



## Special Greetings from Indianhead Area Special Olympics



Oliwni, Dankie, Faleminderit, Juspajaraña, Tangkyu, Tángeyoo, Merci,  
Graciis, Danke, Sas epharisto, Aguije, Háw'aa, Ua tsaug, Arigato.

Ah bo u ja, Dziekuje.

No matter what the language, the meaning is the same. We cannot **THANK YOU** enough for your continued support of Indianhead Area Special Olympics Wisconsin during the past year. Whether you shared your time and talent, wrote a check, sponsored an event or just plain sponsored, or volunteered in some way, we **THANK YOU**. The success of the program is because of your efforts. Our athletes appreciate what you've done for them, and so do we.

### **Always Growing and Changing**

We welcomed three new agencies this year into our Indianhead Area: Northwoods Special Olympics (Butternut area, actually came in 2009), Ventures Athletics (Hayward), and Rusk County S.O. A complete list of all our agencies is in this newsletter.

Sometimes people do not always understand how the pieces of the puzzle fit together in our organization. Our 28 agencies representing 18 counties are primarily responsible for training the athletes and taking them to competitions, and this is no small task. Often several social activities are included.

They also must raise their own money to pay for such items as training facilities, uniforms and travel to competitions.

At our Area office we raise the money for our Area & Regional competitions and then organize the competitions—again no small task. Our State Program Office raises money for the State competitions and organizes them plus, of course, they manage a lot of behind the scenes tasks such as athlete medical information, volunteer information, training, public relations, Torch Run activities, web site, finances, field services and many more. There are many facets

## Always growing and changing con't.

at all levels of our organization, and it takes a lot of cooperation and planning from the youngest athlete to the President of Special Olympics.

The number of our athletes at competitions continues to grow, and that is exciting. Due to scheduling conflicts at some of our usual venues, there will be a few changes. Our District Basketball Tournament will take place in Chippewa Falls. We held it there several years ago and look forward to a successful return. The Chippewa Schools have been very accommodating. Then our District Gymnastics Tournament is being moved to LaCrosse. Most of our gymnasts come from

LaCrosse so it only made sense to move the tournament there. A calendar of events appears later in this newsletter. Join us whenever you can. We always welcome spectators at our events or come to volunteer.

The Young Athletes Program for children 2-7 is very successful and continues next year. Please refer to our web site for more information on this program and a world of other information about Special Olympics Wisconsin including pictures from our events: [www.specialolympicswisconsin.org](http://www.specialolympicswisconsin.org).

## **Healthy Habits for Athletes**

It should come as no surprise that individuals with cognitive disabilities have more serious health problems than the general population. Over 50% have some weight problem ranging from being obese to overweight. Many have hearing, eye, foot and dental problems beyond what the general population can even imagine.



So what do we do about this? In an attempt to address these problems, Indianhead Area began a program we call Healthy Habits for Athletes. We told you a little about it last year when we gave new toothbrushes, tooth paste and floss, along with directions as to how to use them, to each athlete attending our area bowling tournament. We followed that up with a "keeping germs away" theme at the regional bowling, and this past May, every athlete at track and swimming received a pedometer courtesy of the Greater Menomonie Area Community Foundation. It was hoped that the pedometers would spur the athletes to get out and walk!



In March at our basketball and gymnastics tournament, we started working on nutrition by changing the lunch we served our athletes. We went from hot dogs to hot chicken breast sandwiches thanks in part to Mega Foods. We also gave out recipes, portion control directions, and general facts about nutrition all with the purpose of getting our athletes to see the benefits of good eating habits. We will



continue that throughout the years! The dream is to come up with an easy to follow recipe book for athletes.

Also in March we implemented a Fitness Challenge to our agencies challenging athletes to record exercises for six weeks. It was received very well with some agencies starting their own challenge and even one special education teacher incorporating it into her classroom.

Special Olympics Wisconsin has been at the forefront of offering screening for health issues at state games for the past few years. Now each Area is being encouraged to offer health habits at their Area events. It's nice to be the one to lead the charge, and we were even more humbled when we were told the name of the state program would be Healthy Habits for Athletes!

