



Special Olympics

Spirit

Montana

Winter 2005-06

PO Box 3507, Great Falls, MT 59403, 406-268-6759
Email: info@somt.org Website: www.somt.org

2005 State Basketball Sponsors and Donors

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Special Olympics Mission

Special Olympics is a nonprofit, international program of year-round sports training and athletic competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

Breaking Boundaries

2005 State Basketball Tournament

With Helena Schools students joining families and friends in the stands, athletes put on their best performances during the 2005 State Basketball Tournament. Two days of intense competition among 52 teams brought medals and immense pride in the accomplishment. Ten Unified Sports® teams brought an exciting dimension to the tournament, too. Unified Partners enriched the play with unselfish leadership and on-court coaching.

The tournament also included festive opening and closing ceremonies, a carnival and dance, and dinner for families. Helena Public Schools and Carroll College opened their facilities to the tournament. Capitol city hotels and restaurants also warmly welcomed teams and guests. The Helena Independent Record and Southwestern Montana Radio Network were on hand, as well, to provide great coverage.

Special thanks to Dr. Bruce Messinger and Marvin Williams of Helena Public Schools; Dr. Thomas Trebon of Carroll College; Crystal Kelly and staff at The Wingate Inn; Papa Murphy's, Quiznos Sub, Lehrkind's Helena Coca-Cola, Harrington Bottling Company, and WalMart.



We Got Skills from Billings looks for the rebound. #51 Heather Casey and #53 Melodie Bromgard.

New Farrelly Brothers Film *The Ringer* Opens December 23

Film star Johnny Knoxville leads a cast that includes Special Olympics athletes in "The Ringer," set to release December 23 in



The "Ringer" (Johnny Knoxville) and Special Olympics Texas athlete Leonard Flowers.

theatres across the country. The Farrelly Brothers, producers of "There's Something About Mary," were motivated to create "The Ringer" by their relationship with a friend with an intellectual disability and presented the project to Special Olympics. The movie asks, "Can a comedy be off-the-wall, irreverently indelicate and yet ... inspirational?"

"The Ringer" is an uplifting story about an ordinary man who discovers what it truly means to be "special" when he attempts to "fix" the Special Olympics. The Ringer also tells the Special Olympics story in a new way, challenging destructive stereotypes and negative thinking about people with intellectual disabilities.

For more information, call Special Olympics Montana at 406-268-6759 or follow the link at www.somt.org.

President's Message



Athlete Ted Berreth (left) with
SOMT President/CEO Bob Norbie

Dear Friends of Special Olympics:

Season's Greetings! Regardless of one's religious beliefs and the various ways we chose to celebrate life this time of year, I take great pride knowing that our spirit-filled organization celebrates life every day of the year. The mission of Special Olympics Montana is alive and well... because of you. Indeed, you are among the many "gifts" this season that bless Special Olympics Montana.

It has been a particularly challenging year for fundraising. Interestingly enough, 2005 may well be a banner year for giving in the United States due to the tsunami and hurricanes Katrina and Rita. But under the circumstances, it has been more difficult for local nonprofits like Special Olympics MT.

With some success we added several other special events to backfill our anticipated revenue shortfalls (i.e. one more Breakfast With Champions, a Polar Bear Plunge, a Neal McCoy country western concert, an expanded World of Winners On-Line Auction, etc). We also reduced our expenses and remained conservative in our stewardship of resources.

Still, we are uncertain how the year will finish up. It's that close. For these reasons, I invite you to make a yearend, tax-deductible gift to Special Olympics Montana. Please give until it feels good! We need your help.

In spite fundraising challenges, this past year nearly 2,000 athletes trained in 14 Olympic-type sports, competed in 16 area competitions and 3 State Games. We increased athlete numbers participating in the Athlete Leadership Program, the State Basketball Tournament and training at the local level for athletes and volunteer coaches. Three years ago we had 375 athletes attend the State Basketball Tournament. This year the numbers grew to 511 registered athletes from 52 teams who played 90 games in two and one-half days. As evidenced here, by sharing your time, talent and treasure, you do make a difference in the lives of some very deserving individuals who would not otherwise be able to train for life through sports.

