

Triumph



Special Olympics New York • MAY-JUNE 2001

Buffalo Welcomes Special Olympics

Community steps up in a big way to help plan and carry out Summer Games spectacular.

Area by Area, 2,500 athletes and coaches marched proudly out of the giant Buffalo Bills helmet and into the spotlight at the University at Buffalo Stadium, as television cameras, spectators and sponsors caught the parade of happy expressions.

So began the 2001 Special Olympics New York Summer Games – the largest competition of the year in New York and the culminating event for many of the state's athletes.



RF Photography

“Our athletes proved once again that their courage is unmatched anywhere in the world,” said Neal J. Johnson, president and chief executive officer of Special Olympics New York. “First, they played through the oppressive heat, and then the rain came. Yet they still managed to show those of us on the sidelines that they are truly special athletes. They kept their focus and did their best.”

The games featured competition in nine sports at five venues throughout Erie County, including the host



UB campus. The Opening Ceremonies, which were broadcast live on Empire Sports Network, featured the Parade of Athletes, fireworks, musical and dance entertainment, helicopter flyovers, celebrities from the Buffalo Bills and Buffalo Sabres, and a moving rendition of the National Anthem by Area 9 Track & Field athlete David LaGrange.

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Eleventh Annual Satins, Silks & Stars Weekend Planned for Saratoga Springs

Event has raised more than \$1 million for Special Olympics New York in last 10 years.

The 11th annual Satins, Silks & Stars weekend to benefit Special Olympics New York will be held July 28 and 29 in Saratoga Springs. The weekend brings stars of television, stage and film to Saratoga Springs for two days and has raised more than \$1 million in the past 10 years to support year-round sports training and competition for children and adults with mental retardation throughout New York state.

This year's festivities begin with the Silks & Satins 5K Run at 8 a.m. on Saturday, July 28. The weekend continues with a Black-Tie Gala that evening at the Sheraton Saratoga Springs Hotel, and concludes on Sunday, July 30, with an Equestrian Demonstration, Q & A with the stars and a Gourmet Luncheon at Saratoga Race Course. Celebrities for all events will be announced in July.

Tickets for the Gala are \$150 each. The private luncheon in



the elegant At The Rail Pavilion is \$75. The registration fee for the Silks & Satins 5K Run is \$15.

Satins, Silks & Stars sponsors include: **Gold Level** – Price Chopper, New York Racing Association, Cingular Wireless, Crossgates Mall, M&M's

Chocolate Candies; Silver Level – Garelick Farms,

ING Aetna Financial Services, J.P. Morgan Chase & Co.;

Bronze Level – Charter One Bank, The Curran Group of First Union; **Media** – Classical 97.7 - WBKK, Clear Channel Communications, Times Union, NewsChannel 13; **Support** – Amtrak, Connolly's Diamond Gallery, The Desmond, Grace Communications, HMA Contracting Corp., KeyBank, M&T Bank.

To make reservations for any of the above events, call 800-836-6976 or visit www.specialolympicsnewyork.org. ■



Amanda Roop at last year's Equestrian Demonstration.

Jerry Vitagliano

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A Message from the President

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



More than a year ago, the Board of Directors accepted a recommendation by the Organizational Review Task Force to move forward with a

plan to restructure Special Olympics New York.

The Task Force arrived at its recommendation after determining that our athletes should have access to the same high quality Special Olympics sports training and competition, regardless of where in New York they live.

As we continue to develop this new regional structure, I am pleased to report that past Board Chairman, and 30-year volunteer, Richard Johnson, has agreed to become a facilitator in this process.

Rick, who has a great deal of experience in every facet of Special Olympics, will lead a series of twice-monthly meetings of the management team as it develops the framework for this new and improved Special Olympics New York.

As a facilitator, Rick will keep the management team on task, ensuring that the task force's two primary objectives – quality and equality of program – are considered at every step of the regionalization process.

Rick, who recently retired as executive deputy commissioner for the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, is perfect for job. His Special Olympics experience, combined with his leadership skills will be an immeasurable asset to this important process.

