

OCTOBER 2013

**Special
Olympics
Ireland**



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Historic moment for Special Olympics in Ireland

Seanad debate a motion on Special Olympics

A truly historic moment for Special Olympics athletes and the Special Olympics movement occurred recently in Seanad Eireann on July 17th 2013.

Senators acknowledged and praised the athletes, families and volunteers of Special Olympics Ireland and the organisation as a whole as they debated a motion on Special Olympics proposed by Senator Mary Moran. The Senators wished to mark the 10th Anniversary of the 2003 World Summer Games that were staged in Ireland.

The lengthy debate lasted more than two and half hours with contributions from 14 Senators and Minister of State at the Department of Health Kathleen Lynch T.D.



Athletes and family members were present in the public gallery and were warmly welcomed by each Senator as they rose to address the motion.

Although there are Special Olympics Programmes in over 170 countries around the world, this occasion appears to be the first time that the merits of the Special Olympics movement have been debated in a national parliament.

The full debate can be viewed at the link below. It commences approximately 6 hours into the days proceedings.

www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=24214&&CatID=129

**electric
Ireland**

POWERING
Kindness

Special Olympics Ireland are delighted to announce that we are taking part in Electric Ireland's Powering Kindness Campaign during the week of the 1st to 8th November. During this week you can do a good deed and log it in aid of Special Olympics.

Log onto www.poweringkindness.ie or Twitter @SOIreland using #poweringkindness

See backpage for more information

Important Notice

In order to reduce printing and mailing costs, in future Connect will only be available online. If you currently receive Connect in hardcopy and wish to continue to receive our newsletters, can you please email us at volunteer@specialolympics.ie and supply us with your email address.

On the cover

JFK 50th anniversary celebration Special Olympics New Ross at lighting of the Emigrant Flame

Celebrations were held in New Ross Co Wexford on June 22nd to mark the 50th Anniversary of President John F Kennedy's visit to the town and his ancestral family home. Special Olympics Ireland was invited by the Kennedy Family to be part of these celebrations.

The celebrations began with an all-American style Homecoming parade followed by a stage celebration compered by Anne Doyle and George Hook. The Emigrant flame arrived on the LE Orla Naval vessel to the quay and was brought to the Kennedy Monument and onwards to the Emigrants Memorial.

Special Olympics athletes Aidan Sinnott and Claire Wall accompanied by volunteers Phil Mc Evoy and Eddie Manning, carried the flame on part of its journey along the boardwalk with athletes and volunteers from New Ross Special Olympics Club providing a guard of honour. The flame was handed over to members of the Defence Forces, Caroline Kennedy, Jean Kennedy Smith and An Taoiseach Enda Kennedy. The Emigrant Flame was lit on the Quayside to burn forever brightly to remember all Irish emigrants.



Pictured above is Taoiseach Enda Kenny, Chairperson of Special Olympics Ireland Mary Davis and members of New Ross Special Olympics Club

2014 Special Olympics Ireland Games 12th - 15th June 2014

1,500 Special Olympics athletes from the 4 corners of Ireland will participate in the 3-day residential Games, in 13 sports competitions from Thursday 12th to Sunday 15th June 2014.

What: 2014 Special Olympics Ireland Games
When: 12 -15th June 2014
Who: 1,500 athletes
500 Coaches and Official Delegates
2,500 Volunteers
3,000 Family members

Sports: Competitions will be held in the following sports:

Athletics	Golf
Aquatics	Gymnastics
Badminton	Kayaking
Basketball	Tenpin Bowling
Bocce	Table Tennis
Equestrian	Pitch and Putt
Football	



A comprehensive non-competitive Motor Activities Training Programme will be offered as part of the Games. The Games will include a Law Enforcement Torch Run prior to the Opening Ceremony of the Games. During the weekend of the Games, various cultural and entertainment items will be organised giving athletes, families, volunteers and the public an opportunity to experience a true Olympics-style event. The athletes will also be able to avail of a Healthy Athlete Screening programme and participate in other health related activities throughout the weekend.

VOLUNTEER NEWS



2013 Volunteer Ireland Volunteer of the Year Awards.

Volunteer Ireland CEO Yvonne McKenna says: "The search for the 2013 Volunteer of the Year is now on! We're calling on the Irish public to help us shine a light on this country's remarkable volunteers. Members of the public can nominate their choice at www.volunteer.ie."

The deadline for making a nomination is **October 25th**. If a particular volunteer's contribution stands out to you, now is your chance to highlight their work. Each person who is nominated will receive a customised response from Volunteer Ireland and the short listed volunteers will be invited to an Awards Ceremony in Dublin on Thursday December 5th.

Munster Volunteer awarded Cork Person of the Month Award for June

One of Munster's longest serving volunteers, Padraig Aherne, was recognised for his work with Special Olympics Munster and Cope Foundation Cork, when he was awarded the Cork Person of the Month Award for June. He will now be one of twelve people in the running for the overall Cork Person of the Year Award 2013 which will be announced at an awards ceremony in January 2014.

Padraig retired from St. Patrick's School, Montenotte, eight years ago, but has continued working with Cope Foundation on a voluntary basis since then. He has been involved in running a weekly Social Club for adults with disabilities for over forty years, and helps organise 'big party nights' on special occasions like Halloween, Christmas and Summer.



Pictured at the presentation l-r Manus O'Callaghan, Awards Organiser; Padraig Aherne, Cork Person of the Month; John Manning, Lexus Cork and Pat Lemasney, Southern (sponsors). Pic: Tony O'Connell Photography

He has been a volunteer with Special Olympics Munster for over 25 years filling a range of roles at regional and national level. For many years Padraig has been the driving force in co-ordinating the Indoor Hockey programme in Munster and in recent years he has been instrumental in developing the new winter sport of Floorball. He was very involved in training the Special Olympics Ireland Floorball team that did so well at the World Winter Games earlier this year, coming home with a bronze medal.

We wish Padraig all the very best of luck for the Cork Person of the Year Awards, and thank him for everything he has done for Special Olympics Munster..

