

Welcome!! The 2009 spring is long gone, summer has nearly past, and fall is quickly approaching. What have we been doing since March?....Swimming, Bocce, Gymnastics, Track-N-Field, MATP, Golfing, Summer Games, handing out over 5,000 Gold medals and, oh yeah, one more thing.....Changing the World.

Aquatics Provides Gut-Wrenching Excitement

March 8th, 2009

District Aquatics kicked off our Summer Games qualifying season and brought a little feeling of summer to a blustery winter day. More than 50 athletes from 5 areas gathered at SIUE's natatorium to do their best Michael Phelps impression. Freestyle, butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, medley, and relays were performed with grace and haste in order to advance to state. Lucas Bozovich (Alton School District), Joseph Kane (Alton School District), John Dillaplain (PTOEC), Lauren Williams (PTOEC), Kristen McGuire (Ind. McGuire), and TJ Cryder (Region II) took home nothing but Gold, all of which competed in at least 2 events. It was apparent the athletes were enjoying the pool as every athlete was cheering on their teammates while they waited for their turn to shine.

The stands were packed with loudly cheering parents and friends as each race brought excitement with every stroke. Our volunteers came out in droves. B.U.R.T. Divers, Principia Swim Team, O'Fallon High School Jr ROTC, and many individuals volunteered to ensure that this event was a success.

Bocce at Glik Park

April 18th, 2009

Once again District Bocce fought weather, but fortunately the worst was avoided and the tournament was able to be finished. Over a hundred athletes competed in individual, team, and unified matches. The Italian immigrants that brought this ancient game to the U.S. would have been proud of the level of competition, comradery, and sportsmanship that was displayed throughout the day. The beauty of the game is its adaptability for all players. Man, woman, child, adult, wheelchair, walker, or not...this game creates a very competitive environment. This was best displayed by the gold medal winner Mellisa Villier from Clinton County as she dominated her male counterparts with consistent and solid rolls. Each time she scored friends and family cheered in excitement. Melissa would give recognition to her fans with Hulk Hogan-like poses and points. There was no doubt this group enjoyed the days competition. The Highland Moose once again provided almost all the volunteers for the event, food, and wealth of Bocce knowledge to ensure the event would be memorable.

Gymnastics with PTOEC

April 19th, 2009

Cartwheels, flips, somersaults, vaults, kicks, spins, round-offs, aerials, walkovers, cabrioles, endos, fouettes, handstands, pucks, pirouettes, strugs, tour jetes, and finally.....the dismounts were witnessed during the gymnastics competition hosted by Belleville World Class Gymnastics. It was nothing short of amazing to watch how much these young gymnasts have learned and how much they enjoyed displaying their new skills. Belleville PTOEC is our only agency that sponsor gymnastics and the program continues to grow. Athletes competed in uneven bars, the vault, balance beam, and floor exercise during the event. Every athlete received at least 1 gold medal in their multiple events which qualified them to advance to the state competition at ISU on June 12-14th. A special thank you is deserved by PTOEC gymnastics coach Jennifer Hitt who organized the entire event.



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Special Olympics

Illinois

Be a fan.



Spring Games

May 2nd, 2009

Here's a few events that should have been included in this year's Spring Games but weren't: Mud Volleyball, mud wrestling, mudding, mud tossing, mud eating, and any other activity you could associate with mud. Guess what...we had a mud issue, but it failed to put a damper on the day...at least for the athletes. Spring Games 2009 almost wasn't, but our prayers were answered and we were given the perfect window of dry air between downpours to get the games in.

Here is the top 10 reasons we knew this event was a success;

10. Ran out of this year's volunteer t-shirts.
9. Athletes loved Shop-N-Save Olympic town, KHITS, & Drew Johnson
8. Only 1 box of Landshire sandwiches left over.
7. The medical staff was bored.
6. The Dental School ran out of forms.
5. Sold all of the Tie-Died souvenir shirts.
4. After the event Ethel's had free food.
3. Da-Com presented yet another check.
2. Set an unofficial Guinness World Record for most smiles by a 1,000 people in a 6 hour period.
1. The athletes told me so!!!

There were so many other great individual memories and stories that could be shared. A very special thank you goes out to the Games Committee which organized the entire day of events. Thank you to all the volunteers that helped our athletes have a great day. Thank you to the coaches for your patience with the conditions and continuing to volunteer your time to train our athletes. Our hope is that each year we can continue to grow and somehow improve this event. Help us by sharing your story with someone outside the Special Olympics family.

