

Triumph

August-September 2004



Special Olympics
New York

SuperWomen book features Special Olympics athletes Kim Richards and Loretta Claiborne

SONY athlete Kim Richards and athlete Loretta Claiborne of Pennsylvania are featured in *SuperWomen: 100 Women, 100 Sports*, which is a powerful and inspiring tribute to the joy, athleticism, strength, diversity and artistry of women in sports.

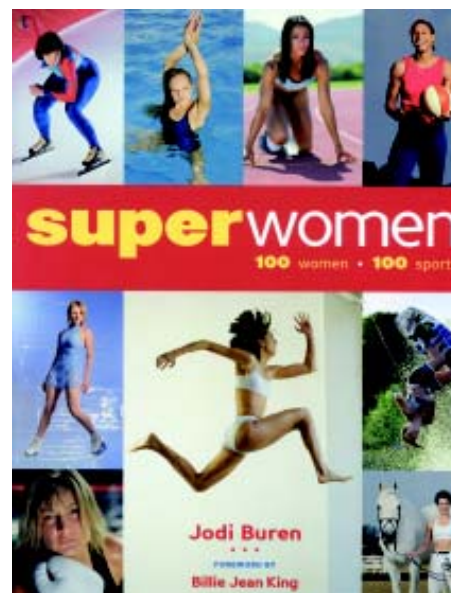
SuperWomen brings together 100 outstanding champion athletes; Claiborne and Richards join other extraordinary women such as Chris Evert, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Annika Sorenstam and Picabo Street, all beautifully photographed by Jodi Buren. Each offers their own stories of triumph, courage, and determination — allowing a glimpse at the personalities and spirit behind the long lists of athletic achievements.

Richards competed in the 2003 Special

Olympics World Summer Games as a Power Lifter, winning three gold medals. She subsequently appeared in *Sports Illustrated's* "Faces in the Crowd" section, which highlighted her many accomplishments. Power Lifting and Softball (the sport in which she competed in the 1999 World Games) are her favorite Special Olympics sports, "because you can meet new people and hang out with friends." In addition to her two favorites, she trains and competes in Soccer, Bowling, Basketball, Aquatics, Floor Hockey and Athletics.

A Special Olympics participant for 10 years, Richards completed training as a Global Messenger for SONY in 2002.

Claiborne, meanwhile, is an accomplished runner. In addition to continuing to compete in Special Olympics Pennsylvania



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Special Olympics Athletes Open Canisius Student's Eyes

Adam Grupka changes life direction after volunteering at SONY event.

Canisius College student Adam Grupka already had a sweet gig set up for his

college-required community service, so he wasn't interested when his girlfriend suggested that he volunteer at SONY's 2003 Section 5 Basketball, Volleyball and Aquatics Tournament.

"I had it lined up so I could just go to a gym and play basketball," said Grupka, now a sophomore at Canisius. "And, for lack of a better way of explaining it, I was always afraid of mentally handicapped people. I'd never spent any time around them."

Grupka's girlfriend, Karly, decided she knew best and signed

him up for the Special Olympics event anyway. Turns out Karly was right.

"I loved it," said Grupka, who helped with Volleyball Skills at the Canisius-based 2003 tourney. "It was awesome to give the athletes a helping hand and make them feel like everyone else."

It was so awesome, in fact, that Grupka came back for the 2004 tournament, which took place on May 1. He trained other volunteers this year.

When Grupka enrolled at Canisius, he wanted to be a math teacher. Now, he's planning to earn a bachelor's degree in physical education and a master's degree in

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INSIDE

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A Message from the President

Neal J. Johnson is President & CEO of Special Olympics New York, Inc.



In a few weeks summer will be winding down and the signs of fall will begin to creep in. School will start up again and vacations will come to an end. Yet, despite the change of seasons and

family schedules, Special Olympics New York will continue to be in full swing. From Poker Runs in the Capital District and Genesee Regions to the Fall Games in western New York, in events big and small, athletes, volunteers and supporters will be coming out to enjoy the experience that is

Special Olympics New York.

Every time I look at our Calendar of Events, I am especially proud of the fact that we are truly a year round organization. With over 400 competitions and 100 fund-raising events a year we can truly offer something to everyone. At the same time, I am always mindful that this could not happen if not for the untold number of hours put in by our volunteers and the tremendous amount of support received from our sponsors.

