

# CONNECT



Special Olympics  
Ireland



Special Olympics Ireland volunteers and athletes carry the Torch for the London 2012 Olympics. See page 2 for full story.



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IRISH SPORTS  
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# WELCOME!

As our competition season comes to a close before the summer break, I would like to express our sincere thanks to all our volunteers who have ensured the smooth running of so many events around the Regions over the last few months and also to the club volunteers who give their time to help train and prepare our athletes for events. Your ongoing support is very much appreciated.

I would also like to express our thanks to The Irish Sports Council, Sport Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Executive and all our T.D.s, Senators, Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Council members who are so supportive of the Special Olympics Programme.

I recently received a letter from Michael Ring, T.D., Minister of State for Tourism and Sport reaffirming the support we receive at governmental level and assuring us that his Department will continue to acknowledge and promote Special Olympics.

I would also like to thank all of the companies and organisations who have continued to support us throughout the year in so many different ways - allowing staff time off to volunteer for Collection Day or at our sporting events, organising fundraisers, making donations or sponsoring our activities. We are very grateful for your support for our athletes.



Matt English, CEO



## UniCredit Bank Ireland plc. sponsor Special Olympics Ireland Football Week

Special Olympics athletes Darren Bevens and Danny Sands pictured with Stefano Vaiani, Managing Director, UniCredit Bank Ireland plc, and Matt English, CEO, Special Olympics Ireland, to mark UniCredit Bank Ireland's support of Special Olympics Ireland. UniCredit Bank proudly sponsored Special Olympics Ireland's Football Week activity which took place during May.

## On the Cover:

### Special Olympics Ireland representatives carry the torch during the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay!

Representatives from Special Olympics Ireland were among the torch bearers who carried the London 2012 Olympic flame when it came to Ireland in early June. Pictured on the cover are just some of these representatives. You can read about all the torch bearers at [www.specialolympics.ie/olympictorchrelay](http://www.specialolympics.ie/olympictorchrelay)

Gary O' Brien, a Special Olympics athlete from Portmarnock in Dublin knows just how exciting it is to represent Ireland on the international sporting stage having been one of the 126 athletes that represented Ireland at the 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens.

Alva Nolan from Killiney, Co. Dublin, has been a Special Olympics volunteer since 2007 with Blackrock Flyers Special Olympics club. She is a qualified match official and dedicates her spare time to officiating at Special Olympic competitions regionally as well as organising fundraising events for Special Olympics Ireland.

Brian Brunton is a member of An Garda Síochána and is a member of the Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch

Run Committee. He has carried the Flame of Hope as part of the Law Enforcement Torch Run for several Special Olympics World Games and was the lead Garda organiser of the Torch Run for the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games.

Pamela Lacken from Ballina, Co. Mayo was one of 200 volunteers from Ireland to volunteer at the 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens.

Ursula Hughes is from Dungannon and was nominated for her work with both Disablement Advisory Service and Special Olympics. She has been a volunteer with Special Olympics Ireland since 2006 and has since taken on more responsibilities as a key member of a Special Olympics event management team.

Matt English CEO Special Olympics Ireland said "We are delighted to be so well represented in the Olympic Torch Relay. We would like to wish the very best to all of Ireland's Olympic athletes who are competing at the Olympic Games in London. We know you will do us proud".



## 2012 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The 2012 AGM was held in the Red Cow Moran Hotel on Saturday 26th May, and despite the excellent sunny weather, was very well attended. The feedback has been very positive. Thank you to all members who attended.

Special Olympics Patron & volunteer Nora Owen attended as guest speaker and as always demonstrated her extensive knowledge and enthusiasm for our programme.

A Distinguished Service Award was presented during the AGM to Mick Feehan. Mick was delighted to receive the award and spoke about his involvement with Special Olympics and thanked the Board for the recognition which he felt honoured to accept.

One of the highlights of the AGM was the presentation of the FAI International Caps to the ladies team. The caps were presented by Ireland's top goal scorer of all time, Olivia O'Toole. The ladies had all participated at the Special Olympics European Games in Poland in 2010 where they finished a gallant 4th. The presentation of these caps brings the total to 91 International Caps presented to Special Olympics Ireland athletes.

Teresa McCabe and Brian Osborne retired from the Board of Directors and were thanked by Mary Davis for their great service and commitment to the organisation. Dervila O'Mahony and Fiona Donaghy were re-elected to the Board under article 4 (i) a) at the meeting. Nerissa Dowling, Leinster Regional Chairperson and Maire Allen, Connaught Regional Chairperson were welcomed onto the Board.

We would also like to welcome back Mary Davis as Chairperson and thank Ronan King who took on the role of interim Chairperson during 2011.



*Mary Davis, Chairperson of Special Olympics Ireland pictured with Patron and volunteer, Nora Owen who was the guest speaker at the AGM.*



*Olivia O'Toole, Ireland's top goal scorer of all time presenting an FAI International Cap to Andrea Buckley from Summerhill, Co. Meath.*



*Mick Feehan being presented with a Distinguished Service Award by Mary Davis, Chairperson.*

## 2012 National Awards to Volunteers in Irish Sport

The 2012 National Awards to Volunteers in Irish Sports were officially launched in early June. These awards recognise coaches, managers, officials and administrators who give of their time to grow and develop amateur sports. Special Olympics Ireland has had several winners in the past, including Pam Beacom of Blue Dolphins in Wicklow in 2011, Carmel Malone from Irishtown Special Olympics Club, Dublin, and Kathleen Sythes from Kiltarnan Karvers Special Olympics Club.

We would like to invite you as a member of Special Olympics Ireland to nominate an individual/s whose contribution you feel has made a real difference to our organisation and to provide details on the person nominated. Full details of the scheme and how to enter can be found on line at [www.volunteersinsport.ie](http://www.volunteersinsport.ie). The deadline for receipt of entries is Friday August 3rd.

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# MEET OUR EXTRAORDINARY TEAM

## Club Profile – Fingal Gallopers

My name is Jerome Moran. I would like to tell readers about a new equestrian club called Fingal Gallopers Special Olympics Club in the Eastern Region.

The club started in February of this year. We meet every Saturday at 4:30pm at Broadmeadows Equestrian Centre near Ashbourne. We have eight riders. Some of our athletes have been riding for a long time and some are beginners.

We have two super coaches. Their names are Lisa and Seamus. They let us ride the horses that suit us best. We use eight wonderful horses and ponies. Their names are Captain, Amber, Tayto, Sparky, Charlie, Max, Zorro and Zuko.

We have great volunteers in our club. They help us to mount up and get ready for the lesson and they help the riders who are beginners to get used to the ponies and not be nervous. I am also a volunteer in the club.

Thank you to Mr. Brian Duff who owns Broadmeadows for letting us use the Equestrian Centre for our club.

I am really delighted to be a member of Fingal Gallopers because I love horses and because we have great fun. I've also made lots of new friends.



*Jerome Moran, with his coach Lisa, pictured at the 2012 Eastern Region Area Event held at Cherry Orchard Equestrian Centre.*



## Challenge 126 success for Brian Maher and Mike Sheridan!



On Thursday 26th April, Brian Maher of Spin 1038 and Mike Sheridan of entertainment.ie and RTÉ set out on a gruelling journey which saw them run 126 miles, (the equivalent of 5 marathons), non-stop in aid of Special Olympics Ireland. After 36 hours on their feet, the two runners arrived onto Dublin's Grafton Street to a heroes' welcome.