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Please contact the relevant Special Olympics office or club contact if you are interested in finding out more about any of these volunteering opportunities

SPECIAL OLYMPICS IRELAND Tel +353 818 300 053; email volunteers@specialolympics.ie

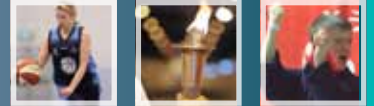
Basketball

Volunteers needed to support a Development Day for athletes aged 8-15 years as part of European Basketball Week on Saturday 23rd November in Coláiste Phádraig Christian Brothers Secondary School, Lucan, Co. Dublin

SPECIAL OLYMPICS CONNAUGHT Tel +353 (071) 911 8320; email connaughtvol@specialolympics.ie

Sports Events Sligo, Mayo, Roscommon, Galway

Volunteers to help us plan, organise and deliver sports events for the coming season. We aim to have a team of volunteers in place for all events. These teams will be made up of people with any of the following skills: event management, volunteer management, operations, health and safety, medical/first aid, coaching qualifications, sports officials, administration skills, or just someone with an interest in event management/sport competition.



SO Connaught contd... Medical	Qualified medical and first aid volunteers required for all our sports events and training days. See the calendar of events on the Connaught section of the website for details of all upcoming events
SPECIAL OLYMPICS LEINSTER Tel +353 (01) 629 6999; email leinster@specialolympics.ie	
Games Management System (GMS)	Special Olympics Leinster is looking for people who are computer proficient to support our 2013 - 2014 events. The Games Management System (GMS) is a software package used by Special Olympics worldwide to operate and manage our sports events. The programme can complete tasks such as registering athletes for events, generating reports and results etc. GMS is a user friendly software package - no computer programming/coding required.
Drogheda SO Club	Currently looking to recruit volunteers to assist in club training sessions. The club trains in various sports throughout the week and requires volunteers of all levels of experience. For further information please contact the Membership Officer on 086 4497455 or email dsocmembership@gmail.com .
SPECIAL OLYMPICS MUNSTER Tel +353 (021) 4977 192; email munster@specialolympics.ie	
Owenabue SO Club, Cork	Volunteers urgently required to assist with Rhythmic Gymnastics on Tuesday evenings 7pm-8pm. If you are interested in finding out more about this club, please contact Zelig Moran on 087 9825225. Knowledge or experience of rhythmic gymnastics is not necessary.
Cork SO Bowling Club, Cork City	Volunteers required on Thursday evenings from 7pm-8pm in Leisureplex, McCurtin Street, Cork to assist. No experience of Tenpin bowling is required. If you can give an hour a week to this club please contact Helena O'Callaghan by email: corksobowlingclub@gmail.com .
Munster Regional office, Cork	The Special Olympics Munster Regional Office located in Cork City is urgently in need of volunteers who can help in providing administrative support. Opportunities are available for volunteers during the regular opening hours of 9am-5pm., Monday to Friday, or on Wednesday evenings from 6pm-8pm. A reasonable level of I.T. skills, especially in the area of data inputting and good communication skills would be helpful.
SPECIAL OLYMPICS ULSTER Tel +44 (028) 9023 9023; email ulster@specialolympics.ie	
New Club Development Ballymena, Belfast, Magherafelt	We are currently recruiting volunteers to help support the development of new Special Olympics clubs in Ballymena, Belfast and Magherafelt. The roles available vary from general volunteering at weekly club training sessions which involve assisting athletes, coaches and other volunteers during club activity to more specific Club Management Team (CMT) volunteering. CMT volunteers will take on specific committee roles and work as a team to manage and operate the club.
Neptune SO Club	General volunteers required on Tuesdays from 6.30pm-7.30pm
Banbridge SO Club	General volunteers required Wednesdays 7pm-8.45pm and Fridays from 8pm-9pm
Roe Valley SO Club	General volunteers required on Wednesday from 7.15pm-8.15pm
Ballymena SO Club	Bocce coach required on Thursdays from 7pm-8pm
Event Management Volunteers	Volunteers required with an interest in helping to plan, manage and deliver Special Olympics Ulster events in 2013-14. We have a number of roles including: event manager, operations manager, events services manager, volunteer services coordinator, medical coordinator and safety officer available. No experience is necessary as event management training will be delivered to all event teams prior to their event.

CONNAUGHT

CONTACT US:
 Special Olympics Connaught
 Tel: +353 (0)71 911 8320
 Email: connaught@specialolympics.ie

Ireland Games Team Connaught Update

The deadline for 1st round acceptances has now passed, with 2nd round offers sent to the clubs in question. We will soon be offering coach/chaperone places to the various clubs who have athletes on the team. This is done on a ratio of 4 athletes to 1 coach/chaperone. Clubs must then decide who is available and willing to go to the Games with the athletes and these individuals must be registered volunteers.

We will also be sending the training calendar for the coming year along with the cost per club. It is up to each club in conjunction with the respective families to ensure that all athletes attend their training sessions and that the fees are paid up in advance. If anyone has any queries in relation to the Games please contact the Head of Delegation, Aengus Sheerin at aengus.sheerin@specialolympics.ie.

14 Days 12 County Tops

Well done to Connaught athlete Aoife Beston who climbed 12 mountain peaks in 14 days, all in different counties. Aoife who is a member of Claremorris All Stars Special Olympics Club has been involved for a number of years in various sports, however her main sport is athletics. Aoife is currently training for the Special Olympics Ireland Games where she will compete in the 5000m Run and the mini javelin. Aoife completed the climbs over the summer with her mum and coach, Mary, and her sister Laura. Aoife and Laura are pictured above at the summit of Mount Errigal.



Inter-Club Activities

All clubs are encouraged to organise an inter-club activity over the coming year. It can be an ideal way to organise a friendly/challenge competition with another club. If you are thinking of organising an inter-club activity a 'Guide to Organising an Inter-Club Activity' is available which can be emailed to any clubs that want it. Clubs who have organised an inter-club activity should inform the Connaught office as we would like to promote these activities on our website and newsletters. If you would like contact information for other clubs please contact the Connaught office (details at top of this page)

Fantastic FUNdraising!

Local Business Support

We would like to thank all the businesses in the region that are getting behind us and supporting Special Olympics Connaught through their own fundraising efforts.