Rick may have retired from his paying job but, lucky for us, he has not stopped working as a volunteer. ■

2001 Calendar of Events

JULY

- 13 Western New York Law Enforcement Open 2001, Darien
- 28-29 Satins, Silks & Stars weekend, Saratoga Springs
- Silks & Satins 5K Run, Saturday
- Satins, Silks & Stars Gala, Saturday
- Satins, Silks & Stars Luncheon, Saratoga Race Course, Sunday

AUGUST

- 6 Summer Golf Classic, Oak Hill Country Club, Rochester
- 25 Law Enforcement Torch Run Plane Pull, Rochester Airport

September

- 8 Section 5 Softball*
- 15 Section 3, 4 & 5 Softball/Football
- 21 Sections 3, 4 Equestrian, Skidmore College Riding Center, Saratoga Springs*
- 22 Fall Classic, Cantiague Park, Hicksville

* Please contact your Director of Field Services or the Special Olympics New York office for details

October

- 5-7 2001 Fall Games, Saugerties
- 17 Real Estate & Construction Gala, Sheraton, New York City
- 20 Section 3 Adult Bowling competition, (Age 22+) Pine Lanes, South Glens Falls
- 20 Section 2 Bowling Pat Tarsio Lanes, New Windsor
- 28 Section 1 Bowling Gil Hodges Lanes, Brooklyn

Also scheduled during October, with dates to be confirmed:

- Section 4 Adult Bowling competition, (Age 22+) Lakeview Lanes, Fulton*

November

- 3-4 Bowling West, AMF Olympic Lanes, Rochester
- 9-11 Bowling Central, Utica
- 16-18 Fall Leadership Conference, Queensbury Hotel, Glens Falls

Also scheduled during November, with dates to be confirmed:

- Bowling East Competition (Age 22+)*

Triumph

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Inspire Greatness

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No Place To Go But Up

Inaugural Plane Pull a success; organizers look to duplicate it in other cities.

It was a tug of war of sorts, men and women versus the beast. Nearly 2,000 people gathered at Albany International Airport on May 12 for the first-ever Law Enforcement Torch Run Plane Pull to benefit Special Olympics New York.

Teams of law enforcement officers from the Capital Region, along with civilian teams from the community, grunted and groaned as they competed to see who could pull the 72-ton Southwest Airlines jet 12-feet in the fastest time.

The Plane Pull was presented by the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police, Albany International Airport and Southwest Airlines.

“This event showed what can happen when a group of people come together to support the athletes of Special Olympics. We couldn’t have found a better way to celebrate our 100th anniversary than by supporting Special Olympics,” said event organizer Colonie Police Chief John Grebert, who also serves as president of the chiefs’ association. “Everyone involved from the team members, volunteers, sponsors and athletes had a wonderful time.”

The New York State Police team won the event with a pull of 6.16 seconds. Second place went to NYSOPBA - Coxsackie Correctional Officers. Union College took third place. Although the centerpiece activities at the Plane Pull were the demonstrations of strength, it was also full of family fun. Children had their faces painted, played in the Glenville Rotary’s Amazing Castle and danced to the music of the DJ. On display were law enforcement vehicles, including helicopters, and a stock car emblazoned with the NYSOPBA and Special Olympics New York logos.

The Plane Pull is part of the Law Enforcement Torch Run to Benefit Special Olympics New York. The Torch Run raises funds for – and awareness of – the Special Olympics movement. Highlighted by the relay leading up to Summer Games, the Torch Run is the largest grassroots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle for Special Olympics in the world.

The next Plane Pull has been scheduled for Aug. 25 in Rochester. For more information, call Sgt. Sal Gerbino at 716-247-2263 or call Rita Cox or Jeanne Mesick at 800-836-6976.



Colleen Brescia

Maximum effort- Correctional officers from the Capital District summon their strength.



Colleen Brescia

The Southwest 737 waits for another team.



Colleen Brescia

Members of the Northeast Association of Chiefs of Police.



Colleen Brescia

The New York State Police team celebrates victory.





Buffalo Welcomes Special Olympics



SONY staff

New York Lottery personality Yolanda Vega emcee'd Opening Ceremonies.

Continued from p. 1

Also featured was the conclusion of the Law Enforcement Torch Run, which led to the lighting of the Olympic Cauldron by Area 23 athletes Mary Beth Stanbro and Gary Drzewiecki.