This program is still in its infancy, but we think great things will happen as we go along. Our athletes won't change their habits overnight but little by little, things will change. Special thanks to those organizations and foundations who believed enough in what we were doing to grant us money to make it possible. They are the Greater Menomonie Area Community Foundation, Arnold and Lois Domer Foundation, Xcel Energy, Edward Rutledge Charity, Mega Foods, Chris Poss, DDS, and Kevin Potter, DDS.

## Spread the Word to End the Word

**SPREAD THE WORD  
TO END THE WORD**  
[www.r-word.org](http://www.r-word.org)

We're tempted to call this "We aren't retarded any more," as the idea behind Spread the Word is to get people to stop using the word "retard" whether it refers to a person or a behavior. How many times have you heard someone say, "Oh that's so retarded or he's so retarded." When you call their misuse of the word to the attention of the person who said it, they usually respond that they didn't mean anything by it and that it's just a saying. Sorry, that's not true.

Athletes Carolyn Voelker, Thorp Adults Special Olympics, and Kim Kulig, B.T.I.A.W., spent a half hour with Judy Clark live on WEAU TV 13 talking about how they felt when people say "retarded." Kim said, "It's mean, and it hurts my feelings." Carolyn agreed. Both have

spent many hours talking to groups, especially elementary children about not using the word.

The Spread the Word campaign is rapidly spreading across the country. We've asked hundreds to sign our banner pledging not to use the word and to tell others not to use it either. Teachers have taken up the cause and along with organizations they advise, some good "stuff" is getting out into the communities.

Now we ask you to do your part. Pledge not to use the word "retard" and when you hear others use it, gently tell them that using the word retarded is not socially acceptable. Carolyn, Kim, and all of our athletes appreciate your help! **The new "R" word is RESPECT.**

## Special Olympics Athletes are the Lion Hearted

Several athletes from the Eau Claire Adults Special Olympics program organized and formed the world's only Lion's International Chapter for Special Olympics athletes and their families. President of the group is Talena Hengst, a Special Olympics athlete. So far the group has adopted a park and cleaned it twice, weeded the community gardens, helped at St. Francis Food Bank, and gone door to door



collecting used eye glasses, hearing aids, ink cartridges, and cell phones.

When asked why they joined such an organization, the athletes all said pretty much the same thing: they wanted to give back to the community for all the things the community had done for them, and they figured a service organization was the way they could do this. Look for this group to do great things in the months and years ahead.

\* \* \*

**The mission of Special Olympics Wisconsin is to provide year-round sports training and competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with cognitive disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.**

# Meet Rachael McNally and Brandon Drinkman

## Our Athletes of the Year



### *Special Olympics Athlete's oath*

**Let me win. But if I cannot win, Let me be brave in the attempt.**

Rachael McNally has been in Special Olympics since almost its very beginning and was named the Female Athlete of the Year. Her accomplishments have been many including one of the few to represent Special Olympics Wisconsin at world games in Dublin, Ireland as a weight lifter! A year round athlete, Rachael plays softball, basketball, doubles bowling, snowshoe skiing, and even golfed with former Indianhead Area Director Bob Lesniewski. In fact, thanks to Rachael, Bob finally was awarded a gold medal as he and Rachael took first place in golf at state two years ago.

What makes Rachael so special? Her team mates would tell you she is always cheering them on, encouraging them to give it their all and is always happy to see them. "Don't take her to give speeches," says development director Andrea Sullivan. "Every time I do she gets a standing ovation, and I just stand there wondering why I came." All kidding aside, Rachael would be the first one to tell you why Special Olympics is important to individuals with cognitive disabilities. She'd also thank you for making it possible for her to

participate in sports, to keep growing as a member of a community, and to stay physically fit. We should all have Rachael's sunny disposition and gratitude for what S.O. has done for her life.

Brandon Drinkman is fresh from representing Wisconsin at the National Games in Idaho this past summer. He came home with three nice medals hanging around his neck – two silver and one bronze. Brandon works hard at whatever sport he's in and appreciates all that people have done to make his participation possible. He was thrilled to be selected to go to National Games and made the most of every minute there. What makes him so special? Hard work, a great team player, and the Special Olympics spirit of "I can do it."