Yet providing sports opportunities year round represents only half the equation. Every time I attend an event I am constantly reminded that the thread that ties all our efforts together, the fuel that always charges

our batteries when we get run down, are the athletes. While the organization has changed, and will continue to do so, the one thing that has remained constant is the pure passion and determination of our athletes.

On the surface, the phrase "It's all about the athletes," may be a concise way to explain to someone why they should become involved with Special Olympics. Once you get involved, it's a reminder of the gratification you get from experiencing sports the way they were meant to be: teamwork, camaraderie and competition to do your best. So the next time you are looking for something to do, spend a day, spend an hour. Let the Games begin! ■

Silks and Satins 5K Showed Off Record Attendance

The fans lined up along the George Street homestretch of the Eighth Annual Silks & Satins 5K, presented by GE's Capital Region businesses and Price Chopper to benefit Special Olympics New York (SONY), saw something many had seen before: 29-year-old Albany native Nick Conway winning the 3.1-mile race in 14 minutes, 58 seconds, marking

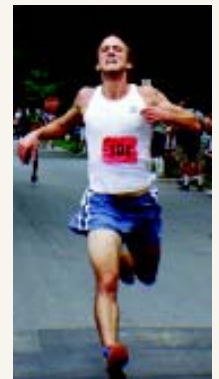


Participants of the Silks & Satins 5K get ready to start the race.

the fourth year in a row he has finished first. Conway was one of a record 1,146 runners to finish the Saratoga Springs race – last year, there were 1,104 finishers – which raises funds to help SONY create cost-free sports training and competition opportunities for 40,000 children and adults with intellectual and

developmental disabilities in New York State.

The Silks & Satins 5K was made possible by the generosity of the Albany Times Union, American Airlines, BlueShield of Northeastern New York, ClearChannel Radio, GE's Capital Region businesses, Price Chopper, New York Lottery, New York State United Teachers and Fox 23 News. ■



Nick Conway

Triumph

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Inspire Greatness

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SuperWomen

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(and international) events, she has completed more than two dozen marathons, and she has twice finished among the top 100-women runners in the Boston Marathon. After winning a gold medal in the 1999 Special Olympics World Summer Games half-marathon, she was subsequently named *Runner's World's* Special Athlete of the Quarter Century.

Claiborne also is a former Special Olympics Board Member.

In her foreword to *SuperWomen*, former tennis great Billie Jean King writes: "The pages of this book are graced with reflections of one hundred athletes in search of the superwoman that lives inside of them. Each one defines winning on her own terms. These are women who have seized the opportunities they have been given."

SuperWomen can be purchased at www.womenssportsfoundation.org.

This story was provided by Special Olympics International. ■

Canisius Student

Continued from P.1

special education so that he can teach special education and adaptive physical education. Additionally, Grupka recently got a job at People, Inc., a group home for three autistic children, where he spends his weekends bringing the home's clients into the community for activities.

"My involvement with Special Olympics has been life-changing," Grupka said. "I've discovered that mentally handicapped people are just like us. They want to do the same things we want to do. They just need a little help sometimes."

"Adam is very inspiring," said Ed Leak, coordinator of the Section 5 Tournament and a Canisius professor. "We try to extol to our students that they can have a true impact on other people. Some get it and some don't. Adam gets it, and he's got a bright future." ■



Satins, Silks & Stars

A Roaring 20s Bash Success!

Celebrities from stage, screen, music and sports were on hand for the Satins, Silks & Stars Roaring 20s Gala July 31st in Saratoga Springs. The period themed evening was presented by GE Materials-Silcone. The following day they enjoyed a day at the track including an Equestrian demonstration with Special Olympics athletes. The weekend was a benefit for Special Olympics New York.

For more photos and stories of the weekend, visit www.specialolympicsNY.org. ■



Dominick Totino Photography



2004 SPECIAL OLYMPICS NEW YORK BOARD OF DIRECTORS AWARDS

Each year, Special Olympics New York honors the people and programs that exemplify our mission by presenting the Board of Directors Awards.

Nominations for the 2004 awards are now being accepted and we encourage all members of the SONY family to recommend deserving candidates. Nominations will be accepted until **October 1**.

While there are no formal nominating forms, sufficient justification should be submitted for recommendation(s) to receive proper consideration. Documentation should include the nominees name, address and any information relevant to the award being nominated for.

