

SH&F, Racevermont.com and VSGA join forces to offer 2011 Senior 5K/10K Run Senior Sprint Triathlon Championships.

Shelburne Health & Fitness (SH&F) and Racevermont.com have recently announced that they are teaming up with the Vermont Senior Games Association to host the 2011 Vermont Senior 5K/10K Run State Championship as well as the Vermont Senior Sprint Triathlon State Championships. Vermont Senior Games Association (VSGA) has a rich history dating back 27 years when the organization was called the Green Mountain Senior Games under the direction of Ardis Smith, Vermont State coordinator and more recently John Pelton, GMSG President. In late 2010, the organization elected a new Board of Directors. Under the leadership of Don Kjelleren (Shelburne), the VSGA President, the organization's name was changed to the Vermont Senior Games Association. Kjelleren and his wife recently moved to Shelburne. He had a chance meeting with two members of the VSGA directors at the Charlotte Senior Center. They successfully convinced Kjelleren to come out of "retirement" to help promote Vermont's senior games after he served as a director and vice chair of the National Senior Games Association as well as an officer of the Delaware Senior Olympics.

The goal of the Vermont Senior Games Association, a member of the National Senior Games Association (the Senior Olympics) is "to provide programs and activities that lead to healthy aging, a quality lifestyle, and well-being that incorporates fun, fellowship, and fitness" according to Kjelleren. That philosophy is shared by Shelburne Health & Fitness, where 46% of the members are age 50+. "The strength and spirit of our seniors never ceases to amaze us. We have 60 and 70 year-olds that can put some 30 year olds to shame. I aspire to be just like them (the seniors) when I am that age," says Ute Talley, one of the owners and Operations Manager at Shelburne Health & Fitness. "It's incredible to see the difference fitness makes in the quality of our members' lives." That's the big reason why Rayne Herzog, General Manager of Shelburne Health & Fitness and Race Director of Racevermont.com and Talley have agreed to host two of the 2011 events for the Vermont Senior Games.

Shelburne Health & Fitness and Racevermont.com will be hosting a 5K/10K run on Thursday, June 23 as well as a Sprint Triathlon (400 yard swim, 15.8 mile bike & 3.1 mile run) on July 16. Both events are open to anyone who will be at least 50 years young as of December 31, 2011. While the events will likely attract some serious athletes, it is expected to draw even more newcomers to racing. Participating in events like these can be as much about competing against yourself as it is competing against others. It's a great way to get involved and stay active.

So how do you get started if you're new to the sport? "Consider getting involved with the Green Mountain Bike Club, The Green Mountain Athletic Association or the Master Swimming program," says Herzog. "You'll find out if you have interest in participating in any of the events. If you just want to try it out, be part of a team. A lot of people who start out as part of a triathlon team, end up participating as an individual later on. Give the events a try. You may just find a new passion in your life."