The purpose of the run was to raise money for Special Olympics Ireland. For further information on their incredible achievement please visit: [www.challenge126.com](http://www.challenge126.com).

# CLUB Corner

## Club Handbook

The new version of the club handbook for community clubs is being distributed to clubs at the moment. The handbook outlines the Special Olympics Ireland guidelines for running a community club and should provide a valuable tool for your club. It is also available for download in the resource section of our website. A separate version of the Handbook, designed specifically for reference by a School/Centre/Service, will be issued by year end.

## Important Reminder Re: Volunteer Registration

It is the responsibility of each club to ensure that every volunteer attending your club is a registered volunteer with Special Olympics Ireland prior to undertaking any activity in the club. This policy is in place for the protection of athletes and volunteers alike. Clubs who have non registered volunteers taking part in activities are in breach of Special Olympics Policy and are taking a risk in relation to the safety of its members and their non-registered members are not covered by Special Olympics Insurance.

Volunteers are considered registered only when all stages of registration are complete, i.e. police background check, reference check, general induction and they have been issued with their photographic membership card and registration letter.

All volunteers should be asked to show proof of their registration when joining the club by producing their photographic membership card or formal letter confirming that they are fully registered. All Special Olympics Ireland volunteers are required to carry their photographic membership card at all Special Olympics activities. Any volunteer that does not have their membership card should contact central office to check their registration status.

## Athlete Membership Cards



Over 700 athlete membership cards were issued to clubs in May, bringing the total number of cards issued to athletes to 8,012. The reason that athletes in your club may not have received a membership card is because we don't have their photograph on our system. You can check this by contacting your regional office. A further batch of cards will be issued to all clubs towards the end of the year - so get snapping!

Please note all photographs should be passport quality (not blurry or grainy) with a plain, pale background. The photograph should be from the shoulders up and the athlete should be facing the camera and not wearing sunglasses or a hat. If the photograph submitted is not of the appropriate quality we will not be able to produce the card and you will be asked to submit a clearer picture.

## Club Management Team – Handing Over the Reins

At this time of year, many clubs are holding their AGMs and committee elections and in some cases bringing new volunteers into Club Management roles. It is of vital importance that any new volunteer taking on a role is provided with as much information as possible and that responsibility starts with the outgoing team members.

Work is currently underway to create officer packs for each Club Management Team member, but while these are still under development, there are lots of sources of information to help ease new members into their roles, including the outgoing officer, the rest of the Club Management Team, the new club handbook and your Regional Development Officer. Club Management Team training is also available on request for any club that needs guidance in management – contact your regional office for further information.

## Annual Affiliation – Get your Records in Order

As the competition calendar draws to a close, some clubs are preparing for a well earned summer break. Before we know it, the new season will be kicking off in September and clubs will be heading back into activity, including Annual Affiliation, which is a mandatory requirement for all clubs. Some preparation work now can go a long way to help make the process straightforward in September, e.g. checking all athlete participation forms and updating any due to expire, updating your regional office of any new athletes or volunteers that have joined your club and making sure you have up-to-date details of all sports qualifications and attendance records at Code of Ethics Basic Awareness training for volunteers. If you would like to receive your Annual Affiliation forms via email, please let your regional office know.



*Pictured are members of Castlebar Special Olympics Club who recent tried out Bocce for the first time to celebrate the end of the club year.*



# CONNAUGHT

## Annual Regional Meeting elects a new Chairperson

Maire Allen was elected as the new chairperson of Special Olympics Connaught by delegates at the Annual Regional Meeting in March. She will replace outgoing chairperson Teresa McCabe who has completed her four-year term. We would like to thank Teresa for her dedication and commitment to the organisation during her term of office and wish her every success in her future endeavours.



Maire, a native of Roscommon, was a Physical Education teacher at the Convent of Mercy in Roscommon and retired in 2009. She also holds a postgraduate certificate in Intellectual Disability from Birmingham University and is an active Buntus Tutor for the Irish Sports Council. She is no stranger to the Special Olympics movement. In 1991 she travelled to the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Minneapolis, USA as a family member. In 2003 she was chairperson of the Roscommon Host Town Committee. Since 2004 she has been at the helm of the Roscommon Special Olympics Club in a chairperson and coaching capacity. Maire has also held many positions in her local community including Director of Brothers of Charity Roscommon and Director and Treasurer of Roscommon Sports Partnership representing Special Olympics.

## Women's Football

### – Johanna Lahart Football Coordinator

It was a lovely, bright Saturday morning as a group of eight very excited athletes and two coaches met in Ballinasloe to travel to the National Football Cup Competition in Dublin. The event was taking place in St Joseph's in Sallynoggin.

The Connaught team was comprised of five athletes from Creagh Training Centre in Ballinasloe - Nikita Cosgrove, Annie Cosgrove, Fionnuala Treacy, Christine Kelly and Laura Guilfoyle, and three athletes representing Loughrea Training Centre - Marion Walsh, Linda Cannon and Margaret Greally. The team was accompanied by two coaches Johanna Lahart and Terence Flynn.

On our arrival in Sallynoggin, it was fantastic to see some familiar faces, athletes and coaches from the other regions, some of whom we hadn't seen since the World Games in Athens last summer.

Divisioning matches took place in the morning. The Connaught team played Newry and two teams from Eastern region. We secured two wins and a draw in the divisioning matches and we were very happy with these result!



Following the divisioning matches, it was decided that Connaught, Eastern 2 and Mallow would play for the National Plate, while Eastern 1, Newry and Foyle would play for the National Cup. Two very exciting games ensued with Connaught winning both. We were into the final and the National Plate was in sight! The final ended in a 2 – 0 win for Connaught. Nikita Cosgrove, Creagh Training Centre and our captain for the day, was named 'Player of the Match'.

It was a very tired but happy group of athletes who accepted the National Plate at the closing ceremony. All too soon it was time to leave, after a wonderful day. There was much celebrating and singing all the way home on the bus.

## A very Special Thank you!

Thanks to all the volunteers who have volunteered and supported Special Olympics Connaught and our athletes at all the sports events, local Special Olympics clubs and fundraising events to date.

We will be busy over the summer months setting out our calendars for the 2012/13 season and we look forward to having you all on board again with us for year two of our 4 year sports cycle - "Regional Events Year". Have a wonderful summer break!

## Date for your Diary!

Thursday, June 28th Selection Night

McWilliam Park Hotel, Claremorris  
7.30pm

Athletes who competed in Area Advancement Competition will be selected to advance to Regional Competitions next year.

## Events Update

April and May have been busy months in Connaught with over 640 athletes competing in 7 sports events. The Area 2 bowling event in City Limits, Galway on April 21st was a big highlight for bowlers following the winter Postal Bowling league.

Kayaking at Loughlannagh proved very popular with athletes from the Castlebar Kayaction Special Olympics club. Invitations were issued to kayaking clubs in other regions to take part and the Northwest Special Olympics Club from Letterkenny travelled to Mayo. Athletes competed in 200m and 500m races.