The Board of Directors has the discretion to eliminate or retain any award given in previous years. Nominations, and supporting documentation, can be sent to:

2004 SONY Board of Directors Awards
c/o Public Affairs Department
504 Balltown Road
Schenectady, NY 12304

2003 AWARD WINNERS

Female Athlete of the Year
Debra Ellis – Staten Island

Male Athlete of the Year
Michael Burg – Brooklyn

Bryner Family of the Year
The Ludin Family
Long Island Region

Dorothy Buehring Phillips Awards
Nancy Logan
Hudson Valley Region – Rockland
County

Herb Rosenblatt Award/
State Volunteer of the Year
Sylvia Korn
Genesee Region – Monroe County

Fran Tokar Award/
Area Coordinator of the Year
John Crosby
Southern Tier Region – Broome-Tioga
Counties

Outstanding Coach
Terry Martinko
Hudson Valley Region – Dutchess
County

Outstanding Organization
Marist College

Outstanding Local Program
Staten Island
New York City Region

Point of View

By Kelly McAuley, Special Olympics New York Intern.

Like every other college sophomore heading home from school for the summer I was looking for an internship to boost my resume. However, I didn't want to get stuck doing the same thing at a desk all day every day; I wanted something a little more exciting. I wanted real experience. I found just what I was looking for at Special Olympics New York.

Working with Special Olympics, I gained experiences in every professional aspect I was hoping for. In the public relations department I had a chance to try my hand at writing, editing, graphic design, special events, reporting and so much more. I had a great experience with a wonderful staff.

But, not only did I get the experience in the office, I got the experience with SONY athletes. From attending Special Olympics sectional events at SUNY Albany to seeing SONY athletes run in the Satins and Silks

5K Run in Saratoga the athletes were always the stars.

Yet, these athletes were unlike any other athletes I have ever met. I attend a large university with a strong emphasis on athletics. I have many friends who are college athletes. When the weather turns to fall you can usually find my friends and I at a football game. But SONY athletes have something the other athletes I have encountered don't have.

The absolute joy of sports. For whatever reasons, it seems some athletes lose the intensity of this joy. Whether it's too much time, too much pressure, or just too much of everything, after 3 months of 6 a.m. practices many college athletes are ready to take a break. The SONY athletes I have met radiate the joy of sports. They go from one competition to the next wholeheartedly enjoying themselves. They can't get enough.

I was at a sectionals event before Summer Games and the impending games were all the athletes could talk about. They were so excited to go compete and catch up with old friends. All the talk was of competing, there was never a discussion of who would "win." The SONY athletes made me see sports from a different view.

This internship proved to be exactly what I was looking for. I learned a lot about public relations and even more about what it means to be an athlete. Thank you for a great summer.

Point of View is written periodically. To submit a Point of View idea, contact John D'Alessandro at 800-836-6976 or jdalessandro@nyso.org.



LETTERS

The following letter was sent to Diana Bennett, SONY's Director of Volunteer Management:

Diana:

I wanted to let you know that the small group of Goldman Sachs employees that worked the Basketball Skills venue at Saturday's event (Metro Games) had a wonderful time. We all thoroughly enjoyed the day spent with the athletes. Between the high fives and hugs, we all left with a very rewarding feeling. Special Olympics is a great organization that we were very proud to be a part of for the day. Thanks to the coordinators of the event and, of course, to the super Basketball Skills participants.

Thanks again,
Andrea Boenheim
Goldman Sachs

Plan Your Next Vacation Around SONY's Statewide Games

If you're looking for a unique idea for your next family vacation, check out SONY's new statewide games schedule. Whether you are looking for a fun afternoon or a few days away from home, SONY athletes will be going for the gold all over New York.

This Fall, Central New York will come alive when Seneca Falls hosts the 2004 Fall Games (Oct. 8-10) for a second consecutive year.

"Last year, hundreds of volunteers, fans, sponsors and visitors attended the games," said Diana Bennett, SONY's Director of Volunteer Management. "It's a great opportunity to get out and enjoy one of the prettiest seasons in New York."

The Central New York excitement continues into 2005 and beyond when Syracuse plays host to both the 2005 and 2006 Winter Games. In a place where snow accumulation reached over 180 inches last year, conditions should be ideal for sports such as Skiing, Speed Skating, Floor Hockey and Snowshoeing.

