

July 2015

Newsletter

Special
Olympics
Iowa



Pride is Evident in Unified Relay; Athletes, Coaches, Volunteers Off to World Games in Los Angeles

As the Flame of Hope is still making its way across the United States, Iowa was proud to be a part of the historic Unified Relay Across America presented by Bank of America.

Three routes are being run simultaneously — north, central and south — to ensure the Flame of Hope visits every state. It takes an army of volunteers to make an event of this size happen and SOIA Board Chair Steve Palmer is one of them. He has been a key member of the torch run crew on the south route of the Unified Relay.

Special Olympics Iowa athlete Corey Leonhard was named co-captain for the Unified Relay, leading the way as the Central Route began in Washington, D.C. He followed the route to Iowa, where he shared in a weekend of activities with his fellow athletes.

The Unified Relay celebration in Iowa included an appearance at the Iowa Cubs game June 12 and a celebration at the Durham Bandshell in Ames June 13, which included a performance by pop duo Alabama Capital.

Special Olympics Iowa will also be well represented at the World Games. Athletes Patrick Gulbranson and Lisa Spencer will be competing in bowling for Special Olympics USA while Mark Robinson will be an assistant aquatics coach.

One of Iowa's Law Enforcement Torch Run volunteers, Randy Spurr, will be part of the Final Leg in Los Angeles, leading the Flame of Hope into the World Games Opening Ceremony. Other volunteers from Iowa who will be helping at the World Games are Sally Briggs, bocce official and Donna Farley, tennis official.

Best of luck to our athletes at the World Games and thank you to everyone representing Iowa and Special Olympics USA at the World Games!



LEFT: Patrick Gulbranson and Lisa Spencer will represent Iowa at the World Games as part of Special Olympics USA bowling.

BELOW: SOIA athletes, along with CEO Gary Harms and LETR Chair Michelle Leonard with the Flame of Hope at the URAA celebration in Ames. The torch was also featured at an Iowa Cubs game during its time in Iowa.



Watch the World Games on ESPN!

The World Games Opening Ceremony will be broadcast live on ESPN at 8 p.m. central time July 25. ESPN will continue its TV coverage throughout the World Games and there will be a Best of Special Olympics World Games show broadcast on ABC at 3 p.m. central time August 8.

You can also follow World Games highlights at www.espn.go.com/extra/specialolympics.

Go Over the Edge for Special Olympics Iowa Sept. 16

The fear of heights is one of the most common phobias in the world...but why let that stop you? Over the Edge is a unique opportunity for individuals and organizations to raise money and support SOIA athletes by rappelling off the 345-ft Financial Center in downtown Des Moines!

The whole event is an experience you'll never forget, and one you'll want to share with others! Help us recruit rappellers or find another way for everyone to be involved:

- Rappel Solo
- Rappel as a Team
- Corporate Challenge
- Toss Your Boss
- Sponsor
- Volunteer
- Recruit



Register online at
www.soia.org/overtheedge

Participants must raise a minimum of \$1,000 to guarantee a rappel spot. Space is limited so fundraise early!

Want to toss your boss? Your fearless leader may not seem so fearless when it comes to dangling over the side of a 345-ft building. Start a petition and generate excitement in the office so that your boss can't say no!

Boone Students Live Up Summer Games Olympic Festival

The Olympic Festival at Summer Games just wouldn't be the same without the talented and gifted students from Boone Middle School and High School. The students spend two days in photo booths, painting faces, airbrushing tattoos, polishing nails and making bracelets and balloon sculptures.

The program started as a service project 20 years ago. Originally, it was a project for the eighth graders, but as students went on to high school, they wanted to keep coming back to Summer Games. Student who have graduated are even asking to come back.

The program has even started to span generations. One of the original service members was back this year with her daughter, who is now volunteering with the program.

Not only do the students volunteer their time, they also do some fundraising.

"It seemed silly that Special Olympics was paying for the supplies," said Peggy Watkins, the Boone CSD 7-12 grade talented and gifted teacher. "Why couldn't we bring our own?"

So the students began to raise money to cover the cost of the supplies. Eventually, they were raising more money than they needed, so they donated the balance to Special Olympics Iowa. This year, they raised enough to cover their expenses and present a \$600 check to SOIA.

