



Special Olympics Idaho The Connection

UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR!

SEPTEMBER 2008 - 09/17/2008

From the Desk of the CEO...

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer! It is so hard to believe that we are in the middle of September! Where does the time go? My mom used to always tell me that 'the older you get, the faster time goes.' I never believed her as a kid as it seemed like school would never end and Christmas was never going to come. Well, the older I get, the wiser my mom seems.

As we get busier and busier here at Special Olympics Idaho, sometimes I have to slow down and reflect on the importance of our mission. I came across the following story written by Nate Geharz, an athlete from Special Olympics Wisconsin, which explains what the Special Olympics logo means. Our simple logo--displayed on everything from stationary to t-shirts to business cards--truly exemplifies what our movement is all about. Now, when I see our logo, I have an instant reminder of the important work done by our staff, board, volunteers, parents and supporters! *Enjoy!*



The Story Behind the Special Olympics Logo By Nate Gerharz, Special Olympics Wisconsin

In 2003, I (Nate Gerharz) was one of eight athletes from Wisconsin who attended an Athlete Leadership program training in Atlanta, Georgia. At one workshop, I learned what the Special Olympics Logo means.

The logo has five people who each have six arms. The down position means 'downtrodden,' remembering a time when many people thought we were not able to make good decisions or try new things. This describes my life before I became involved in Special Olympics. I had few friends and spent most of my time alone.

The straight arms mean 'equal.' We are the same in many ways. When I joined the Special Olympics swim team I found out I was the same as everyone else. No one cared that I could barely read or write. No one laughed that I was a lousy swimmer. For the first time in my life I felt accepted for myself. I believe that acceptance gave me the determination to become the best swimmer I could. It also taught me how to be a friend and not judge others by what they cannot do.

The arms raised represent 'joy' and realizing our ultimate goal. All goals should be challenging but reasonable. I have reached my goal of learning to swim, but now I have raised the bar and will advocate for a better state swim program. I reached my goal to be an assistant coach, but I challenge myself to help other athletes reach their goal of learning to dribble a basketball. I continue to work on my reading and writing skills, but I have become a Special Olympics Global Messenger and have spoken to crowds of more than 600 people.

The five people represent the five continents involved in Special Olympics at the time the logo was made. The people are placed in a circle to represent the world. It is pretty overwhelming to think when you look at the globe, there are Special Olympic athletes and volunteers in almost every country: People who are like you and me.

Remember: Don't always take the easy path. Challenge yourself each day.

Treasure Valley Parrot Heads Help Idaho Athletes!!

On August 13, 2008 the Treasure Valley Parrot Head Club raised nearly \$1,200 for Special Olympics Idaho by selecting us as the beneficiary of their night at the Boise Hawks baseball game. Local Jimmy Buffet fans gathered at the stadium to listen to music, eat barbeque, watch baseball, and to 'Party with a Purpose.' The TVPHC selected Special Olympics Idaho based on the involvement of Nino Cariaga, the group's event coordinator. Nino first became involved with the Special Olympics movement in the 70's when his sister who has Down Syndrome started participating in the program. Cariaga remembers the first medal his sister brought home from school. 'She was so proud she'd won that medal, I'll never forget it. I joined then and helped with the track meet to see her smile.' Today, Cariaga is a volunteer with Special Olympics Idaho and helps raise money and awareness as a way to honor his sister who is now 54. He and the other Treasure Valley Parrot Heads are 'extremely proud to serve the athletes.' To find out more about the Treasure Valley Parrot Head Club and join the party, visit their website at www.tvphc.org. Phins Up!



13th Annual Golf Sprint Raises More Than \$40,000

Early in the morning on August 25th, golfers converged on the Plantation Country Club golf course to raise money for Special Olympics Idaho. Nearly 60 golfers raised more than \$40,000 from various businesses in Idaho, Oregon, and Nevada. Special Olympics Idaho Board member, Sean O'Gara, has organized all 13 golf tournaments, which have generated more than **\$500,000** to help us provide year-round sports training and competition. On behalf of the 2,200 Special Olympics Idaho athletes, we would like to thank Sean O'Gara and all of the sponsors who made this a great event!

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SPORTS AND TRAINING UPDATE - SEPTEMBER 2008

Hello Everyone-

We are bringing back a sport that our athletes and coaches have been requesting for a LONG time- Soccer! This fall, Special Olympics Idaho will be having unified soccer competition. After polling our volunteers, we will be offering indoor soccer in Northern and Eastern Idaho and outdoor soccer in Central Idaho. Not only will offering unified soccer provide communities with more opportunities for involvement through unified partners, it also offers a physical activity and social opportunities later in the year than we are usually able to provide.

We will be looking for qualified and excited volunteers to help out with all of our soccer competitions. If you are interested, the dates and contact information is listed below:

Eastern Idaho Soccer; Rigby, ID, November 15th. Contact Delyn Porter at either 208-380-3946 or delyn@idso.org

Northern Idaho Soccer: TBA: Contact Heather Erikson: 208-704-1798 or heather@idso.org

Central Idaho Soccer: Boise, November 15th: Contact Jennifer Gardner at 208-859-8198 or jengardner@idso.org

State Floor Hockey Invitational!