Fundraising Fashion Show

Sligo Gardaí are hosting a Fashion Show in aid of Special Olympics Connaught and S.H.O.U.T. (Sligo Hospital Oncology Unit Trust) on Wednesday November 6th. Athletes from Special Olympics Connaught along with a host of Mayo and Dublin GAA Stars will parade down the catwalk at the Clarion Hotel Sligo. Doors open at 7:30pm with the show commencing at 8:00pm.

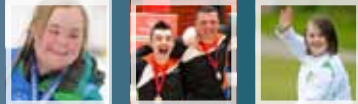
Tickets can be obtained from Special Olympics Connaught office. All ticket holders will receive admission to Toffs Night Club. Complimentary shuttle service will run from The Clarion Hotel to Toffs Night Club after the show. Contact the office to book tickets.



CISCO Galway recently organised a virtual ride around Ireland to raise funds for Special Olympics Connaught. Pictured L – R are Anthony McLaughlin CISCO Galway, Michael Carty Regional Fundraising Coordinator Connaught, Sheila Greaney CISCO Galway

Cops and Donuts Fundraiser

Cops and Donuts will make their appearance on Shop Street Galway on Saturday December 7th. With the support of An Garda Síochána, volunteers and Special Olympics athletes will be selling delicious Dolly's Donuts to members of the public. If anyone would be free to help on the day, please get in contact with Michael Carty on 071 9118320.



Connaught Club News

Galway Special Olympics Kayak Club



The dedicated work of those involved with the Galway Special Olympics Kayak Club was celebrated on August 25th as family members, volunteers and athletes alike gathered together to mark the official launch of the club. Club members showcased their skills on the river Corrib for the crowd gathered.

The club which has existed since late last year has since obtained its own club house off the Corrib where they can store their boats and equipment.

Irish Olympian Eadaoin Ni Challarain was on hand to present the club athletes with their Level 1 and Level 2 Proficiency Certificates from the Irish Canoe Union, while Galway City Councillors Donal Lyons and Billy Cameron, as well as Éamon Ó Cuiv TD, were also present to congratulate the athletes and volunteers on the progress that has been made in the club.

With the club in existence less than a year and already 4 athletes qualified for the Ireland Games in 2014, it promises to be a bright future for the club.

Roscommon Special Olympics Club



The Roscommon Special Olympics Club had a very busy summer; kicking off the summer with an inter-club Bowling night in Longford with the Longford Special Olympics Bowling Club. Thirty athletes travelled to Longford for a super night's bowling, and afterwards all enjoyed pizza and refreshments.

Over the summer, Monday nights saw the beginning of Uni Hoc at Roscommon Leisure Zone. This proved to be very popular with the athletes and helped to improve their fitness and skill levels. As the weeks went on and fitness and skill levels improved the more competitive the games became. Next step, floorball!!

From September the club has extended bowling time from 7:00pm – 9:00pm to cater for the growing number of bowlers. New members are always welcome, contact Jackie at 086171118 1 if you require further information. You can follow all the club news on Facebook at Roscommon Special Olympics Club.

Kiltimagh and Ballinrobe Special Olympics Club



On the 6th of July 2013, Special Olympics Clubs in Ballinrobe and Kiltimagh hosted a gathering of athletes, families, coaches and volunteers in Kiltimagh to mark the 10th Anniversary of the 2003 Ireland World Summer Games.

The day started with a Bocce Tournament in Kiltimagh Bocce Complex with Minister of Sport Michael Ring dropping in to say hello to the athletes and joining in a game. Following the Bocce event, winners were presented with prizes and everyone enjoyed a lovely reunion meal in Park Hotel in Kiltimagh with a disco afterwards, and music provided by local DJ Tommie Elliot.

Castlebar Strikers Bowling Club

On Friday 21st June Castlebar Strikers held an open bowling event to celebrate the 2003 Ireland Special Olympics World Summer Games. Castlebar was well represented with 7 athletes on Team Ireland in 2003. Taking place in Mayo Leisure Point's bowling alley, members of the public were invited to bowl with the club bowlers. A large crowd attended the event and enjoyed the bowling experience. Cllr. Brendan Heneghan (Mayor), Cllr. Micheal Kilcoyne (Mayor in 2003), Teresa Ward (Special Olympics Connaught) and Michael Larkin (2003 Host Town committee) addressed the crowd congratulating the 7 athletes on their achievements and speaking of their fond memories of the 2003 Venezuelan Team whom Castlebar town hosted.

EASTERN REGION

CONTACT US:

Special Olympics Eastern Region

Tel: +353 (0)1 8912000

 Email: eastern.region@specialolympics.ie

Family Movie Day

Our Family Movie Day was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended with over 120 people turning up to the Lighthouse Cinema in Smithfield on Father's Day June 16th. The movie on show was 'Oz the Great and Powerful' which was attended by athletes, siblings, parents and grandparents. A Special Olympics DVD clip was viewed prior to the film.

Everybody was impressed by the funky choice of venue and for only €3 per person it could not have been better value. There was a goodie bag for everyone and information stands on display, including topics such as the Ireland Games 2014, Coaches Forum, Athlete Selections, the Health Promotion Programme and Athlete Leadership.

If you have any ideas for next year's family event please email claire.grehan@specialolympics.ie.

ATHLETE REVIEW: Oz the Great and Powerful'

I attended The Family Movie Day in the Lighthouse cinema on June 16th. I was volunteering for my Athlete Leadership Gold Award and was handing out Special Olympics booklets on Healthy Eating.

I then saw the movie 'Oz the Great and Powerful'. This is the story about a fairground artist who gets involved with two witches, one good and one evil and the good witch wins. The wizard is played by James Franco. You will know him as the good-looking actor from Spiderman. The good witch is played by Michelle Williams. The two evil witches are played by Mila K and Rachel Wise.

The story is set to take place before Dorothy and her little dog, Toto ended up in Oz in the movie of 'The Wizard of Oz'.

The best movie ever!

Chloe McMullan, Sports Club 15



Athlete Forum Update

A combined Leinster and Eastern Region athlete forum will take place on 9th November in the Crowne Plaza Blanchardstown from 9am to 4pm. The forum is open to Special Olympics athletes over the age of 16. Each athlete must be accompanied by a mentor, volunteer or a family member for the day.

Throughout the day athletes will get to experience and receive training in public speaking, interview skills, health promotion, social media and texting guidelines and drama.

