold and silver medals in the 2021 U.S. Open Beer Championship, and Cinderlands' Gregg scored a gold at the 2021 Great American Beer Festival. Other award-winning brews, including Church Brew Works' Pious Monk Dunkel, Helltown Brewing's Mischievous Brown and Brew Gentlemen's General Braddock's are among the many quality beers visitors will find in the city.

Visitors will find no shortage of unique brewery options in Pittsburgh. Penn Brewery, the oldest and largest craft brewery in Pittsburgh, specializes in German-style beers brewed in the tradition of German immigrants, while Strange Roots Experimental Ales Brewery is a unique style brewery that specializes in foraged ingredients, spontaneous fermentation and experimentation.

background on each brewery. Seven suggested trails are geared to help plan excursions to various areas of the city.

Craft beer culture is celebrated in Pittsburgh, and the city's craft beer community is garnering national attention for promoting inclusivity. A 2021 article in *Forbes* said Pittsburgh is "leading the world in brewery diversity and inclusion." From Barrel & Flow Fest, the nation's first Black brew festival, to the Pittsburgh Brewery Diversity Council, Pittsburgh's craft breweries are a welcoming, diverse community.

Pittsburgh also boasts several local distilleries that have perfected the art of a friendly drink. Learn about Pittsburgh's unique spirits history at Wigle Whiskey, the first distillery in the City of Pittsburgh since Prohibition, in the Strip District. Neighbors include Kingfly Spirits and Allegheny Distilling, creators of Maggie's Farm Rum, the first commercially available, Pennsylvania-made craft rum since Prohibition.

Learn more about Pittsburgh's craft beverage scene at [VisitPITTSBURGH.com](https://www.visitpittsburgh.com).

JANUARY ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

Gene Berg, 70

Margaret Berg, 61

Litchfield, New Hampshire

Pickleball + Airstream = A Lovely Way to Play

By Del Moon

Many senior athletes travel to multiple events each year to enjoy the competition and

camaraderie. Noticing a shiny Airstream travel trailer with New Hampshire plates glinting in the sun at the 2022 Georgia Golden Olympics reminded us that some go the RV route and travel in style. We had to find the owners.

Turns out Gene and Margaret Berg are just what you would imagine a traveling couple to be like – friendly, inquisitive, good humored and passionate about life. In this case, pickleball fuels the passion.

“We make a very odd couple,” Gene says. “She looks fantastic in tennis wear and I’m a lumpy sort of guy.”



“It was time for us to do something together, and we both love sports,” Margaret adds, apparently agreeing with his appraisal. “Gene really wanted to do pickleball and we loved it in an instant. I think he loves it more but I enjoy playing and really love meeting the people.”

Both are previously married and have six children between them. They got together 16 years ago and married in 2012. Both love sports - field hockey, racquetball and cheerleading are in Margaret’s history, and Gene played squash in school and played adult hockey up until 2019. Both had busy careers, hers with the IRS and Gene as an orthopedic surgeon. As retirement approached they felt the need to refocus.

“Our lives were centered around youth sports,” Gene notes. “When the kids left for college we missed chasing them around all the time. I told Margaret we better find something good for us.”

“Litchfield had two indoor courts and we borrowed equipment and learned there in 2014,” Gene continues. “We played our first tournament one year later and haven’t slowed down since.” With state senior games in New England closely located, they got to know many people in the region and even hosted a party for out of staters when the New Hampshire games were near their hometown.

The Airstream came in 2018 when Gene retired. “I qualified for the 2017 and 2019 National Senior Games, but I was still working and could not take that much time to play three events,” he explains. “When I retired we looked at each other and said, ‘Let’s play the other states.’”

The couple has checked off 22 so far. “We try to plot and plan when games take place and

what's along the route," Gene says. "We have a lot of states left to hit, especially out West. We'd also like to play all the Canadian provincial games."

When they finally got to the 2022 National Senior Games, the 3.0 rated couple did not medal. "We got smoked in mixed doubles," Gene admits. "But she's two age groups younger than I am so I play at her level. But otherwise it was like old home week really because we saw people we played with in the state games."

The two also joke about giving marriage counseling to couples who play together. "When it's competitive neither of us is very demure, so when we are not winning friction can occur," Gene says diplomatically. Margaret adds, "When you're partnering with a stranger you're nicer about a missed shot. When you're married, that doesn't necessarily happen. We all laugh about that. Besides, I can hit him with a paddle and no one will say anything!"

