



Special Olympics
Ireland

CONNECT

February 2010



Collection Day 2010 Friday April 23rd

It's that time of year again... in 2009 you came out in massive numbers to help us despite the rain. This year we have ordered the sun for April 23rd for the Special Olympics All Ireland Collection Day.

Of course for the day to be a success we are once again relying on the commitment of volunteer collectors to join the county collection teams on the day. If you can spare just a few hours of your time and would like to be part of our largest fundraising event of the year please get in touch with us.

The generosity of the people of Ireland continues to amaze us in Special Olympics Ireland and we know, with your help, the support we receive on the streets of towns and cities around the country will continue to help us change the lives of people with intellectual disabilities across the island of Ireland.

To join the team

Text COLLECT followed by your NAME and COUNTY to

51444 (Republic of Ireland)
or
86122 (Northern Ireland)

Or phone: 1850 462005 (ROI)
00800 40002006 (NI)

Email: collectionday@specialolympics.ie

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2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games Limerick June 9th - 13th

BDO Simpson Xavier Sign Up As Friends Of 2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games!

Special Olympics Ireland has announced that the financial organisation BDO Simpson Xavier has become Friends of the 2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games which will take place in Limerick from June 9-13th. BDO will support the Games through fundraising and the provision of staff and expertise in key support areas.

Speaking at the announcement of the partnership, Matt English, CEO of Special Olympics Ireland, said: "We are delighted that BDO's Limerick office has come on board as Friends of the 2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games. We need a great deal of financial and professional support to ensure that these Games are a huge success for all involved and I know that with the support of businesses like BDO we will realise this aim". Also at the announcement Brian McGann of BDO said: "the scale of the 2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games for Limerick is remarkable and we are delighted to be able to help through a combination of fundraising supports and offering some of our colleagues to provide their expertise across a number of operational areas for the Games".

Regional News

The training sessions are now well underway for the 1900 athletes that are attending the Games in Limerick. Head coaches in each sport have scheduled team training sessions between now and June in order to prepare the athletes for the Games. The training sessions are taking place in a variety of venues throughout each region.

For details of the training sessions visit www.specialolympics.ie and click on your region on the Regional Offices page. Families need to register for the Games to receive regular updates, if you haven't done so already, please contact your regional office.

Volunteer Recruitment Drive

The recruitment drive run in November and January for volunteers from the Limerick area interested in joining either the Games Organising Committee (GOC) or the Venue Management Team was extremely successful. The GOC has held its first meeting and all the volunteers are actively involved now in planning and co-ordinating their functional areas.

The Volunteer Services team has run a series of recruitment sessions for general volunteers who want to get involved in the five days of the Games throughout February and these have proven to be very popular with high numbers of enthusiastic volunteers in attendance.

If you are from outside Munster and wish to volunteer for the Games please visit our website for an important update.

Please note that you would need to be available for the full 5 days of the Games, organise your own transport/accommodation and attend any training relevant to your role in Limerick. Priority will also be given to Munster volunteers but please do get in touch either by email limerick2010@specialolympics.ie or phone us on the lo-call number 1850 555 222 if you are interested in being part of the Games.



Message from our CEO

Welcome to the February edition of Connect. I trust you all had a lovely Christmas and I would like to wish you health and happiness for 2010.

Throughout the month of February we have been busy recruiting our team of 3,500 volunteers to help us to run the Games in Limerick. So far the response has been hugely positive and we are delighted at the enthusiasm and eagerness of people to play a part. I would urge anyone who is interested in experiencing the joy and excitement of the Games to come along to one of our recruitment sessions to hear more.

We are also busy in the build up to our All Ireland Collection Day which will take place on Friday 23rd April. This is our biggest and only All Ireland level fundraising event of the year. Many of you helped us last year and this is what made the day such a success. The winning formula for a day like this is really is a case of the more the merrier - the more people we can have out on the streets on the day collecting, the bigger the impact, both in terms of awareness and fundraising, so if you can spare a few hours to help us on the 23rd of April we would be extremely grateful to you.

As an organisation we rely hugely on the support of our volunteers and the one word I would place before "volunteers" is "extraordinary". Each and every one of you makes an extraordinary contribution to Special Olympics Ireland and ensures that we deliver on our promise of changing lives. I would like to take this opportunity, at the beginning of what promises to be a very exciting year, to express the appreciation of the entire organisation to you - your contribution is hugely significant and hugely important to us and we are truly grateful to you.

I am looking forward with great anticipation to everything that lies ahead for Special Olympics Ireland in 2010 and I hope that when it comes to the time for reflecting on the year that was that we will do so with many fond memories.

Matt English
CEO



Training Opportunities

You Asked—We Answered!

Looking to learn more about working with people with intellectual disability why not avail of our

Intellectual Disability Educational Modules

Subjects covered include: Introduction to Intellectual Disability, Communicating with the Athletes, Athlete Health, Assessing Safety, Risk, Challenging Behaviour, Relationships and Sexuality, Professional Ethics in Volunteering.

Training delivered locally within the club, max group size 15, one module or several, depending on your needs:

To empower you, the athletes and volunteers on issues of poor practice and concerns of abuse avail of

Code of Ethics and Good Practice Training

Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Athletes
Available to be delivered to athletes within your club, this course is 3 hours in duration normally divided over two or three sessions.

Code of Ethics and Good Practice Basic Awareness Course for volunteers, families, coaches is delivered through the Local Sports Partnership (LSP) or Sports Northern Ireland in your area. *Coaches and Athlete Protection Officers are especially requested to attend this 4 hour course.