In May the sun was out for our football event on May 3rd celebrating Special Olympics European Football Week at Salthill Devon FC.

Athletics took place in IT Sligo on May 9th and Athlone IT on May 16th. There were a number of athletes at both events competing in the longer 5km distance and some very fast times were recorded in the sprints. A number of athletes in the field events moved away from tennis ball throws and softball throws to take up the new discipline of the mini javelin which was great to see.

Golf closed out the month of May with competitions taking place in Ballinrobe and Tuam Golf Clubs. Margaret Carr from Sligo Fairways Special Olympics Club led the way as she moved up to 18 hole competition and put in a excellent round at the event. In Tuam, several athletes moved on to Level 2 competition from the skills competition which was great to see.



*Athletes Deirdre Garvin and Bridget Walsh who took part in the kayaking event. Bridget is also the Public Relations Officer for ALPs Connaught - see her article on the right.*

## Inter-Club held for Motor Activities Training Programme (MATP)

St Michael's Special School, Castlerea, Co Roscommon hosted the first inter-club motor activities event on Thursday 17th May. Athletes from St Michaels School, Outreach class in Roscommon, and from Sunshine class Creggs National School all got together for a very enjoyable event. The athletes were welcomed to the school by the principal, Geraldine Connolly, and the Special Olympics coordinator in the school, Bernadette Finnerty.

The athletes then participated in their individual motor activity events and this was followed by the presentation of awards. All of the pupils from St Michael's School gathered for the presentation of the awards and they gave the motor activities athletes great applause for their achievements.

The Sunshine Class, Creggs National School, are hoping to host a similar event before the summer holidays and they also hope to include the Ability West athletes from Glanamaddy and Kilkerrin in the next event.

Congratulations to Bernadette and all the staff in St Michael's School for initiating this most enjoyable event.

## Athlete Leadership Programme Connaught Training Day - Bridget Walsh, PRO ALPs Connaught

I attended the ALPs Connaught training day on 19th of May at Loughrea Training Centre with seven other athletes and their mentors. Deirdre Garvin and I represented South West Mayo. Other athletes attended from Mountbellew Tigers, Toghermore, and Loughrea.

We learned about the classification of athletes called divisioning and the 15% rule. We organised and participated in a balloon event to experience what it is like to organise competitions. We considered participation and divisioning, using age, gender and ability to make up our events, rules and awards, refereeing, timing, ribbons, disqualification. We also saw what happens when an Athlete Participation Form is not in date, how to book venues and arrange for volunteers to support the event.

I enjoyed working with other athletes, mentors and facilitators, and I am looking forward to the summer barbeque in Lough Key Forest Park.

Thanks to Loughrea Training Centre for their hospitality on the day.

# EASTERN

## Athlete Recruitment

Great news for potential athletes training in multiple sports! The following clubs are recruiting new athletes with some immediate places available.

- Badminton - (S.E.A.S.O.N. Shuttles Special Olympics Club, Dublin 4)
- Football (5 aside) - Dundrum Special Olympics Club, Dublin 4
- Golf - Elm Eagles Special Olympics Club, Dublin 15
- Table Tennis, Badminton & Basketball - Arklow Vikings Special Olympics Club, Arklow
- Badminton - Tallaght Trojans Special Olympics Club, Tallaght

If you are interested in getting involved in any of the above clubs or other clubs in the Region, please contact Nuala Wright on +353 1 8912008 or email [nuala.wright@specialolympics.ie](mailto:nuala.wright@specialolympics.ie).

## Athlete Leadership Programme (ALPs) - Mentor Recruitment

### About the Programme

The Special Olympics ALPs Programme enables athletes to explore opportunities for participation in roles other than sport. Athletes of all abilities, working with a mentor, learn how to become socially and personally more confident, have a voice, contribute and participate as leaders and ambassadors within Special Olympics Ireland and in their own community.

### The Role of the Mentor

Mentors are volunteer members who are recruited, trained and supported in order to offer the support that athletes need. The main function of the mentor is to enable the athlete to recognise the intrinsic value of their own achievement.

### Matching

It is important that mentors are carefully matched to an athlete, taking into consideration personal interests and geographic location. Once matched, the mentor and athlete decide on the type of activities they would like to do in the programme e.g. attending regional workshops, committee work, volunteering and coaching.

### Mentor Requirements

All mentors must be over eighteen years of age, be a registered volunteer with Special Olympics Ireland and have an interest in the programme.

### Contact

If you would like more information please contact Nuala Wright on +353 (0)1 891 2008 or email [nuala.wright@specialolympics.ie](mailto:nuala.wright@specialolympics.ie).



## Official launch of Celbridge Condors Special Olympics Club

Celbridge Condors Special Olympics Club was officially launched by the Mayor of Kildare, Michael 'Spike' Nolan, in the Celbridge GAA Hall on Friday, April 27th, 2012.

Maurice Redmond, Chairperson of Special Olympics Ireland Eastern Region, along with volunteers and athletes from neighbouring Special Olympics clubs based in Lucan, Leixlip and Maynooth were invited to attend.

Local athlete Simon Darragh who attends St John of God Kildare Services (St. Raphaels) who was a member of Team Ireland for the 2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games also attended with his family.

The Celbridge Condors Special Olympics Club Committee would like to thank everyone who made the club launch such a success and for helping to showcase the need for a Special Olympics club in Celbridge. We have received great support from elected local representatives, the Celbridge business community and local sports and community based clubs. We are very grateful to North Kildare Educate Together School and Celbridge Athletics Club who give us the use of their facilities for training.

Due to the popularity of the Celbridge Condors Special Olympics Club, we are currently seeking more general volunteers to come on board so we can invite more athletes to train with our club. We are also seeking qualified medical/first aid volunteers to assist with our sports events held throughout the year.

Training takes place on Wednesday evenings from 6.45pm to 7.45pm at the North Kildare Educate Together School, Clane Road, Celbridge, Co Kildare.

Good Luck to all the Eastern Region, Area 3 Clubs in the upcoming athletics advancement event on Thursday, June 21st, 2012 in the Morton Stadium, Santry. Our athletes will be there!

If you are interested in getting involved in the club please contact Philomena (Chairperson) on +353 87 797 3327 or alternatively email Mary (Secretary) on: [celbridgecondorsoc@gmail.com](mailto:celbridgecondorsoc@gmail.com).



## Annual Integrated Tournament for Football and Basketball

St. Benildus College, Stillorgan, 29 April 2012

The 'Integration Through Sport Day' held at St. Benildus College, Stillorgan is a good practical example of how young people with intellectual disabilities can be included and valued and how young people can enjoy each other's company through sport.

The event brings together the boys of De La Salle Stillorgan College, the girls of the neighbouring St. Raphaela's Secondary School and the athletes from local Special Olympics clubs creating an occasion of fun and inclusion. This annual event, now in its ninth year, organised by the teachers and students of St. Benildus and St Raphaela's once again proved a wonderful success and it serves as a model for other schools in the country.