Two competitive types traveling long distances in tight spaces might test a relationship, but they report it's been a smooth ride. "The camper is our favorite spot, our little home on wheels," Margaret says cheerily. "Honestly, we never argue in it and love having our routines. I can cook our meals in it, and after dinner Gene might read a book and I'll go out to meet other campers. It's just so much fun."

Gene has a simpler equation for happiness on the road. "When we're traveling, I'm just obedient so there's few issues."

Obviously the element of love brought them together and continues to pave the road ahead. Gene will tell you he 'married up'. Margaret has her pet expression. "I tell people when I'm asked if I got a ticket for a big lottery prize and I say 'No, I used up all my luck when I met Gene!'"

[CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT YOUR ATHLETE STORY](#)

SENIOR HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Senior Games Movement: Be Well By Doing Good

By Andrew Walker, MPH; Director of Health & Well-Being

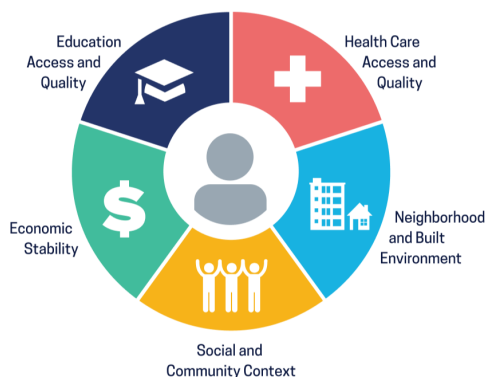
"The Champion of Economic Impact Award" for mid-size multi-sport events was recently awarded to National Senior Games by *Sports Travel* magazine for generating 30 million dollars in economic impact during the 2022 National Senior Games presented by Humana in Fort Lauderdale Florida.

In addition to economic impact, the Senior Games and other similar events yield additional

benefits to athletes, community, and society. Health impacts are generated through fitness, sport and public health programs. Volunteerism and community engagement can yield meaningful social capital.

Although social impact of sporting events can be difficult to assess, more event host and sports commissions are looking at social impact on participants and communities. In an article in a recent issue of *Sports Travel*, it was noted that the “next great study will be the one that figures out the cost savings for getting people moving.” The author of the article, Dr. Heather Gibson PHD of Ohio University, goes on to note the emerging number of sport commissions who are reshaping their views to include considerations of health and quality of life.

Social Determinants of Health



Social Determinants of Health
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Healthy People 2030

In recent years the health care system has paid more attention to the influence of social determinants of health (SDH). These are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. These forces and systems include economic policies and systems, development agendas, social norms, social policies and political systems which are important non-medical factors that influence health outcomes; especially ones regarding social norms.

Positive health impacts of qualified athletes in The Games are well documented by findings from several published reports by researcher Becca Jordre Ph.D., DPT, from our Senior Athlete Fitness Assessment (SAFE) project. Additionally, Dr. Jordre is leading a cross-sectional study with Hongdao Meng MD, and myself in analyzing results of a survey of qualified participants in the 2022 Games. Findings from the survey confirm results from the SAFE regarding the association between Games participation and positive health impact despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Positive trends in several areas such as physical activity, health habits, preventive health and quality life have emerged among over four thousand study participants. In addition to COVID-19 related findings, quality of life and social indicators from the study are closely connected to social impact.

NSGA will extend its social capital yields by building on recent community and athlete engagement efforts from the 2022 Games. This will be accomplished by leveraging partnerships with organizations including Fearless 261/Katherine Switzer, Art Of The Olympians (AOTO), United States Olympic and Paralympian Committee (USOPC), University Of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health and others. Exploring programming opportunities integrating social impact activities into our athlete and community engagement model for the 2023 National Senior Games

will be key to creating both short term impact and long term legacies in Pittsburgh this summer.

Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love. ~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

NSG OFFICIAL APPAREL

2023 National Senior Games Merchandise Available Online!

In case you missed it - 2023 National Senior Games merchandise is now available from the NSGA Online Store. You can also check out limited items from the 2022 Games!

Get in gear - [Click here for the NSGA Online Store.](#)



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NSG SPORT PARTNERS



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