For further information or to book a course please contact Annette Codd, annette.codd@specialolympics.ie or telephone 01-8691637

Do you have Public Speaking Skills?

Please help us by giving 6 hours of your time per year to deliver Volunteer Induction Training in your region

If you live in Connaught, Leinster or Munster and have a background in public speaking or training please contact Anne Hughes at anne.hughes@specialolympics.ie or 01 8691620

Club Volunteer Induction

If you have a number of new volunteers who have just joined your club, avail of our Induction Training geared especially to them. It will be delivered at a time and venue that suits you (min 6 people).

Just joined us???

Come to one of our induction sessions!

Next one scheduled;

Wednesday 24th March

Commons Inn, Cork City (19:00 - 21:00)

NOTE: This does not relate to Ireland Games.

Check out our website for more dates around the country!

Health In Focus - New Year, New You!

2010 may bring many things for us but one thing that we could all do is to make a health change for the better. As we are all aware obesity levels in Ireland have risen dramatically in recent years. According to the 2007 SLAN survey, the percentage of respondents who reported themselves as being overweight has increased, from 31% in 1998 to 36% in 2007. Obesity levels have also risen from 11% in 1998 to 14% 2007 (National Health and Lifestyle Survey, 2007). This means that half of the Irish population are either overweight or obese. This can have a **detrimental effect on the person's health and wellbeing**, making them more susceptible to cardiovascular disease, certain cancers as well as the onset of Type II diabetes mellitus.



This increase in weight has stemmed mainly from increased energy intake and decreased energy output. Put simply we are eating too much food for the work that we do. A piece of research conducted by the University of Ulster in Coleraine showed that by individuals eating larger portions at the three main meals per day they could put on as much as 1 kilogram per week. The key to staying a healthy weight is to eat a balanced diet and to control portion sizes. Many people are familiar with the food pyramid but are unaware as to what constitutes a portion of the foods described in the pyramid.

The Food pyramid consist of 5 shelves, the bottom shelf is made up of carbohydrate foods these include: breads, cereals, pasta, rice and potatoes and we should have 6 portions from this shelf everyday (or more, depending on activity level). Carbohydrate foods can be one of the biggest culprits for overeating. People are often surprised a just how small a portion is exactly.

They are as follows:

Food	Portion Size
Bread	1 Medium slice or 1/2 Roll-or 1/2 Bagel
Rice & Pasta	1/2 cup raw or 1 cup of cooked
Potato	1 medium sized (about the size of a computer mouse)
Breakfast Cereals	30g or half a regular sized cereal bowl

It is also extremely important with carbohydrate foods to go with the wholemeal variety as often as possible. Not only are they more beneficial in terms of higher fibre content but they are often free from unpleasant additives such as bleaches which can compromise the nutritional quality of the flour unless they are added post bleaching.

So, this New Year, if you are trying to lose weight, keep an eye on your portion size. For more information on healthy eating check out:

www.specialolympics.ie/athlete/health_services/health_4_U or e-mail carol.farrell@specialolympics.ie

Get Connected!

In each issue of Connect you will find the Coaches Corner and Club Corner. These sections are dedicated to each and every one of the volunteers and coaches across the island of Ireland who work so hard to make sure our athletes have the best sporting chance possible. We want both these sections to be useful and informative, and so we want to hear what you want!

1. Do you have an interesting story to share other coaches and club members?
2. Do you have some great warm-up ideas?
3. Do you have some handy coaching tips to share?
4. Have you encountered a new challenge, but are unsure how to face it?
5. **Are you thinking about doing something new in your club, but aren't sure how to go about it?**

Why don't you send in your questions or ideas and we can post them in Connect and see what comes of it? We will welcome all contributions and will invite all clubs and coaches to respond.

Queries or ideas can be sent to vicky.finlay@specialolympics.ie. Remember, your regional officers are always there to assist you in the case of more pressing matters but this could be a great way to share ideas and information across the organisation.

For specific coaching queries or ideas, contact Fiona Murray at Fiona.Murray@specialolympics.ie



Coaches Corner

Protests & Appeals

Competitions are always busy! We have all been there, and although everyone does their best to ensure that everything goes according to plan, **sometimes, they don't. Occasionally, something** happens in competition that a coach is unhappy about. In some such instances, a coach may lodge a protest.

But when can you protest? When can you not? And how do you make a protest? Well here is your simple guide to protests and appeals.

Protests must:

1. Be made by the Head Coach (an alternative coach can be designated in the absence of a head coach)
2. Be lodged on an official form, available at the Sports Information Desk (SID)
3. Be submitted to the SID within an agreed timeframe following the conclusion of the event
4. Cite the specific rule violation from the Official Special Olympics Summer Sports Rules or National Governing Body rules
5. Be correctly completed and signed by the head coach.

Note: Any protest involving the judgement of an official will not be considered. Once a valid protest has been made it will be brought to the Jury of Appeals (JoA), which is composed of the Competition Manager, Sports Advisor and Head Official. The JoA endeavours to rule on the protest within 1 hour of receipt. If a Head Coach does not accept the ruling of the JoA, he/she is entitled to appeal the decision.



Appeals

If a coach chooses to appeal a decision of the JoA, this appeal must be lodged at the SID on the original protest form only, on which the Head Coach must note the ground for appeal. This is brought to the Games Rules Committee (GRC). The composition of the GRC will vary depending on the level of competition. They will meet/conference call to discuss the appeal and make a ruling. The result will then be conveyed to the Head Coach and the JoA. Any decision of a GRC is final.