Thank you for being part of the Special Olympics Montana family. From our family to yours, Happy Holidays dear friends. May the New Year bring you and your family good health and much joy!

Bob Norbie
President/CEO

USA National Games in Ames

When the first-ever USA National Games are launched July 2-7, 2006, thirty SOMT athletes and nine coaches will be there. Together with 3000 athletes from across the US, Montana's team will travel to Iowa for the Games in Ames.

With competitors in athletics (track & field), aquatics, Unified basketball, bowling and powerlifting, Montana's team will compete at Iowa State University and in the surrounding area. For more information about the Games, go to www.2006nationalgames.org.

Congratulations to the coaches and athletes selected to participate in the 2006 USA National Games to be held in Ames, Iowa, July 2-7.

Aquatics

Coaches

Debbie Olson Sevier of Glendive
Carl Russ of Bitterroot Stars

Athletes

Jena Lawson of Great Falls Lions
Kayla White of Billings Schools
Jenna Whisenhunt of Billings Adults
Zach Smith of Billings Schools
Eddie Glover of Flathead Industries/Kalispell
Anthony Koebel of Bitterroot Stars

Athletics

Coaches

Jacob Lund of Bozeman Outreach
Reg Heikkila of Great Falls Lions

Athletes

Kerrie Sheets of Billings Adults
Amie Bartell of Lighthouse Christian/Kalispell
Kandi Kessler of Billings Adults
Joseph Lucara of Billings Schools
Alan Hopper of Bozeman Outreach
Billy Rasmussen of Billings Schools

Basketball - Unified Team

Lincoln County Wolfpack of Libby Coaches

Head Coach Cindy Anderson

Assistant Coaches

Bob Bennett from Hardin Schools

Seth Weston from Billings Adults

Athletes

Josh Anderson

Robbie McDonald

Shon Foote

Brent Futrell

Mark Magera

Mike Norris

Partners

Ray Mitchell

Kevin Mitchell

Les Anderson

Dave Dickerson

Bowling

Coaches

Shaylee Lewis of Havre Schools

Athletes

Dena Harris of

Bozeman Reach

Melody Allies of

Eastern MT

Industries/Miles City

Steve Brown of Helena Adults

John Dodge of Billings Adults

Powerlifting

Coaches

Cindy Fouhy of

Northern Plains

Athletes

Steve Crouch of Great Falls Hornets

J D Dempsey of Northern

Plains/Opheim

Lisa Holland of Great Falls Hornets

Heather Casey of Billings Adults



New Global Messengers

Athletes interested in leadership opportunities take advantage of Athlete Leadership Program (ALPs) training. Global Messenger training is a popular ALPs program that prepares athletes to be public speakers. Montana's newest Global Messengers trained in September 2005 and are noted here. Thanks to each of them for their hard work and dedication; to their coach mentors; and to Jodel Petroni, Butte, SOMT's Global Messenger trainer. To invite a Global Messenger to speak in your area, call an SOMT Area Director or the SOMT office.

Lori Bestwina of Great Falls

Coached by Betty Bestwina

Devin Booth of Glasgow

Coached by Connie Wethern

John Espinoza of Eureka

Coached by Steve Espinoza

Zachary LeProwse of Butte

Coached by Jerry LeProwse

Alvin McKamey of Shelby

Coached by Laura Jo McKamey

Daisy Motschenbacher of Great Falls

Coached by Ina Onsager

Randy Place of Great Falls

Coached by Lyle Onsager

Michael Schaff of Helena

Coached by Duane Schaff

Lisa Tilton of Billings

Coached by Carla Tilton

Chris Zier of Stevensville

Coached by Candice Zier



Distinguished Service Awards



Kenneth Hedrich

Athlete of the Year - Kenneth Hedrich

"Kenny's life & love is Special Olympics. If you have met Kenny you have heard something about Special Olympics." – Darlene Houghtaling