Thank you to the students and staff at Boone. We look forward to seeing you in Olympic Festival at Summer Games for many years to come.



Win a Free Pizza in Our Casey's Cup Photo Contest!



Special Olympics Iowa athletes and law enforcement officials are being showcased on the 44-oz. cups at Casey's General Stores throughout the state! The cups will be available in stores through Labor Day with a portion of the proceeds from each Casey's Cup sold going to SOIA.

Casey's and SOIA are challenging customers to take photos of themselves with the cups! Each week, a winner will be chosen to receive a free Casey's pizza. A grand-prize winner will be chosen to receive a one night stay at the Ramada Tropics Resort in Urbandale and a year of free pizza from Casey's. To enter:

1. Take a photo with the Casey's Cup (be creative!) and tweet it to @soiowa and @caseysgenstore with the hashtag #soiacaseyscup15.
2. OR post the photo to the SOIA Facebook page (www.facebook.com/specialolympicsia) with the hashtag #soiacaseyscup15.



Special Olympics Iowa Day Kinnick Stadium Discounted Iowa Football Tickets!

Iowa vs. Illinois State Sept. 5, 11 a.m. Kickoff

SOIA athletes and their families are invited to Iowa's season opener at great discounted group rate pricing.

SOIA Youth (high school and younger): \$25
SOIA Adult: \$40

Regular single game rate: \$55

ORDER TODAY!

Call Bravo Sports at 319-626-8286 or order online through the link at www.soiowa.org. All orders will be seated together.



Train to Inspire Pays it Forward at the Plane Pull

Joe Hogan has taken the idea of paying it forward to a whole new level. It all began after helping one man to run a 5K. Hogan's dream, the Train to Inspire gym, is not only a reality, but is expanding.

Hogan's gym sponsored three teams in the Law Enforcement Torch Run® Plane Pull for Special Olympics Iowa on June 6. At 20 people per team, that's 60 people he inspired to help make a difference. After recruiting an all-male team and an all-female team, he realized he needed a team to represent Train to Inspire that was truly about inspiration... an athlete team. He got the local carpenters' union to sponsor the athletes.

"I didn't feel like it was right for me to do all this and not have a team of athletes with special needs," Hogan explained.

It all came together when a gentleman approached Hogan with a story of how his doctor pushed his wheelchair in local races. The gentleman was born with Noonan syndrome, a genetic disorder that prevents normal development in various parts of the body. He was born with a club foot and wore leg braces. He did not learn to walk until he was seven.

Prior to working with this man, Hogan had not been around someone with special needs. They started lifting weights and doing kick boxing.

"Pretty soon I realized this man was no different than me," Hogan said. "In fact, he was better than some of my other clients." One day, Hogan asked the man what he thought about running his own race instead of having his



doctor push him in his wheelchair. The man didn't hesitate. That sounded like fun.

"We started jogging 80 feet a time, then walking 80 feet," Hogan remembers. "After three months, he could run a mile. By the time he was ready for a 5K, he could run three miles without stopping."

They trained in secret. When he was ready, the gentleman told his doctor he wanted him to push him in another race. On race day, when the doctor went to get the wheelchair out of his truck, he stopped him and told his doctor to watch him run.

Hogan became a personal trainer to help people change their lives, but he didn't expect that one man would end up changing his. Now it was time to pay it forward. Hogan needed to give other people the opportunity to change their lives as well. He opened a gym called Train to Inspire and works with about 15 Special Olympics athletes there.

"Sometimes I bring people into the program as a volunteer because I know they need some inspiration in their life," said Hogan. "I'm not only helping the athletes, but I'm changing the volunteers' lives as well without them knowing it."

While most nonprofits focus on one thing, Hogan is looking to expand. He has received funding to start a new program for children with ailments to provide monthly group activities and parties for kids with terminal diseases. He also has plans for alcohol addiction and battered women's programs.

For Hogan it is all about giving people opportunities – whether it be the opportunity to try something new in his gym or the opportunity to change someone's perspective on life just as the gentleman he helped run a 5K changed his.

To learn more about Train to Inspire, visit their website at www.traintoinspireiowa.org.