Nearly two hundred and fifty young people took part in the soccer and basketball competitions organised by teachers Mr Oisín Mac Eoin and Ms Cliona Maxwell. All teams were integrated, the games were played in a spirit of fun and friendship with participation being the keyword rather than winning. The souvenir t-shirt proudly carried the Special Olympics logo alongside that of St. Benildus College, illustrating the sense of partnership on the day.

At the presentation, Mr. Liam Mc Loughlin from St. Benildus spoke of the natural bond between all athletes and of the possibilities that sport can offer for meaningful inclusion.

Student organiser, Patrick Reilly, remarked that 'sport is a great leveller and seeing the talents of the Special Olympics athletes helps us think again about disability. Everyone has the right to play together', he continued, 'and we learn so much through our activities'.

Conor Coffey, from Blackrock Flyers Special Olympics Club, said how much he enjoyed making new friends. Liam Ryan, Carmona Cougars, loved the football and hopes the tournament takes place again next year. Ms Clodagh Cosgrove, a teacher from St Raphaela's, said how much the girls enjoyed the occasion.

The inclusion of people with disabilities is a difficult process and there are no easy answers. Sport however, provides the ideal arena where we can all meet as equals, enjoy each other's company and profit from the experience. The Integration Through Sport Day at St Benildus College is a most welcome initiative and we wish it many years of success. The date for 2013 is already set, April 28th - we can't wait!

## An Taoiseach Enda Kenny T.D. and members of The Oireachtas meet Special Olympics athletes at Government Buildings



*Pictured at Government Buildings ahead of Special Olympics Collection Day on Friday April 27th are from L-R: Senator Mary Moran, Labour: Fine Gael T.D. for Meath East Regina Doherty; Independent T.D. for Dublin North Finian McGrath; athlete Mark Claffey, athlete Cian O'Connor who was the Taoiseach's 'shadow' for the day, Fianna Fáil T.D. for Clare Timmy Dooley, An Taoiseach Enda Kenny T.D.; athlete Elizabeth Mair; Sinn Féin Senator Kathryn O'Reilly; athlete Killian Moran and Matt English, CEO Special Olympics Ireland.*

# Fantastic FUNdraising!



## Dundalk to Scarva Charity Cycle

Special Olympics Ireland is hosting its first charity cycle on September 1st 2012. This is a 90km cycle offering two routes, a novice route and a challenge route.

The novice route will see cyclists do a return leg from Dundalk Racecourse to Scarva via Carlingford, Newry and the dedicated cycle route of the Tow Path that runs along the canal from Newry to Scarva. The Challenge route will also take in the infamous Jenkinstown Hill on the return – this route should not be underestimated!

The route will be clearly signposted and we will have a support vehicle available. After the cycle there will be a buffet at Dundalk Racecourse. Registration is €25 or Stg£20. To register please contact your Regional Fundraising Coordinator (see below) or log on to [www.specialolympics.ie/dundalkcycle](http://www.specialolympics.ie/dundalkcycle)

## Regional Fundraising Contacts

There are always lots of fundraising challenges happening in our regions. Check out the regional pages on our website at [www.specialolympics.ie](http://www.specialolympics.ie) or contact your Regional Fundraising Coordinator if you are interested in getting involved.

### Connaught:

Lydia Rogers +353 (0)71 911 8320  
Email: [lydia.rogers@specialolympics.ie](mailto:lydia.rogers@specialolympics.ie)

### Eastern:

Paul Ahearne +353 (0)1 891 2000  
Email: [paul.ahearne@specialolympics.ie](mailto:paul.ahearne@specialolympics.ie)

### Leinster:

Jeremy Perrin +353 (0)1 629 6999  
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### Munster:

Siobhan Nolan +353 (0)21 4977 192  
Email: [siobhan.nolan@specialolympics.ie](mailto:siobhan.nolan@specialolympics.ie)

### Ulster:

Ronan McCay +44 (0)28 9023 9023  
Email: [ronan.mccay@specialolympics.ie](mailto:ronan.mccay@specialolympics.ie)



## Wicklow Walking Festival

Special Olympics Ireland is hosting its first Charity Walking Festival on 28th & 29th July in Co. Wicklow.

Day one will see walkers take on a one-day hike through the trails and mountains surrounding Glendalough. Day two will take in Glenmalur to Glendalough including the Avonbeg River, Glenmalur Valley, Lugnaquilla and Mullacor Mountain before ending up at the monastic site and tower of St. Kevin.

Get your hiking boots on and join us on this guided tour around Glendalough which is renowned for its spectacular scenery, rich history and archaeology.

### Day Package

This challenge is open to walkers who wish to join us on either or both days. All you need to do is register now and book your place. The registration fee is €20 per day and all we ask is that you raise funds for Special Olympics through sponsorship. The package includes

- Guided walk
- 1 packed lunch
- Transfers when required

### Weekend Package

For walkers who wish to avail of the fully inclusive weekend package the minimum fundraising target is €250 including a non refundable deposit of €40. The package includes:

- 2 guided walks
- Accommodation, 3 course dinner, breakfast and 2 packed lunches in Lynhams Hotel, Laragh. (Accommodation is based on two people sharing a twin / double room.)
- Transfers when required

Please contact us for an alternative weekend package staying in a hostel.

Entertainment will be provided after dinner by local musicians.

For further details contact Paul Ahearne in our Eastern Region office or Jeremy Perrin in our Leinster office (contact details on left) or log on to [www.specialolympics.ie/walkingfestival](http://www.specialolympics.ie/walkingfestival)





### i3 Swim

Special Olympics Munster has been selected as the charity partner of Immersed in Ireland for 2012 for the i3 open water swim which will be held this year at Lough Derg on September 29th and 30th 2012

The i3 swim series takes place in Lough Derg on the twin towns of Killaloe and Ballina that span the River Shannon. With a vast array of activities on land and water, historic sites and a bustling nightlife, Killaloe/Ballina have long been Ireland's secret vacation destination delighting all the family.

All you need to enter this great event is a sense of adventure, a will to succeed and of course be able to swim. You can pick your own distance and start time and take to the water with hundreds of other like-minded people to experience the amazing sensation of open water swimming.

Swim a half mile, a mile or 5km depending on your ability. For children there are two dedicated kids events so all the family are well catered for young and old alike.

Speaking about the significant relationship the Shannon Region has with Special Olympics Munster, Paul Ryan, Tourism Marketing Manager with Shannon Development, the tourism and regional development agency, said: "The 2010 Special Olympics Ireland Games held in Limerick in June 2010 left a lasting legacy behind in the formation of a new Special Olympics Club in the city, the recruitment of more athletes and volunteers and the generation of greater understanding of how sport changes the lives of everyone involved. As one of the lead partners in the "Immersed in Ireland" (i3) swim event, Shannon Development is delighted to continue our support of Special Olympics Munster."

For more information about this event please log on to [www.i3swim.ie](http://www.i3swim.ie) or contact Siobhan Nolan in our Munster office (contact details on page 10).



### Charity Bridal Party!

Wear your wedding dress again at the inaugural Bridal Party at the 2012 Galway races on Monday 30th July.

All participating ladies receive:

- admission to the races
- complimentary parking
- champagne reception
- four course meal
- racecard & Racing Tipster
- reserved table in the Killanin stand

Raise €150 sponsorship for Special Olympics Connaught to participate .