"Kenny Hedrich has been involved with Special Olympics for several decades. He is kind, extremely helpful, generous in spirit, warm, and funny. When the conversation is about him, he will always somehow turn it around to put the focus on someone else." – Penni Kolpin, Big Sky Area Director



Tammy Matzke

Outstanding Coach - Tammy Matzke

"In the past 3 years, Tammy Matzke has doubled the number of athletes participating and competing in the school age program in Billings. By increasing the number of athletes involved, she has also increased the number of parent volunteers. Her energy and enthusiasm are absolutely boundless." – Sheryl Shockley

Youth Volunteer - Linsey Burton

"Linsey Burton has been instrumental in teaching athletes how to play basketball, how to snowshoe correctly and has helped with all track and field events. Lindsey has also been a wonderful help with all fundraising events. The athletes respect her and she in turn respects them. She enjoys volunteering with our team so much that she's talked two of her friends into volunteering. Now they all enjoy teaching the athletes while forming wonderful long-term bonds with each of them." – Pam Underwood, Head Coach of the Great Falls Hornets



Linsey Burton

Adult Volunteers - Jean & Ernie Peters

"When Special Olympics Montana needs help with a project, Ernie and Jean Peters always happily step in to lend a hand. They make name tags for games; they handle merchandise sales at Fall Leadership Conference; they work with the Rebekkahs and Oddfellows at State Summer Games. No matter what they are asked to do, Ernie and Jean cheerfully accept any assignment." – Rise Pelloni, SOMT Staff



Jean & Ernie Peters

Outstanding Media Support - KSEN Radio, Shelby

"The KSEN Radio Station has provided continued support of Special Olympics for over 20 years, providing free advertisements for our fund raising efforts. Our athletes have their names and event results announced just like all the other local athletes. It's a proud moment to hear their names read on the radio. The station has been the location of the LETR "Stand Up For Special Olympics" fundraiser, which averages over \$24,000 yearly – in large part due to the wonderful publicity from KSEN." – Robin Pambrun, CM Russell Area Director

Outstanding Family - the Stiles Family

"Terry, Peggy, Chance and Skylehr Stiles are truly a Special Olympics family. I see them whether we are at a local event, state event, local fundraiser or a school event. They are either selling tickets, competing in golf events or enjoying a Special Olympics gathering. Their family has had many struggles but always has smiles on their faces. I am proud to know them and I have learned so much from them." Tricia McKenna, Past Board Member



Terry, Skylehr & Peggy Stiles

Outstanding Statewide Business - Carquest

"As the Premier International Sponsor of the Law Enforcement Torch Run, Carquest is proud of their commitment to Special Olympics. Not only has Carquest raised funds for SOMT, their employees are hard at work at fundraisers and games. When you need them, they are willing to help. They have put their heart and soul into supporting us" – Terri Sappington, SOMT Staff

Outstanding Local Business - The Missoulian newspaper

The Missoulian's commitment began in 2003 when they volunteered to develop, print and distribute in excess of 40,000 copies of a 16-page Missoulian insert at no cost to SOMT. In addition, The Missoulian printed thousands of coach, volunteer and family handbooks for the Games. The Missoulian has been an amazing model of community giving with their enormous gifts of financial and human resource over a three-year period." – SOMT Staff

Outstanding Local Special Olympics Program - Special K Ranch

"Special K Ranch staff is totally unselfish, and willing to give all kinds of time and energy to fundraising and betterment of SO. They are also creative – and proud of a "get 'er done" attitude even when it's hard to work SO training, competition and fundraising into their busy ranch life. They stress the whole person's individual development, on and off the playing field, reflecting not just their personal philosophy but the Special Olympics mission, as well." -- Vicki Dunham, SOMT Staff

Spirit of Special Olympics - Todd Hoar

"Todd has been employed in DD services for many years and has always gone above and beyond by serving Special Olympics on his own time. He has supported various state games events and coordinated local support. He gives rides to participants, sets up supporting props and arrangements, and works tirelessly towards promotion and fund raising for events. Todd is always there." – Miles Finlen, Parent of Athlete