Rachael and Brandon are just two of the 1,230 plus athletes who would tell you that being in Special Olympics has given them so many opportunities and has helped them grow as worthy individuals as part of a community many opportunities and has helped them grow as worthy individuals as part of a community.

🍁 **Congratulations to ALL of our** 🍁  
**2009 Indianhead Area Award Winners**

**Male Athlete of the Year**

Brandan Drinkman, Eau Claire

**Female Athlete of the Year**

Rachel McNally, Eau Claire

**Volunteer of the Year**

Jorgiann Gierok, Independence



**Family of the Year**

Johnson Family, Hayward  
(Eugene, Pattie, Connery, Ryan)

**Coaches of the Year**

Voelker Family Siblings, Thorp

**Agency Manager of the Year**

Kathy Spence, Spring Valley

**Organization of the Year**

Kado & Associates, Menomonie

**Media of the Year**

Sawyer County Record, Hayward

**Award of Excellence**

Jerry Smith, Eau Claire

**LETR Person of the Year**

Pam Wallace, Chippewa Correctional

🍁 **And Now a Word for our Sponsors** 🍁

Just like it takes a village to raise a child, it also takes a bundle of people to make a program survive. Many thanks to those of you individuals who've given your time, talent, and treasure to keep this program afloat.

Our competition and training sponsors commit a minimum of \$2,500 in cash or in-kind donation to our program per year. They are our gold medal sponsors and include the Arnold and Lois Domer Foundation, Chippewa Valley Chiropractic Association, Edward Rutledge Charity, Eau Claire Leader-Telegram, Mega Holiday, Mega Foods, One Tree Martial Arts, Xcel Energy, Hardee's Restaurants, Studio One, and the Career Development Center. Our Silver medal sponsors donate between \$500 and \$2,000 per year. They are The American Marketing Association of UWEC, the AnnMarie Foundation, Culligan Water Treatment, and Hilltop Tavern. We also want to thank the many businesses that sponsor our polar plunges--the Leader-Telegram Buckshot Run, Law Enforcement Torch Run and other fundraisers throughout the year as well as the many groups and organizations within our 18-county Area that have given financial support in 2011.

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**State Mission and Competition Partners**

Kwik Trip \* Law Enforcement Torch Run \* WIAC

## Retreading

Yes, it is true, Patti Knez, sports director, and Andrea Sullivan, development director, are each retiring, or as they say, “All good things must come to an end.”

Patti says we’re not retiring: we’re “re-treading.” That means looking to spend more time with family and friends, and while we loved it, not having to work Saturdays unless we volunteer to do so!

Patti has been with Indianhead Special Olympics since February of 2001. She’ll officially step down the end of February 2011. Starting out as the Indianhead office manager, she became regional director of sports during the re-organization of Special Olympics Wisconsin. Thanks to her efforts, we have well organized competitions. And Patti has put a lot of effort into agency communication, keeping our agencies well informed. We will miss the Bears vs Packers teasing in the office as Patti is an avid Bears fan!



Patti Knez  
Regional Director of Sports

Andrea will retire in early August 2011 after 13 years with SOWI. She started out with an empty desk and drawers and has progressed to loads of file folders and a very messy desk. It will be nice to just talk to people without asking them for anything although it’s amazing how wonderful people have been about donating and

supporting Indianhead Area. During her time with SO, Andrea has gone from raising \$72,000 a year to over \$260,000. Patti always likes to say Andrea raises the money and she gets to spend it.



Andrea Sullivan  
Regional Director of Development

No, we do not know who will replace us, but we do know they will be spending lots of time with us before we go out the door so that the transition will be as smooth as possible. It goes without saying that we hope you will do your best to help them just as you would have supported us.

Yes, we will miss you and our athletes but don’t look for us at any SO events for at least a year. In deference to whoever replaces us, we’ve decided to stay away for a while to give them the opportunity to put their own foot print on Indianhead Area Special Olympics. We are both deeply grateful for the continued support you gave us during our time with Special Olympics. We leave richly blessed with a lifetime of memories.