"Syracuse was selected for the great

facilities and the outstanding hospitality from the surrounding community," said Pete Lawrence, SONY's Vice President of Competition.

As your thoughts turn to warmer days, the competition will heat up on Long Island once again as the 2005 Summer Games returns to Hofstra University, on Long Island, for an unprecedented third year.

"The facilities are great, the fans are fantastic and the athletes love it," said SONY's President and CEO, Neal J. Johnson.

Coming full circle, the 2005 and 2006 Fall Games will be held in Binghamton where the fall foliage is never lacking, and the fall weather should be ideal for athletes competing in Softball, Cycling, Soccer, Bocce and Golf.

"Binghamton beat out many competitors," Lawrence said. "We've had some memorable competitions there and look forward to adding to that list in 2005 and 2006. The venues and fans are always excellent."

This story was filed by SONY intern Kelly McAuley. ■

TORCH RUN TIMES

Law Enforcement Torch Run News

Auburn Fire Truck Pull a Barn Burner

The top three teams were separated by less than half a second at the Second Annual Auburn Law Enforcement Torch Run Fire Truck Pull to benefit Special Olympics New York on July 18.

In the end, the home team prevailed. A 10-person squad from Auburn Correctional Facility (Auburn entered two teams in the event) squeezed out a narrow victory, hauling a 46,000-pound fire truck 20 feet in 5.89 seconds. Attica Correctional Facility was second in 6.20 seconds and a team from Cayuga Correctional Facility claimed third in 6.26 seconds.

"A day like today is great for the morale of corrections officers," said Sgt. Mike Murray, a member of the winning team and organizer of the Fire Truck Pull. "It's great to get out of the jail and see another slice of life. And interacting with Special Olympics athletes is the best."

SONY athletes played a large role at the Fire Truck Pull: Along with players from the Auburn Doubledays (a minor-league

baseball team) and the team's mascot, five SONY athletes kicked the event off by



pulling the fire truck. They also handed out trophies afterward and were honored at a Doubledays' game that evening.

"All you had to do was look at the faces of the athletes when they pulled that truck with the Doubledays to see who today's true winners were," Sgt. Murray said.

According to Sgt. Murray, events like the Fire Truck Pull have increased the level of awareness for Special Olympics in Auburn.

"Special Olympics is definitely picking up around here," he said. "Look at how much bigger the crowd is compared to last year. People in Auburn are like, 'Holy cow, we've got some Special Olympics athletes in our community.' And they want to be supportive." ■

Up Against the Column



Whirlwind
Months of
Memories



Did you ever go through a period of time where it is all just a blur?

Then one day, somehow it's all over – you finally have a chance to sit back, close your eyes – and suddenly these snapshots start appearing in your brain. Some are work related, some are personal. The months of June and July were like that for me and although some moments were joyous and others much more solemn, the experiences somehow make you a different person. Although these are bulleted points and there is a story behind each one, I hope you get the picture:

- With hundreds intently watching, you could have heard a pin drop as the final two competitors - Auburn Correctional Facility and the New York State Police - went for top bragging rights, at the Western New York Fire Truck Pull. Congratulations Auburn.

- Watching one of my favorite athletes, Kevin Brown running the Torch into the DOCS Olympics and receiving a check from NYSOPBA for \$20,000.00.

- At our own local leg, hearing the trooper recruits class running in cadence... why do we do it? We do it for the athletes."

- The look of pride and joy in the eyes of the parents of one of the athlete's who ran the Torch in during Opening Ceremonies.

- As a boisterous team exits the Hofstra Arena – obviously victorious, they dump a cooler of ice water on their coach. Their coach's response? "Line up you guys I have a great big hug for each and every one of you."

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Save the Dates!!!!

September 11 –
Inaugural Royal Flush
Tour Poker Run,
Schaghticoke
\$30 biker / \$10 rider

September 17 –
Western New York
Harley Davidson
Raffle Drawing
\$10 a ticket

There's still time to enter!



To purchase tickets or for more information contact Kristen Adalian at 800-836-6976 x 107.

Up Against the Column

Continued from P. 6


• Watching the Nassau County Police Department Bureau of Special Operations, bringing in their road show to Olympic Village (again) – but this time they were all there on their days off.