If you are an **Eastern Region** athlete and wish to attend the athlete forum, please contact joanne.kelly@specialolympics.ie or at 01 891 2000.

If you are a **Leinster** athlete and wish to attend the athlete forum, please contact patrick.oreilly@specialolympics.ie or at 01 6296999.



Thank you to all teams and sponsors who supported our fundraising golf classic at the K Club on September 9th. We look forward to your continued support next year! Pictured above are the Electric Ireland Team including Martin McEnteggart on the far left who won the longest drive.



**Special
Olympics**
Eastern Region



2pm, Saturday 7th December 2013
FORTY FOOT, SANDYCOVE



Plunge into the Irish Sea
Brave the elements and raise funds for
Special Olympics at the same time!

Raise a minimum of €25 to participate
Refreshments available afterwards
Why not have a family day out
you might even meet Santa!

For more information or to
request a sponsorship card please contact
Brenda at Special Olympics Eastern Region
Telephone: (01) 891 2000
Email: eastern.region@specialolympics.ie

www.specialolympics.ie/easternregion



CLUBS UPDATE

We would like to welcome all our clubs back after a well-earned summer break. We are delighted to announce that we have a new club, "Swords Basketball Special Olympics Club", and we would like to welcome all the athletes and volunteers to the Eastern Region.

Training opportunities for clubs

Membership Officer Training

Who can attend? Club Membership Officer and Secretary
Where: Special Olympics Ireland, Park House Offices, Dublin 7
When: Wednesday November 27th
Time: 6.30pm to 9.30pm

Athlete Protection and Medical Officer (APMO) Training

Who can attend? Club APMO
Where: Special Olympics Ireland, Park House Offices, Dublin 7
When: Wednesday November 27th
Time: 6.30pm to 9.30pm

Intellectual Disability Modules

Modules on offer: Introduction to Intellectual Disability; Athlete Health; Communicating with the athletes; Relationships and Sexuality; Safety, Vulnerability, Assessing Risk and Behaviour; SO Ireland professional ethics in volunteering

Who can attend? Coaches, volunteers and family members
When: Modules will be taking place on the 22nd October and 19th November
Time: TBC

Please contact Joanne Kelly on 01 891 2000 if you wish to attend. Places are limited therefore booking is essential.

LEINSTER

CONTACT US:
 Special Olympics Leinster
 Tel: +353 (0)1 6296999
 Email: leinster@specialolympics.ie

The Irish Air Corps Event Management Team takes Leinster Regional Events to new heights



The Irish Air Corps personnel have been supporting Special Olympics' Leinster basketball events for the last five years. We started in 2008, when one of the Special Olympic Leinster representatives came to an open day at Casement Aerodrome Baldonnell and gave an insight into how Special Olympics worked and the volunteer opportunities available. As a result of this, a number of personnel from the Avionic Section became core volunteers at the 2008 Basketball Leinster Regional events.

As the years progressed, we were able to continue and expand our support by increasing volunteer numbers. After being involved with the regional basketball events for four years, and having gained the knowledge and skills necessary to run a basketball event, the opportunity arose to take on the roles of the Event Management Team for the 2013 Leinster Regional Football and Basketball event.

This is the largest single venue sporting event to have taken place in the Leinster region to date. The event hosted 27 teams, male and female, 5-a-side Football and Basketball and a further 49 athletes in Basketball Skills, accumulating to a massive 253 athletes competing in one day.

Planning commenced 6 months in advance, when we attended an Event and Competition Management training seminar in Kerdiffstown House.

Here we learned and discussed all of the duties and roles of an Event Management Team. We were able to meet with other event teams in the Leinster region, all of whom had similar roles and had the opportunity to deliberate issues and ideas for our upcoming events.

Following this the Air Corps hosted numerous meetings and brainstorming sessions at Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnell, and attended site visits to Gormanston College to prepare for the event. The key to the success of the 2013 event was good planning, co-ordination and teamwork. Our team was rewarded for the hard work as we witnessed how much each athlete enjoyed the day. The Air Corps would like to thank all the volunteers, coaches, referees and table officials for their hard work, which contributed to the delivery of a well organised and smoothly run event.

The event required a lot of time and energy however we enjoyed every minute of it. All team members gained a huge amount of personal satisfaction from being involved with Special Olympics Leinster. The Air Corps are thankful to have been given the opportunity to support Special Olympics Leinster and look forward to participating in future events.

Event Management Team
 – Irish Air Corps - Casement Aerodrome, Baldonnell



Ireland Games 2014 Important upcoming dates!

Athlete Uniform Fitting

1. South Leinster 1: Wednesday November 13th, Delta Centre, Co Carlow
2. South Leinster 2: Thursday November 14th, Kare Kilcullen, Co Kildare
3. North Leinster: Friday November 15th, Claremont Stadium, Navan, Co Meath

A draft schedule with your club's allocated time will be issued by the Leinster office in the coming weeks. The sessions will operate from 11:00am-4:00pm.

Coach/Chaperones Uniform Fitting

This will take place during the Team Leinster 2014 Coaches Forum in Osprey Hotel, Naas, Co Kildare on December 7th 2013.

Team Leinster 2014, Coaches Forum

The Team Leinster 2014 Coaches Forum is taking place in Osprey Hotel, Naas, Co Kildare on Saturday December 7th 2013. It is compulsory for all Ireland Games coach/chaperones to attend this forum. This session will contain valuable information on the role of a coach/chaperone at the Ireland Games.



Polar Plunge at the Enniscorthy Strawberry Fair

On Saturday 29th June over 100 participants "took the plunge" to raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics. The first ever Polar Plunge in Leinster was held on the promenade as part of the Enniscorthy Strawberry Fair 2013 and was a great success. The support before and during the event was fantastic and we would like to extend our thanks to everyone involved. Your support has helped to raise over €10,000 for Special Olympics Leinster and Enniscorthy Special Olympics club. A special thanks to ClearStream Technologies whose staff took the plunge and raised €2,527.87 which was matched by the company bringing their total fundraising to €5,055.60. Thank you again to everyone who took part in the day.

