Connie Dayton: Celebrating 20 Years of Friendship, Sportsmanship, and Personal Growth at the New Mexico Senior Olympics

For Connie Dayton, the New Mexico Senior Olympics isn't just about competing—it's about the camaraderie, personal growth, and the sheer joy of participating in a sport she loves. A resident of Albuquerque and dedicated competitor for 20 years, Connie has found her niche in shot put, discus, and javelin, and she attributes much of her success to the community spirit that defines the Senior Olympics.

Connie's journey to becoming a multi-sport athlete is an interesting one. Initially a swimmer, she was drawn to the world of field events when her twin sister, a fellow competitor, expressed interest in shotput and javelin. Wanting to support her sister, Connie jumped in to train together, marking the beginning of a five-year adventure in these throwing events.

Trying something new has been an integral part of her experience. "I like the camaraderie," Connie says. "Everybody helps everybody. People are open about sharing knowledge and advice about technique in a friendly way. We are a lot of self-taught folk who just want to support each other. We cheer for each other." This sense of community, where every athlete is willing to lend a hand and offer encouragement, is what keeps Connie coming back to the competition year after year.

Despite competing in the same events, Connie and her sister share a unique dynamic—there is no rivalry between them. "Although I compete against my sister, we aren't competitive against one another. We just root for each other and focus on competing against our own personal best," she explains. For Connie, the thrill isn't in earning a gold medal but in pushing herself to improve and in celebrating the progress she makes, both on and off the field.

Connie's outlook on competition is refreshing. She encourages anyone considering participating in the New Mexico Senior Olympics to simply take the leap. "I'm not in it for the gold medals, I'm in it because I thoroughly enjoy doing it," she says with a smile. "I would tell someone who is considering participating to just go for it. Don't worry about whether you know what you're doing or if you are a professional. It doesn't matter. All of us just show up, try our best, and help each other. Be there to enjoy the sport and the sportsmanship."

For Connie, the New Mexico Senior Olympics has brought not just competition, but a renewed sense of purpose and positivity. "The New Mexico Senior Olympics just adds goodness to my life," she says. It's clear that, for Connie Dayton, the true reward lies in the friendships formed, the knowledge shared, and the joy of simply participating.