Some key things to remember

1. Only the Head Coach can make a protest
2. A protest must cite a specific rule violation
3. It must be completed in time on the official protest form
4. It cannot involve the judgement of an official
5. Divisioning cannot be protested unless it has been misapplied
6. Protest rulings are made by the JoA
7. Head Coach can appeal the JoA decision to the GRC
8. GRC decisions are final

Record Makers!

Record Breakers



Special Olympics athletes break records every day! As coaches it is a big part of our job to make sure we know when our athletes break their records and achieve personal bests but also to know when things are not going so well!

One very simple way we can do this is to keep training records. For a sport like athletics, alpine skiing or swimming, this might mean making sure we time our athletes in their event on a regular basis and keep a record of their times in a notebook. For other sports, noting match results, scores and even rating performances can help us as coaches.

Pauline Nugent, Athletics Head Coach for Team Ireland at this year's Special Olympics European Games is a big fan of record keeping! Pauline talked to us about some of the reasons she believes this is so important:

- Athletes need and deserve to know if they are making progress; it works wonders for their self-esteem and personal development
- If the usual club coach is unavailable for a training session, the Assistant Coach will have all the necessary information to hand
- Substantial variance in performance measures can be an indicator that the method and/or frequency of training needs to be changed
- Coaches should consult their records on a regular basis when doing training plans, and particularly when preparing athletes for competition. Part of a **coach's job is to act as an ongoing assessor** and they cannot do this effectively unless accurate records are kept
- Accurate and historical record-keeping is very important when entering athletes into competitions; this will show whether some athletes are motivated to perform much better in front of an audience, but possibly less well under normal club training conditions. The coach can take such performance variations into consideration when completing Entry Forms.

Keeping good records can help you to provide your athletes with quality and targeted training and give them the best possible opportunity to have a positive experience at competition. Records help you, the coach, too, by ensuring you can properly prepare the **athlete for competition. Remember, says Pauline, "it** is the responsibility of the Club Coach to maintain accurate records; it is NOT the responsibility of the athlete to perform within the times or distances which the Club Coach decides to submit on **Competition Entry Forms!"**

Club Corner

A Guide to Organising Inter – Club Events

We are delighted to announce the launch of our guide to organising an Inter- Club Events. Inter-club events are a great way to provide more competition and training development for athletes.

What is an inter-club event?

It is when two or more clubs come together to host a training / competition event.

Why hold an Inter-Club Event?

- Increases opportunities to learn & develop skills.
- Increases opportunities for competition / training
- Flexibility
- Opportunities for family involvement

Where do I get a Guide?

- Guides will be issued to every Affiliated Group and coach in the coming months
- Go to www.specialolympics.ie and click on the "Information & Resources" under "About Us" .



Fundraising – It's in the Bag!

WEEE Ireland have donated Recyclable Bags to Special Olympics Ireland which are available for Special Olympics Affiliated Groups to use as a fundraising device for themselves. The Recyclable Bags retail at €3 each, 100% of which stays with the club. This is a great opportunity to raise valuable funds for your club with no cost involved. If your club would like to avail of the offer, simply contact Gearoid Mitchell on 01 8691642 or email: gearoid.mitchell@specialolympics.ie

Every euro collected stays with your club!!



Involving Families – a valuable asset in any club

Family members are the backbone of so many Special Olympics Clubs, but in many cases, involvement can be limited. As a club, if you are not doing so already, there are many ways to involve families in your activities, which will serve to make them feel included, but can also benefit the club in lots of ways.

Do you communicate regularly with the family members of your athletes? Do they know what's going on with the club and their athlete? Do they take an active role in the club? Do you ever include your family members in club social evenings? By keeping in touch

with your family members you can encourage greater involvement over time. Your family members can be the lead supporters at events, help out on club nights, dig deep when you are fundraising and generally experience more of what Special Olympics is all about.

Family members can register with the Families Programme either online at www.specialolympics.ie or by completing the form available from your regional office. Any family member willing to take an active role in the club must register as a volunteer through the usual channels.

Why not think about starting.....

The Athlete Leadership Programme in your Club

Many of you will already be aware that ALPs is active throughout Special Olympics Ireland with great success. This programme offers current and former athletes (who are over 16 years old) the means to explore opportunities in addition to taking part in sports training and competition and empowers athletes to take on new and challenging roles.

What you might not know is that you can bring ALPs right to your doorstep, by setting up an ALPs group within your club. This will allow the athletes in your club to embark on the programme in their own environment and can be of great benefit to the club. The athletes in ALPs Groups are always looking for new ways to expand their experience so in a club setting there are countless ways that they can help, from running fundraisers, volunteering, organising socials, and many more ideas.

For more information on ALPs, please contact your regional office or get in touch with Vicky Finlay on 01 8691612 or by email at vicky.finlay@specialolympics.ie.

Munster News

EMC Ireland Ltd host the Rhythmic Gymnastics with Special Olympics

On Sunday 29th November a group of volunteers from EMC Ireland Ltd organised and hosted the rhythmic gymnastics event with Munster Special Olympics at Colaiste Colm in Ballincollig. EMC got involved in Special Olympics this year for the first time and volunteered at a number of different sports events coordinated by the Special Olympics. This event was the first event sponsored and organised by EMC in association with the **Women's Leadership Form group within EMC where all the involved volunteers took the key roles in the event.**

The rhythmic gymnastics was an all female event with 44 artists performing their routines on the day. The athletes came from different schools and clubs across Munster, Owenabue Club, Crosshaven; St. Vincents Lisnagry, Limerick; Scoil Aonghusa, Cashel; and St. Clare's School, Ennis. The Competition had 5 different events: rope, hoop, ribbon, ball and clubs; the athletes could enter up to 4 of these.



