

## Athlete Stories

55-59

### Glasco, Wayne

The Senior Games has blessed my life. Let me explain. I come from a very competitive background. Football, baseball and wrestling were a significant part of my growing-up years. If I wasn't competing in an organized sport, I was competing in something, which was usually physical in nature.

Once my organized years of sports were over, I continued to pursue physical activities, but greatly missed the competitive component of organized sports. It wasn't until I had completed seven grueling years of earning my D.C. (doctor of chiropractic) degree that I seriously began considering a venue to satisfy my competitive desire.

I have always loved running—the faster, the better. It was during the growing-up years of competitive sports that baseball season conflicted with track-n-field season, so I never got the opportunity to challenge my potential as a sprinter. This left, what I would call, a void.

When I run fast/sprint, the rush of wind is exhilarating. I picture a race horse that, simultaneously, exhibits power and grace. This image provides the motivation I need to take sprinting to the next level. It also helps me endure the sprints, particularly the longer ones.

At the ripe age of 43, I was in my 15<sup>th</sup> year of private practice. I had remained “fit” and benefited from the regular, exceptional care from my brother (also a chiropractic physician and business partner). It was then I decided to compete in my first track-n-field meet (formerly Sooner State Games) in Sulfur, Oklahoma. Even though I medaled, I knew there was significant room for improvement. So, with the Senior Games already in my sights, I continued training and competing.

In many respects, I'm now in better condition than I was in my youth. I'm also sprinting faster than I did in my youth which is something I didn't anticipate at the age of 55. My motto of “train smarter, not harder” has had a tremendous influence on my success. Injuries tend to unnecessarily plague aging athletes, but the “train smarter, not harder” approach can eliminate injuries and enhance performance.

I'm now going on 29 years of private practice with my eye on the National Senior Games of 2021. Chiropractic has provided a unique perspective with regards to wellness and the extraordinary potential of the human frame. That's what the Senior Games is all about: wellness and harnessing potential, and all while having fun. It provides an outlet for anyone who desires a healthier and happier life. You *can* feel younger as you grow older!

So, how has the Senior Games blessed my life?

First and foremost, it's provided a venue to exploit the physical faculties God has blessed me with.

Second, it's created a special bond with my daughter (and training partner) as we've endured the hottest, coldest, and windiest days together. Her love, encouragement, and direction are priceless.

Third, it's helped me become a better chiropractic physician. As I face the challenges of an aging athlete, I'm better equipped to provide the care necessary to optimize the health of my aging patient population.

Fourth, training for the Senior Games is therapeutic and helps to manage stress and keep my body and mind sharp.

Fifth, I get to enjoy God's creation while training and competing in the elements of the great outdoors.

Sixth, it keeps me focused and goal-oriented in this world of meaningless distractions.

Seventh, as a college instructor in the biological sciences (i.e. nutrition, anatomy, physiology), I get to share my Senior Games experiences and moments with my students, grooming them to be healthy and productive for an entire lifetime.

Finally, it's allowed me to meet others with similar interests, creating lasting friendships and memories.

The Senior Games offers a variety of "games." As I consider retirement in the foreseeable future, I anticipate expanding my participation in the Senior Games. Beyond increasing my participation in track-n-field events, I'm considering events such as swimming, horseshoes, bowling, table tennis, and yes... even pickle ball.

I repeat, you *can* feel younger as you grow older!

## **Lampzey, Esther**

My name is Ester Lampzey and I am 58 years old. I was born and raised in Ghana, West Africa. I am a table tennis player. I was introduced to the game of table tennis by the late Mr D.G. Hathramani, an Indian table tennis coach in Ghana, when I was nine years old. I started representing Ghana in international competition at age 11 and became the African Champion at age 18. I am a level one table tennis coach and also an international table tennis umpire. I have represented my country in many international competitions and have won many honors for my country.

Table tennis has kept me in good health and helps me to look younger than my age. I am able to transfer the knowledge of the sport to my work as well as when I coach others. It keeps me active, alert, and safe and sound. It has helped me to be honest, respectful, and truthful. I thank God and also Mr. Hathramani, who trained me.