"The volunteer Local Organizing Committee has worked hard in its effort to provide an out-

standing competitive and social experience for the athletes," said Erie

County Sheriff Patrick Gallivan,

who co-chaired the

LOC with his wife Mary Pat. "We were so impressed by the enthusiasm and devotion of all those involved. This was a real community effort."

The volunteer committee co-chaired by the Gallivans included professionals

from the worlds of fund-raising, event planning, professional sports management, public relations and entertainment.

"From Day One, the LOC, led by Sheriff Gallivan, embraced its charge to make the Summer Games something special for our athletes," Johnson said. "This committee

devoted itself to putting on a great show for our athletes, and they delivered. We can't wait for next year."

Summer Games

sponsors included Honorary Gold Medal sponsors Rich Products Corp. and Wegmans Food Markets; state level Gold Medal sponsors Cingular Wireless and the New York Lottery; Gold Medal sponsors Adelphia, Empire Sports Network, General Mills, M&M's Chocolate Candies,

"I came out, and people were cheering all around."

**-- Steven Portuando
Area 6**



SONY staff

Athletes of the Year, Jason Gorski and Jessica O'Brien recite the Athletes' Oath with Neal J. Johnson

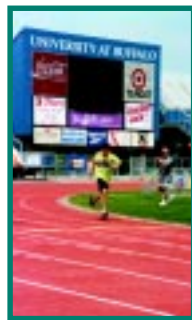
Nabisco, Reckett/Benckiser and *The Buffalo News*; Silver Medal sponsor: Amtrak; Bronze Medal sponsors: ClientLogic and Niagara Mohawk Power Corp.; Support sponsor: New York State United Teachers and Friend: J.P. Morgan Chase & Co.

The sponsors helped make this competition possible for athletes like Steven Portuando from Ulster County and Bonnie Snapp from Broome County.

"I came out and people were cheering all around," Portuando said at Opening Ceremonies.

"This is awesome," Snapp said at the Victory Dance. "I'm having the greatest time."

The Summer Games return to Buffalo in June 2002. To get involved, call 800-836-6976.



Photos: RF Photography

A Day at the Ball Park

Thanks to the New York City Sports Commission and the New York Mets, 100 athletes and coaches from Sections I and II watched the Mets beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 4-2 on May 4 at Shea Stadium.



SONY staff

Cingular Announces Details of New Promotion

Consumers offered great deals in exchange for \$20 donation to SO.

Cingular Wireless has launched a 60-day promotional drive during June and July to collect donations on behalf of Special Olympics.

The promotion was announced over two days in May in four upstate cities – Albany, Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo.

“Cingular is all about self expression,” said Terry Stenzel, president and general manager for Cingular in New York state. “After spending time at the Summer Games in Buffalo, it is clear to me that Cingular and Special Olympics is the perfect partnership. Watching the athletes express themselves will remain with me for the rest of my life.”

During June and July, consumers who donate \$20 to Special Olympics at a Cingular retail store are eligible for an exclusive \$35 rate plan offer, an Internet ready Ericsson handset and/or a co-branded Cingular/Blockbuster card for five free movie rentals.

“Cingular’s friendship goes beyond the important financial contribution they make,” said Neal J. Johnson, president and

chief executive officer of Special Olympics New York. “Led by Terry Stenzel and his wife Lesley, Cingular employees played an integral part in the planning of the Summer Games in Buffalo. Their support as volunteers and fund-raisers helps us achieve our mission of providing year-round training and competition for our athletes.”

Cingular Wireless, an Official Partner of Special Olympics USA and an Official Sponsor of Special Olympics Team USA, is in the second year of its support for Special Olympics. Its four-year goal is to raise \$40 million nationwide.

Funds raised by Cingular support year-round training and competitions for Special Olympics athletes and will help send Team USA athletes to the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Ireland.

Questions about the promotion may be directed to your area Cingular service provider or Rita Cox, director of Development, Special Olympics New York, 800-836-6976.

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Fall Conference and Awards Banquet Set for November

Volunteerism will be the theme of annual gathering.

The 2001 Fall Conference and Board of Directors Awards Banquet will be held Nov. 16 to 18 at the Queensbury Hotel in Glens Falls.

