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Willie Banks Heads Olympians' Competition Committee for Senior Games

2009 National Senior Games LOC Announces Theme at NSGA Annual Meeting

(Palo Alto) – An All-Star Olympians' Competition Advisory Committee and theme for the 2009 National Senior Games were announced today at the annual meeting of the National Senior Games Association (NSGA). Gold medallist Olympic swimmer and 2009 Local Organizing Committee President Anne Warner Cribbs unveiled the theme of the 2009 Games – “*Long Live the Challenge*”, as she welcomed the national and state-by-state leaders of the Senior Games at their annual meeting in Palo Alto.

“We’re delighted to be able to announce our theme today, *Long Live the Challenge*, at the same time we welcome Willie Banks and the other esteemed Olympians who will ensure we deliver the best possible competitive conditions for the athletes just 545 days from now,” Cribbs said. “Our theme we believe captures the spirit of all those athletes 50 and older training right now for the right to compete at the National Senior Games in 2009. No matter what your age, you push yourself to your limit and when the time comes you give it your best on the field of play no matter what the sport. We get it, we respect it and we love the athletes for it.”

Willie Banks is a three time Olympian (1980, 1984, 1988) in the triple jump, he set a world record of 58' 11 " in June, 1985. He is still an active competitor in the event and is the current President of the U.S. Olympians Alumni Association. Mr. Banks has agreed to serve as the chair of the Olympians' Competition Advisory Committee to provide critical input to the Local Organizing Committee about the venues for the 12,000



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plus athletes expected to participate in the 2009 Senior Games. The other Olympians to serve on the Advisory Committee as of now include: Debbie Meyer (swimming); Dick Fosbury (high jump); Micki King (diving); Peggy Fleming (skating); John Naber (swimming); Dick Dreager (rowing); John Carlos (track & field); Barbra Higgins (fencing), Bill Toomey (decathlon) and tennis legend Rosie Casals.

“On behalf of the Olympians on our Competition Advisory Committee, and as a “senior” myself, we’re very pleased to assist and advise the Organizing Committee as they strive to guarantee a great experience for the athletes next year. Stanford University of course has produced so many Olympic and national champions we won’t really be critiquing the facilities as much as making sure all the athlete support systems are ready and in place,” Banks added.

Phil Godfrey, President & CEO of the National Senior Games Association, said, “We are honored to have Willie Banks and the other Olympians advising us on how to deliver the best Summer Senior Games ever. Our athletes will experience a truly world class event on the campus of Stanford University, befitting the dedication, perseverance and sweat of each and every competitor.”

The 2009 National Senior Games will be held August 1st to 15th, involving 18 sports and seven (7) demonstration sports primarily at Stanford University. Other events will be held in San Francisco, San Jose, San Mateo County and Oakland.

Stanford Athletic Department Deputy Director Ray Purpur said, “We are very excited that the largest multi-sport event ever held in the Bay Area, with over 12,000 athletes, is only a year and a half from now. This is the kind of challenge Stanford thrives on and we pledge to match the extraordinary effort of the athletes who compete with our very best. ”

The National Senior Games Association governs the Summer National Senior Games, the largest multi-sport event in the world for seniors, and other national senior



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athletic events. The National Senior Games are held every two years, in 2007 they were hosted by Louisville, KY and the 2011 Games will be in Houston, TX. National multi-year sponsors include Humana, AstraZeneca and Euflexxa. Stanford Hospital and Clinics and Catholic Health Care West head up the 2009 Sponsor roster.

The 2009 National Senior Games is a project of the San Francisco Bay Area Sports Organizing Committee (BASOC). BASOC was founded in 1987 and has led or participated in three domestic bids to organize the Olympic Games. BASOC remains dedicated to this ultimate goal as it acts to encourage healthy lifestyles for the old and young alike, hosting events like the Senior Games in order to inspire and demonstrate the region's love of sport and capacity to embrace athletes of all ages and nationalities.

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