

Upcoming Events

18th Annual Hoops Classic Returns

HOPE Network's largest and most popular fund-raising event, the Hoops Classic, returns to the Galleria at Pittsburgh Mills in Tarentum, PA. This 18th annual festivity of 3-on-3 basketball will be held on Saturday, June 14th. It is a double elimination tournament, so all teams are guaranteed a minimum of 2 games. Some of the winners could go on to play as many as nine games in the day. All players on the winning team and runners-up will receive trophies. All players receive a collectible Hoops Classic t-shirt. Anyone over age 8 can play. Besides the games, there will also be special event contests that anyone attending the event can enter. These contests include the ever popular 3-point shootout, 2-man hot shot, and free throw shooting. New this year will be special clinics conducted by CRONS athletes. Basketball standout Brandon Fuss-Cheatham and Anthony Cheatham will provide individual skills analysis and instruction.

The Hoops Classic is a 3-on-3 competition but teams consist of either 3 or 4 players. It is a good idea to have that extra player available as a substitute. Refreshments will be abundant all day. To enter a team into the contest, pick up an entry form at local **Giant Eagle Get Go** and **Giant Eagle Express** stores, go on-line to hopenetwork-pa.org, or call the Hoops Classic Hotline at 412-826-2772 to request an entry form. Registration deadline is postmark by May 24th.

Major sponsors this year include UPMC Health Plan, Giant Eagle, AC Dellovade, American Beverage, CRONS, ESPN Radio, and FSN Pittsburgh.

Bring on your game! Come take in the action!

Winter Sports Expo

Are you sad because winter is over? HOPE Network will be conducting a winter sports expo, in conjunction with the Pittsburgh Mighty Penguins, the Pittsburgh Curling Club, and Robert Morris University Island Sports Center on Saturday, May 3, 2008. Sled hockey and curling demonstrations will occur throughout the clinic, in addition to the opportunity to actually try the hockey equipment on the ice and participate in a full demonstration of curling exercises and activities.

The Mighty Pens will face-off at 11AM against the Predators, after which, all clinic participants will be given the chance to score a few goals. The clinic will also include instruction and demonstrations by members of the Pittsburgh Curling Club, and snow skiing video and equipment display. So, if you have that competitive spirit and you love winter sports, this clinic is for you. Family and friends are also welcome to attend and participate. Call the Healthsports office for volunteer, registration, and/or sponsorship opportunities.

Ice time is being sponsored by: Healthsouth Harmarville Rehabilitation Center and Minuteman Press of New Kensington.

HOPE Network Joins Forces with the Armed Forces

On Saturday, July 19th, HOPE Network will partner with North Country Access Cycling (Northern New York's chapter of DSUSA), The Antique Boat Museum of Clayton, NY and The Universal Access Program of the Department of Environmental Conservation to provide water sports programs to disabled veterans. HOPE Network will be conducting the water skiing portion of the event, but many other activities are planned for the weekend, including sailing, rowing, fishing, riverboat tours, and rafting.

More information about the event can be found at www.ncaccess.org or by emailing northcountryaccess2008@gmail.com. For information regarding potential exhibitors, volunteers, or registration call 315-782-2838 or 315-686-4104.

HOPE Network's Summer Water Skiing Program

HOPE Network has been keeping a close eye on the Allegheny River to help determine when summer can officially start. We have determined that the official start for summer will be Thursday, June 26th. That is when we will hit the river with boats and jet skis to support anyone who is interested in learning to water ski. The program will run every Thursday from 5:30 PM until 8:30 PM.

Anyone interested in participating or volunteering must call the Healthsports office to register and to check availability for session of interest. Anyone interested in operating the jet skis must show proof of Pennsylvania state certification. The cost to ski \$25 and family and friends are welcome.

Wheelchair Softball Comes to the Burgh

HOPE Network, along with some assistance of the Pittsburgh Pirates Baseball Club, is bringing wheelchair softball to Pittsburgh. Plans are underway to start a competitive, traveling wheelchair softball team in the Pittsburgh area. The process will start with an informational clinic and demonstration. Anyone interested in playing, coaching, or volunteering should call the Healthsports office to get updated information on dates, times, and location of clinic, as well as, the status of game schedule.

HOPE Network Scholarship Program for Active Involvement in Sports/Fitness Activities

HOPE Network recently received a grant from WOMEN of Southwestern PA Inc. to develop a scholarship program for women with disabilities to become active in sports/recreation. The program will offer financial assistance to new, female participants who want to get involved with the Healthsports programs. Each applicant will be able to select individual programs of interest.

Scholarships will range in amounts from \$100 to \$200. Any adolescent or adult female with a disability interested in applying, please call the Healthsports office for an application.