Megan O'Halloran

The artists presented a very high level of technique and musicality. Most of them performed in several different categories so the judges could see their skills from different perspectives and in various musical contexts. It was a memorable day for all the athletes and their proud coaches and relatives, and also for the EMC volunteers who gladly shared the success of the athletes on the podium. Many athletes received several medals as they competed in different events, and every artist went home with a medal or a ribbon. EMC sponsored goodie bags for all the athletes and judges and the volunteers presented these after the awards ceremony. The volunteers then cleaned up the gymnasium and the event was finished by 4pm.

EMC was very proud to host this competition as it was a very unique and rewarding experience for all the volunteers.



Clonakilty Rings Tournament

The Clonakilty Special Olympics Club Fundraising Pub Rings Tournament Finals were held at the Brewery Bar on 19th December last with a packed house in attendance. The growing popularity of Rings was illustrated by the fact that each night over the three months over 40 people came along to watch the players throw the rings in the men's and ladies singles heats.

Over €3,000 was raised by the tournament for the Clonakilty Special Olympics Club. On the night of the finals, five times All Ireland Rings Champion, J. J. Behan from Kildare, made a guest appearance,. Also present were Special Olympics Club athletes John Reardon and Donal O'Brien and Club Manager Rose Dempsey who spoke passionately about the club and the athletes.

Thanks to Camilla and Denis of The Brewery Bar who sponsored all the Ladies prizes and Micheál O' Donovan of Rick's Pant Hire who sponsored all the Men's Prizes.

Cllr. Cionnaith Ó Súilleabháin



John Reardon, Gretta Hegarty (overall Ladies Winner)Donal O'Brien & with Camilla O' Leary of the Brewery Bar) (Photo: Richie Tyndall)

OWENABUE GYMNASTICS CLUB

The girls of Owenabue Gym Club took part in the Munster Rhythmic Gymnastics Competition in Ballincollig, Cork. Every year we add to our participation and this year we had 18 girls at the competition. Congratulations to all who competed. Well done to Aisling, Laura H, Laura C and Abbie who took part for the first time.

We have a very busy year as we will need to have extra sessions to prepare our seven gymnasts who will be part of the

Munster Gymnastics Team for Ireland Games 2010. Karen, Meghan, and Margaret will be on the Rhythmic Team and Fiona O'B, Fiona H, Maeve and Grace will be part of the Artistic Team.

The club also trains and competes in artistic gymnastics and will have 28 gymnasts in the Munster Artistic Competition on 18th April. Owenabue has places for a small number of gymnasts if anyone knows of someone interested in gymnastics in the Cork area.



Volunteer and coaches are always welcome. We will be delighted to welcome any one interested in helping.

Connaught News

Splashin' Penguins Special Olympics Swimming Club

Michael John Scanlon who is pictured with David Platt from Coronation Street on our visit to Derry in September last year. This trip was organised by Pat O'Malley Head Coach with Splashin' Penguins swimming club in Sligo and Paddy Curtis Head Coach with Foyle SO swimming club. We had a fantastic time in Derry with the main event being a swimming gala where medals galore were won. A disco followed in the evening and the athletes crammed the dance floor with plenty of energy. Both Head Coaches Paddy and Pat met at a meeting of a group of union members from both north and south called City Bridges. While talking after the meeting they discovered that they both taught swimming for Special Olympics and decided to undertake a cross border project under the auspices of City Bridges. A group of Special Olympics athletes from Derry visited Sligo where they were given a civic reception by the Mayor of Sligo followed by a visit to the Sligo Fire Station where the athletes tried their hands at using the fire hoses and wore helmets and were treated to rides in the fire engines. A Swimming Gala followed and medals presented. Special Olympics athletes from Sligo then had a return trip to Derry and were given a civic reception by the Mayor of Derry followed by a Swimming Gala and then on to ten pin bowling. It was great for the athletes to meet others from the north and friendships have been forged which will last forever. We hope to return the favour this year by inviting the Derry club to come to Sligo for a visit.



For those with access to a computer, click on the following link to see more of the visit to the Sligo Fire Station <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GwcRrwPzdY>

Nightriders Special Olympics Equestrian Club

Nightriders have been on the go for the past 12 years. They are based at McGarry's Riding Centre in Sligo. The group meet every Tuesday and there are still some of the original riders and volunteers in attendance. The club has become so popular with the local athletes that the club has had to organise the athletes into two groups which attend every other week. Head Coach Claudia Florchinger, along with the rest of the dedicated club volunteers, organises a group outing every year. Some of the outings have included trips to the Apassionata Show in Dublin, Horse Shows in Belfast, Ride Outs, BBQs in Markree Castle and Barn Parties to name but a few.



Our Schools Got Talent Sligo

We are delighted to announce that Special Olympics Connaught are to benefit from an exciting new inter-schools talent competition. The competition "Our School's Got Talent" is sponsored by Quayside Shopping Centre in association with OceanFM and carries a prize fund of €5,000.

"Our Schools Got Talent 2010" is open to all students attending secondary school in County Sligo; Auditions took place in the Quayside Shopping Centre in January.

Seventy two acts were chosen from these auditions to represent their school in "Our School's Got Talent" show which will take place in the Sligo Park Hotel throughout February with the final scheduled for March 16th.

Audition application forms are now available at all secondary schools in Sligo and from the Special Olympics offices in Wine Street Sligo, or by email from osgt@live.com

Announcement of Annual Regional Meetings

The 2010 Special Olympics Connaught Annual Regional Meeting will take place on Thursday 25th March at the McWilliam Park Hotel, Claremorris, Co. Mayo commencing at 7:30pm.