Coaches Training Certification Clinics Scheduled

The goal of the SOIA Coach Education Program is to give all athletes the benefit of quality coaching. Results of the program include an improvement in the competitions, better awareness of rules and better training of the athletes.

Training will be offered on the following dates:

July 14 at 7:45 a.m.

Location: Des Moines
Training for golf.

September 29 at 4:30 p.m.

Location: Council Bluffs
Training for bowling, basketball and athletics.

November 7 at 9 a.m.

Location: Sioux City
Training for bowling, basketball, athletics, bocce and soccer.

November 17 at 4:30 p.m.

Location: Urbandale
Training for athletics, basketball, bowling and cycling.

To download a registration form, go to www.soiowa.org and click on Coaches Training under the Coach drop list. Online courses are also available.

Questions? Contact Rhonda Schwarzkopf at 515-986-5520 or rschwarzkopf@soiowa.org.

SOIA State Softball Tournament to be Held August 8 in Ankeny



The Special Olympics Iowa State Softball Tournament presented by Sammons Financial Group will have a new look this year, moving to the Prairie Ridge Sports Complex in Ankeny. The move will allow more athletes to participate in a wider variety of activities.

Last year, 24 traditional and Unified Sports teams participated in the tournament, with more than 300 athletes representing 17 communities across the state. SOIA officials expect that number to grow this year and are excited to be able to offer a softball skills competition at the new venue.

"The facilities at the Prairie Ridge Sports Complex are a great match for our growing tournament and needs of our athletes," said SOIA CEO Gary Harms. "It is our mission to provide training and athletic competition opportunities for children and adults with intellectual disabilities regardless of their ability level. Not only will we be able to host more games for our athletes and Unified Sports partners, but we will finally have the space needed to host events for athletes who compete in individual skills competitions like our softball throw and batting events."

The tournament will tentatively begin at 9 a.m. with the Opening Ceremony, featuring the ceremonial first pitch from Sammons Financial Group and the recitation of the Special Olympics Athlete Oath.

The tournament is free and open to the public. The community is encouraged to come cheer on the athletes and enjoy a great day of softball.

Updated team rosters are due to the state office by July 24. In order to compete in the State Softball Tournament, an athlete's medical and consent form must be valid through August 9, 2015.

Please contact Rhonda Schwarzkopf at rschwarzkopf@soiowa.org or 515-986-5520 if you have any questions.

FIT Focus: Expanding to a Delegation Near You!

It is with great excitement that we announce expansion of our FIT Program! We recently received a generous grant from Special Olympics North America and Finish Line to roll out FIT and Fitness Assessment Testing to an additional 30 delegations/300 athletes.

FIT Program Requirements:

- Register your delegation by emailing FIT@soiowa.org
- Pre- and Post-Fitness Assessment Testing during fall 2015 and spring 2016 sports seasons
- Submission of FIT Assessment data

FIT Program Benefits:

- FREE Coach Assessment Kits and FIT Coaching Guidebooks
- Incentives for completion of pre- and post-testing
- Improved athletic performance and overall health!

To sign up or for more information, contact Adrienne Johnson, eastern regional director, at FIT@soiowa.org.

Are You Ready for Some Football? Pigskin Madness Tickets on Sale Now!

We're gearing up for the NFL season and our annual Pigskin Madness tickets are on sale now! For just \$20 you have eight chances to win each week of the regular NFL season — that's 17 weeks of play!

HIGHEST Three Team Total	\$225
Second Highest	\$100
Third Highest	\$70
Fourth Highest	\$40
Fifth Highest	\$35
Sixth Highest	\$30
Seventh Highest	\$25
Eighth Highest	\$20
LOWEST Three Team Total	\$15
Second Lowest	\$10
Third Lowest	\$5

Want to help your friends get in on the fun? We will send you a book of 25 ticket to sell — you do not need to pay anything up front. Just turn in the sold tickets and money to the SOIA state office.

Questions? Contact Jeanette Steinfeldt at 515-986-5520 or jsteinfeldt@soiowa.org.

Alt Begins Role at SOIA Vice President of Development



Jamie Alt has been named the vice president of development for Special Olympics Iowa. He began his new role on May 11.

