

# Agency Times



**Support. Volunteer. Compete.**

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## SPREAD THE WORD!

March 3, 2010 is the official Spread the Word to End the Word day of awareness and we are encouraging everyone to visit [www.r-word.org](http://www.r-word.org) and make their pledge to not use the R-word (retard). Our goal is to reach 100,000 pledges by March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Young people around the world are taking a stand and raising awareness of the dehumanizing and hurtful effects of the R-word and are helping encourage others to think before they speak. We ask that you help us change the conversation by helping to eliminate the demeaning use of the R-word and replace it with "respect." This will help create a more accepting world for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and all those people that may appear different, but have unique gifts and talents to share with the world.



In addition to our middle and high school efforts, Special Olympics Wisconsin is working with the Midwest Conference and the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) to involve those schools in the "Spread the Word to End the Word" Campaign. The Midwest Conference schools are currently underway with a competition between them to see how many pledges they can get between February 1<sup>st</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. WIAC is making plans to have pledge drives at a few of the upcoming WIAC Championships.

Enclosed in this mailing are two resources to help you in spreading the word: an R-Word brochure with ideas on how you can get involved and an R-Word t-shirt order form your Agency can use to buy shirts to spread the word locally.

Make sure to report any success stories to SOWI AmeriCorps member Rebecca Masephol at [rmasephol@specialolympicswisconsin.org](mailto:rmasephol@specialolympicswisconsin.org)

## COMPETITION NEWS

### Basketball Advancement Policy

The following advancement policy is being implemented for all of the Regional and State Team Basketball Tournaments :

- All 1<sup>st</sup> Place teams will earn automatic advancement into the next level of competition.
- The slot for any 1<sup>st</sup> Place team choosing not to advance to the next level of competition shall be added to the lottery.
- All other teams who win at least one game in the current tournament will be eligible to enter the lottery for advancement to the next level of competition.
- For 2010, the number of lottery slots available for each tournament will be equal to the number of divisions.

Why is SOWI doing a lottery?

Ultimately, while the lottery doesn't allow for more teams to advance, it allows more teams in the tournament to have a chance of advancing. In a single elimination tournament, the second and third place teams in many cases have not played each other and the lottery gives those teams a chance at

advancement that they would not have had otherwise. The lottery also gives incentive to teams who lose their first game to continue playing in hopes at a chance for advancement through the lottery system.

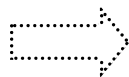
### Winter Games Recap



Wausau welcomed about 300 athletes from 28 Agencies Jan. 30-31 for the 2010 Winter Games. Despite the temperature being the coldest it could possibly be without cancelling events, the Games were a great success! A big thanks to our ever-solid Games Management Team who kept everything running smoothly all weekend and congratulations to all the athletes who competed!

A bit of good snowboarding news: there has been an increase in snowboarding coaches, so we hope to see growth in that sport next year.





# COMPETITION NEWS

## Games Entry Forms

The host Area for any given tournament handles games entry forms. Therefore, for State Games, Agencies should always send their materials to their own Regional Director of Sports, but for Area or District Games in a different Area, they should send materials to the host Regional Director of Sports.

## Intent to Play Forms

The rationale behind the use of the Intent to Play forms is to collect team contacts for Agency use in planning scrimmages and invitationals, as well as for Area office use to plan facilities for tournaments. In past years, we have found that the intent to play deadlines are so early that information is not accurate because Agencies don't know how many teams they will have until they start practices. Therefore, the intent to play form

deadlines will be adjusted beginning with the 2010 Summer Games season. These new dates have been included on the SOWI website where you access the Agency Manager Handbook.

## Flag Football

Flag football will see it's SOWI debut this year in the form of rules finalization, education on competition, and possible clinics. Stay tuned for updated information on our newest sport.

## Team Basketball

We have 260 teams thus far participating in team basketball, up from 200 last year!

# TOP 10 Top 10 *Top 10* Top 10 Top 10 Top 10 Top 10

1. The 2010 Polar Plunge Fundraising season is off to a good start in WI with a sunny, balmy 20+ degree day on Sun., January 31. A total of more than 200 Plungers raised approximately \$70,000 at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Muskego Polar Plunge. In Menomonie, 91 plungers raised \$12,000 and in Wis. Rapids, about 280 plungers raised \$40,000! Remember, Agencies can receive 25% of their total pledges by participating. There are 12 Polar Plunges statewide in 2010, so contact your Regional Director of Development for more details!
2. We are excited to inform you that 22 Special Olympics athletes and their family members agreed to form the Chippewa Valley Pioneer Lions Club. This club is the first in the world to be a Lions Club made up of special needs individuals.
3. Hats off to Texas Road House in Kenosha! They raised \$8,500 for SOWI in just three hours in 2009 and another \$7,000 this year during the annual Guardians of the Flame® lunch!
4. We are happy to welcome our newest staff member, Krysten Kirsch, to the Area 8 office. Krysten is SOWI's first Director of Youth Initiatives and will be overseeing the Young Athletes Program, So Get in to it, and the R-Word campaign. We are excited to see these programs continue to grow! As always you can monitor our web site for new staff positions.
5. Please ensure that the Years of Service (YOS) date on your Class A Volunteer rosters are correct for all your volunteers. We use these dates to create plaques each fall and we cannot afford to redo plaques if a date was not listed correctly.
6. Twenty-year-old musician Joe Jonas of the Jonas Brothers as well as Olympic runner Carl Lewis joined more than 300 Special Olympics staff around the country, including Wisconsin's Dennis Alldridge and Kelly Klopping, urging Members of Congress to authorize *The Eunice Kennedy Shriver Act*. This new legislation continues the legacy of Mrs. Shriver by authorizing funds for specific programs supporting persons with disabilities in health, education and global program initiatives.
7. Just as a reminder, any volunteers who are due for their 3-year rescreening **must** complete the online Protective Behaviors training again! Please refer to your volunteer rosters for more information.
8. Congratulations to Milwaukee athlete Mario Ogunbowale who is featured in a Special Olympics commercial spot titled "See the Athlete First!" The commercial will be unveiled at the Feb. 24 Milwaukee Bucks game on the halftime jumbotron, as well as through Fox Sports for commercial slots during the game. Soon after it will be shown nationally in other basketball team media markets. Check it out on the SOWI website or on youtube.com (search 'See the Athlete First').
9. New in 2010, the Fit Feet Healthy Athletes venue will have orthotics available to athletes that can benefit from their use. SOWI has a variety of sizes of Vasyli's pain reliever and slimfit models to fit athletes with free of charge. Fit Feet will be offered at the Outdoor Sports Tournament in Eau Claire on August 14, 2010.
10. The finance department (Mary Hensen) has been working tirelessly to implement new financial edge software which we have integrated with our existing Raisers Edge database system. SOWI is one step closer to automating the accounting system for Agencies.

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