DONATE CLOTHES, SHOES, BAGS AND ACCESSORIES in aid of Special Olympics

To donate items please contact

Marianne Rowan

087 696 1015

marian.rowan@specialolympics.ie

Siobhan Nolan

085 805 3242

siobhan.nolan@specialolympics.ie



COME AND GRAB A BARGAIN AT OUR EVENT ON

26th, 27th and 28th October

Cois na hAbhann Garden Centre, Camolin, Wexford

MUNSTER

CONTACT US:
 Special Olympics Munster
 Tel: +353 (0)21 497 7192
 Email: munster@specialolympics.ie

Reflections of a first time volunteer



Every year when the Annual EMC Special Olympics event is announced and volunteers are called for, I have every intention of participating, and each year as the event draws closer something else comes up that I prioritise ahead of it. This year when my colleague and EMC Special Olympics Event Manager Denise O'Riordan put the call out for volunteers I decided to put the event first this year and I am so glad I did.

The EMC Special Olympics Event 2013 took place on May 25th. It was an early start to a beautiful sunny day and there was a fantastic mixture of Special Olympics volunteer novices full of anticipation and excitement to meet the athletes we had heard such wonderful things about. The EMC Special Olympics Volunteer veterans who, having a vast amount of experience volunteering for Special Olympics Ireland, were equally as excited as the novices. In fact the quote of the day for me was from one volunteer who said

"I look forward to this day like I look forward to Christmas, it is that important to me".

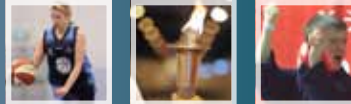
I was very impressed with the energy from the organising committee; it was indeed infectious and as the athletes arrived the enthusiasm and excitement grew. These athletes travelled from all over Munster to take part and their dedication to sport as well as the commitment from their coaches is inspiring.

The Vice president and Managing Director of EMC, Bob Savage, opened the event with approximately 40 EMC volunteers lined up in their EMC blue t-shirts. I admit I felt a rush of pride and excitement as the brass band, followed by the athletic teams, walked by. The Olympic spirit was in the air. Ella O'Keefe was also on hand to cheer on both athletes and volunteers and to present medals along with Olympian Olive Loughnane.

I think I struck gold with my post at the finish line. My job was to bring the athlete when they crossed the finish line to the recorder to identify their place in the race and ensure that they went in the right direction. I learned a lot about the spirit of participation from the athletes. Each athlete that crossed the finish line had put their all into their race and were very proud of their own, and their fellow athletes' accomplishments. There was plenty of humour and even a few hugs and kisses which were bigger rewards than I could have hoped for.

The day went so quickly. We had been running around, chatting and laughing all day. I can now understand how this Special Olympics event can become as important as Christmas. It is definitely as much fun and I will not be putting any other events before it in the future. It was an invaluable experience in many different ways."

Sarah Murray, Supervisor & Regional Service Lead, GBS Software Operations EMEA



Team Munster 2014

As we begin preparations for the Ireland Games in 2014, Special Olympics Munster is delighted to introduce the management team for Team Munster 2014. This group have already been meeting and working hard behind the scenes, and there is no doubt you will hear a lot more from them in the coming months!

Elaine Sheehan: Head of Delegation (H.O.D)

Elaine is a teacher in St. Pauls School, Cork, Elaine is a long-time volunteer within the Special Olympics Munster programme, helping out with GMS at events, as volunteer officer on the Regional Committee and of course as H.O.D for Team Munster in 2010.

Frank Fitzgerald: Assistant H.O.D / Sports Coordinator

Frank is the parent of an athlete. Frank first volunteered with Special Olympics in 2003, going on to be a founder member and coach with Shannon Flyers Special Olympics club. Frank is currently a member of the Regional Athletics Development team, and can be regularly seen track or poolside with a starting gun in his hand!

Charlotte Donnelly: Families Coordinator

Charlotte is a coach within Leaside Legends Special Olympics Club, and is very active within the Special Olympics Munster families programme. Charlotte was families' coordinator for Team Munster in 2010 and Team Ireland at the World Summer Games in 2011.

Geraldine O Hara: Medical Coordinator

Geraldine is a nurse in Scoil Aonghusa Cashel. Geraldine has huge experience working with Special Olympics athletes. A regular at events throughout the region, Geraldine was also Medical Coordinator on Team Munster in 2010.

Julie Dwyer: Medical Coordinator

Julie brings vast experience to the role as medical coordinator, a role which she will share with Geraldine. Julie has travelled with several squads at both national and international level, is a key member of the Floorball Development team, and one of the driving forces behind several clubs in North Cork.

Clonshire Hosts its First Special Olympics Munster Equestrian Event

Clonshire Equestrian Centre near Adare Co. Limerick was the venue for the recent Equestrian Competition. It was the first time that Special Olympics Munster had used the venue, and we were delighted with the support we had from the staff of the centre in the lead up to the event.

We also recruited a group of equestrian volunteers led by Event Manager Maggie Jardine and Competition Manager Ruth Mahon who had been involved in the 2010 Ireland Games at the venue. The volunteers made it a very enjoyable day for the athletes, coaches and the families who came along to spectate. We look forward to returning to Clonshire in 2014.



Pictured is athlete John Deavy from Waterford Equestrian Club at the Equestrian Event in Clonshire

EMC Hosts Athletics

The Volunteers from EMC in the Ballincollig and Ovens campus hosted their annual athletics event in Cork IT. This is the 5th year of their involvement with Special Olympics Munster and their volunteer numbers are growing within the company. The weather was perfect which added to a great day of competition. Well done to the organising committee of the Special Olympics volunteer club in EMC, for all the hard work they put into the planning of the day. The Event Manger on the day was Denise O'Riordan, and Competition Manager Jim Casey.

Joint J&J Companies Host Athletics

The level 2 athletics event was hosted by the Cork Johnson and Johnson Companies, Janssen Biological, Janssen Scientific and Depuy. Depuy took the lead role this year on the planning team. The event was held in C.I.T., and catered for over 190 athletes on the day. It was a great day's competition with many excellent performances from our athletes. There was an array of sports stars presenting awards from Cork City Soccer, Cork Men's and Ladies Football, Ireland Ladies Rugby Team and Olympians Rob and Marian Heffernan which added to the excitement of the day. Many thanks to our friends in Johnson and Johnson companies who have hosted this event for the last 9 years.

