

Triumph

December 2005



Special Olympics
New York

If You Can Make it Here, You Can Make it Anywhere

New York City to Become 5th Special Olympics New York Region

The new year will usher in New York City as the newest region for Special Olympics New York (SONY). The regionalization of New York City will be made possible in large part by a grant from Special Olympics, Inc., from their Christmas Record Endowment. The three year grant will provide an investment of funds as well as other assets. SOI and Special Olympics North America (SONA) will be working in collaboration with SONY and the New York

City Region to develop a strategy that can be expanded to other major urban centers of Special Olympics around the world.

Discussions and planning took place between SONY and SOI for the past 18 months prior to the announcement. At the beginning of November, the SONY management team began introducing the regionalization plan to internal staff and met with local volunteers in New York City.

The regionalization of New York City is

an exciting initiative that is part of the broader SONY reorganization strategy that began with the implementation of the Long Island Region in January, 2003. Under the plan, nine regions in total will be organized throughout the state. With the regionalization of New York City in January, 2005, it will bring the total number of current regions to five, including the Central Region, the Genesee Region, the Hudson Valley Region and the Long Island Region. ■

Special Olympics National Invitational Golf Tournament

SONY athletes compete in Ames, Iowa

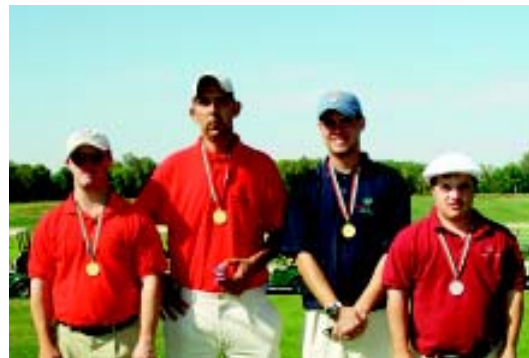
Written by: Terry Uellendahl

I hope you enjoy reading about our four medal winners and their experiences when they participated in The National Invitational Tournament for Golf that was held in Ames, Iowa. We had beautiful weather in Ames for our 54 hole tournament. Each of the athletes in the New York contingency played at level 5 (18 hole individual stroke play). The actual tournament lasted for four days, from September 16-19. The tournament started on Friday with a nine hole practice round. We completed our practice round at The Coldwater Golf Club, had dinner and went to the opening ceremonies just before dusk. The parade of athletes began, the speeches were given and just before the sun went down the colors were presented and the caldron was lit by one of the Special Olympics athletes from Iowa. We all took the Special Olympics Athletes' Oath and the games were declared open. Then it was back to the hotel for a good nights sleep. Even before the sun was up

the next day we were done with breakfast and on our way to the course for warm-ups and practice. Our first tee time was shortly after 8 am and we were ready.

The first tee, as all of us golfers know, is the one that makes us the most nervous. Why—I don't know why—could it be everybody is watching and the photographer is taking pictures? Oh well, with that out of the way we went on to have three great days on the golf course. We ended up with three gold medals and one silver medal. I think that's really outstanding for our New York guys. We competed in divisions 2, 3, 5 and 6 out of 7 divisions.

Peter Pelegrino had a total score of 274. He beat his nearest opponent by 18 strokes and won a gold medal. Matt Pope had an aggregate score of 299 and also won a gold medal in his division. Steve Foley finished the 3 days with a score of 350 with a silver medal to show for his efforts. The fourth



member of the team was Jeff Davis. He also won a gold medal with a total score of 377. It was a true pleasure to be able to coach these young gentlemen. They were all excellent representatives of our home state of New York.

The tournament committee asked Peter Longo to entertain us all on Sunday afternoon. He is a PGA member and a trick shot artist. He hit balls for us at the driving range. He hit them so far you could not see them land. He hit balls off short tees and long tees (I mean some tees were 3 feet tall). He hit balls standing on one foot or kneeling, or sitting on a chair. Actually, he

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A Message from the President

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



The holiday season has begun with a wonderful Thanksgiving weekend and all the shops and stores are geared up for a hopefully record run of business. As we look behind us we can see much that we all can be thankful for and forward to an exciting time ahead of us. We at SONY are certainly thankful for our inspirational athletes who share their courage and their joy with us throughout the year. We're thankful for their families and our volunteers, without whom nothing in Special Olympics could be accomplished. We're thankful to our supporters and sponsors who supply the fuel to help us produce our wonderful program. I'm thankful for a truly dedicated and committed group of coworkers who come to work every day knowing that they are helping to make a difference in the lives of our athletes. All the while we give thanks, we're mindful of those in our world who may never have had the opportunity to see a Special Olympic athlete beam as they are awarded a medal for their efforts or that athlete's families elation as they share in the success.