Prizes include a pamper package at Radisson Blu hotel for the Best Fundraiser and tickets to Galway Ladies day for most stylish bride

Brides of all ages are wanted to strut along one furlong (200metres). Even, if you haven't been up the aisle, you can join in the fun! Bridal-type gown required.

Please contact Lydia Rogers in our Connaught office for more information (contact details on page 10).



### Skydive

For a real adrenalin rush take to the skies on Saturday July 14th for a tandem skydive under the expert guidance of Skydive Kilkenny.

Contact Siobhan Nolan in our Munster office or Jeremy Perrin in our Leinster office for more information about this event.

#### Other fundraising events coming soon

*Please contact the relevant Fundraising coordinator for more information*

July - Golf Classic in Wexford (Leinster)  
 August - Abseil (Ulster)  
 August - Golf Classic in Meath (Leinster)  
 August - Barbeque (Ulster)  
 September - Gerry Kelly Golf Classic (Ulster)

September - Tiburon Mile San Francisco (Eastern)  
 September - Twin Peaks Challenge (Connaught)  
 November - Celebrity Jailbreak (Ulster)  
 December - Polar Plunge (Ulster)  
 Spring 2013 - Horse Trek Argentina (Leinster)

# LEINSTER

## Athlete Leadership Programme (ALPs) Workshop - Money Management and More!

On Saturday 28th April, all roads led to Trim for the first Leinster Regional ALPs Workshop of 2012. The Knightsbrook Hotel was the perfect setting for athletes and mentors to take part in various ALPs activities.

ALPs mentor Pat O'Keeffe, from Carlow Special Olympics Club, got everyone energised for the day, putting the group through a strenuous "Chair Aerobics" session.

After everyone had settled down and recovered from the Chair Aerobics, the group took part in a worthwhile discussion on how they would like to see the ALPs Programme develop in the Leinster Region. Everyone spoke honestly and passionately about their experiences of ALPs, and provided some crucial feedback on where they see the ALPs programme developing over the coming months and years.

Next on the agenda were Rachel, Aine and Anna who work together at Price Waterhouse Cooper, Dublin. They delivered a great "Money Management" workshop. Issues such as the importance of taking responsibility for your finances, managing your budget, deciding on needs versus your wants, and the importance of planning for a rainy day were all discussed. The athletes (and some of the mentors!) showed a great understanding of how important it is to properly plan and manage how you spend your money.

After a well-deserved lunch, Carol Farrell, Health Promotion Officer from Special Olympics Ireland, kept the budgeting theme going with a very practical workshop, "Cheap Eats - Eating Healthily on a Budget".



*Liz Bradley ALPs mentor, Ray Butler, T.D. for Meath West, John Tobin, Special Olympics Leinster Regional Treasurer, and Shauna Bradley from Carlow Special Olympics Club receiving her ALPs Gold Award.*

The athletes and mentors listened carefully to Carol's words of wisdom, and showed great budgeting skills when they completed their "healthy" shopping lists for the week. Needless to say, there was very little chocolate and crisps put on any of the lists!

The day finished up on a positive note, with Annette Codd, Regional Director Special Olympics Leinster and Ray Butler, T.D. for Meath West presenting "Certificates of Attendance" to all the participants.

It was an extra special day for two athletes and their mentors. After years of hard work and commitment, we were delighted to present athletes Shauna Bradley and Annita O'Connor with their ALPs Gold Awards. It was a great moment for both Shauna and Annita, and they were very quick to acknowledge that none of this would have been possible without the support and friendship of their two mentors, Liz Bradley and Tess Fitzpatrick. On behalf of everyone in Special Olympics Leinster, we would like to congratulate everyone involved who has participated in the ALPs Programme and we hope they can stay involved and continue along their journey of learning and fun.

## Leinster Fundraising



### Golf Classics

If you would like to dust off your golf clubs we have a choice of two dates for you:

- Friday 20th July, Wexford Golf Club, Co Wexford
- Monday 20th August, Knightsbrook Golf Classic Trim, Co Meath.

Each golf classic includes 18 holes on superb golf courses, dinner and lots of extras. Full details of both Golf Classics can be found on the fundraising page at [www.specialolympics.ie/leinster](http://www.specialolympics.ie/leinster)

See pages 10 and 11 for details of other fundraising events coming soon.

For more information on any of these events please contact Jeremy Perrin  
Tel: +353 (0)1 629 6999 or email: [jeremy.perrin@specialolympics.ie](mailto:jeremy.perrin@specialolympics.ie)



## Leinster Events Round-Up

April and May have been busy months for both athletes and volunteers in the Leinster Region.

The South Leinster Motor Activities Training Programme event was held in The Watershed, Kilkenny 28th March. 59 athletes took part and the event was supported locally by students from Presentation Secondary School and the Community Policing Unit, Kilkenny.

Area Advancement Equestrian Events were held in K.A.R.E., Baltinglass, Kill Equestrian Centre, Kildare and Kells Equestrian Centre, Meath. The three days saw 97 athletes compete. Thanks to both the north and south Leinster Equestrian Event Teams and volunteers for three wonderful days of competition.

Finally, athletics, our largest competition event in the calendar was held over three days on 16th, 17th & 19th May. The Watershed, Kilkenny played host to South Leinster Athletics with 303 athletes competing over two days. This event was strongly supported by local schools Presentation Secondary and Loreto Secondary, Kilkenny. There were also Transition Year students travelling from further afield: Gael Cholaiste, Kill Dara and Loreto Secondary, Wexford. A big thank-you to the Kilkenny Senior Hurling Team, Sergeant Gary Gordon and his team from the Community Policing Unit, Kilkenny and to the Watershed Staff for their support throughout the event.

The third day of athletics was held in Claremont Athletics Stadium, Navan, with 151 athletes competing to a high standard, in both track and field. This event was attended by a strong army of local dedicated volunteers, Leinster Regional Committee members and Senator Mary Moran.

One final big 'thank you' must also go to the team of volunteers from Arthur Cox who volunteered in a number of key roles at each of the athletic events in both the north and south of the Region.



*Marian Flood, and Jenna Carty pictured with Kilkenny hurler Tommy Walsh at the South Leinster Area Athletics Advancement Event held in The Watershed, Kilkenny.*

### Leinster Volunteer Vacancies

**Royal Rovers Special Olympics Club** is a ladies soccer club in Co. Meath. seeking new volunteers to assist at their training sessions. Coaching qualifications not required, however an interest or qualification in soccer would be beneficial. The club meets on Tuesday evenings at the M.D.L. soccer grounds in Navan. For further information contact Anne Marie Govern on +353 (0)87 944 0835 or email [annemariegovern@gmail.com](mailto:annemariegovern@gmail.com).

**Kilkenny Special Olympics Club** requires volunteers to provide supervision at swimming training in the Watershed Leisure Centre, Kilkenny City on Wednesday evenings. Contact Marguerita O'Flynn on +353 (0) 87 203 3411 for further details.

**Drogheda Special Olympics Club** is looking for new volunteers to join their established team. They meet on various days in the Drogheda area and require volunteers to fill a range of roles. For more information, contact Liz Doyle on +353 (0)86 8224303 or email to [liz.7millmount@gmail.com](mailto:liz.7millmount@gmail.com).