Upcoming Munster Law Enforcement Torch Run Fundraising Events

Special Olympics Munster is delighted to announce that it is going to be the beneficiary of a number of fundraising events that will be organised by the Law Enforcement Torch Run Committee.

We are part of two Law Enforcement Polar Plunges, the first of which will take place on November 17th in the University of Limerick Activity Centre in Killaloe. This is a once off plunge and is not restricted to An Garda Síochána so we would love if you could join us.

The second Polar Plunge will take place on Saturday December 7th in Waterford. This event was a huge success in 2012 and we would love to expand on it in 2013. There are two options open to participants; both as once off plungers or part of a core team that will take 8 chilly dips! It will once again take place in conjunction with the Winterval Festival in Waterford and promises to be a wonderful family day out.

For more information on any of these events please contact Siobhan on 021 4977192 or email siobhan.nolan@specialolympics.ie.



Ennis Special Olympics Golf Club celebrates a great year



Starting out with only 3 athletes Ennis Special Olympics Golf Club now caters for 18 athletes with a full complement of volunteers to assist on the golf course.

13 athletes from the club took part in the Munster Regional Golf Competition this year. Veteran athlete Tommy Kenny from Ennis took the gold medal in the Stroke Play 9- hole division. In total Ennis Golf Club's team took away 2 Gold, 3 Silver, and 3 Bronze Medals.

The club was delighted to host the Special Olympics Golf Skills Competition for North Munster on 10th June. Over 40 athletes participated on the day.

A full turnout of Ennis volunteers acting as starters, scorers, score recorders, and chaperones ensured that everything went off smoothly. Particular thanks are due to Pat Rutherford and Barbara Foley for all their behind-the-scenes work.

The day started with a parade of athletes from the 7 clubs involved, led by a piper of the Tulla Pipe Band. Captain Des Neylon welcomed all the athletes to Ennis Special Olympics Golf Club, and the Special Olympics Oath was read by Jill Hayes prior to the start of competition. During the lunch break we were entertained royally by the orchestra from Ennis National School under the baton of Fiona de Buitleir.

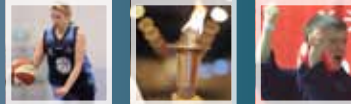
Medals and ribbons were presented to successful golfers by President Kitty Morris, Lady Captain Mary McMahon, and Men's Captain Des Neylon. The ILGU was represented by Claire Ruane and the GUI by Kevin Glynn. Without the continued cooperation of Ennis Golf Club, Kieran Ryan and his staff, P. and M Golf, and the Special Olympics volunteers, events of this nature would simply not be possible. A heartfelt "Thank You" to all involved.



Roy is a "Face of Cork"

If you have passed through Cork airport over the last few months, you will surely have seen the fantastic photographic exhibition entitled "Faces of Cork". The exhibition marks the Year of the Gathering and evokes a unique sense of Cork City and County through images of some of its people.

Cork athlete, Roy Saville, a member of the bronze medal winning Special Olympics Ireland Floorball team in South Korea earlier this year, is featured among the many faces of people, young and old, famous and not so well-known. Well done Roy!



Got a story to tell? Interested in blogging?

We are looking for Volunteers to blog online about their experiences with Special Olympics Ireland. No previous experience is necessary but some computer literacy will be required

To register your interest please contact Pamela by email to eteam@specialolympics.ie



Interested in fundraising?

We are currently seeking volunteers in each Region to become part of our Fundraising Teams for 2014.

If you're interested in getting involved please email fundraising@specialolympics.ie or contact Sarah on +353 (01) 869 1608.

CHALLENGE126

126 MILES IN ONE DAY FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS IRELAND



For the third year running, Irish radio presenter Brian Maher is rolling out his Challenge 126, to raise funds for Special Olympics Ireland. Each year he's taken on a fitness based challenge (last year he ran 5 marathons in one day!) and this time he's going to get on his bike...

At the Dundrum Town Centre, Dublin on Friday 1st November, Brian's going to attempt to cycle his heart out for 126 miles on a stationary bike, to mark the 126 miles from Dublin to Limerick, the location of the Special Olympics Ireland Games 2014. Special guests will be dropping in throughout the day and cycling up a sweat with Brian while his radio station Spin 103.8 spin the hits. Lucky members of the public who stop by on the day will get the chance to cycle with Brian and his mystery guests too, and add some miles to the fundraising clock.

We're hoping that when we tot up the mileage, Brian and his team of crack cyclists will have gotten to Limerick and back a few times. What do you think, are they up to it?? To show your support and make a donation, text '€4' to 50300. Every text received equals a €4 donation to Special Olympics Ireland by the texter.

Listen in to Brian on the Zoo Crew or turn up at Dundrum on the day to be in with the chance to win some great prizes, courtesy of Flyefit gyms.

Bikes for the event have been kindly provided by Fitness 4 Hire, for more see www.fitness4hire.com.

www.challenge126.com

Twitter @Challenge126 @BrianMaherSpin

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/events/536730493071514>



ULSTER

CONTACT US:
Special Olympics Ulster
Tel: +44 (0)28 9023 9023
Email: ulster@specialolympics.ie

Athlete Leadership in Ulster

During 2013 athletes have participated in the various workshops we have been running throughout the region as well as gaining some valuable experiences through volunteering at events.

Upcoming Athlete Leadership Workshops November/December 2013

Please note that some dates have been changed due to a clash with other events taking place

Ulster East - Drama Workshop
 Saturday 23rd November 2013
 11am-3pm, Belfast, Venue TBC

First Aid Workshop
 Saturday 16th November
 11am-3pm, Belfast, (venue TBC)

Athlete Code of Ethics workshop
 TBC, Special Olympics Ulster Office, Belfast

- Workshops are open to any Special Olympics athlete aged 16+
- Athletes will work with a mentor (mentors can work with up to 3 athletes)
- If you are interested in coming along to one of these workshops then please contact Victoria or Cathy at the Ulster Regional Office on 028 90892995 or e-mail victoria.kelly@specialolympics.ie or cathy.hunter@specialolympics.ie

Foyle Special Olympics athletes host Special Olympics Ulster League Awards Night

Athletes from Foyle Special Olympics Club did a great job at hosting the League Awards Night held in the Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown in June. The different roles they took on included registration and welcoming the guests, presenting speeches and giving out the Awards. Many thanks to all the athletes and volunteers from Foyle SOC!!