Our state floor hockey invitational will be in Rexburg, ID on October 18th. We will have 6-8 floor hockey teams there and ready to give it their all! Floor hockey has quickly become one of our most popular team sports, and along with that, we need a great deal of help. We are looking for volunteers that are comfortable scoring and/or officiating floor hockey. If you are a fan of ice hockey, we could help you bridge the gap- just give me a call or email me and we will get you all lined up.

Sports Management Teams

We are still slowly but surely building our sports management teams. We have several sports covered by a person to head the teams, but are looking for support. Every team needs a person to help with coach s training, equipment, rules and regulations, partnership opportunities, officials and training, etc, etc. The list goes on and on. If you are a sports enthusiast and love Special Olympics, we will have a spot for you on an SMT. Here is a list of the sports that we currently offer:

http://www.idso.org/website/idaho/sports_available.cfm

Feel free to let me know if you have any questions- no pressure, I promise!

Thanks for all you do for our athletes!

Corby Goade
Director of Sports and Training
Special Olympics of Idaho
208-323-0482 x 22

L.E.T.R. UPDATE - SEPTEMBER 2008

The LETR program has a lot of really fun events coming up! **October 23rd through October 25th will be our Cop On**

Top of a Doughnut Shop at the Krispy Kreme in Meridian **along with a Tip A Cop at the Meridian Red Robin.** In January we will be having our annual Penguin Plunge at the Meridian Wal-Mart. Then January 29th to February 6th the 'Flame of Hope' will be run through Idaho by Officers from all over the world known as the Final Leg Team to help raise awareness for Special Olympics and the 2009 World Winter Games.



COP ON TOP -- BRING YOUR KIDS!!

We are doing some fun and exciting new things this year during our Cop On Top event. Here is a schedule of events we have planned. Please check our website the first of October for official times of these events. We will need volunteers to help hand out fliers for doughnut deliveries and to help with the pumpkin carving contest and carnival. If you are interested please email me at amy@idso.org.

Thursday 23rd

Doughnut Deliveries

Friday 24th

Doughnut Deliveries

Tip A Cop at Red Robin

Live Entertainment (Johnny Law will play during the trunk-or-treat)

Trunk-or-Treat (Bring your kids to trick or treat out of the trunks of cop cars!)

Halloween costume contest (Will happen during the trunk-or-treat)

Saturday 25th

Parent and Child Pumpkin Carving Contest (Carve a pumpkin with your kid!)

Tip A Cop

Carnival (Fun for all ages!)

Copsticle Course (an obstacle course competition for teams of 4)

Tip A Cop

PENGUIN PLUNGE

We have not set an official date for the Penguin Plunge but it will be held in January sometime at the Meridian Wal-Mart parking lot. Please look for further details in the next newsletter.

THE FINAL LEG TORCH RUN

The Final Leg Torch Run will be coming through many cities and towns throughout all of Idaho. Once the cities and towns are finalized we will send out the information to you so you can watch this once in a lifetime event! Stay tuned for more details!

BECOME A PART OF LETR!

If you or anyone you know would like to become more involved with the Law Enforcement Torch Run program I would love to hear from you! Please email me at amy@idso.org or call me at 208-323-0482 to find out how you can become involved!

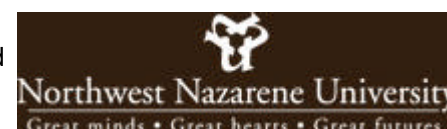
Upcoming Council for Exceptional Children Conference

Interested in learning how to inspire today's youth to be the most they can be? Then the upcoming Council for Exceptional Children Conference is for you! This year's conference has a theme of 'Going for Educational Gold: Empowering Both Students and Teachers' in honor of the upcoming 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games and will take place on October 1-3 in Sun Valley. The conference has something for everyone and will feature award-winning filmmakers, film screenings and internationally sought after speakers.

Council for Exceptional Children is a non-profit association that seeks to improve educational outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities. For more information on the upcoming conference, or about CEC, please contact Idaho CEC President-Elect Karen Gillette at Karen.gillette@boiseschools.org or visit the organization's website at <http://www.idahocec.org>.

NNU Course Credit Opportunity

Teachers interested in earning one graduate credit now have the opportunity to take part in a course taught by Dr. Mary Gervase through Northwest Nazarene University. Ed 550 'Education to Make a Difference' is a course designed as an independent-learning team experience in which educators teach a series of three concise and engaging K-12 lessons about valuing diversity through involvement with Special Olympics.



The course allows educators who teach the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games K-12 curriculum, which will be mailed to all public and private Idaho schools the week of September 22, 2008, to earn one graduate credit. Educators enrolled in the course form teams in schools or districts and have online access to lesson plans, literature selections, PowerPoint presentations and other activities and ultimately teach the lessons in individual classrooms. Teachers will maintain and submit a reflective journal on the changes in student behavior, engagement, compassion, acceptance, appreciation of differences and involvement with Special Olympics.