We're mindful of our Special Olympic family members in the Gulf region who are still reeling from the horrific impacts of the hurricanes not very long ago. We also shouldn't forget those in our world who live with strife and in harms way every day.

As we look forward to the New Year we are excited by the opportunity to grow our program and provide even more opportunities to existing - and new athletes and families. For the first time to my knowledge, SONY will be working in collaboration with SOI to reorganize our New York City region in what will become a global model which will help introduce the power and experience of Special Olympics to those yet to be reached in major urban centers around the world. This will be an extraordinary opportunity for SONY to help change the attitudes of many who still look at those among us with intellectually disabilities through a perspective of ignorance and intolerance, and with a focus of what they may think our athletes cannot do, rather than on what they can accomplish and achieve. As always, at the center of our efforts will be the chance to illuminate all our communities with the "power of our athletes" so everyone can share in their joy and achievements.

As you move through the coming weeks, sharing the joys and blessings of family and friends, please accept our best wishes for a wonderful and happy holiday season and a healthy and successful new year for you and for all those you may hold dear. ■



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Arbonne International produces a high quality line of health, beauty and skin care products based on herbal and botanical formulations. During the 2005 Holiday Season, Arbonne will contribute a portion of each online purchase to support the programs of Special Olympics New York. Do your holiday shopping, and increase the joy your generosity brings, all from the comfort of your home.

To Order Online Go To: www.specialolympicsNY.org ■

Triumph

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Inspire Greatness

Special Olympics New York, Inc.

504 Balltown Road, Schenectady, NY 12304-2290

Phone: 800-836-6976 Fax: 518-388-0795 Web site: www.specialolympicsNY.org

TRIUMPH STAFF

John D'Alessandro
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Public Affairs
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National Invitational Golf Tournament *Continued from P 1*

hit a ball while he was standing on one foot and on a chair. Don't try this at home it could be dangerous. The average length of a driver is approximately 46" long. Peter hit a ball with a driver that was almost 100" long. You can try that at home. The tough part is finding a driver that is that long.

Besides all the fun we had with golf we learned some things about the state of Iowa. Do you know that the state is the largest producer of corn in the country?



Well—it is! I was concerned

when we flew in on American Airlines that all of their fields in Iowa were brown and not green. Well, the cornfields that we are used to in New York grow sweet corn that we can eat. This corn is picked when the stalks are still green. In Iowa the corn is used to make feed for animals or oil for cooking, or ethanol to make our cars run cleaner. The corn is also used to make cereal for us to eat. As you all know corn is a plant and it comes

from a seed. There are rows upon rows, acres upon acres of corn grown just to make the seeds for next year's crop. All of these types of corn must mature (or turn brown) before it is harvested. It is just about that time of the year for the farmers in Iowa to take in their crops.

Along with the corn you can also see acres and acres of soybeans. The scientists are finding many new ways to use this crop as well.

What kind of soy products could you think of? I'll leave that with you to talk about that with your friends and come up with as many products as you can. Not only was this a wonderful golfing experience for our New York state athletes but it was also an educational experience.

There were close to 200 athletes representing 28 states participating in the NIT this year. Golf is going to be part of

the national games in 2006. Ames, Iowa volunteers are looking forward to hosting the approximate 3,500 athletes for next year. The Coldwater Golf course is located right next store to the Iowa State University Cyclones campus. There were an abundance of university students volunteering to help run our tournament. Many of the local golfers and their families volunteered as well at the tournament this year. These volunteers really made the past four days a pleasure for everybody who played or watched golf in Ames.

No matter what sport you play work hard and perhaps you will be fortunate enough to represent New York State in next years Special Olympic National games to be held in Ames, Iowa.