Open Gym Night Returns

Starting Wednesday, April 17th, the gymnasium at HEALTHSOUTH Harmarville will be open from 5PM until 8PM for those individuals interested in pursuing the sport of basketball. Everyone is welcome and sports chairs will be provided. Please call the Healthsports office by the Tuesday prior to the session you plan to attend, so that proper arrangements can be made. These sessions will continue throughout the summer.

Juniors Sports Sessions

The Juniors Sports Sessions, also known as Super Saturday Sports, continues to grow in attendance and in sporting activities. The sessions are open to anyone up to age 19 who has a physical disability. Most activities are geared to wheelchair users. A variety of activities that are enjoyed include basketball, wifle-ball, floor hockey, quad rugby, basketball, racing, and beach ball volleyball. These activities are complimented by general stretching and exercise routines. All activities are performed in large group situations. Every one who attends is involved for the complete 2 to 4 hour session. And everyone must leave with a smile.

The Juniors Sports Sessions are held at The Children's Institute in Pittsburgh. Upcoming sessions will be held on March 29th, April 26th, May 17th, June 21st, and July 12th. Get active, get involved!!!!

Paintball Tournament

Helping Hands for Wounded Veterans will be hosting a paintball tournament for people with disabilities on August 23-24, 2008 at American Paintball Park in Greensburg, PA. The tournament is open to all ages and abilities. For more information contact Andy Pope at apope@hhwv.org.

Past Events

Team USA Wins Osaka Cup

Team USA women's national wheelchair basketball team competed in an invitational tournament in Osaka, Japan in early February. John Sikora, assistant coach for Team USA, reported that the competition at the Osaka Cup was a great experience for the players and coaches. Three of the top players on Team USA were unable to travel to this competition due to work schedules and health problems. Thus, the team was faced with the need to discover new leadership and confidence. That they did, and much more. Team USA faced Japan in the opening game and after a slow start, came away with a double digit win. The next day, Team USA played a double-header whereby they defeated an always competitive Canada team the proceeded to be totally outplayed and lost to the Australian national team. The team did qualify for the championship game due to the two wins in the first round of the tournament. In the title game versus Australia, Team USA came out slow again and fell behind 11-2 at the end of the first quarter. The coaching and players retained confidence for a win as the team had many good shot opportunities but just were not converting. The second quarter saw the beginning of the comeback as Team USA closed the deficit to 4 points by halftime. Then in the second quarter the teams confidence solidified as the players displayed their determination and drive to succeed. Through full court defensive pressure and great ball rotation and team balance on the offensive end, the Americans took the lead early in the third quarter and never looked back. Team USA cruised on to a double digit victory and would be crowned champions of the 2008 Osaka Cup. All members of the team enjoyed the hospitality of the Japanese hosts and look forward to returning a team again next year. In the meantime, everyone's focus is now toward the 2008 Team USA and practices leading on to the Paralympic Games in Beijing, China in September. The road to Beijing and defending the Paralympic gold medal is now the mission!

Steel City Starz Score a Top Ten Finish

The Steel City Starz recently returned from the University of Illinois, the host site for the 34th Annual National Women's Wheelchair Basketball Tournament (NWWBT). Twelve teams competed for the National Championship with Steel City finishing in 9th place. The University of Illinois and the University of Alabama fought hard for the title, but Illinois won the game with a one-point lead at the buzzer.

National Rankings:

- University of Illinois
- University of Alabama
- University of Arizona
- Dallas Lady Mavericks
- RIC Sky
- Phoenix Banner Mercury
- PossAbilities Lady Warriors
- Denver Lady Rollin' Nuggets
- Steel City Starz
- United Spinal Liberty
- Bennet Blazers
- Shepherd Lady Stealers

The Starz played well throughout the tournament, displaying terrific teamwork both offensively and defensively. Coach Sikora stated, "the ladies made a commitment to practice hard and play as a team, and they

took great strides to achieve that this year.” The team lost games to Denver and Arizona before regrouping and defeating Atlanta and United.

From the NWWBT, the U.S. Team coaches selected their candidates for the Paralympic tryout camp in April. Please check out www.nwba.org for further details on those selected and stay tuned for those who make the final cut to represent U.S. women’s wheelchair basketball at the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing, China.

Congratulations and good luck to two of the Starz players, Sarah Heinzl and Kaitlyn Willard, as they have seized college, athletic scholarships to play wheelchair basketball at the University of Illinois and the University of Alabama, respectively.

26th Annual Healthsports Ski Classic

Few words can be used to describe this year’s event held at Hidden Valley Ski Resort-foggy and soggy! The Healthsports Ski Classic was shortened to only 2 days this year, but the turnout was greater than expected. The event was enjoyed by 30 participants with physical disabilities, their families, 13 instructors, and 52 volunteers. Skiing conditions were interesting with good snow, but plenty of rain and fog (including a little lightning!). The annual Woody Woodworth Volunteer Award was presented on Tuesday afternoon to this year’s recipient, Clark Manny. Clark has been a dedicated volunteer and instructor of the Ski Classic for many years.