THANK  
YOU

# 🍁 Neat Things People do for Special Olympics 🍁

We call them the unsung heroes. These are people who have worked with our athletes for years. They are members of our very active Games Management Team and Agency Managers and Coaches many serving over 20 years, some even over 30 years! And we have welcomed several new, enthusiastic members to our Games Management Team this year.



- Hilltop Tavern held it's annual luau in honor of Special Olympics
- Students from One Tree Martial Arts once again broke hundreds of bricks for Special Olympics
- Over 1,000 people ranging in age from 7 to 67 took the plunge for Special Olympics at either Elk Point Resort in Menomonie/Colfax or Half Moon Beach in Eau Claire raising over \$120,000 in the process
- Over 200 volunteers pumped gas at the Mega Holiday stations and in an eight-hour period raised \$24,000
- Kwik Trip employees in the Indianhead Area raised almost \$21,000 through the sale of polar bear icons during a 2-week period October/November
- Our Indianhead Area Law Enforcement raised close to \$40,000 through their various Torch Run activities throughout the year. This included the sale of t-shirts, Filling the Dream gas pumping, participation in the Torch Run, the Warden's Golf Tournament, and Aqua Golf



Other great happenings for Indianhead Area Special Olympics this year:

# 2010/2011 Schedule of Events

## SPORTS EVENTS

### 2010

#### Bowling & Volleyball

- Oct. 16 Duluth Area Bowling Tournament
- Oct. 23 Eau Claire Area Bowling Tournament
- Nov.13 Regional Bowling Tournament (Eau Claire)
- Nov.13 District Volleyball Tourn. (Green Bay)
- Dec. 4 SOWI State Fall Sports Tourn. (Milw. & Wausau)

### 2011

#### Cross Country & Downhill Skiing

- Jan. 8 Downhill Invite Spirit Mtn, Duluth
- Jan. 15 Winter Invitational Cross Country & Snowshoeing
- Jan.29-30 SOWI State Winter Games (Wausau)

#### Basketball & Gymnastics

- Feb. 12 "Eau Claire Affair" Team Basketball Invitational
- Mar. 6 District Basketball Tournament Chippewa Falls
- Mar. 19 District Gymnastics Tourn. LaCrosse
- Mar. 20 Regional Team Basketball (Stevens Pt.)
- Apr. 8-10 SOWI State Indoor Sports Tourn. (Oshkosh)

#### Track & Field, and Aquatics

- Apr. 23 District Powerlifting (Stevens Point)
- May 7 District Soccer (Green Bay)
- May 7 Area Track & Field and Aquatics Meet (North H.S.-Eau Claire)
- June 9-11 SOWI State Summer Games (Stevens Point)

#### Softball, T-ball, Tennis, Golf & Bocce

- June 4 Bocce Invite Polk County
- June 18 Softball/T-ball/Bocce Invitationals
- July 9 District Softball, Tennis, Bocce Tourn. (Onalaska)
- July 9 District T-Ball (Appleton)
- July 10 District Golf Competition (Green Bay)
- Aug.5-7 S.O.WI State Outdoor Sports Tourn. (EC)

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### 2011

- Feb. 12 Menomonie Polar Plunge
- Feb. 27 Polar Plunge
- April TBA Filling the Dreams
- June 8 LETR Torch Run
- Aug.TBA Aqua Golf
- Aug. 30 'Lil Buckshot Run, Carson Park
- Sept. 3 29th Annual Buckshot Run, Carson Park



*Chances are, there's a local program near you.  
Become an athlete! Become a volunteer!*