Todd Hoar

Hall of Fame Award - Jim Kack

"He is constantly a helper at the area games, working tirelessly and in whatever capacities we need him. He's someone we can always count on for his enthusiasm, support, and smile!" --Cyndi Huempfer, Big Sky Area Treasurer

"Jim personally trucked the first Chevy raffle vehicle throughout Montana logging an incredible number of miles during the the initial year to promote the truck raffle. Even after Jim's Board service he has continued to provide counsel along with his never wavering financial support of the organization. I am proud to call him my mentor." – Laurie Shadoan



Jim Kack

Memorials

Deep appreciation is extended to those who have made recent donations to Special Olympics Montana in memory of friends and loved ones. Our apologies to recent donors whose names were unavailable at time of publication.

Leif Babcock

H.T. & Frances Fagrelus; Harold Holmes

Betty Bielen

Shirley Rudberg

Mel Bloom

Andrew Major Bloom

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Stanley & Hazel Parzych;
Douglas & Ann Rice; W.F. & Marion
Thompson; Women of the Moose Chapter 547

Justin Dalke

Justin Levi Dalke, 24, passed away unexpectedly November 5, 2005 in Great Falls. Justin was a member of the Great Falls Hornets team where he most recently trained as a Unified Sports® basketball player. Justin was also a bowler, a track and field athlete and an alpine skier. He had been involved in Special Olympics since childhood.

To his teammates and coaches, Justin was upbeat, happy and well-liked. He was able to cheer others up when they were down. Justin also worked as a custodian at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School. He leaves behind many family members, friends and teammates who will miss him dearly.



Derek Dowson

Thomas Agamenoni; Dennis Alexander; Clayton Annala; Patti Ashmore; Gene Bailly; James Baroch; Craig Bartholomew;
Clyde Bigelow; Gerald & Teresa Buck;
C Lohman Games Inc;
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Mike Toy; Bradley Veis;
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Francis Raucci

Darrell Ridder

J.Jeffery & Donna Ridder

Fred Vanisko

Jeff Vandekop

John Yuill

J.Jeffery & Donna Ridder;
Williams & Madonna Yuill

Bill Zimmerman

George & Delores Erickson

Darrell Ridder, 49

Darrell L. Ridder, 49, of Whitehall passed away March 27, 2005 in Butte. He was born in Garden City, Kansas, had lived in Montana since 1965 and in Whitehall since 1974. Darrell liked animals, especially his cats and dogs. He was a Special Olympics athlete who won several ribbons in local competitions. Darrell also enjoyed riding his four-wheeler. He had a smile for everyone he met. Survivors include his parents, brother, sisters and many nieces and nephews.



freezin' for a reason

photo by Shanny Murphy 2005



photo by Shanny Murphy 2005

Thanks to Sunshine Productions for use of a spotlight.



Law Enforcement Torch Run polar plunges made a splash in December at two locations. The first-time Polar Bear Plunge in Great Falls saw thirty plungers jumping into an icy tub December 2 in downtown Great

Falls. Jumpers in the Yellowstone Valley Area made their plunge during the Polar Bare Plunge in Columbus December 8. There, 32 brave souls entertained the crowd during Columbus' annual holiday parade.

Diary of a First-time Plunger

The night before it is still snowing. There appears to be more than a foot of the white stuff piled over everything. Worse, though, the thermometer keeps steady sliding lower and lower toward the single digits. Not the time of year to go swimming! Am I crazy? Possibly.

I am surprised by the crowd of people gathered. The "pool" turns out to be a free-standing body of water about 3-feet deep and 10-foot square contained by what looks like heavy tarps inside a framework of pipes. I start asking anyone where the check-in place is. In a couple of asks I find the door to an RV. Inside some busy people quickly sign me in. Next I seek a place to change. "It's in the Bresnan." Not quite sure what a Bresnan is, I eventually spot a boxy trailer with the name "Bresnan" printed on the side. After an unnecessary amount of time fussing with my clothing, I realize I am never going to feel ready. Ready or not, here I go.