Heathsouth Harmarville Rehabilitation Hospital served as an event sponsor again this year and Hidden Valley, Boston Culinary Group, and the Log Cabin Motel showed great hospitality to all in attendance. The 2008 Healthsports Ski Classic was fortunate to have several generous sponsors who assisted in a variety of ways including housing, food, and prizes and HOPE Network would like to thank each of the following for their assistance in making the event a success: Accessible Home Automations, Baltimore Adapted Recreation and Sports, Blackburn’s Physicians Pharmacy, Caroselli, Beachler, McTieran & Conboy, Chesapeake Rehab Equipment, Dairy Queen Brazier of Donegal, Three Rivers Adaptive Sports, Union Orthotics & Prosthetics, and Quickie.

Audition Notice for Wheelchair Dancers

The Dancing Wheels Company is currently seeking dancers, apprentices, and trainees for employment in the 2008-2009 season. Dancing Wheels works with nationally and internationally acclaimed choreographers each year. Most recent works include full-length pieces for Rosalind Newman, David Rousseve, Rebecca Darling of Pilobulus, Mai-Ni Chen Company, Robert Wesner, Christopher Fleming, and Dianne McIntyre.

Dance positions offer full, 52-week contracts, competitive compensation, and an opportunity to travel throughout the country and abroad (with all expenses paid). The Company is auditioning male and female sit-down (wheelchair) dancers. Apprentices receive professional training, performance opportunities, and a stipend. Trainees receive professional training and limited performance opportunities. Wheelchair dancers do need prior dance experience, but should be athletic, with excellent speed and agility. Most importantly, potential wheelchair dancers must possess a willingness to learn. All applicants should be comfortable with speaking in front of large audiences. The Dancing Wheels Company provides training in these areas.

Auditions will be scheduled on an individual basis and will include a full class with modern and partnering sections. Please bring resume, headshots, and samples of work, if available. Please call 216-432-0306 or email

Mary Verdi-Fletcher at vfletcher1@aol.com to schedule an audition. Dancers with disabilities who are not everyday wheelchair users, but are willing to adapt to wheelchair technique are also welcome.

Audition location: The Dancing Wheels Studio
 3615 Euclid Avenue, 3rd Floor
 Cleveland, OH 44115

Donations

A significant percentage of HOPE Networks' operational budget is dependent upon, and supported through, private donations. There are many ways to donate to HOPE Network including :

- \$ monetary donations made directly to the HOPE Network
- \$ in-kind donations (i.e. equipment, services)
- \$ the United Way Contributor's Choice Program (**Code #968193**)
- \$ the Combined Federal Campaign (**Code #47982**)
- \$ Volunteerism

Any of these methods of support will help to continue all of HOPE Network's programs. Additionally, they provide great opportunities for you to experience the world of adapted sports. All donations are tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated!

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2008 Calendar of Events

Fitness & Conditioning.....	every M, W, F 10AM – 2PM
Aerobics (call in advance).....	every Wednesday @ 12:15PM
Open Gym (HRC Gym).....	every Wednesday 5PM-8PM
CLO New Horizons.....	On-going
26th Annual Healthsports Ski Classic (Hidden Valley).....	February 4-5
Juniors Sports Sessions...(held at The Children’s Institute).....	March 29, April 26, May 17, June 21, July 12
Winter Sports Expo (RMU Island Sports Center)....Sled Hockey and Curling.....	May 3
Track & Field.....	starts May 5th
Pittsburgh Amputee Golf Tournament (EAGA).....	June 6-7
Table Tennis Clinic.....	June 7
Hoops Classic (The Galleria at Pittsburgh Mills).....	June 14
Water Skiing (session every Thursday 5:30PM – 8:30PM).....	June 26—Sept 30
National Turkey Federation Fishing Outing for Juniors.....	July
North Country Access Water Sports (Clayton, New York)...(DSUSA & Wounded Warrior).....	July 19
TRAS Water Skiing Clinic, Conneaut Lake.....	July 21-25
Learn to Golf Clinic.....	TBA
Golf Outings (local courses).....	Tuesday, May 13 & 20, July 1 & 8
Chuck Scally Memorial Golf Tournament...(TRAS & HOPE Network).....	August 11
Steel City Starz (women’s basketball).....	Sept-March
Pittsburgh Steelwheelers (men’s basketball).....	Sept-March
Pittsburgh Steelwheelers Quad Rugby.....	Sept-March
Racquetball, - Oxford Club, Wexford, PA.....	November
Rock Climbing, SRU.....	TBA
Wheelchair Softball.....	May 24
Cycling.....	TBA

TBA = To Be Announced

**Check out the new HOPE Network website for information and updates on scheduled events at
www.hopenetwork-pa.org.**

HOPE Network is always looking for more people to become involved with our various programs. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, instructor, and/ or participant, give us a call TODAY!!!

For information and to register for events, call 412-826-2703