• Danny Ryan, (ret. Det. Albany Police Department) a long time torch runner and Special Olympics supporter lost his 3 year battle with cancer on June 21 of this year. Danny will always be remembered for the smile on his face, the wink in his eye and his love of life. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and the Albany Police Department.

It is truly amazing what goes on around us and rarely enough do we sit back and take the time to ponder the recent events that shape our lives. Although some memories are rousing, others may be somber but always do they lead to fond recollections of hopes, dreams and inspiration. ■

Royal Flush Tour

Sweeps through the Capital District

 The Inaugural Royal Flush Tour Poker Run will sweep through the Capital District on Sept. 11, 2004. The nearly 100-mile-long route will start at Hender'Son's in Schaghticoke, continue through Washington County into Saratoga County and end up back at Hender'Son's. The event will feature a Pig Roast barbecue, raffles and entertainment all throughout the day.

Registration is from 9-11 a.m. at Hender'Son's. The cost is \$30 per biker and \$10 per rider. You must be 18 years old to play hand.

Organizer James Henderson hopes to raise \$15,000 and bring in over 500 motorcyclists into town for this fund-raiser. "We hope to have a fantastic scenic ride through the Capital District that day," said Henderson. "I am very happy to donate my services and raise public awareness for a terrific nonprofit like the Law Enforcement Torch Run which benefits Special Olympics New York."

For more information, contact Darcie Henderson at 800-836-6976 x108 or Jeanne Mesick x106.

This story was filed by SONY intern Kelly McAuley. ■



ALBANY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

4th ANNUAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TORCH RUN




PLANE PULL



to benefit Special Olympics New York

"Ready on the Rope?"

 That familiar call will soon be heard at the 4th Annual Law Enforcement Torch Run Plane Pull scheduled for August 28, 2004 at the Albany International Airport.

A Plane Pull is a fund-raising event of teams that compete to pull an Independence Air Bombardier CRJ200 a distance of 12 feet in the shortest time. Teams consist of a



maximum of 20 members, with 5 alternates, competing to be the fastest team. The

team entry fee is \$500.00. Teams can raise the entrance fee via a corporate sponsor or by recruiting each of the team members to donate \$25.00 to the Law Enforcement Torch Run to benefit Special Olympics New

York. Also featured will be a variety of family attractions and food (in concession area only). ■

WHERE: Albany International Airport

WHEN: Saturday, August 28, 2004

TIME: Competition begins at 1:00 p.m., team registration will open at 11:00 a.m. Admission is free to the public.



Special Olympics New York

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Schenectady, NY 12304

www.specialolympicsNY.org

Comments and story suggestions can be directed to:

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Special Olympics New York, Inc. is Authorized and Accredited by Special Olympics International for the Benefit of Citizens with Mental Retardation.

Miles for Medals Walkers Get a Horse's-Eye View

Miles for Medals returned to Saratoga Race Course for the second consecutive year on July 25. Walkers, including SONY athletes, were treated to a horse's-eye view of the famed racetrack, walking near the

backstretch and the stables, going where typically only jockeys and horses go. The course covered two miles.

With most walkers turning in at least \$100 each to benefit SONY's athletes, the walk-a-thon was a huge success: It raised approximately \$25,000.

"The community support in the Capital District has been exceptional," said Kristen Thorsen, a Director of Development at SONY and organizer of nine Miles for Medals events in New York State. "By embracing Miles for Medals, the people of the Capital District also embraced the athletes of Special Olympics New York."

Miles for Medals is SONY's statewide walk-a-thon program, and the program is made possible by the generosity of New York Lottery and New York State United Teachers. ■

Upcoming Miles for Medals walks

- Oct. 2 —
New York Chiropractic College (Seneca Falls)
- Oct. 16 —
SUNY New Paltz
- Oct. 17 —
Marist College (Poughkeepsie)
- Oct. 23 —
Delaware Park (Buffalo)
- Oct. 23 —
Burnet Park (Syracuse)
- Oct. 24 —
SUNY Institute of Technology (Utica)

*For information on any of the walks,
contact Kristen Thorsen at 800-836-6976.*

Picture of the Month



SONY's mission is to provide sports training and athletic competition to individuals with mental retardation. Our programs are designed to offer participants continuing opportunities to enjoy sports, develop physical fitness and demonstrate courage while interacting with their families, the community and other Special Olympics athletes.