I arrived in the USA in 2016 as an immigrant. It was my daughter who filed for me. I was introduced to the Oklahoma Table Tennis Club by Winfred Addy, a table tennis player I knew from Ghana. I meet players like Linda, Tiffany, Kathleen, John and a lot more. I train with some of them and coach some of them. I assist Britt, the president, and coach the club on Saturdays to coach beginners both young and old. I have played in some competitions in the state and have won

medals. I represented the state in the 2019 senior games in Albuquerque and won silver medal in women's singles and I partnered with Linda in the women's doubles and won 4th position. Kathleen, Tiffany and Linda have been very nice and helpful to me. They are always ready to assist me with whatever I need. I am grateful to them and all the members of the club.

To be a good coach you must come to the level of the player and make the lesson as simple as possible to him or her. You cannot train a beginner and advanced player with the same skills. You also have to know the aim of the player: if he or she is playing for fun, if it is to represent the school or the state, or if it is to become an international or professional player. You must also have in mind that all the players are not the same. Some learn fast and others need more time. Lastly, to be a good coach, you must always put yourself in the position of the player.

## **Morgan, Linda**

### **How I Got Involved in Senior Games**

I was an athlete for as long as I can remember. In seventh grade I made the All-City Boys Basketball Team in Milpitas, California because of title nine and my natural abilities. In high school I continued with basketball, track and field, badminton, soccer, and softball. I continued competing while in the United States Air Force. I played basketball in England, Spain, Germany, Turkey and Greece. I loved travelling and competing. I became a softball umpire in Madrid, Spain and at Altus AFB in Oklahoma, and I traveled to umpire in Texas, too.

After my knee surgery in 1995 I was told I would never be able to compete again. I believed the hype, so I retired and started coaching my daughters YMCA basketball team then became like the team mom For Marcella's High School Track and Field Team, where I made sure the relay team always arrived at the meets on time and screamed for the team to run. I missed playing sports. I found out the Veterans Administration Hosted the annual National Veterans Golden Age Games (NVGAG) annually, but you had to be at least 55 to compete. My first set of games (NVGAG) was in 2016 when I turned 55. These games were held in Detroit, Michigan. I selected events that would have the least amount of impact on my knees. Boy did I select the wrong events. Horseshoes was the funniest and I tied for third place. Table tennis was a bust because the net had little squares that caused migraines, and nine-ball was definitely not for me. I was too strong for shuffleboard. I keep trying bocce ball but hadn't been successful. I came home thinking I wanted to do this again but maybe I had selected the wrong sports.

I went to the Will Rogers Senior Center and told the staff of my adventures. The staff encouraged me to contact Tim Rhoads and sign up for Oklahoma Senior Games (OSG). The OSG were coming up in September, so I signed up and tried different events. These events were: shuffleboard, bowling, horseshoes and field events. These games were great. I earned medals, and I met some really great athletes. All the retired P.E. teachers taught me to throw the discus, hammer, and the javelin. I already knew about the shot put. This was all I needed and I have been a senior athlete ever since.

In 2017, I went to the NVGAG in Biloxi, Mississippi and won medals in shot put, bowling, discus, and horseshoes. In 2017, I also went to the National Senior Games in Montgomery, Alabama where I won a bronze medal in horseshoes and an 8<sup>th</sup> place ribbon in shot put. That year I also competed in the Yukon Senior Games, winning five gold medals. In 2018, I traveled to Albuquerque, New Mexico; in 2019, I travelled to Alaska; but in 2020, due to the Covid-19 virus, the NVGAG games were held at home. I still medaled in three sports: basketball, discus and

javelin. I received four gold medals at the Oklahoma Senior Games. The medals were in hammer throw, shot put, discus, and javelin.

Now that I have the “Senior Games Bug” I am more active and compete in as many events as I can. In the summer of 2020, I even volunteered at the swimming events. Volunteering was great, and I also tell all seniors and veterans about the Oklahoma Senior Games. By volunteering I even found another sport I might be interested in the future called water walking.

## **Peuster, Peggy**

### **My Senior Olympics Story**

From what my mom tells me, it seems I started out as an athlete the moment my feet hit the floor! I was curious about life and about anything, whatsoever, I could get my hands on. I was on the move the moment I figured out what crawling was all about, and I got into everything, much to my mom’s dismay! My earliest memories are of climbing trees and trying to outdo my older sister and younger brother at whatever task they were attempting to accomplish.

