

## **Marty McHone Male Athlete of the Year**

The award was re-named in 2003 after former Iowa Games Athlete of the Year Marty McHone, who died of cancer in 2002.

### **A Birthday Medal**

Ron Peterson celebrated his 64<sup>th</sup> birthday during the 2008 Summer Iowa Games. On Saturday, July 19 Peterson won gold in the basketball shooting shootout with a score of 61 and received 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the freethrow competition hitting 12 freethrows out of the possible 15. The day before his birthday he competed in the adult track and field bringing home four gold medals in the 400 M dash, long jump, high jump and discus. Also, in 2007 he won gold in the shootout, triple jump and silver in freethrow, high jump, shot put and discus adding to his 2006 medals when he won gold in the shootout, freethrow, triple jump, discus and silver in the high jump and shot put.

Peterson, now of Waukee, grew up as an Iowa farm boy near Gowrie. The Prairie of Gowrie graduate played basketball, baseball and ran track in high school but indicated he couldn't commit to a lot of practice time as a kid due to his responsibilities on the farm. He said the Iowa Games allows him to 'make up for lost time'.

The retiree has been competing in the Iowa Games for 12 years and has won 40 medals (22 gold, 9 silver and 9 bronze). Besides the Iowa Games, Peterson is actively involved with the Senior Olympics competing in several sports/events and has won nearly 600 medals in the last 13 years. He also is a member of their board of directors. He said the competitions provide incentives for him to work out and stay in shape throughout the year. Peterson mentioned that of all the events he has participated in, the Iowa Games basketball shooting is the most competitive and provides the truest test of shooting skills. Even though he loves the competition the most important part of being involved with the Games is the friendships he has made over the years. He often challenges other competitors to try new sports and they end up loving the event.

Not only has Ron participated in the Iowa Games he is actively involved on a Senior Softball team from Omaha. The centerfielder plays for the Omaha Old School Legends and recently helped his team with a .900 batting average to win first place in the 60+ A division at the 2008 North American Senior Circuit Softball World Series in Lincoln, NE. In the past his team placed second in the Senior World Series in 2002 and he was named to the All Star team at the 2005 and 2008 National Championships.

His active lifestyle also includes biking with his most notable event being 'Iowa 150 Bike Ride/A Sesquicentennial Expedition' across the United States in 1995. The ride took 100 days and Peterson rode every day, every mile recording over 5,000 miles on his bike.

Peterson's healthy active lifestyle and commitment to the Iowa Games is why we are nominating him for National Athlete of the Year.