We can all learn a little bit more, when it comes to health

Would you like to take some small steps towards a healthier lifestyle? Health messages can sometimes become a bit confusing but we want to bring it back to basics. Come along to a Health Promotion awareness session and join other Special Olympics Ulster athletes, families and volunteers for some fun workshops. Book now by contacting Emma Douglas on 028 9026 2774 or emma.douglas@specialolympics.ie.

Special Olympics
**Health
 Promotion**

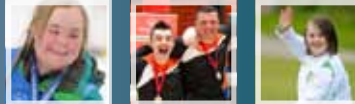


Health Topic	What will I learn?	Date/Time/Venue
Cancer Prevention	You will learn about what everyone can do to lower their risk of developing cancer and spotting early detection signs for both males and females.	30th November 11am Ardmore Recreation Centre, Armagh
Heart Health	You will learn how to decrease the risk factors that we can change, learn what cholesterol and blood pressure is and how it affects your heart health.	1st February 2014 12 noon Special Olympics Ulster office, Belfast
Sports Nutrition	You will learn what types of foods and drinks can help our bodies to perform before and after sport.	15th March 2014 11.00 am Strabane Library

The Healthy Athlete Programme visits Antrim Forum

A total of 79 athletes participated in the Healthy Athlete Programme at the Special Olympics Ulster Regional Athletics advancement competition on 29th June 2013. The day was a great success with volunteers providing athletes with the opportunity to take advantage of free health screenings, education and preventative services. The following Healthy Athlete Programmes were offered: Fit Feet (Podiatry), Special Smiles (Dentistry) and Health Promotion

Over the three Healthy Athlete Programmes, 147 health screenings were carried out, which is fantastic! A BIG thank you to all of the volunteers who supported athletes through each of the different health screenings, activities and information. If you are a health professional or currently completing a health related degree and would like to join our team of Healthy Athlete volunteers, please call Emma Douglas on 028 9026 2774 or email emma.douglas@specialolympics.ie for more information.



Training Opportunities and Coach Development

Volunteers and coaches are absolutely essential to the Ulster Region. Without you, the programme simply cannot operate effectively. As a coach you provide athletes with encouragement, guidance and technical support to help them reach their full potential.

Special Olympics Ulster is running a number of coach and volunteer training courses to assist with your development. If you are interested in attending or would like to find out more information please contact the Regional Office on +44 (028) 9023 9023.

Coaches Conference

In 2012, Special Olympics Ulster hosted the first ever Coaches Forum in the region, with over 80 coaches and volunteers in attendance. Following the 2012 forum theme of 'Back to Basics', this year's conference will focus on addressing coaching issues and challenges coaches and volunteers face on a daily basis. The conference will provide a positive, challenging and inspiring experience and provide the opportunity to engage in a wide range of topics presented through the day. It is imperative that every club in the Region sends a representative.

The cost of the conference is £10/€10. To find out more please contact Christine or Emma at the Regional Office.

Irish Tenpin Bowling Level 1 – Sat 9th & Sun 10th November – Dundonald IceBowl (Belfast)

This course is designed to provide guidance and recommendations for coaches and volunteers on how to coach junior and beginner bowlers. This guidance will promote the safest and most effective methods currently being used. These form the basics, which are required, to take the first steps to becoming a fully qualified and experienced Coach.

The course will highlight a number of key coaching principles which will be essential when coaching within your club. To find out more or to express an interest please contact Christine at Christine.stewart@specialolympics.ie

First Aid Workshops

Special Olympics Ulster is holding a number of first aid workshops for all Special Olympics clubs to avail of. The first aid courses are directed at all volunteers involved throughout the Special Olympics programme. The courses will aim to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to assist in a first aid role in any given leisure pursuit. On completion of this course, participants will receive a nationally recognised sports specific first aid certificate which will be valid for 3 years.

Session 1 – Saturday 26th October '13 (Area West)

Session 2 – Saturday 23rd November '13 (Area South)

Session 3 – Saturday 15th February (Area East)

Where – Venues to be confirmed

Cost - £10

Additional Information – Theory/practical (please wear appropriate sports clothing e.g. trainers and tracksuit bottoms)

Special Olympics Ulster would strongly recommend that all volunteers in clubs hold a valid First Aid Certification and this is a great opportunity for volunteers within your club to gain the qualification.

If members of your club do wish to participate in the course please contact Christine at the regional office on 028 9089 2997 or christine.stewart@specialolympics.ie.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS ULSTER AT THE WORLD POLICE & FIRE GAMES

Earlier this year 11 Special Olympics Ulster athletes were successfully selected to volunteer at the World Police & Fire Games!

The athletes took on the role of 'Games Ambassadors' at Queen's PEC on August 2nd and 3rd where the basketball and handball events were taking place. The athletes did a great job promoting the events and helping competitors and spectators to find their way around the venue. Many thanks to all the mentors who gave up their time to help the athletes. The athletes who took part in the Games were all involved in the Athlete Leadership programme that Special Olympics Ulster offer.

SPORTS & COACHING

European Basketball Week

The Special Olympics Ireland will be celebrating European Basketball week across all five regions by hosting a variety of events ranging from blitz days, league fixtures and development days.

Special Olympics Ireland will also offer a development day for athletes aged between 8-15 years on Saturday 23rd November in Coláiste Phádraig Christian Brothers Secondary School, Lucan.

We are currently looking for volunteers to support us at this event. If you are interested please contact us on +353 818300 053.



Special Olympics athlete Timothy Morahan, Micheál O'Muircheartaigh, Nadine Lattimore, John Delaney and Quartz at the launch of the Disability Inclusion Training Course on 25th September 2013

Disability Inclusion Training Launch

Special Olympics Ireland has been working with the CARA National Adapted Physical Activity Centre, Cerebral Palsy Sport Ireland and the Football Association of Ireland to develop a Disability Inclusion Training Course. It is a 6 hour course designed to give coaches, volunteers, development officers and others ideas and inspiration to adapt their sessions to make them more accessible for participants with a disability.