In recognition of the International Year of the Volunteer, the theme of the conference will be the importance of volunteerism in the Special Olympics movement.

“Our volunteers, including coaches, Area leaders and event organizers, are the backbone for everything that we do, day in and day out,” said Neal J. Johnson, president and chief executive officer of Special Olympics New York. “We could never do enough to adequately thank those who give their time to our athletes, but we hope this conference can be a special way we can show our gratitude.”

The Fall Conference and Awards Banquet was reinstated last year in an effort to recognize volunteers, sponsors and athletes for their work and support, and to improve the collaboration between Area programs and the state office with the goal of increasing fund-raising initiatives, athlete enrollment and visibility across New York.

This year’s conference will include a new three-day, two-night format with more sessions available.

The Queensbury Hotel is a full-service, 125-room hotel located in downtown Glens Falls. Built in 1926, its Colonial design features modern conveniences such as a pool and Jacuzzi, exercise room, beauty salon, and spacious and comfortable conference rooms.

The United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution declaring 2001 to be the International Year of the Volunteer (IYV 2001). The objective of this resolution is to recognize the importance of volunteering and to engage more individuals, groups, and organizations in volunteer service.

And while IYV 2001’s goal is to create awareness of the formal and informal ways in which people can volunteer in their communities, it was also designed to recognize those

individuals and groups who are committed to volunteer service.

While the United Nations has designated 2001 as the Year of the Volunteer, every year should be designated as such, said Suzanne Ellsworth, director of volunteer management.

“We need a strong foundation at the local program level and that’s what volunteers give to the organization,” Ellsworth said. “They donate the most precious thing we could ask for as an organization, their time. It’s their commitment to the athletes that should be recognized above all else.”

Nominations for the Board of Directors Awards program are being accepted until July 23 and should be

submitted to Ellsworth in writing. For more information about the Fall Conference, call Ellsworth at 800-836-6976. To learn more about the International Year of the Volunteer, visit www.iyv2001.org.



Around the State

Nassau County, Area 2

- FOCUS (Foundation of Community Unified Services) is teaming up with Special Olympics to devise activities for the developmentally disabled. Those interested in participating may contact Sheila Penn of FOCUS, 516-487-0276
- On April 18, the 4th annual Opera/Dinner Night fund-raiser took place at La Cisterna Restaurant. The Nassau Pops Symphony Orchestra hosted the event to raise money for Special Olympics. The Orchestra often makes charitable donations to Special Olympics, which to date have totalled \$150,000.

Dutchess County, Area 7

Global Messenger Ann Hertel spoke at the 2001 MAAC Softball Championship Banquet at Marist College on May 11.

Monroe County, Area 20

On April 7, Dr. Dot Richardson was the featured speaker at the 10th annual Crystal Ball, Olympic Gala held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Rochester. Richardson is a two-time Olympic gold medalist in softball. This year's dinner dance and fund-raiser commemorated 31 years of Special Olympics in Monroe County.

Oswego County, Area 29

The 14th annual Softball in the Snow tournament held on Feb. 17 was a huge success. This year's benefit raised more than \$3,000.

Ogdensburg County, Area 27

On March 24, a basketball tournament was held at Canton Central school. The teams entered were from Ogdensburg, Canton, Malone and two from the Adirondack region. A total of 120 athletes competed in both basketball skills and physical fitness contests. The Malone Timberwolves came in first, while the Canton Kool Kats came in second.

Suffolk County, Area 31

Suffolk County is in need of Certified Gymnastics Coaches. For more information call Linda Arminio at 631-928-4489

Christopher Reeve PSA nominated for Emmy

Spot featuring actor promotes Special Olympics New York and encourages volunteerism.

The 44th Annual New York Chapter Emmy Awards were held on May 6 in New York City. The Special Olympics New York public service announcement featuring actor Christopher Reeve was nominated for an Emmy in the category of Outstanding PSA. The nominations were announced by the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS) New York Chapter in April.

The PSA was produced by 13/WNET whose team included Producer Mara Posner,

Art Director David Chomowicz and Creative Director Chris Kogler. It was underwritten by the Riggio Foundation.

While the Special Olympics PSA didn't capture the award, the 13/WNET production team walked away with four other Emmys.