_2010 Regional Council Meetings
All meetings take place at the McWilliam Park Hotel, Claremorris, Co Mayo commencing at 7.30pm.

All affiliated groups, family members, athletes and volunteers are welcome to attend these meetings. The following are dates scheduled for the coming year:

Thursday, 11th February
Thursday, 20th May
Thursday, 21st October

Shuttle Stars Special Olympics Badminton Club

Our club is three years in existence and it is growing each year under the watchful guidance of Gerry our coach and the fantastic organising skills of Kay. We started off with 10 members and now our group is near 25 which is a great tribute to the way the club is run.

We wish to thank all our dedicated volunteers and especially our TY students what a super group of teenagers they are. All our athletes want to wish one of our first volunteers Sally a big speedy recovery and to tell her she is missed dreadfully. We cannot but mention Michael our Bar Manager who every evening after our training has our supper ready and serves it with a smile and good humour.

Thanks to all and welcome back for our next term.

2010 Ulster Aquatics Events



January 2010 saw the Ulster region host two aquatics events across the region with a third falling casualty to the weather.

The Ulster South Aquatics event on 21st January in Orchard Leisure Centre Armagh saw 60 athletes competing in events in a range of disciplines.

The event was supported by a group of 30 local volunteers and pupils from local school St Catherine's College. Local Cllr Sylvia McRoberts also attended showing her support for Special Olympics Ulster.

Lagan Valley Leisure Plex in Lisburn hosted the Ulster East Aquatics Event on 26th January. One Hundred athletes competed representing both Co. Down and Co. Antrim. Councillor Allan Ewart, Mayor of Lisburn City Council was in attendance to distribute medals and ribbons.

Both events proved to be a great success with some great competition and athletes displaying their swimming talents. Special Olympics Ulster would like to thank all those who made the events such a success including all the volunteer, Affiliated Groups, coaches and athletes.



Ryan Receives Personal Achievement Award

Ryan Hill from Eagers Special Olympics Ski Club and Appleby SEC in Co. Armagh was recently awarded with a Personal Achievement Award from The William Keown Trust for his involvement in Special Olympics. Ryan received the Lilliput Cup Special Olympics Award at an Awards Ceremony in Belfast's City Hall. He was part of the Irish team that competed in the 2009 World Winter Games in Boise, Idaho where he won a Gold medal in the Intermediate Giant Slalom and 4th place in the Intermediate Super Giant Slalom.



Congratulations to Ryan from Special Olympics Ulster on this Award!

Kia Donegal Drives Special Olympics Campaign

Owner of Letterkenny Kia, Seamus McLaughlin was delighted to launch Kia Motors support for Special Olympics Ulster. Mr McLaughlin said "we are delighted to be associated with Special Olympics – an organisation that truly changes the lives of people every day. The work of all involved in the organisation is magnificent and it allows us give something back to communities throughout Ulster."

Local athletes Bryan Doran and Oliver Boyle were in attendance to help launch Kia Motors support in addition to Special Olympics Ulster Regional Director Shaun Cassidy and the Ulster Head of Delegation 2010 Games, Angela McGee. The launch signifies the support of Kia Motors for the transport of Special Olympics staff and volunteers in each of the five Special Olympics Ireland regions.



Leinster News

THE ICE HAS MELTED - IT'S TIME TO KNOCK SOME PIN'S



Thankfully our final of the postal bowling league took place on the 27th of January. It was initially scheduled to take place on the 13th of Jan but our infamous 'cold snap' weather conditions forced it to be rescheduled.

After a six week postal league campaign 124 athletes, representing 11 Affiliated Groups across Leinster were invited to compete in the postal bowling league final, in The Dome family entertainment centre, Co Carlow. The event was a huge success and we would like to thank all our fantastic volunteers that made the day possible. We would also like to thank the staff of The Dome for once again for making the day run as smoothly as possible.

Call to action for all Medical Volunteers



As you may be aware we are currently in the process of training our athletes that have been selected to represent Team Leinster at the Ireland Games in Limerick in June. These training sessions are taking place across the region on a monthly basis and are hugely important in order to prepare our athletes for their competitions in June.

We are in the process of trying to confirm medical cover for these events however, unfortunately this is proving difficult. So if you are available or interested in volunteering at any of the events listed on the website or are interested in any future events...

We would be hugely grateful if you could contact Áine O'Driscoll at the Leinster Regional Office (contact details on back page)



Carlow Chamber of Commerce presenting a cheque to Special Olympics

BOOCE BALLS SET FOR SALE!

Price:
€1,700.

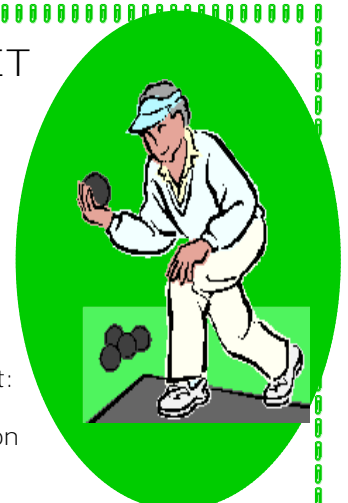
Condition:

Never been used.

Including:

Bocce carpet and roller.

If interested please contact:
Karen Breslin, South Offaly
Special Olympics Club, Birr on
087 7407167





A SWIMMING CHALLENGE FOR 2010

The Tiburon Mile 2010 Open Sea Swim San Francisco
Our Tiburon plans include:

- Recruitment of 50 swimmers by 28th February 2010.
- **Each swimmer commits to raising €3,250 which includes** your flights, accommodation and race entrance fee.
- Raise much needed funds for Special Olympics Ireland

What?