State Summer Games

June 12th-14th, 2009

What comes to mind when you think of summer? Maybe its barbecues, swimming pools, sunbathing, or baseball. Well not if you're a Special Olympics athlete, coach, parent, or staff member. For us, its Summer Games in Bloomington/Normal. Without a doubt this is our largest and most recognized event statewide with over 3500 athletes and over 4000 volunteers. The single most used phrase by an athlete after they receive their gold medal at an area event is not..."I'm going to Disneyland!" Instead its, "I'm going to State." Although, the experience at Summer Games can feel a little like Disneyland. Everywhere you turn there is something going on.

A must see event at every facility located around ISU's iconic field house. Music, food, a parade and dance, entertainment, and there was even a giant bear mascot for the Young Athletes. Although the festivities were awe inspiring it is the athletes and competition that separates this event from all the others. And once again Area 12 and our southern allies dominated our northern foes or as we like to call them, the Snowbirds. Not only did we bring home more gold than Fort Knox...we did it with style and class. Blood, sweat, and tears (mostly of joy) were shed during competition for the opportunity to stand and be recognized on the biggest Olympic stage in Illinois.



Pictures are from Area 12 Spring Games and State Summer Games

Foz Ryan Golf Classic

Join Jody Trover and Yorktown Golf Course for the Inaugural Foz Ryan Golf Classic on Friday, August 28th to benefit Special Olympics Illinois. This event is a 3 person scramble in which teams can opt to have a Special Olympics Athlete play as their 3rd teammate.

The event will take place under the lights at Yorktown Golf Course in Belleville, IL with a 6 p.m. shotgun start. The cost is \$50 per person and includes green fees, cart rental and a meal. There

is no charge for Special Olympics Illinois athletes. To register a team or donate an item for this event please contact Special Olympics Illinois at 618-654-6680 or via email at [sstover@soill.org](mailto:ssstover@soill.org).



Shop-N-Save T-Shirt Days

The 2009 Law Enforcement Torch Run Shop `N Save T-Shirt Days will take place the weekend of August 14, 15, and 16 at all Shop `N Save stores in the St. Louis Metro Area.

Law Enforcement Officers and personnel will be outside every Shop `N Save store from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. each night selling Torch Run Merchandise. You will be able to purchase 2009 Torch Run T-Shirts, Hats, Lapel Pins and Harley Davidson Raffle tickets from the officers.

All proceeds from the 2009 Law Enforcement Torch Run Shop `N Save T-Shirt days go to benefit the 22,000 Special Olympics Athletes in Illinois.



Athlete Spotlight



July's athlete in the spotlight is Roy Robinson for Southern Illinois Living Center. Roy (60 yrs.) doesn't let his blindness slow him down when competing in Special Olympics events or in life. Roy has been competing in Special Olympics for over 25 years. He competes in Bowling and Track & Field. Roy is getting ready to compete in the 50m run at this year's State Summer Games in the picture above. During the race Roy can be heard shouting, "Hup, two, three, four" as he runs along

the rope. Gold or not, Roy always has a good time. Although Roy enjoys the competition in Special Olympics he really loves meeting new people at SOILL events and any where he goes. Roy has a tremendous memory and can remember the names of people that he met many years ago. One of his greatest passions is singing. He can often be heard singing the National Anthem loud and proud at SOILL events. He has even recorded a CD.

Roy epitomizes what an Olympic athlete should personify. Next time your at an event be sure to take the time to cheer on Roy as he competes or join Roy in singing the National Anthem. Afterwards introduce yourself and congratulate him on his accomplishments. Your time with him will never be forgotten, literally.

Law Enforcement Torch Run Trivia Knight

Join Special Olympics Illinois for the 2009 Law Enforcement Torch Run Trivia Knight on Friday, December 4th at the O'Fallon Knights of Columbus. All proceeds from this event will benefit over 1,200 Special Olympics athletes in the Southwestern Illinois area. Doors open at 6:30 pm with the Trivia beginning at 7:30 pm.

Last year, Special Olympics Illinois Southwestern Area 12 hosted it's first annual trivia night which raised over \$12,000 for the athletes in the area. The theme last year was "Are you smarter then the Average Grade-schooler", this year all the questions will be based on entertainment such as movies, music and television.

Tickets are on sale now for \$20 each or \$160 for a table of 8. Attendees are encouraged to bring decorations for their table as well as snacks for the event. There will be a prize given to the team with the best movie themed "table spread". There will be a cash bar provided at the event.

In addition to the trivia, the Law Enforcement Torch Run Trivia Knight will include a silent and live auction. Special Olympics Illinois is still in need of auction items as well as sponsorship.

For more information on sponsoring this event, donating an item, or purchasing tickets please contact Sandy Stover at 618-654-6680 or via email at [sstover@soill.org](mailto:ssstover@soill.org).



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