I hope you enjoyed reading a little bit about our experiences at the National Invitational tournament for golf in Ames, Iowa.

Terry Uellendahl

Director of Golf

Long Island Region Coach ■

Raising funds.

Having fun.

Inspire someone Special.

Sponsor an athlete this holiday season.

An **Employee Giving Campaign** is the ideal opportunity for your company to create a customized fundraiser that will generate excitement, fun and funds for New York's intellectually disabled community this season. Best of all, 100% of the funds raised will help to insure Special Olympics athletes, their families or their caregivers will never be charged to participate in the year-long training or Olympic-style competitions in which they compete.

Tailoring your campaign to the company's culture and your employees' interests will result in the most success. The fundraising campaign can be as simple as the **distribution of a flyer or email** to encourage individual donations or as ambitious as a company sponsored **auction or raffle**. To get your company involved or for more ideas about activities that will be the most fun and raise the most funds, please see our website www.specialolympicsNY.org or call (212) 661-5217. ■

Day of Dedication and Celebration at P.S. 23 in New York City

Special Olympics New York (SONY), Special Olympics, Inc. (SOI), and P.S. 23 in the Bronx partnered for a very special ceremony on Wednesday, November 16, 2005. The day included a celebration of the Special Olympics Young Athletes Program, as well as a dedication of a new climbing wall in memory of P.S.23 student Paige Batchelder, an exceptional 8-year-old child who passed away last year. She had a great and lasting impact on all who crossed paths with her during her short life. The climbing wall was designed specifically with the needs of students with intellectual and physical disabilities in mind.

Dr. John Dow, Jr., Chief Administrative Officer of SOI (who spoke on behalf of Mrs. Eunice Shriver); Neal Johnson, President and C.E.O. of SONY; Kenneth Podziba, the New York City Sports Commissioner; and many officials from the school and the New York City Department of Education gave touching speeches as part of the morning's ceremonies. The Adaptive Physical Education teacher at the school then led 12 students through a demonstration of the Young Athletes curriculum. Finally, a red ribbon was cut for the new climbing wall by dozens of attendees.

The Young Athletes Program extends the outreach of Special Olympics to children ages 2-7. The curriculum emphasizes foundational skills, balance, walking, running, jumping and advanced skills. New York is one of 20 global locations for the pilot program, and there are nearly 50 young students at P.S. 23 who are participating in the program. The Young Athletes Program of SONY has been made possible by a grant from the Mattel Children's Foundation and SOI. ■



Industry Honoree Shines Light on Special Olympics

This year's 6th Annual Real Estate and Construction Gala to benefit Special Olympics New York honored Gerard Nocera, Chief Operating Officer for SL Green Realty Corporation. The record-breaking event, on Tuesday, November 1, at the New York Sheraton Hotel and Towers in New York City, included a raffle, cocktails, dinner and dancing. However, the highlights of the evening were a live demonstration by Special Olympics athletes in powerlifting and gymnastics, and a touching speech by honoree Nocera.

A yearly event that brings together organizations from throughout the real estate and construction industries, it honors a distinguished individual who brings excellence to the industry, as well as being an important fundraiser for SONY.

Gerard T. Nocera is the C.O.O. for SL Green Realty Corporation, and is responsible for the operation, leasing and redevelopment of the entire 27 building, 15.4 million square foot, SL Green portfolio. Mr. Nocera also oversees all capital projects, leasing programs and day-to-day operations of all properties owned and managed by the company. He is a leader

A special thanks to the committee for their tireless energy and enthusiasm that made this year's event even bigger and better than the past, and particularly to committee members Dayle Bass and Gary and Marla Greenspan, who have a long history of working to promote the athletes of Special Olympics. ■

2005 ING New York City Marathon a Triumphant Experience for Special Olympics Athlete Sean O'Rourke

Within the record-breaking throngs of more than 37,500 runners in this year's ING New York City Marathon on Sunday, November 6, was Sean O'Rourke, 28, a Special Olympics athlete from Bay Shore, Long Island. The ING New York City Marathon is a unique experience for each runner who completes the grueling 26.2 miles throughout the five boroughs. And Sean ran an impressive time of 4 hours, 29 minutes in New York City after having just run the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C. the weekend before.