Teachers can enroll in the course at the cost of \$65 for the credit for fall and/or winter semesters by going to: <http://www.nnu.edu/cereg>. For more information on the course, please contact the instructor, Dr. Mary Gervase, at marymgervase@yahoo.com.

The art community will soon get the opportunity to see the courage of Special Olympic Idaho athletes thanks to a local professional photographer. Idaho artist and Special Olympics Idaho parent and volunteer, Susan Valiquette, will have her photographs featured from December 6, 2008 - March 1, 2009 at the Boise Art Museum (BAM). The exhibition titled, *Let Me Be Brave: Portraits of Courage*, will feature more than thirty portraits of Idaho Special Olympic athletes and is being displayed in conjunction with the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games which takes place in Boise February 7-13.



Susan Valiquette is the parent of a Special Olympics Idaho athlete, served as a volunteer for Boise Community and has been taking portraits of Idaho Special Olympic athletes for the past six years. A glimpse of Valiquette's photography can be seen at her website: <http://www.svaliquettephotos.com/>.

Come listen to Susan Valiquette speak about her work at BAM's Art Talk on Thursday, February 5, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. You can also visit the Boise Art Museum's website at <http://www.boiseartmuseum.org> for more information.

Special Olympics Idaho introduces Motor Activities Training Program (MATP)

The Special Olympics Motor Activity Training Program (MATP) is designed for athletes with severe or profound intellectual disability who are unable to participate in Official Special Olympics sport competitions because of their skill and/or functional abilities. This program is designed to prepare athletes with severe or profound intellectual disability, including athletes with significant physical disabilities, for sport-specific activities appropriate for their abilities. Through MATP the athletes will acquire the skills that will lead to participation in Official Special Olympics competitions!

Benefits to Athletes

There are numerous benefits for athletes who participate in the Special Olympics Motor Activity Training Program. They include:

- ✦ increased physical activity that leads to improvement in motor skills, physical fitness and functional ability.
- ✦ more opportunities to perform sport activities,
- ✦ development of a more positive self-image through skill acquisition
- ✦ greater family interaction through sport involvement,
- ✦ more opportunities to develop friendships with other athletes, their families and the larger community

Special Olympics MATP athletes transfer these benefits into their daily activities at home, and in the community. Additionally, family bonds strengthen as family members develop an appreciation for their athlete's ability to participate in a sport activity.

A MATP Challenge Day will be held in conjunction with the World Winter Games coming to Idaho in 2009. If you are interested in getting involved or would like more information, please contact Corby Goade at cg@idso.org.

2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games still needs your help!

The World Winter Games will require approximately 6,000 volunteers to assist in various functional areas to make the Games a success, and is seeking qualified, willing and enthusiastic individuals to help. If you are interested in volunteering please go to www.2009worldgames.org and sign up online! The deadline for volunteers in **SEPTEMBER 30th!!**

Host Town Program

The **Host Town Program** is an opportunity for each and every person to become involved in the World Winter Games on a very personal level. Please join our team by welcoming the athletes from around the world into your homes!

The Host Town experience is one like none other. Prior to the World Winter Games Opening Ceremony, international delegations are hosted in the homes of residents around the state.

For more information, or if you are interested in hosting a delegation and would like to schedule a presentation on this exciting program, please reply to Nicci Cleveland, Host Town Manager, at (208) 377-7237 or HostTown@2009WorldGames.org.

2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games - Family Ambassador Program

Family Ambassador Program

The purpose of the Family Ambassador Program is to provide a warm welcome to Special Olympics families visiting Idaho during the World Winter Games. Family Ambassadors will be the first people to communicate with families when they arrive in Idaho, USA. Ambassadors will be provided with contact information so that they may communicate before the families arrive in Idaho, USA. They will also be provided with flight arrival and hotel accommodation information. Ambassadors are encouraged to research the home country of the family they will be paired with in order to be prepared for the family's arrival.

Responsibilities of Family Ambassadors:

- ' Meet and greet families at the airport, using welcome signs if desired
- ' Direct families to the Family Information Booth, baggage claim and transportation (hotel shuttle, taxi, etc.)
- ' Attend venues, if possible, to watch and cheer for their assigned family's athlete

Family Ambassadors are not responsible for:

- ' Transportation of the family
- ' Accommodations for the family
- ' Paying for visiting family's expenses associated with joint activities between the family and the Ambassador

Optional suggestions:

- ' Cut out newspaper articles from the local newspaper that feature the World Winter Games during the week and pass them on to the family
- ' Take a picture of the family at the World Winter Games and print a copy to give to them
- ' Learn about the culture of the family's home country
- ' Make a special treat to give the family at the airport
- ' Share information with the family about fun and interesting things to do while the family is in Idaho, USA

To participate in the Family Ambassador Program e-mail Family Services at familyservices@2009WorldGames.org.