My daddy worked in a bowling alley, so I got to do that anytime I wanted. I started learning even before the shoes fit, because I can remember bowling with only socks on my feet! I was easily trainable because I wanted to be the best at what I was doing! I soaked in instruction, and any and all advice that would make me the best athlete I could possibly be.

In grade school I could do just about anything as well as the boys. I could beat them at tetherball and I was always picked first, among the girls, when choosing sides for teams. I started playing softball when I was 10 years old. I played centerfield and third base, but I loved pitching the best. When I was 14, I went to our nearby mall where they were holding a pitching contest, and won first place in accuracy. I pitched nine out of 10 strikes in a row. As I got older the softball league coaches would call me before the leagues started to make sure they got me on their team.

I was a very shy, introverted athlete, but the moment I started playing ANY sport, I was laser-focused on what I was doing, so being around people and performing in front of them never made me nervous. I just zeroed in on the task set before me. Being an athlete gave me the confidence to look inside myself, and it has shaped the strong person I have become today—not just physically, but emotionally and spiritually, too. All I wanted to do was win and be the best at what I was competing at.

In middle school, I set many records in track and field competitions. They have since been broken but I know they held for several years. In high school, I played volleyball and had a pretty wicked overhand serve. I scored 15 straight points in a row, in which the receiving team could not return. I ended up lettering in that sport. However, when I graduated from high school, bowling became my number one love! When I was 16, I remember a few people were concerned about my wanting to bowl in an adult league. If I did, I could no longer go back to bowling in a junior league. I was not worried about that at all. I was better than a lot of the women in those adult leagues, and I could hold my own. At the age of 20, I knew, without a doubt, I wanted to be a pro bowler. I had people who were ready to sponsor me and I was averaging in the 200s, so I was well on my way.

If I had stayed focused on THAT instead of boys, I would probably be a pro bowler today. Unfortunately, when I was 21, I got pregnant. Back in the 70s it was almost “trendy” to get an abortion, but I refused to, and then I was further advised to just get married even though I had my doubts. (But, unfortunately, I did not have enough confidence then and allowed myself to be

persuaded to get married.) I had no friends or family encouragement to stay focused on bowling, and no stable, loving father figure in my life to keep said focus directed on my desire to bowl.

Now, I definitely give that important advice to all my grandchildren. I'm instructing them in what I lacked in order for them to succeed. I tell them to direct their attention on whatever interests them, to grow and mature in those things first, and to get to know who "they" are as a person. Getting married and having children can wait. If they don't, they'll likely live with regret and the consequences of rash, poor choices the rest of their lives. There's not a day that goes by when I don't think of "what might have been."

Being good at all the sports I played made me feel special, and it gave me the attention I needed because I was not the smartest person in school. I thought about becoming a P.E. teacher if bowling didn't pan out, but then I discovered you had to take classes in other courses, like advanced math and I would have failed miserably. Unfortunately, I did not pursue that after I got married and had my children. I did, however, stay focused on the things I could do to keep my body in shape and still be at the top of my bowling game, even if I didn't have the time or money to play all those other sports. I joined a health club and I won a free, lifetime membership, which included two hours of daycare three times a week! That was such a Godsend at the time. It made it easier to keep in shape when I was in my 20s and 30s. (I even bowled a 300 two days before my wedding day on September 26, 1998!)

When my dad died of cancer and his mom had been diagnosed with it as well, I knew I had to change a lot of my poor lifestyle choices. I was lying out in the sun way too much and eating a lot of junk food, so all that had to stop. I investigated in becoming a vegan, which I did, and started making better food choices. I couldn't believe how much healthier I felt after cutting out processed food and dairy as well. It was very difficult to be a vegan back then, but now there really are no excuses. The alternative foods to choose from are amazing, and the recipes for "live" food can be found everywhere. I even started making my own moisturizer and deodorant from scratch. I use lots of essential oils and herbs, so I am not on any prescription medicines. When you eat correctly, you build an amazing immune system and are never sick! People say I don't look a day over 45, and I turn 62 in April. I still weigh what I did when I graduated high school.