### Special Olympics Leinster welcomes new Chairperson

We would like to welcome Nerissa Dowling who was elected as the new chairperson of Special Olympics Leinster by delegates at the Annual Regional Meeting in March. Nerissa is from Co. Westmeath and is a qualified aquatics coach.

She will replace our outgoing chairperson Brian Osborne. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Brian for his commitment and support to the Region during his term in office.

We send our best wishes to Nerissa and the incoming committee for the coming year.

### Date for your Diary

**Saturday July 7th**  
Regional Selections in KARE, Mc Mahon Centre, Kilcullen from 1.30pm – 3.30pm.

**Athletes who competed in Area Advancement Competition will be selected to advance to regional events next year**

# MUNSTER

## Assurant and E.M.C. Volunteers help run Munster Events

Well done to the volunteers from **Assurant Solutions** in Cork who played a key role in organising the Regional Table Tennis event held at Little Island Sports Complex on the 10th March. This event had over 100 athletes taking part and it was a really successful day. This was the second year that volunteers from Assurant were involved with this event and special thanks must go to Mary Hennessy and her team.

A group of 30 volunteers from the Womens' Volunteer Forum in E.M.C. organised the Area West level 1 Athletics event on the 16th May at C.I.T. in Cork. Over 150 athletes from clubs throughout west Munster participated and special thanks must go to event manager Ruth Kelly and her dedicated team for the fantastic job they did in organising this event.

## J&J Special Achievers Club 2012

Following a very successful launch of the Special Achievers Club programme of events for 2012 on the 12th of April at the Janssen Biologics facility in Ringaskiddy, Cork, a range of events have been taking place over recent months.

Volunteers from Janssen Pharmaceutical/Biologics assisted with the 5-Aside Football Cup event at C.I.T. in Cork on the 28th April with 22 teams taking part. On the following day volunteers from Depuy hosted an excellent artistic gymnastics event in Carrigaline with over 50 athletes taking part. On the 12th May it was the turn of volunteers from Vistakon in Limerick, when they hosted the Regional Basketball Cup event, involving 17 teams, at the Arena in the University of Limerick. On the 16th June over 100 volunteers from Janssen Pharmaceutical/Biologics and Depuy came together to deliver athletics at C.I.T. in Cork.

Well done to event managers, Mark Kennedy (Janssen), Jamie Skoda Bell (Depuy) and Grace Mc Eleny (Vistakon) and their teams of volunteers. The final event of this year's Special Achievers Club programme will take place in November when volunteers from Janssen Pharmaceutical/Biologics will help organise the Regional Tenpin Bowling event at the Planet Leisure Centre in Cork.



*Volunteers from Vistacon who organised the Regional Basketball Cup Event at the University of Limerick.*

## Munster Golf Clubs Support Special Olympics Munster

Three Munster Golf clubs have opened their courses and provided volunteers for the Munster area golf events this year.

On 21st May Charleville Golf Club welcomed a group of athletes from West Munster. There were 50 athletes in attendance at the Skills event and it was a very enjoyable day for athletes, coaches and volunteers. The weather held up for the day and the volunteers made a great effort to make the Skills course look wonderful. Many thanks to Charleville for their continued support of our golf programme.

On 28th May, it was the turn of Fota Golf Club and their members to plan and run the Golf Skills for East Munster and also the Regional Course Competition. There were 55 skills athletes and 49 on course players. The weather was great, the course looked marvellous and everyone had a really good day. Donal Og Cusack and the Lord Mayor of Cork attended the event to present awards.

On 11th June Ennis Golf Club hosted the Skills competition for another group of 49 West Munster athletes. The volunteers came from the Ennis club, it was a very well-run day and everyone enjoyed themselves very much.

Thanks is due to all the hard work of our Golf Coordinator, Michael Forde, for the dedicated work he puts into making the Munster Golf Programme first class.





## VOLUNTEERS URGENTLY NEEDED

### Waterford Special Olympics Club

Our gymnastics programme urgently requires volunteers from around the Waterford area who would like to get involved in the weekly club training programme. It is not essential to have knowledge of gymnastics as there are lots of roles in the club, but if you have a background in gymnastics we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact Susan McGill +353 (0)51 832211.

### Bandon Special Olympics Athletics Club, Co. Cork

Volunteers are needed to support the activities of this club in their weekly athletics training. Experience of athletics is not essential as there are lots of jobs in the club that need to be done. Please make contact with Willie Buckley +353 87 2736836 if you have an hour per week to give to the club.

### Owenabue Special Olympics Gymnastics Club Carrigaline, Co. Cork

We are looking for new volunteers and at the moment we particularly need female volunteers for our rhythmic club and male coaches for our artistic club.

Rhythmic gymnastics is hoop, ball, ribbon and clubs and all routines are performed to music. We have 21 female athletes ranging in age from 6 years to 28 years and we work with four different levels of ability. No gymnastics experience is needed as it is mostly movement to music and we can train volunteers.

Artistic gymnastics is floor vault, rings and bars and we work with male and female athletes from 6 to 24 years. We have all ranges of abilities in this group and a large beginners group.

We would welcome volunteers to either or both sessions and a full weekly commitment is not required as we can run a rota to suit peoples' availability. The artistic club does not initially require volunteers with qualifications but we would ask that you would be willing to attend coaching courses that become available.

At present the rhythmic gymnastics runs from 7pm to 8pm Tuesdays and the artistic gymnastics on Saturdays 10am to 11.30am. These may change in September. Contact Zelig Moran at +353 (0)87 982 5225 or email [Owenabue.gymclub@gmail.com](mailto:Owenabue.gymclub@gmail.com).



## Munster Athlete Leadership Programme North Cork ALPs Update

The North Cork ALPs group did a great job volunteering at the Level 1 Athletics Event in CIT on May 26th. They put in a lot of time and effort making preparations for the event and the day was a success. As well as being a group activity it was also a day which will help work towards some of the ALPs athletes' bronze and silver awards. Thank you to all the athletes and mentors for their help on the day.

The North Cork ALPs Group have had three meetings so far in 2012, two in Charleville and one in COPE, Mallow. We have a new committee and all athlete members have new roles. We are busy working on our ALPs log books. Some athletes are almost finished their Gold Award and several members are working on their Silver Awards. Bernadette Cronin has just completed her Bronze log book so all the group would like to wish her the best of luck with that.

Eilish Harrington from the Munster Office attended our most recent meeting on the 14th April and discussed the possibility of having a joint meeting with some other ALPs groups in September. The group thought this was a fantastic idea and would be delighted to meet with other ALPs groups.

If any athletes are interested in finding out more about our ALPs group, you can contact our PRO Emily on [emilyhurley81@gmail.com](mailto:emilyhurley81@gmail.com).

## Special Olympics Munster Welcomes Redhill School

Special Olympics Munster is delighted to welcome Redhill School to the Munster Special Olympics programme. Redhill School is based in Patrickswell in Limerick and has 50 pupils. The school will join the Special Olympics Munster Athletics program with 14 athletes initially registered. Laura Ahern is the Special Olympics coordinator within the school, and along with her colleagues, has put a huge amount of work into setting up the club. A number of staff members have attained athletics coaching qualifications and are looking forward to getting involved in the program.