Sean described crossing the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge at the start and watching the suspension cables bounce as the thousands of feet hit the ground. Winding through Brooklyn and Queens, the course comes across the 59th Street Bridge into Manhattan and continues up 1st Avenue into the Bronx before returning to Manhattan and the finish in Central Park. Crowds line the entire course to cheer on the runners, including Sean's parents Gary

and Patti, who were on 1st Avenue in Manhattan, and SONY President and C.E.O. Neal Johnson and Director of Development Laurie Kennedy at the finish line.



Sean O'Rourke poses for a picture with parents Gary and Patti and his girlfriend Pavla Salacova. Sean completed the New York City Marathon in 4 hours, 29 minutes.

This was Sean's first New York City Marathon, but the 7th marathon he's run in total. He said, "It was exciting, and I hope to

help get more Special Olympics runners involved next year." He trains year-round on his own and with the Rolling Thunder Special Needs Program on Long Island

(which has a number of Special Olympics Athletes in its membership), as well as with the Greater Long Island Running Club and the New York Road Runners. At the Special Olympics International World Games in Ireland, Sean placed fourth in the half-marathon. Sean has been involved with SONY for 14 years, competes in multiple sports, and represents the organization as a Global Messenger.

Sean ran as part of Team ING, who sponsored his participation in the race. His girlfriend, Pavla Salacova, and coach, Brion Cobb, also ran in the marathon. Brion said, "Words cannot really express the experience that we all had. Moving ahead I hope that this can continue to an even larger

scale." ■

Genesee First Region for Volunteer Re-Screening

Additional Volunteer Screening Measure Will Increase Safety

In December, Special Olympics New York (SONY) will be contacting all Type I volunteers in the Genesee Region as part of the comprehensive new volunteer screening policy enacted earlier this year. This will be the first region to be re-screened. Type I volunteers in the Genesee Region will be sent information on the new policy, and the focus will be on re-screening all existing volunteers. The mailing will include the new volunteer application form that must be returned by February 15, 2006.

In an effort to further protect Special Olympics athletes, Special Olympics

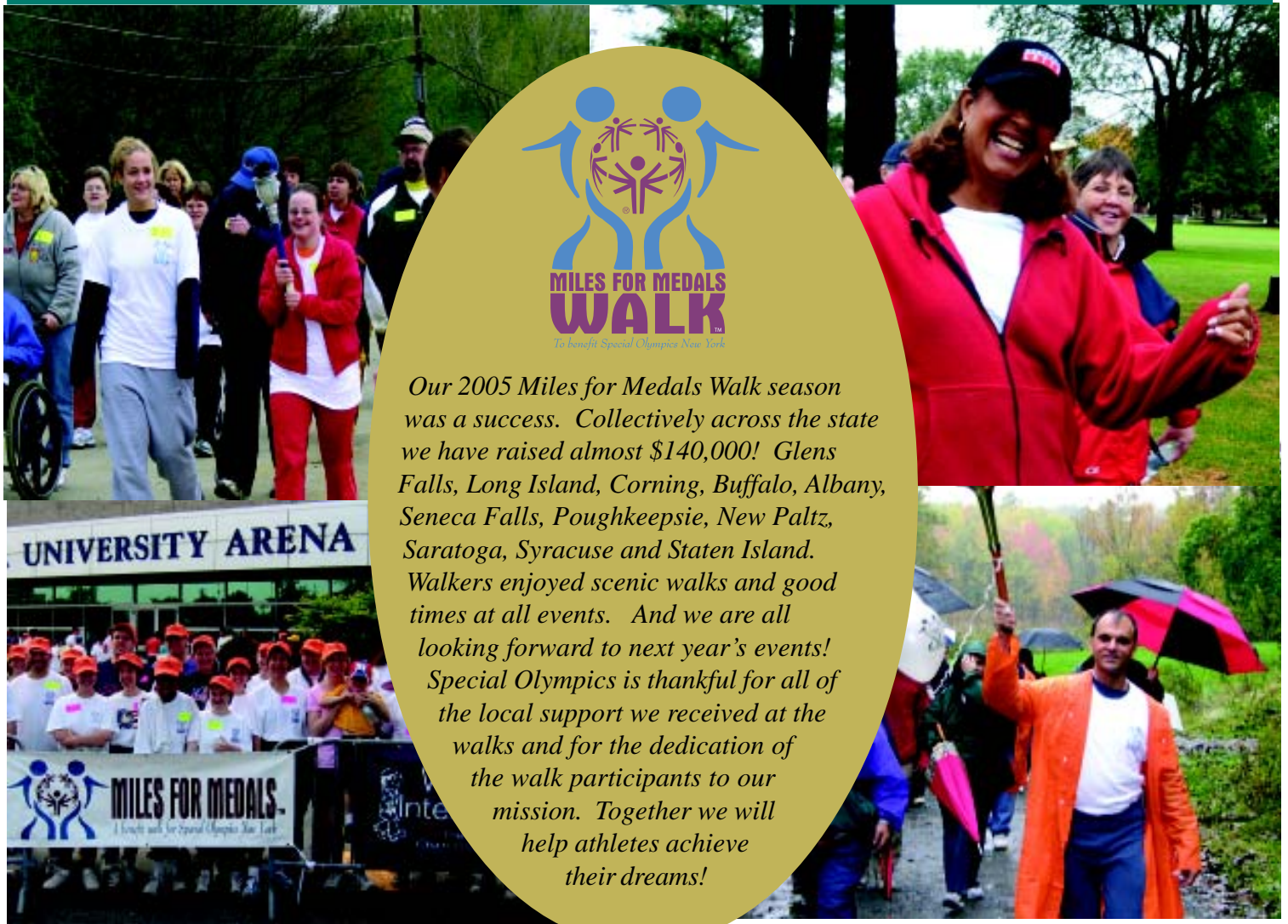
International revised its policy regarding volunteer screening and will now include background checks. This policy impacts what is currently referred to as 'Type 1 Volunteers': volunteers who may have close physical contact with athletes, volunteers who are in a position of authority or supervision with athletes, and volunteers who handle substantial amounts of cash or other assets of the Program. These volunteers must be screened using a national vendor that researches the sex offender registry for each State in which the sex offender registry is available electronically.