Founded in 1999, the RCP Tiburon Mile is the most competitive and prestigious international open water swim event in the world. Once a year, hundreds of swimmers converge upon the town of Tiburon, California, USA, ready to swim a nautical mile — **that's roughly 2,000 yards or 1,800 metres.** There are a number of divisions so that regardless of ability, Olympic Gold Medallists, World Champions and tri-athletes can participate alongside high school and hobby swimmers! Remember the Special Olympics oath:

"Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

Where?

This unique race takes place in the beautiful surrounds of San Francisco Bay – starting from Ayala Cove on Angel Island and finishing at the beach in downtown Tiburon.



When?

Join the "Tiburon Mile 2010 Team" race date Sunday 17th October 2010.

Who?

Are you: Over 18 years old?...free to travel mid October?...a keen swimmer looking for a challenge?...committed to raising **at least €3,250?**

In the words of one of the participating volunteers last year: *"This proved to be a fun, rewarding experience through which I made new friends and best of all helped raise money for a fantastic cause".*

We'd love to hear from you today!

If you know of anyone who might be interested in participating please ask them to contact Brenda.

Phone: 01 8691626

Email: tiburonmile@specialolympics.ie

Annual Regional Meeting

Special Olympics Eastern Region Annual Regional Meeting will take place in

National College of Ireland (NCI)

Mayor Street, Dublin 1.

Monday 22nd March

7.30pm

If you are a registered volunteer, athlete or family member and would like to attend please contact the Eastern Region office on 01 8691626.

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font on a dark blue background.

The Special Olympics Ireland Facebook page is a great way of keeping up to date with pictures, news and events from all regions throughout the year. Become a fan and help us reach 10,000 fans!

Volunteer Vacancies

Get Involved - We Need Your Help

Club Opportunities—EASTERN

Knocklion Special Olympics Club is a new athletics club being set up in Dublin 16 and we hope to be up and running by early March. If you are an athlete or volunteer who would like to get involved with this exciting new venture, please contact Susan O'Sullivan on 01-8691619 to find out more!

Astro Galaxy Special Olympics Club is an established club offering training in 5-a-side football in Tallaght. The club are currently looking for volunteers to join their dedicated team to help them run the club. For more information, contact the Club Secretary Louise O'Loughlin on 086-0670719.

Ballymun Deep Blues Special Olympics Club
Do you live in the D9/D11 area? If so, Ballymun Deep Blues Special Olympics club offer swimming training every Tuesday evening and are currently looking for volunteers to help them at their weekly training sessions. To find out more, contact Deirdre Kirk on 086 8931861.

North City Striders Special Olympics Club offers training in athletics every Saturday 1.30-2.30pm in St Kevin's College, Ballygall Road, Glasnevin and the club are currently looking for more volunteers to help the club every week. For more information, contact Kieran Maycock on 086 4059142.

Speisialta Special Olympics Club are growing from strength to strength participating in two sports. We are looking for volunteers to help at their weekly club training sessions on Saturdays as follows:

Badminton
Clondalkin Sports & Leisure Centre
11.30am-1.00pm

Football
Rathcoole FC
3pm-4.30pm

To find out more, contact Mary Kennedy 087 2270183

Club Opportunities—ULSTER

Club volunteers are needed throughout the Region. No particular sports knowledge is needed, just a willingness to take on new tasks and learn new skills. Contact the Ulster office for more information.

Medical volunteers needed **URGENTLY**. Special Olympics Ulster requires medical volunteers to assist at their upcoming events and 2010 Team Ulster Squad training sessions. If you would be interested in getting

more information on these dates and venues please contact Emma at the regional office.

Athletics Squad Training is ongoing from now to June. Special Olympics Ulster requires volunteers to assist at the training sessions of the 2010 Team Ulster Athletics squad. Knowledge of athletics is not necessary but preferable. Please contact Emma at the Regional Office for more information

Club Opportunities—MUNSTER

We have several clubs across the region looking for new volunteers. We need qualified coaches, assistant coaches and general volunteers to help in a variety of sports for clubs in Waterford, Tipperary Limerick, Cork, Kerry and Clare. Whether you are brand new to Special Olympics or just want to get more active...you can make a real difference. A full list of the clubs are available on the Munster page of the website.

Please contact Eilish in the Munster office to find out more about the clubs that need your help.

Event Management and Competition Management Course

This course is an introduction to event management and competition management at our events. It is aimed at volunteers who would like to become more involved in the planning of events and taking on roles such as Event manager, Safety officer, Volunteer Coordinator, Operations Manger and Competition Manager etc.

Date: Monday 29th March
Time: 7pm to 9.30pm

For more details or if you would like to put your name down for this course please contact the Munster Office (Contact details on the back page)

Club Opportunities—CONNAUGHT

Volunteers needed for Special Olympics Clubs in Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim, Galway, Roscommon, Longford and Westmeath. There are many roles within the club environment i.e. assisting a Head Coach, club administration, media/pr, medical/physio/first aid etc. If you are available to assist as a club volunteer please call 071 914200 or email connaughtvol@specialolympics.ie or call and we will provide you with a list of clubs and contacts in your area.

Volunteer Vacancies

Get Involved - We Need Your Help

LEINSTER

Sport	Venue	Date	LEINSTER
Motor Activities	Kerdiffstown House, Naas	March 10 th	If you are interested in volunteering at any of the development day dates listed or can get involved in our squad training sessions, please do not hesitate to contact Aine on 01 629 6999 or email aine.o'driscoll@specialolympics.ie
Football	Tullamore Town Football Club.	April 20 th	
Athletics	Claremont Stadium Navan	May 29 th	
2010 Games—Leinster Squad Training dates have been scheduled over the next few months. The full list of dates and times are available on the website. Please go online and check out which events you could help us with.			