Special Olympics Munster wishes Redhill School every success with the Special Olympics Programme.

## Family Day:

The Munster Special Olympics Family Day will be held on July 1st in Fota Wildlife Park and followed by dinner at the Fota Resort Hotel. There will be something offered for the whole family on the day; a tour of the park, meal, disco and an overview of the Special Olympics Athlete Programme. We are expecting a large turnout and a great day!

# ULSTER

## Athlete Profile – Charlene Patrick

My name is Charlene Patrick, I am 20 years old and I have been a Special Olympics athlete since 2009. I train with Omagh District Special Olympics Club and I am their athlete representative.

I love horses and sport of any kind, I enjoy training with my club and I always look forward to taking part in Special Olympics competitions. I took part in the Special Olympics Ireland Games in Limerick in 2010 where I spent four of the best days of my life along with six other athletes from our club. There was such a friendly atmosphere and everyone was so nice. I won three bronze medals and I was very proud of myself.

Since the All Ireland Games I have joined the swimming, golf and bocce sections of the club. I have competed in a swimming competition and won 2 gold medals. Recently I was nominated along with other members of our swimming club for Disability Sports Person of the Year and was so proud to have won it.

I hope to continue swimming with the club for a long time and I would love to compete in another Special Olympics All Ireland competition.

Before joining Special Olympics my life was very different and I felt very lonely. But since becoming a Special Olympics athlete, I feel I have found a family. Now I am studying retail full time, I am engaged to Darren and I am very happy and proud of everything I have achieved.

I want to say thank-you to all of the Special Olympics volunteers and athletes in the club. I have got to know most of them and enjoy seeing them each week. We are a great bunch.



## Events Round-up

The Events Programme continues to grow with five events hosted between February and May 2012. Some 500 athletes attended events in bowling and bocce, aiming to advance to Regional events in 2013. A development day was hosted for basketball.

There were some exciting additions to these events mainly around the introduction of elements of the Healthy Athlete Programme in the region.

The programme was offered at the basketball event in Lough Moss Leisure Centre on 28th March 2012. This was followed by a much larger programme at the bocce event in Jim Baker Stadium on 19th & 20th April 2012, where Fit Feet and Health Promotion screening and information was available.

We would like to thank the organisations, including Action Cancer, Chest, Heart & Stroke, Diabetes UK, Belfast Health Trust, and Social Care Trust who came along to support the Health Programme. Athletes had the opportunity to speak with qualified professionals about important health issues.

Such events would not be possible without the continued support of our dedicated volunteer teams.



Over the past four months over 200 volunteers have helped plan, manage and deliver the Events Programme. The regional office would like to thank all of them and extend a special thank you to St. Josephs Boys Model and Belfast Boys Model (pictured above) who recently joined the programme as volunteers and attended events in their areas. These will be key relationships as we move forward into Regional Events in 2013.



## Ulster Athlete Leadership Programme (ALPs)

### ALPs members attend Celebration Dinner at Stormont

On the 15th of March, members of the ALPs programme attended a special dinner at Stormont, hosted by MLA William Hay. The St Patrick's Day Celebration dinner was attended by members from Down Special Olympics Club (Jackie, Noel and Kevin and their mentor Frank) and Shimna Stars Special Olympics Club (Larry, Michelle and Peter and their mentor John). The evening consisted of a dinner in the Parliament Buildings, entertainment, guest speakers and a tour of Stormont.

### ALPs Photography Workshops

During March and April, Special Olympics Ulster ran three photography workshops for ALPs members. The first one took place at Tollymore Mountain Centre, Newcastle on Sunday 25th March. Athletes and mentors from Down, Shimna Stars, Salto and Lisburn 2gether Special Olympics Clubs participated in the training. The second workshop was held at the Share Centre in Fermanagh on Saturday 14th April and was attended by athletes and mentors from Breffni Blues and Monaghan Special Olympics Clubs. The final workshop was held in Omagh Community House on Sunday 29th of April with athletes and mentors from Strabane & District Special Olympics Club attending.

The workshops provided athletes with training on the various settings and modes of their cameras, how to compose a photograph, and downloading and e-mailing them. The athletes then had a chance to put it all into practice when they were given the task of taking a range of different types of photographs. They each then selected their 3 favourite photos which were put on display. The workshops were a fantastic success and gave the athletes the knowledge and confidence to take great pictures but also allowed them to complete the photography task of their ALPs Award.



Any athletes aged over 16 are welcome to get involved with the ALPs programme. Future workshops are taking place on:

- 24th June & 1st July (Introduction to Coaching Practices – Templemore Leisure Centre, Derry)
- 25th September (General Induction training – Belfast), 8th October (Money Management – Derry),
- 5th & 10th November (Health Promotion).

For further details on any of these or how to get involved see the ALPs page of the Ulster website or contact Victoria on +44 28 9089 2995 or email [victoria.kelly@specialolympics.ie](mailto:victoria.kelly@specialolympics.ie).



Special Olympics Ulster is hosting a fancy-dress Halloween-themed Family day in October that will have lots of fun packed activities and spot prizes as well as beneficial information for athletes and family members. Places are limited and need to be booked in advance.

The event is open to family members that are registered with the Special Olympics Ulster Family programme. If you are not yet registered but would like to be involved please contact Cathy Hunter on: +44 (0)28 9023 9023 or email [cathy.hunter@specialolympics.ie](mailto:cathy.hunter@specialolympics.ie).

### Inaugural Gerry Kelly Golf Classic for Special Olympics Ulster



To raise funds for Special Olympics Ulster, I am hosting a Golf Classic at Edenmore Golf & Country Club in September. I am asking you to support this event as every penny we raise will be invested in our athletes – and every penny will make a real difference for them. I know we are living in tough economic times, so any goodwill you can show will be deeply appreciated. For more information about sponsorship opportunities or to book your tee time please contact Ronan McCay on +44 (0)28 9089 2996 or send an email to [ronan.mccay@specialolympics.ie](mailto:ronan.mccay@specialolympics.ie).

Thanks for your support,  
Gerry Kelly

# HEALTH in Focus

## Health Promotion Video

Special Olympics Ireland has collaborated with MIDWAY Services to produce a fantastic video all about healthy eating. The film depicts athletes from MIDWAY taking us through the food pyramid, portion sizes and making healthy lunch choices. Keep an eye out on the website to see when it is available for viewing!

## Sign up for Health Promotion

The Special Olympics Ireland Health Promotion Pilot Programme is now complete. The programme is currently being extended to clubs who have not yet participated. If you would like to find out more about the programme or to see how your club can avail of this fantastic project please contact Carol Farrell, Health Promotion Project Officer at [carol.farrell@specialolympics.ie](mailto:carol.farrell@specialolympics.ie) or on +353 (0)1 869 1669.

## Opening Eyes Demo

Special Olympics International and the European Council of Optometry and Optics (ECOO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in January 2012, creating a partnership that will expand the reach of the Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes vision screening program throughout Europe-Eurasia. The collaboration will help bring vision care services and prescription eyewear to more athletes with intellectual disabilities, as well as build increased public awareness.