Alt brings more than 13 years of professional experience to SOIA. Most recently he was the Director of Corporate Sales for the Iowa Events Center, developing and

managing key revenue sources for Wells Fargo Arena, Hy-Vee Hall and the Community Choice Credit Union Convention Center.

For six years, Alt was the tournament director for The Principal Charity Classic where he was responsible for all aspects of the tournament including the development and administration of an annual budget over \$5 million. He managed all sales and marketing efforts, along with 28 tournament committees and 1,200+ volunteers. Other key duties included operational planning, staging of the event and developing and maintaining relationships with professional golfers, the media and sponsors while maintaining a key relationship with the PGA TOUR.

He also was the Tournament Director for the Web.com Tour's Cox Classic, in Omaha, Neb., for eight years prior to moving to Des Moines.

Sign Up for Our E-Newsletter to Continue Receiving SOIA Updates

The Special Olympics Iowa newsletter will soon be moving to an all electronic format. Printed newsletters will no longer be mailed.

To ensure that you continue to receive articles, notices and updates from us, please send your email address to Lauri Pyatt at lpyatt@soiowa.org to have your email address added to our system. Thank you!

Special Olympics Iowa Calendar of Events

July

9	Play Day	River Hills
10	Softball Skills	Atlantic
11	Softball Conference Tournament	Des Moines
11	Softball Skills Competition	Muscatine
14	Coaches Sports Training Certification Clinic (Golf)	Des Moines
17	Swing with Celebrities Golf Tournament	Coralville
18	Softball Conference Tournament	Cedar Rapids

August

6	Challenge Day	Council Bluffs
8	State Softball	Ankeny (new location!)
10	LETR Golf Tournament at Echo Valley	Norwalk
16	Unified Golf Tournament	Spencer
20	Kiwanis Golf Tournament at Otter Creek	Ankeny
28	Unified Mini-Golf Tournament	Vinton
29	Unified Golf Tournament	Cedar Rapids
29	Cargill Night at the Ballpark (with CR Kernels)	Cedar Rapids

September

1	Southeast Area Coaches Meeting	Mt. Pleasant
5	Southwest Area Coaches Meeting	Council Bluffs
12	State Equestrian Meet	Iowa State University
12	Unified Golf Tournament	Davenport
12	Unified Golf Tournament	Akron
15	Central Area Coaches Meeting	Marshalltown
16	Over the Edge	Des Moines
18	Dunkin Donuts Fundraiser	All Locations Statewide
19	Southwest Area Cycling	Avoca
19	Jester Park Unified Golf Tournament	Granger
26	World's Largest Truck Convoy	Des Moines
29	Coaches Sports Training Certification Clinic (Bowling Basketball, Athletics)	Council Bluffs

October

3	State Flag Football	Cedar Rapids
6, 13	Southwest Area Bowling	Council Bluffs
10	State Volleyball Tournament	Iowa State University
15	Central Area Bowling	Marshalltown
16-17	East Central Area Bowling	Cedar Rapids
17, 19	Southeast Area Bowling	Ottumwa
17	Gold Medal Gala	Des Moines
17	Polar Plunge®	Davenport
24	Polar Plunge®	Siouxland

Connect With Us!

Remember to follow Special Olympics Iowa to receive important updates and stay on top of the latest events and activities.

Be Our Twitter Reporter!

Training for a competition? Volunteering at an event? Having a great time at a fundraiser? Let us know about it! Tag your tweets with @soiowa and we will retweet you!



www.facebook.com/SpecialOlympicsIA

Twitter: @SOIowa



Special Olympics Iowa

551 SE Dovetail Road
PO Box 620
Grimes, Iowa 50111

www.soiowa.org
515-986-5520

Thank You to Our Partners!

Champion Statewide Partners



Premier Statewide Partners



Champion and Premier Statewide Partners provide a comprehensive level of support of all programs and services offered by Special Olympics Iowa (SOIA). Organizations may be recognized at these levels for financial support, in-kind donations or any combination thereof, and are recognized in many other ways. To find out more about our current partnership opportunities or for information on how to become one, visit our website at www.soiowa.org and look under Support Us, or contact the SOIA Vice President of Development Jamie Alt at jalt@soiowa.org or 515-986-5520.