Eastern

Sport	Venue	Date	EASTERN
Aquatics	ALSAA Pool, Dublin Airport	March 27 th	If you would like to become a part of team and you are available for any of the events listed please email or call us and so can assign you to your chosen event.
Football 5 Men's Finals	Dublin Venue to be confirmed	April 11 th	
Basketball Skills	Sportsco, Ringsend, Dublin 4	April 17 th	
Football 5 Women's Finals	Dublin Venue to be confirmed	April 18 th	
Athletics	Morton Stadium, Santry	May 15 th	

ULSTER

Sport	Venue	Date	ULSTER
Ulster West Aquatics	Omagh Leisure Centre	April 22 nd	If you would like to become a part of team and you are available for any of the events listed please email or call us and so can assign you to your chosen event.
Bocce	Jim Baker Stadium (Templepatrick)	April 30 th	
Golf	Silverwood Golf Club (Craigavon)	May 10 th	

MUNSTER

Sport	Venue	Date	MUNSTER
Equestrian	TBC	March 25 th	For further information on volunteer opportunities at any of the sports events listed please contact munvol@specialolympics.ie or call 021 4977192. We need to recruit volunteers for all the sports events listed so we would appreciate it if you have a couple of hours to spare on any of these days.
Basketball Cup	Little Island Cork	March 27 th	
Gymnastics Artistic	Crosshaven	April 18 th	
5 a side Football	University of Limerick	April 24 th	
Athletics	Mardyke Cork	May 8 th	
Bocce	Rockwell	May 16 th	
Golf	TBC	May 24 th	
Athletics	Mardyke Cork	May 29 th	

CONNAUGHT

Sport	Venue	Date	CONNAUGHT
Aquatics	Leisureland	March 3 rd	The sports events listed will require volunteers to plan, organise and take part of the day. If you would like to become a part of team and you are available to volunteer at any of the events listed please email connaughtvol@specialolympics.ie or call 071 9141200 which event you are interested in and we will assign you to your chosen event.
Gymnastics	Athlone Gym Club	March 10 th	
Bowling	City Limits	March 13 th	
Basketball	Calasanctius College	April 24 th	
Equestrian	Sligo Riding Centre	April 28 th	
Athletics	Athlone IT	May 5 th	
Bocce League Final	Toghermore	May 19 th	

Athlete Leadership Programme Update

EASTERN REGION

What do we get up to in ALPs in the Eastern Region ?

Well each year we do various workshops (about 4 per year), we do lots of different things like Public Speaking, Photography, Information on Special Olympics, Healthy Living, Code of Ethics and we hope to throw in some new workshops this year but we'll keep them a secret for the minute. We also have an annual ALPs Conference. This year will be our 3rd annual two day ALPs Conference.

ALPs athletes in the Eastern Region also work hard on their ALPs Awards where you can receive Gold, Silver or Bronze. We usually have our awards night on the second day of our ALPs Conference.

We also have an Eastern Region ALPs Committee where athletes from all 3 Area's come together and meeting 4 or 5 times a year. The committee will discuss items from the Area and they try to represent the view of all the athletes in the region. If you are a member of the Eastern Region Committee you can also go on to ALPs Ireland, the Eastern Regional Committee and even the Board of Directors!

So as you can see there's never a dull moment in the Eastern Region!



WE NEED MENTORS NOW!!!

We have 3 athletes at present who are in need of a mentor. Brian (Dublin 5) and Aisling (Wicklow) who are hugely involved in ALPs but have recently lost their mentors and also Kevin (Dublin 15). Brian even sits on ALPs Ireland so its hugely important that he gets a new mentor soon. Aisling has been involved in ALPs for a long time and has great experience in the programme. Kevin is brand new to the programme and is looking to get kick started but he needs a mentor to help him do so! We would really love to see all 3 athletes involved in the ALPs programme going forward but they need mentors so if you think you may be interested please contact the Eastern Region on (01) 869 1626.



CONNAUGHT

On Wednesday 9th December, athletes from Connaught travelled to the McWilliam Park Hotel for the Annual Christmas dinner and ALPs Awards night.

17 athletes received their awards on the night - 16 Bronze and 1 Silver award were presented by Regional Director, Myra Merrick and ALPs Officer Simeon Whittington. Certificates of Appreciation were given to all mentors for their invaluable assistance to the athletes throughout the year.

Following the awards presentation, the athletes took to the dance floor dancing away the rest of the evening with music provided by a local ceili band.

Training took place on Monday 25th January to a potential new ALPs group. Loughrea Training Centre will come on board with new ALPs athletes and mentors. Any Affiliated Group who would like to learn more about the ALPs programme can contact Mary Ann in the Connaught office:

maryann.mcbrien@specialolympics.ie.