The New York Chapter of NATAS is one of 18 city chapters involved. The purpose of the Emmy is to recognize outstanding achievement in the arts and sciences of television. ■

Area 28 Names Sportsmanship Award After Longtime Friend and Supporter

Robert F. Borgognoni touched many lives in the Special Olympics family. He was so loved in his community that there was a two-hour wait to get into the funeral home when he passed away last winter. But though Coach Borgognoni may be gone, he will be forever remembered by Area 28, which has created the Robert F. Borgognoni Award for Sportsmanship at its Spring Games this year.

"He knew sports were important to everyone," said Area 28 Coordinator Jerry Bruno. "He never turned his back on us and always

helped us get what we needed, whether it was a field, equipment or volunteers."

Though Borgognoni wasn't an official Special Olympics Coach, he was a fixture at the Area Spring Games, running the field events. He also coached high school and community sports for 50 years.

The first ever Robert F. Borgognoni Award for Sportsmanship went to athlete Joseph Tornatore. The award will be given out each year to the athlete who exemplifies the attitude and sportsmanship of Special Olympics, an athlete who would make Coach Borgognoni very proud. ■



Area 28

Area 24 held its Annual Awards Banquet recently. Awards were given to various groups and individuals who have supported Area 24's program throughout the year. The Katie Campbell Rexford Most Improved Athlete Award was also presented to Jim Williams and Ron Dormer. Katie Campbell was a young Special Education teacher killed by a drunk driver. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. George Campbell, presented the award.



Area 24

Summer Golf Classic Planned in Rochester

The 3rd Annual Summer Golf Classic to benefit Special Olympics New York will be held on Monday, Aug. 6, at the historic and elegant Oak Hill Country Club in Rochester. The tournament is presented by ING Aetna Financial Services and New York State United Teachers.

Golf Professional Craig Harmon, who was voted one of the Top 100 Teaching Professionals by Golf Digest, will present a golf clinic prior to the 11:45 a.m. shotgun start. He will be joined by Special Olympics



athletes, who will put on an exhibition of their own golfing skills.

Participating golfers will also enjoy a gourmet breakfast, lunch and dinner and have the opportunity to take part in a raffle,

an auction and a putting contest. They will also have the chance to play on a legendary golf course known as much for its stately oak trees as its pristine and perfectly manicured greens and fairways.

Oak Hill has hosted many major events including the US Men's Amateur Championship, the US Open, the PGA Championship and the Ryder Cup. The PGA Championship will return there in 2003.

For more information about the Summer Golf Classic, call Linda Greenwald at 212-661-5217 or visit www.specialolympicsnewyork.com. ■

Office Furniture USA presents prize check

Ron Lazetta, president of Office Furniture USA, presents a prize check to Chris Culihan for winning the closet to the pin contest with a distance of 12 feet, 1 inch. Office Furniture USA associate Andrea Seabeck helps with the presentation during the March 10 event at the Golf Dome in Latham.



GETTING TO KNOW THE STAFF

There have been many new hires at Special Olympics New York in the last few months. In an effort to keep you familiar with the staff, we would like to update you on these changes.

Darcie Henderson began in late April as the administrative assistant in the Public Relations department in Schenectady. She brought a wealth of graphic design knowledge from her previous employment with her.

The New York City office hired a new director of program in May. Melissa Gross has worked with the NBA and PGA and has significant event experience.

Leigha Stuber was hired at the end of May as an administrative assistant in the Schenectady Program Department. Also hired at that time was Jeanne Mesick, associate director of Development, who will work closely with the Law Enforcement Torch Run.

Leaving Special Olympics after two years was Director of Development Beth Costello. Also leaving this June was Bookkeeper Sheryl Andersen.

And finally, congratulations to Associate Director of Development Addy Ryndinsky, who was married June 2 and is now using her married name of Addy Waldie. ■

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On Your Mark ...

Neal J. Johnson, president and chief executive officer of Special Olympics New York, prepares to start one of the track events at the Metro Tournament. The June 2 meet drew 1,500 athletes and coaches for one day of competition in six sports. Special guests included New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, Special Olympics, Inc. CEO Tim Shriver and actress Lorraine Bracco, who plays the psychiatrist on the "The Sopranos."



Mission: To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-style sports for children and adults with mental retardation, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.