The ECOO General Assembly held their spring meeting in Croke Park from April 20th to 22nd. Special Olympics Ireland ran a demonstration Opening Eyes screening at the event. 20 athletes from Special Olympics Eastern Region were screened by 15 Special Olympics Ireland volunteer optometrists. The athletes were prescribed glasses as required or received a pair of designer sunglasses thanks to the wonderful partnerships already established with Safilo and Essilor. Many thanks to all the athletes and volunteers who made the day possible.

## Healthy Athlete at Ulster Bocce

At the Bocce event at Jim Baker Stadium on April 19th and 20th, athletes had the opportunity to avail of Healthy Athlete Screening. Two disciplines were offered on both days, Fit Feet and Health Promotion with a great uptake by athletes for both screenings.



*Special Olympics Ireland athletes and volunteers together with European Council of Optometry and Optics representatives at the Opening Eyes Demonstration.*

## Code of Ethics and Good Practice

We are working to ensure clubs, athletes and volunteers have support in relation to Code of Ethics and Good Practice and would like to update you on recent developments.

In each Region, I am pleased to announce that the designated Regional Athlete Protection Officer (RAPO) is now the Regional Director. A designated phone number will connect you to the RAPO in your Region; this should be used in the event of an incident/concern/allegation relating to Athlete Protection

**+353 818 313 045**

(This number will work for callers both north and south and calls will be charged at a local rate.)

All other club matters should be channelled through your Regional Development Officers.

### Upcoming publications

Guidelines will be issued shortly to support clubs who may have concerns about bullying. In the meantime, please link in with your Regional Development Officer, Clubs who should be able to guide you if you are having current issues in this area.

## Training News

I am delighted to say that the training for clubs is ongoing with Loughrea Training Centre being the latest club to receive the Athlete Code of Ethics and Good Practice.

The Intellectual Disability Education Modules are also getting excellent feedback from all, even those volunteers who have been working in the area for a number of years

*"I have co-existed with intellectual disability for fifty years now! .....and I would have to compliment you on the amount which I took away from last night. I really learned something."* (volunteer, Ballymun Deep Blues Special Olympics Club)

If you are interested in organising this very valuable training for your clubs from September 2012 please contact [muireann.nirai@specialolympics.ie](mailto:muireann.nirai@specialolympics.ie)

I would like to take this opportunity to say a hearty THANK YOU to all the medical volunteers that have supported all the Area events in the regions during this year and I wish you all a lovely summer.

# SPORTS NEWS

## 2012 Special Olympics Ireland National Football Finals



*Rachel McCloskey, Foyle in action against Nikita Brennan, right, Eastern 1*

The 2012 Special Olympics Ireland National Cup and Plate finals, sponsored by UniCredit, took place in St. Joseph's Boys FC, Sallynoggin, Co. Dublin on Saturday 12th May. Teams representing Donegal, Cheeverstown House, Bray Lakers, Waterford, Galway, Cork and Eastern Region combined women's teams were all in action. The standard of football particularly in the men's 11 a-side matches is increasing

enormously and it was very encouraging to see many players and administrators from St Joseph's coming out to watch the matches.

In the men's National Cup event, Donegal Special Olympics Club took the honours against Cheeverstown to claim the title, while in the ladies competition Foyle Ladies Special Olympics Club overcame a strong challenge from Special Olympics Eastern Region Team 1.

In the Men's National Plate event, Bray Lakers took the title following a closely matched final against Waterford Special Olympics Club. Meanwhile, the West was awake in the Women's National Plate Final with the Connaught team claiming the accolades over Special Olympics Eastern Region 2.

Cheeverstown came out on top against Donegal Special Olympics Club in Division 1 of the National 11-a-side league, while in Division 2 Bray Lakers stood their ground against the challenge of Cork Special Olympics Football Club.

Individual awards are always a fantastic achievement and the following players were honoured with awards from the League, Cup or Plate.

- Division 1 League: Michael Levy (North West Special Olympics Club)
- Division 2 League: George Fitzgerald (Waterford Special Olympics Club)
- Men's Cup: David Friel (North West Special Olympics Club)
- Men's Plate: Noel Delaney (Bray Lakers)
- Women's Cup: Nicola McGlorey (Newry City Special Olympics Football Club)
- Women's Plate: Nikita Cosgrave (Connaught Team)

## Special Olympics Ireland National Floorball Event

The first ever National Floorball event took place in the University Limerick on Saturday 19th May. Three combined teams from Munster, with athletes from Lisnagry, Waterford and Tipperary Special Olympics Clubs and COPE Foundation, took part in the event.

This is an excellent, fast-paced spectator sport and on the day there was a high level of competition and sportsmanship. There was a high level of interest from staff and members from the UL Sports Arena who came to watch the matches. Recently retired Irish rugby union player, David Wallace, who played for Munster, Ireland and the British and Irish Lions, attended and met the players and coaches.

It is hoped that this sport will grow and develop and coaches from Munster have offered their support to other regions who might like to take up the sport.

### Results:

- Gold Medal Winners: Munster Team 3 – Aidan Cross, Joseph McCarthy, Willie McGrath, Seán Murphy and Brendan O'Sullivan
- Silver Medal Winners: Munster Team 1 – George Fitzgerald, Michael Minogue, Brian Aldworth, James Murphy and Roy Saville.
- Bronze Medal Winners: Munster Team 2 – James Upton, James Healy, Thomas O'Herlihy, James Healy and Colm Mulcahy.

Sincere thanks all the volunteers who helped to make this event such a success and to David Wallace, Anne Bourke (Board Member), David Mahedy (Director of Sport, UL), Matt Hall (UL Eagles Basketball Club) and Cathy Grant (UL Basketball Club), both of whom play in the Super League, all of whom presented awards on the day.



*Colm Mulcahy shoots past goalkeeper Shaun Murphy during the first ever Special Olympics Ireland National Floorball event held in Limerick.*



# Collection Day 2012



Special Olympics Ireland's Annual Collection Day, sponsored by eircom, took place on Friday 27th April. Over 4,000 volunteers took to the streets of villages, towns and cities all over Ireland to collect on the day and we are delighted to announce that as of now the total raised is €580,000.

There was lots of activity around the country to coincide with Collection Day. A great number of coffee mornings took place in companies throughout the country, including one which was hosted by Newstalk in the Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin and another which was held in Government Buildings. In addition we had entertainment on the streets of Dublin, Belfast, Derry, Dundalk, Cork and Limerick.

Speaking about the fantastic collective effort that made the day such a success, Matt English, CEO Special Olympics Ireland said "On behalf of Special Olympics Ireland I would like to express my gratitude to each and every one of the 4,000 volunteers who went out to collect for us on Friday April 27th. Your contribution has made a huge difference to us. I would also like to thank everyone who donated on the day. Every cent will go towards supporting our on-going programme of sports training and competition for people with an intellectual disability throughout Ireland".

Pictured above are staff members from Aon, along with the Maynooth Gospel Choir and Special Olympics athletes and volunteers who collected at Connolly Station, Dublin. *Photo courtesy Rob Webb, Aon*



*Athletes Claire Adams and Lynn Conroy are joined by Newstalk's Henry McKean at the Newstalk Coffee Morning*



*Special Olympics athletes and volunteers collect in eircom headquarters in Dublin.*