"Becoming an ALPs mentor has been a life changing experience. The athletes inspire me and indeed have been my teachers"

Puzzle Page

Staying Healthy



U C T E V V R G N I K L A W L
 T O N I N G E H C E O R E S T
 H Y V G S O Y G H R E Q N N V
 G Y S M E G I L E U N I H M E
 I B C T I C W T E T M E Y L K
 E W U E R G S A I A A G O N B
 W R N I O E X S T R R B B S J
 H E X D L R S I T E T N L S Z
 E A G O A M V S N P R U I E P
 W Q H P C F E E R M F F N N S
 I C E X E R C I S E O E A T G
 M U S C L E S D O T L H P I N
 X E V Y Y E W N W Q V I U F U
 B L O O D P R E S S U R E S L
 J E N T V E R U I T I U R F E



Blood pressure
 Calories
 Cholesterol
 Diet
 Energy
 Exercise
 Fitness

Fruit
 Germ free
 Gym
 Heart
 Hygiene
 Learning
 Lungs

Muscles
 Nutrition
 Rest
 Stress relief
 Temperature
 Toning
 Vegetables

Vitamins
 Walking
 Water
 Weight

Health Quiz

- Q1. How many portions of fruit and vegetables should we eat everyday?
 a) 1 b) 5 or more c) 3
- Q2. When should we wear sunscreen?
 a) In the summer b) Only if we get sunburnt c) Everyday
- Q3. How often should we take part in physical activity?
 a) Once a week b) 30 minutes 5 days a week c) Never
- Q4. How many spoons of sugar are in a can of cola?
 a) 7 b) 3 c) 5



Congratulations

The winners of our last competition were:

1. Kathleen Mulroy
2. Catherine Gorby

Please fill in your name and daytime phone number:

Name: _____

Phone Number _____

Answers to the questions above plus your completed Word Search to be submitted with your name and address to:
 Volunteer Department, Special Olympics Ireland, 4th Floor, Park House, North Circular Road, Dublin 7

EMILY HURLEY - ATHLETE PROFILE

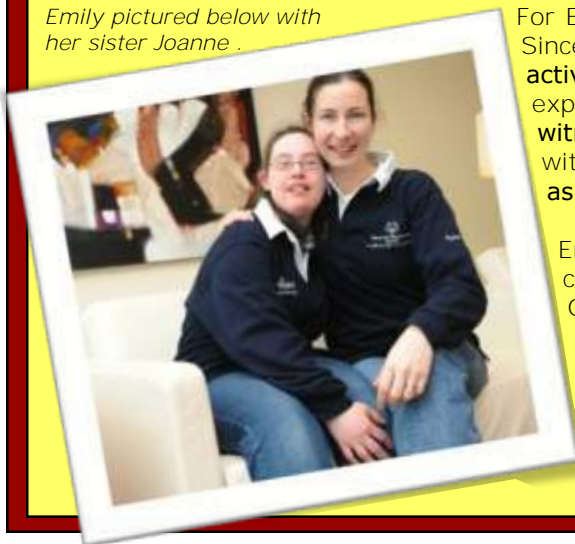
Twenty eight year old Emily Hurley from Kilmallock, Co. Limerick. Emily, an experienced horse rider, has previously competed in the Special Olympics Ireland Games in 1998 and 2002. However, for Emily, the forthcoming 2010 Games promise to be extra special as she has been selected for the role of Special Olympics Ireland 'Athlete Face of the Games'. Emily will work closely with her favourite sporting hero, rugby legend Keith Wood, who is the 'Celebrity Face of the Games' - exciting times ahead for Emily!

Emily first became involved with Special Olympics Ireland in 1996 when her Special Olympics Riding Club, Duhallow Riders, was formed. Emily has competed in Special Olympics Games on a number of occasions and lists her selection to compete in the Special Olympics World Games which were held in Ireland in 2003 as one of her most special moments with Special Olympics.

Emily is no stranger to success having won many medals and ribbons since becoming involved with Special Olympics Ireland. She lists her main achievements as winning three gold medals at the 2002 Special Olympics Ireland Games and being involved in the 2006 Special Olympics Ireland Games as a volunteer.

Emily participates in the Athlete Leadership Programme (ALPs) which she describes as one of the best things about being involved with Special Olympics Ireland. The Athlete Leadership Programme offers current and former athletes who are over sixteen a chance to explore opportunities additional to sports training and competition. Emily has been involved with the programme for four years now and as well as achieving her Gold ALPs award she has also filled several roles on the national ALPs committee, including those of chairperson and secretary.

Emily pictured below with her sister Joanne .



For Emily, Special Olympics Ireland has transformed her life in many ways. Since becoming involved with Special Olympics Ireland Emily has led a more **active life and now enjoys a better social life.** Emily's mother, Anne, has expressed her pride in Emily and the changes which the family have witnessed in her. "As a family we have shared in many moments of joy witnessing her happiness at being involved and also many proud moments as we watched her grow in confidence and see her social skills improve".

Emily has a number of hopes for the future. She hopes that her continued training will pay off and that she will do well in the 2010 Games.

When Emily isn't busy training for the 2010 Games or fulfilling her ALPs duties she enjoys watching horse racing, golf and 'Coronation Street' on television. Jack P Shepherd who plays David Platt in 'Coronation Street' is her favourite actor. She also loves listening to music and especially to her favourite song, 'The Power of the Dream'.



Contact Details Volunteer Support Centres

Central Office Support Centre

Email
volunteers@specialolympics.ie

Tel: +353(0) 818 300053

Contact: Lorna Collins

Eastern Support Centre

Email
easternvolunteers@specialolympics.ie

Tel: 01 - 869 1626

Contact: Joan Shields

Munster Support Centre

Email
munvol@specialolympics.ie

Tel: 021 4977192

Contact: Vivien Buckley

Connaught Support Centre

Email
connaughtvol@specialolympics.ie

Tel: 071 914 1200

Contact: Michael Gilroy

Leinster Support Centre

Email
leinster@specialolympics.ie

Tel: 01- 629 6999

Contact: Aine O'Driscoll

Ulster Support Centre

Email
ulstervol@specialolympics.ie

Tel: 028 9089 2999

Contact: Emma McMenamin