My strategy is to watch a few experienced plungers go first to learn what I can. The celebrities amaze me. I have already missed Molly from the TV station because I tarried in the changing trailer. The Ice Queens have raised a stunning amount of money and I stand in awe of them. I watch people sliding out of coats and sweat suits. Helpful hands knowingly reach out to pass the clothing around to the "take out" point. It all seems so expertly choreographed.

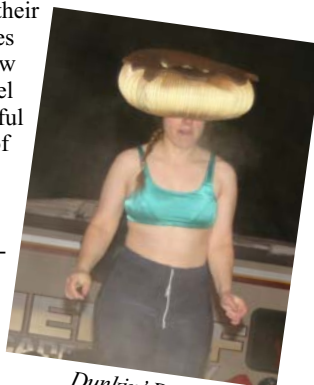
I guess I imagined there would be hundreds of plungers and that it would take hours to give everyone their turn, but suddenly, I am the last one! Oh no! No time to be nervous now, I trip over myself stripping off coat,

socks, fleece, wind pants, mittens. Donning my "costume" (a large donut hat I have created out of heating duct and foam rubber) I pose on the platform listening to my name announced from the green card. Then I look down at the cold, cold, cold, (really cold) looking water. I am not getting any warmer standing here.

I leap.

It's a good thing when the temperature of the water is many degrees warmer than the air. It's really not that bad. A brave volunteer standing in the pool passes me off to two more volunteers who help me climb out. A fire chain of helpful hands move my gear along to the next place. Unencumbered, I happily trot for the hot tub. Ah!

In a few minutes I am ready to dash to the "Bresnan." A friendly doorkeeper lets me inside. How helpful all these volunteer valets! No announcements for them, no cheers from the crowd for them, no victorious hottubbing for them, but their kindness makes everything flow smoothly. I feel insanely grateful to every one of them. The inside of the trailer rings with the camaraderie of shivering women congratulating each other on good costuming, good sportsmanship, good fundraising, and a good time is had by all.



Dunkin' Donna

Polar Plunges

Join the Montana Law Enforcement Torch Run in taking the plunge for Special Olympics Montana athletes. You can participate by taking the plunge, donating to the plunge or sponsoring a plunger. Visit <http://www.somt.org/torchrun/plunges.html> to find out more or call Terri Sappington at 406/268-6759.

Super Grizzly Dip - Missoula, MT
Missoula Country Club
February 4, 2006 - 12:00pm

Penguin Plunge - Whitefish, MT
City Beach during Carnival Days
February 4, 2006 - 12:00pm

Sweetheart Passion Plunge - Helena, MT
Spring Meadow Lake
February 11, 2006 - 12:00pm

President's Plunge - Bozeman, MT
Bozeman Ponds
February 20, 2006 - 12:00pm

Plunge Sponsors

Capital Family Mortgage
First Interstate Bank of Whitefish
Mountain West Bank
Dick Walter Auto Group
Stillwater Mining Company

More LETR Events

Torch Run Relay - Statewide
May 3-17, 2006

Final Leg - Circle of Honor
Great Falls, Montana
May 17, 2006

LETR Kick-Off Conference
Holiday Inn of Great Falls
March 11, 2006

World's Largest Truck Convoy
Montana Leg, Billings
Sept 16, 2006

Premier LETR Sponsors

International Sponsor



Montana Sponsor



Major Sponsor



SOMT Calendar of Events

Jan

24-25 Bitterroot Winter Games Lost Trail Powder Mtn

February

- 4 LETR Penguin Plunge Whitefish
- 4 LETR Grizzly Dip Missoula
- 10 CMR Area Winter Games Showdown Ski Area
- 11 LETR Sweetheart Plunge Helena
- 20 LETR Presidents Plunge Bozeman