Special Olympics
New York

Beginning January 1, 2005, new volunteers are subject to the new procedures and all existing volunteers will be screened over a 3-year period ending July 2008. Going forward, volunteers must be re-screened every three years.

Special Olympics feels that this measure will better protect the athletes in our programs, who are considered a vulnerable population. Most importantly, volunteers and staff want to ensure a safe environment for Special Olympics athletes, volunteers, staff and spectators. The organization would also like to stress that all information collected will remain confidential. We understand that there will be some adjusting to this new procedure, but ultimately it will best serve the most important group we're all here for – our athletes. ■



Our 2005 Miles for Medals Walk season was a success. Collectively across the state we have raised almost \$140,000! Glens Falls, Long Island, Corning, Buffalo, Albany, Seneca Falls, Poughkeepsie, New Paltz, Saratoga, Syracuse and Staten Island. Walkers enjoyed scenic walks and good times at all events. And we are all looking forward to next year's events! Special Olympics is thankful for all of the local support we received at the walks and for the dedication of the walk participants to our mission. Together we will help athletes achieve their dreams!

TORCH RUN TIMES

Law Enforcement Torch Run News

Law Enforcement Torch Run visits Minnesota

Planning of conference requires lots of time and people

The 2005 International Law Enforcement Torch Run conference took place in Minneapolis, Minnesota from October 26th -30th. With the 2006 International Conference coming to Buffalo, NY, November 7-12 it was important for LETR state committee to send a group of people who are core members of the planning process for 2006 out to Minnesota. At the conference those who attended from New York were working in areas that they have been charged with for 2006. Each member who was there was learning a key role to come back and bring that information to the 2006 conference planning meetings. A key thing learned at the conference was that law enforcement is needed from across the state to pull off our conference. The 2006 Conference is also the 25th year of the Law Enforcement Torch Run and we have been charged with producing this silver anniversary conference. As we approach the deadline a lot needs to be done and we are looking for other agencies to come on board, if you have not been a part of our LETR before, this is a great opportunity for you to join us and support Special Olympics New York. The Core Conference Committee has amazing things planned for the 25th Anniversary event. This conference is going to be a great opportunity to show off what we can do as a community of law enforcement officers. Any one with any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to call either Sgt. Kevin Arnone (Attica State Prison) 585-813-8483 or Jeanne Grebert 518-388-0793. ■



Look at what we did in 2005

With everyone's time being pushed and pulled in every direction, it's a wonder we know what direction we are going this week. The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics New York continues to be a driving force behind the overall mission of our organization.