The course is not specific to Special Olympics, but would be useful to those working across the Special Olympics programme. For more information on the course and to check out upcoming course dates and how to register, please visit www.caraapacentre.ie/training-education/disability-inclusion-training.

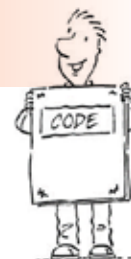
Coaching Mixed Abilities

One of the biggest challenges our coaches face on a weekly basis is working with a group of athletes who have a wide range of abilities. The latest in our recent coaching resources will help coaches to explore ways in which they can adapt their sessions, coaching styles and games in order to ensure that every athlete can achieve their potential. Keep an eye out on the sports section of the website www.specialolympics.ie/whatwedo/sports, on our Facebook page and in your regional office. Remember we have lots of other coaching resources available for download on our website. Keep an eye out for our new sports resources page which will be your one-stop-shop for rules, coaching resources and other sports information ... coming soon!

HEALTH SERVICES

Code of Ethics and Good Practice

In a continuing review of best practice in working with athletes two new documents have been published. Copies have been sent out to all the clubs and they can also be found alongside all Code of Ethics and Good Practice publications at www.specialolympics.ie/codeofethics.



Social Media and Texting Guidelines

With more dependence on Facebook, Twitter etc, clubs asked for guidance on how to work with social media in their clubs and with the athletes. These accessible guidelines can be used with everyone to clarify what is expected of them, and should be used in association with our current Code of Ethics and Good Practice Handbook.

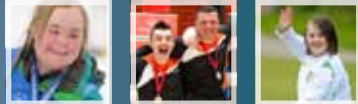
Physical Contact in Sport

This has been developed to clarify the best practice in Special Olympics Ireland. Special Olympics is the National Governing Body (NGB) for bocce, floorball and the Motor Activities Training Programme. Similar to all NGBs, Physical Contact guidelines must be provided as specific guidance for these sports. For guidance in all other sports, coaches and volunteers should refer to the relevant NGB.

Education

Our volunteer tutors are in the middle of a rush of training. High Rollers Special Olympics club in Ulster and volunteers in the Leinster and Eastern regions are confirmed for Intellectual Disability Education modules this autumn. Athletes in Blue Dolphins Special Olympics club are attending the Athlete Code of Ethics and Good Practice workshop and there are more clubs awaiting confirmation of dates. It is recommended that athletes attend this workshop as part of their training for the 2014 Ireland Games, so if your club has athletes who have been selected contact Muireann (+353 1 869 1615 or Muireann.niriain@specialolympics.ie) to organise a workshop in your area as soon as possible.

Athlete Protection concerns? Contact our dedicated number 0818 313 045



GP Exercise Referral Programme

The GP Exercise Referral Programme is a 12 week programme to help you develop a physically active lifestyle. The programme is run through GPs and qualified local coordinators. The local coordinators are all qualified Exercise Professionals who have completed training with the HSE. To avail of the programme you can visit your GP who will complete a referral form which will be submitted to your local coordinator.

Special Olympics Health Promotion



Following the referral from your GP, the local coordinator will carry out an initial assessment and check your medical details. He/she will then work with you to develop an exercise programme which fits your interests and lifestyle. It could involve gym based exercise, walking, swimming, cycling or even classes. The most important thing is that the programme is tailored to your needs. You will also have a mid-programme assessment to gauge how suitable the programme is for you. For more information on The GP Exercise Referral Programme, contact your GP to see if they are registered or visit www.gpexercisereferral.ie.

Health Promotion Programme – Get Involved

Do you think your club is ready for a new challenge this sporting year? Could your athletes benefit from learning more about healthy eating, physical activity and other health topics? If you answered yes to either of these questions well then the Special Olympics Health Promotion Programme is for you. Here are some frequently asked questions:

What is it all about?

The Health Promotion Programme was designed to support athletes to make healthier choices in their lives.

How does it work?

One (or more) volunteer(s) from the clubs will be trained in the delivery of the Health Promotion Programme. They will receive all the resources they need to run Health Promotion workshops using a Health Toolkit. Each registered athlete will receive an Athlete Pack including easy to read health information leaflets.

Why would we do this?

By running the Health Promotion programme in your club it gives athletes the opportunity to see the relationship between health and sport and how making small changes in their daily lives can improve their health.

Is there a cost involved?

No, the Health Promotion programme is offered free of charge to all Special Olympics Ireland registered clubs and athletes.

For more information or to get involved please contact:

Carol Farrell on +353 1 869 1669 or at carol.farrell@specialolympics.ie

Or for Ulster Clubs please contact: Emma Douglas on (028) 9026 2774 or at emma.douglas@specialolympics.ie

CALLING ALL CLUBS

Calling all clubs!

Is your club in need of some extra volunteers and you are not sure where to recruit? For many years now Special Olympics clubs have been linking with their local secondary schools to encourage second level students to get involved as volunteers. It is a great way to get young people involved in the club but to also give them a taste of what Special Olympics is all about.

We have developed some resources to help you to recruit students including leaflets and an informative presentation to use in schools. If you would like some more information on recruiting second level students as volunteers please contact: Carol Farrell – Health and Education Coordinator on +353 1 869 1669.



Help Special Olympics to Power Kindness in 2013

Friday 1st to Friday 8th November 2013

Special Olympics Ireland took part in Electric Ireland's Powering Kindness Campaign in 2012 which we were delighted to WIN! This meant that we received a donation of €50,000 from Electric Ireland, a feat we are hoping to achieve again this year, and we need your help!

The 2013 Powering Kindness Campaign will run from Friday, 1st November until Friday 8th November.

Over the course of this week we will be running events which entail people carrying out kind acts and good deeds which we would like you to support in your local area. We will be releasing information on what is taking place and where and instructions on how to bank your deeds which is an essential part to the campaign.

From 23rd October check out our website at www.specialolympics.ie or our Facebook and Twitter pages for more information on how to get involved (details at bottom of page).

If you would like to get your company involved please contact Pamela.kavanagh@specialolympics.ie. We appreciate your support!

**electric
ireland**



www.facebook.com/SpecialOlympicsIreland



[@SOIreland](https://twitter.com/SOIreland) #PoweringKindness