<i>Program Name</i>	<i>Manager</i>	<i>Phone #</i>	<i>Email</i>
Barron County 3-30	Mary Ebner	537-5641	<a href="mailto:ebnerm@barron.k12.wi.us">ebnerm@barron.k12.wi.us</a>
Blk River Falls Tigers 3-39	Barb Gluch	284-4357	<a href="mailto:barbara.gluch@brf.org">barbara.gluch@brf.org</a>
B.T.I.A.W. 3-37 (Blair, Taylor, Independence, Arcadia, Whitehall)	Heidi Kadinger	985-3172	braggerh@indps.k12.wi.us
Buternut/Northwoods 3-13	Tony Erba	769-3255	aerba@centurytel.net
Cadott High School 3-01	Bridget Brenner	289-4211	<a href="mailto:brennerb@cadott.k12.wi.us">brennerb@cadott.k12.wi.us</a>
Chequamegon Bay 3-12 (Ashland)	Bill Ertl	682-0139	<a href="mailto:wm_ertl@yahoo.com">wm_ertl@yahoo.com</a>
Chippewa Adults 3-09	Francis Bohl	723-7194	<a href="mailto:broesler@charter.net">broesler@charter.net</a>
Chippewa Falls Schools 3-10	Denise Buckli	720-9264	glbuckl@hotmail.com
Dream Catchers (Eleva) 3-05	Diane Knudsen	695-2696	knudsend@essschools.k12.wi.us
Durand Panthers 3-40	Pam Wheeler	285-5315	pwheeler@durand.k12.wi.us
Eau Claire Adults 3-06	Jean Paulson	579-8893	ckk3265741@yahoo.com
Eau Claire Schools (3-26, 3-33, 3-43)	Todd LaValley	852-4239	<a href="mailto:tlaivalley@ecasd.k12.wi.us">tlaivalley@ecasd.k12.wi.us</a>
Ellsworth S.O. 3-21	Kathy Spence	273-6770	<a href="mailto:spfamily@svtel.net">spfamily@svtel.net</a>
Hayward 3-34	Stacy Briggs	934-2504	<a href="mailto:stacybriggs89@yahoo.com">stacybriggs89@yahoo.com</a>
Hayward Adult 3-20 (Ventures Athletics)	Tom Sweeney	934-3035	tom@venturesunlimited.org
Menomonie Red Cedar 3-25	Dan Gainey	235-4015	<a href="mailto:gainey@charter.net">gainey@charter.net</a>
Polk County 3-36	Leanne Richter	472-2534	<a href="mailto:luckauto@centurytel.net">luckauto@centurytel.net</a>
Rusk County 3-03	Katie Schwalbe	642-0697	rockbtmfrm2009@gmail.com
Spooner 3-31	Shannon Wendel	520-7288	<a href="mailto:shanwend@yahoo.com">shanwend@yahoo.com</a>
Kinnickinnic Kids 3-15 (River Falls)	Linda Rudesill	612-867-6026	mlrudesill@yahoo.com
Superior Neon Chargers 3-08	Mary Hanchett	392-7276	maryhanch@yahoo.com
Superior Challenge Ctr 3-41	Terri Franson	394-2771	<a href="mailto:tfranson@challenge-center.org">tfranson@challenge-center.org</a>
Superior Schools 3-42	Sandy LeMieux	394-8720	<a href="mailto:drgnflyeyes@hotmail.com">drgnflyeyes@hotmail.com</a>
Thorp 3-18	Betty Voelker	669-3009	<a href="mailto:goldgirl@centurytel.net">goldgirl@centurytel.net</a>
Trempealeau Cty Health Center 3-19	Jeff Langner	538-4312	jlangner@tchcc.com

## **Our Games Management Team**

We cannot put on our competitions without this dedicated group-  
many who have volunteered over twenty years!

<p>Bill Burich Jack Corey Patti Gilmore Dick Knez Rod &amp; Deb Kremer Dave &amp; Ginny Lien Monica Meadows Howie Nelsen</p>	<p>Pam Nimmo Sheryl Prochnow  Jill Prushiek Marcia Root Jim Sekel Dave Turner Ken Van Es Dean VanAmber</p>
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Ed Watkins  
Pat Watkins  
Mary Werlein  
Gail & Mark Wirz

  
**Special Olympics**  
Wisconsin  
Be a fan.  
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Eau Claire, WI 54701

*To Someone Special*

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

Menomonie Polar Plunge February 12  
Eau Claire Polar Plunge February 27



**Andrea Sullivan, Regional Director Development**  
[asullivan@specialolympicswisconsin.org](mailto:asullivan@specialolympicswisconsin.org)

**Patti Knez, Regional Director Sports**  
[pknez@specialolympicswisconsin.org](mailto:pknez@specialolympicswisconsin.org)

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