Now I do my own workout from home three times a week using light weights. Physically I still feel like I'm in my 30s, which I'm very happy about, so I can chase around and keep up with all 10 of my grandkids! I hope my lifestyle is an inspiration to them. I know they see other kid's grandparents and I don't look anything like them. I use to be really embarrassed about this, as I get curious looks from total strangers when my grandkids call out "Nana" to me! But now I'm learning to embrace it, because it's a special legacy that only I can leave to them. If a person can stay active and be consistent about it throughout their life, ageism is not really a thing you feel you need to deal with, or overcome. I have treated my body well and it has not let me down, so far. I still feel strong and vital. No one should be cast aside at ANY age. Everyone has something he or she can contribute to society and beyond.

Finding out about the Senior Olympics was amazing. My first year was 2016 and I participated in table tennis because I injured my finger in a skiing accident and couldn't bowl. I didn't place then, but the experience was amazing and I learned so much from it! The next time, in 2018, I did bowl and placed 4th. Having the opportunity to participate in Senior Olympics to showcase your talent helps you stay youthful and vital, and gives you something exciting to look forward to as you age. I can't tell you the number of people I have recommended it to! As long as I am able, I will continue on this course in order to be around for a long time to come.

I would love to have my story in AARP. In their most recent issue, they had an article showcasing women's rights, and how far we have come, as we celebrate the 100-year anniversary of winning the right to vote. We like to talk about doing all the right things when we are young. I'd like for people to say that I am living proof that consistent, dedicated work does pay off! Thank you for taking the time to read my story.

**Rice, Luke**

### **Ageism**

My name is Lucien Rice, and playing sports while growing up molded me into a team player. I graduated in May of 1981 from Thomas High School in Oklahoma, a small western town that has a great winning tradition in football and girl's basketball. During my time in school I participated in football, basketball, track, and summer league baseball. Playing sports was an outlet for me to let loose all of my pent up energy. While playing sports, I also learned a lifetime's worth of lessons about leadership, loyalty, perseverance, friendship, and especially teamwork.

For as long as I can remember I played catch with a football or baseball, hit a golf ball, and ran. These were key components for my introduction to being an athlete, which led to me having a successful school sports life. I had some great coaches, friends, and especially good sports moments. After graduation from high school, I continued playing sports and participated in the Oklahoma Sooner State Games in running. My favorites were the 3200 meter, five kilometer, and 10 kilometer races. In 1987, I enlisted in the U.S. Army and all of my learned and natural athleticism was needed to be successful and competitive in my career field. During my time in the Army, I was on several different winning softball, basketball, and running teams. I was also selected to be on teams that represented Army Posts in the annual Army 10 mile run.

After retirement from the U.S. Army, I continued playing sports and have now narrowed it down to golf. All of my years of service in the Army as well as my learned traits of being healthy have contributed my overall well-being, and I want to continue this mindset. I am a realist and know that there will be times of rejection, failure, questioning moments, and feelings of doubt, or anxiety. This is why I stay focused and trust in my learned sports fundamentals. Age is just a number— not a way of life.

To me, playing sports means the ability to have an influence on others who may not think that they are still competitive, and to improve their overall personal growth as a senior athlete. That is a big part for me to share my success as a Soldier and athlete. I want to see my fellow athletes succeed, and to show that we are dedicated athletes who still use and understand hard work, frustration, and disappointment. All of these are parts of a process of success. The athlete mindset cannot be taught—it must be experienced over and over again, so that it does not go away.

Senior athletes might not be able to run and jump with the same ferocity as a 20-year-old once past 50, but that doesn't mean we can't enjoy pursuing improvement or experiencing the challenge of physical activity. Being able to go as hard as you can is a lifelong privilege, even though our definition of "hard" changes. Being able to still participate in sports as I age is what makes the difference for me.

As an older athlete, I have some advantages over our sprightly competitors, and the big ones are mental toughness, resilience, and a general sense of personal composure, which is often out of reach for younger contestants. I have learned with time that self-perseverance, dedication, and being a mentor is a way to show how to be a true athlete. It's how I age and what I give back that makes the difference for me. I wished that younger athletes could have the attributes of an older athlete because it would make them stronger and faster. Senior athletes have more patience, eat better, and the ability to listen to their body. Senior athletes also have less stress due to family, career, and lifestyle. Senior athletes know themselves better, understand what confidence is—so I guess age does give some people the wisdom to be better at being athletes.