March

- 5-7 State Winter Games Big Mtn
- 11 LETR Kick-Off Conf. Great Falls
- 31 Five Valleys Area Raffle Radio Marathon Missoula

April

- 19-21 Five Valleys Area Spring Games Missoula
- 21-22 Yellowstone Area Spring Games Billings

May

- 17-19 State Summer Games - Great Falls

July 2006

- 2-7 US National Summer Games in Ames, IA

2006 Bresnan Communications/Chevy Raffle

Athletes Bowl with Bob at State Summer Games

President/CEO Bob Norbie is up to it again. He shocked us all in 2004 when he had his face and head shaved during *Operation Cueball* at State Summer Games Closing Ceremonies – shaved off a beard that hadn't



Bowling With Bob

Area Directors / Contacts

Big Sky Area

Penni Kolpin, *Co-Director*
Bozeman, 406/522-7678

Central MT Area Director

Vicki Dunham, (Interim)

C M Russell Area

Robin Pambrun, *Director*
Cut Bank, 406/873-5938

Five Valleys Area

Roger Miller, *Director*
Missoula, 406/777-0348

Glacier Area

Terri Siefke, *Director*
Kalispell, 406/756-2692
Susan Bonin, *Assistant Director*
Kalispell, 406/837-5214

Great Northern Area

Shaylee Lewis *Co-Director*
(406) 265-6734 x 338
Dusty Toth *Co-Director*
(406) 945-1319

Northeastern Area

Kalu Rogenes, *Director*
Larslan, 406/725-3362

Prairie Badlands Area

John Roth, *Program Director*
Sidney, 406/488-6187
Toni Goroski, *Program Director*
Glendive, 406/488-6187

Southwestern Area

Sharon Hanni, *Director*
Butte, 406/494-5753

Tri-County Area Director

Steppen Wirth, *Director*
Helena, 406/458-1179

Southeastern Area

Vicki Dunham, (Interim)

Yellowstone Valley Area

Lisa Watson, *Assistant Director*
Billings, 406/598-7616

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406.268.6759

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Terri Sappington, LETR Coordinator
Donna Williams, Field Service Asst
Jerry Zahller, Gift Coordinator

been touched in more than 25 years. So we can only imagine what will happen after he climbs into a giant, steel-caged bowling ball and is rolled by athletes across the infield at the 2006 Closing Ceremonies.

What prompts these shenanigans by an otherwise rational, level-headed person? Well, Bob Norbie will go the distance to raise money for Special Olympics athletes. So if the 2006 Bresnan Communications/Chevy Raffle hits the \$200,000 mark, he will sacrifice "level-headed" to go "end-over-end" as a human bowling ball. One can only imagine his color when he crawls out of that ball. We sure don't want to miss it!

Bowling with Bob promises to be the high point of Special Olympics Montana's annual fundraiser, though the winner of the 2006 fully-loaded Chevy Silverado may disagree. Other winners will enjoy Pizza Hut pizzas for a year. To get Bob rolling along, we can all help. Consider the results of ticket books sold:

1 book per athlete or athlete family = \$100,000

2 books per coach = \$70,000

2 books per staff, Area Director and Board member = \$4200

Sales by all others – OVER THE TOP!

Thanks to sponsors, supporters, athletes, families and volunteers for continued support of the Bresnan Communications/ Chevy Raffle.

Meet Our New Development Director

Darlene Bos has joined the Special Olympics Montana team as our new Development Director. Working for Special Olympics is a "Dream Job" for Darlene who has lived her life blessed by many individuals with intellectual disabilities, including her aunt who is a Special Olympics Michigan athlete. Darlene grew up in Michigan and attended Grand Valley State University where she received a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology in 1997 and Western Michigan University, where she received a Master's Degree in Anthropology in 2000. Darlene and her husband Jim Harris, moved to Montana in 2001, and have lived in Great Falls since January 2003. Darlene comes to us from the Children's Museum of Montana, where she served as Executive Director. Look for her at upcoming Special Olympics Montana events!



Darlene Bos,
Development Director