

Trail Blazer plus Peter's story about MSO records
Fall Newsletter – 2017

It's not too early to begin making plans for the upcoming 33rd Annual Montana Senior Olympic Games being held in Pablo, Polson and Ronan on June 14 – 16, 2018. Those of you who entered our 2017 games are well aware of the beautiful Flathead scenery plus their fine athletic facilities. Thanks to the wonderful group of commissioners and volunteers who conducted our games. Another new feature in 2017 was the opportunity to register on line by using the program, Fusesport. We are hoping that more of you will use Fusesport in 2018 as it simplifies the registration process for you and makes it easier for medal winners to be submitted to the national office on this the qualifying year. If you do not own a computer, your local library or senior center probably can assist you with your entry. Watch for your entry books that will be mailed out in the early spring and available on our web site as well. If you have received this newsletter, we will be sending your entry book to this address. The post office will not forward entry books to snow birds. Sports that will be offered for competition include Archery, Basketball, Bowling, Cycling, Golf, Horsehoes, Pickleball, Racewalk, Road Race, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis, Track & Field and Badminton (badminton will be held in Bozeman). Please, read your entry book carefully as it contains valuable information that will enhance your participation and alleviate frustration at the games. The same information will be included on line so take the time to search it out if you enter with Fusesport and without an entry book. Entries will close about three weeks before the start of the games so that commissioners and coordinators can plan competition schedules, order supplies, etc. There is no on - site registration at the games. Our games will serve as the qualifier for the National Senior Games in Albuquerque in 2019. Check the NSGA website (www.NSGA.com) for preliminary information. New Mexico has a wonderful senior program and they are happy to be hosting the upcoming games. Most of our medal winners will be eligible to enter those games and compete with seniors from all around the country.

Thanks to our wonderful sponsors and coordinators who chose to support you the athlete as well as our organization. Sponsors included Kalispell Regional Health, Platinum; Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Gold; Bozeman Health Care, Providence St Joseph Medical Center, Kalispell Rehab, Silver; The Peaks Independent Living Facility in Ronan, Humana Insurance, Ozog Eye Care, Big Sky Wind Drinkers (Bozeman Running Club), and First Interstate Bank, Bronze. They all agree that keeping seniors active is necessary for a healthier happier life. Sponsors help to pay our operating costs. We are so grateful for their support. Our games directors are again Beth Trosello and Monty Marengo both from Polson. They made and carried out plans at the local level and were assisted by Linda Greenwood and Doug Schmidt. Support also came from the local Year Round Recreation Committee. Meals were prepared by the VFW and Eagles Lodge both from Polson. Jonne Shearman again served as registrar and coordinator of all games preparations. Tom Hayes, from Polson and Bozeman, continued to serve as Web Master and handled results as well. Charles Widdicome from Missoula keeps our Facebook page current. If you have pictures, please, send them to him at widd@outlook.com. We appreciate all they did and are glad they will help us with the upcoming year.

The MSO Board will again be selecting our Outstanding Senior Athlete of the year award winner. This is presented to a senior who has participated in our games and persevered despite personal issues. If you know of such an individual, please, send a brief summary of their qualifications to me at kayjn3@gmail.com or mail the information to MSO at 2200 Bridger Dr. Bozeman 59715. Last year we selected two winners who were Richard Moore, a long time competitor in Golf and Bowling, and Lucy A. Keller, a swimmer, both were highly qualified candidates. They are from Missoula. Richard was also on the organizing committee when our games were last held in Missoula in 2005 and 2006.

News Notes About our Athletes: Tom Ferch from Bozeman , a frequent entrant in our MSO games, competed with his 76 year old team composed of players from around the country in Montecatini, Italy. There they won the FIMBA World Maxibasketball Championship. Teams competing in the tournament were from Russia, Chile, Brazil, Estonia and Latvia.

Congratulations to Tom and his teammates.

Mike Devaney from Globe, Arizona is about to attain his goal of competing in a Racewalk in all fifty of our states. He proved to be a strong competitor at our 2017 games when he participated in our 1500 meter event in Ronan. He said that the last two years have been the best of his life. He travelled from Alaska to Florida, Maine to Hawaii and all points in between, rising above a near death experience to compete in race walking in all but Vermont and North Carolina thus far. He has met many nice people and made some lasting friendships, life has been a great adventure. He also mentions that he would love to see more seniors get out and compete. Compete at ANYTHING – swim, run, throw, hit or shoot but MOVE. Travel, see and most of all live. Thanks for coming to Montana, Mike, we loved meeting you and hope you return.

It is with pleasure that we announce that our games in 2019 and 2020 will once again be held in Missoula with the leadership provided by their Parks and Recreation Committee. It would seem to be an ideal location especially with the addition of their new sports facility, Fort Missoula Regional Park. We are so privileged to be able to locate there. Thanks for their interest in our program for seniors.

In closing remember to keep moving. Staying active is very important. We look forward to seeing you next summer at the 2018 MSO Games.

2017- - -A RECORD-SETTING YEAR FOR SETTING RECORDS

by: Peter Charles Briant

Who made Montana history 2017. It might be you! If you weren't aware, both the back page of the recently mailed Summer Games "Results" booklet and the MSO Fuseport/Facebook page mark 2017 as a year of outstanding performances for many Montana senior athletes, with 58 event and activity records broken. These include 28 new records in Swimming, 23 in Track and Field, 5 in Archery, and 2 in Bowling. If you won a first place back in June, you may not know that you also set your event's age group record for Montana. Please visit these sources to see who made history.

Of interest to 2017 MSO T&F participants (and T&F athletes from previous years), a website called MastersRankings (www.mastersrankings.com) collects and ranks times and distances of senior athletes in the standard track and field events as reported from meets across the US and the world. WMA/ MastersRankings organizes the results by country, meet location, date, event, gender, age group, in/outdoors. Individual rankings tend to change after initial posting as the season progresses. In one sense, then, competition continues after the meet, until the last finish line is crossed.

As an example of how this works, an effort in early in April may exceed the established age-group All-American criteria, and at that time rank in the US Top 10, and World Top 20, but by late fall, while still an All-American effort, this same performance may be ranked several places lower as competitors elsewhere exceed that distance. The submitted statistics are not certified until scrutinized for the highest possible accuracy. Competitors whose final rankings are in the top 25 or top 10 qualify for certificates, as are qualified All-Americans.

Collecting and ranking senior track and field performances began as a US Track and Field Association (USATF) project started by Dave Clingan about 2003. Initially, the lists included just the Top 25 efforts. In 2006, John Seto took over site operations, upgraded the data base, and programmed the current website to list all participants world-wide. Thanks to John's diligent work, our local MSO efforts are much more meaningful because they can be readily compared to the efforts of many others. Many Senior Games competitors do not realize they are nationally or world ranked. Many are probably much more competitive than they realize. Below are listed some of the most outstanding efforts of Montana senior athletes thus far in 2017:

Mary Birgenheier-age 91- ranked #7 in discus, qualified for All-American

Alaete Fish-79- #11 in 50m dash; #13 in 100m run; #11 in 200m dash; #2 in long jump (All-American); #9 in shot put (All-Am.); #9 in discus (All-Am); #18 in javelin

Diane Page-66- #9 in shot put (All-Am); #4 in discus (All-Am); #1 javelin (All-Am)

John Rumney- 90- #4 in 50m dash; #3 in 100m dash

Ron Tilgener -71- #16 in triple jump (All-Am)

Charles Widdicombe-70- #8 in shot put (All-Am); #3 in discus (All-Am)

Alan Cress-55- #13 in discus (All-Am); #15 in hammer throw (All-American)