So what did LETR do in 2005? The law enforcement community held many events and supported Special Olympics New York in so many ways. There were the Polar Plunges from Coney Island, Port Washington, Fishkill all the way to Rochester. Then we had Fire Truck pulls along the same route in Hudson Valley, Auburn and on to Lancaster. There were Golf Tournaments, raffles (yes this includes our current Fantasy Raffle), BBQ's, Cops and Lobsters/Law and Orders, t-shirt sales and so much more.

The Torch Run did what most think of when we say who we are and that was carry the "Flame of Hope". This was done in different locations through-out the state ending with the Final Leg run into Hofstra Arena for the opening of the State Summer Games on Long Island.

As we come to a close in 2005 we have a lot to look back on and be proud of. The dedication and determination of so many law enforcement personal and agencies helps us continue to support the 40,000 athletes across the state. We would not be able to do what we do without each of you and the many sponsors who come on board for such a great partnership. So in 2006 look for an event in your area and get

a team, group, company what ever to help support the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics New York. ■



COLD FEET – WARM HEART

POLAR PLUNGES START NOW!

Special Olympics New York will have a great winter season with your help and support. The Polar Plunges will start New Year's Day.

Coney Island will hold its polar plunge on New Year's Day. The Coney Island Polar Bear Club, Inc. will be supporting Special Olympics New York again this year with a pledge and plunge along the boardwalk. What better way to ring in the New Year?

Rochester Polar Plunge will be held February 5th, 2006. The location is Ontario Beach Park, Charlotte Beach. This event continues to grow and become a premier event in the Rochester area. It is never too early to start your fundraising and support of Special Olympics New York.

Fishkill will offer its Polar Plunge on March 11, 2006 at Camp Mariah, Sharpe Reservation. Come and enjoy the peaceful surroundings of the wilderness as you dunk yourself into some refreshing water.

Port Washington (Long Island Region) will be held March 18, 2006. This event will take place at Bar Beach in Port Washington. The second year for this event, come and join those inaugural members of this polar bear club. ■



HEADS OR TAILS IT ALL ADS UP

“Mile of Quarters” is no chump change

The International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA) and the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) for Special Olympics have a formal affiliation agreement. As always this is great news for the Torch Run as it gets another organization on board to help spread the message and also another avenue to raise funds for the nearly 40,000 athletes of Special Olympics New York.

The members of IACLEA have a campaign that they are calling their fundraiser of choice and that is the “Mile of Quarters” campaign. A mile of quarters goes a long way, well it goes a mile, but beyond that it will help to support the many programs Special Olympics offers through-out the state. As a “Mile of Quarters is a lot of change 63,360 to be exact and that all adds up to a whole lot of dollars \$15,840 worth.

So we would like to welcome the members of IACLEA to our family and we look forward to working with them on this tremendous campaign. Look for the “Mile of Quarters” on a campus near you in 2006 and if you see one, stop and drop off a quarter of two as every quarter counts. Who will be the first member of IACLEA in the state to reach a “Mile of Quarters”? ■



Special Olympics New York

504 Balltown Road
Schenectady, NY 12304

www.specialolympicsNY.org

**Comments and story suggestions
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Special Olympics New York, Inc.
Public Affairs Department,
504 Balltown Road, Schenectady, NY 12304,
Phone: 800-836-6976.
Fax: 518-388-0795
Email: ewohlleber@nyso.org.

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*Don't forget to send your letters to the editor. Submit letters to Eric Wohlleber,
Special Olympics New York, 504 Balltown Road, Schenectady, NY 12304, or e-mail them to ewohlleber@nyso.org.*



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**CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS WITH
SPECIAL OLYMPICS**

**JOHNNY KNOXVILLE
*****THE
RINGER

**OPENS IN THEATERS
DECEMBER 23RD**

SONY's mission is to provide sports training and athletic competition to individuals with intellectual disabilities, including 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.