



Special Olympics
Virginia

Program Memo

March, 2011

New RTP Form

The RTP form is used for a number of different purposes including reporting statistical information to Special Olympics, Inc. We now have to track Young Athletes in two separate categories, ages 2 – 5 and ages 6 – 7. The RTP Form was revised to reflect this change.

Young Athletes Session at Basketball Championships

Athletes age 2 – 7 are invited to participate in a Young Athletes session held in conjunction with SOVA's Basketball Championships. Volunteers interested in starting a Young Athletes program in their Area are also encouraged to attend.

This session will be held on Saturday, March 19 from 10 – 11:30 AM in the cafeteria at Brooke Point High School in Stafford.

VMI

The 8th Annual VMI Games will be held at historic Virginia Military Institute on Saturday, April 2nd. This one day event features seven different sports, all played at the same time. The VMI Games offer half court basketball, basketball skills, power lifting, swimming, athletics (track), bocce and equestrian. VMI provides a buffet dinner after the competition.

The VMI Games, winner of the 2010 SOVA Special Events Category, are open to all Areas throughout the state. Contact Daniel Leake at dleake@specialolympicsva.org for more information or to receive a registration packet.

Area 29 Spring Invitational

Area 29 (Suffolk) will host a multi-sport invitational on Saturday, May 21. Level 1 and Level 2 golf, power lifting, tennis and track and field will be featured.

Contact Michael Clark, Area 29 Coordinator, at michael.clark@artraycorp.com or 757-925-4797 to register athletes for this event.

2014 National Games

The 2014 Special Olympics USA National Games will be held in Princeton, New Jersey.

Little Feet Meets

Little Feet Meets are a great way to engage preschool and elementary children with intellectual disabilities in Special Olympics. The athletes train at school with their classroom teacher, PE teacher and/or peer buddies. The athletes then take a field trip to a Little Feet Meet demonstration/competition.

Eight motor skill stations are offered for preschoolers, demonstration track events are held for children in K – 2nd grade (standing long jump, tennis ball throw, 25 meter walk/run) and competition track events are held for children in grades 3rd – 5th (standing long jump, softball throw, 50 meter walk/run). In 2010 Little Feet Meets engaged 818 children with intellectual disabilities and 572 peer buddies from 49 schools in Henrico, Lynchburg, Roanoke City and Roanoke County. 676 high school students ran the events. This year Little Feet Meets will debut in Chesterfield County and Norfolk City.

Contact your Region Director for additional information.

Principles of Coaching Course

Volunteers who are already Special Olympics certified coaches won't want to miss this great educational opportunity. West Virginia University in cooperation with Special Olympics offers an online Principles of Coaching course. All information is downloadable, including the *Coach Workbook*. WVU's terms during the year are as follows: Spring (January 1-June 30); Summer (May 1-October 31); Fall (August 1-February 28). One can enroll at any time during a term and can be rolled over to the following term to complete the course upon request.

To take advantage of this great opportunity, go to [http://www.elearn.wvu.edu/Continuing/Career Training/](http://www.elearn.wvu.edu/Continuing/Career_Training/) and scroll down to Principles of Coaching for Special Olympics. The cost is \$35 for this self-paced web class.

Staff Changes

A couple of new staff members joined the SOVA team in January and February. Josh Walker accepted a new position with SOVA as Director of Development for the southwest portion of the state. Josh hopes to capitalize on his knowledge of the Area programs and develop new cooperative fundraising opportunities for Areas in the Southwest, Shenandoah and Piedmont Regions.

Matt Camire replaced Josh as the Piedmont Region Director. Matt worked with Josh as an intern in the Piedmont Region while a sports management student at Liberty University. Matt is currently enrolled in Liberty's Sports Administration master's program.

Eamonn Garvey joined SOVA as the Potomac Region Director in January. Eamonn has extensive experience working with people with intellectual disabilities and working with volunteers.

Both Matt and Eamonn are excited to be a part of SOVA and bring lots of new ideas and energy to the organization.

Area 6 Split

Area 6 voted to split in half at its January council meeting. The Area has grown tremendously over the last few years and has become too large for the leadership volunteers to manage. Amelia, Chesterfield, Goochland and Powhatan will remain Area 6 and Henrico, Hanover, New Kent and Charles City will become Area 31 effective in June.

New R-Word Website

Check out SOI's new and improved R-word site, <http://www.r-word.org/>. The site brings all the great content, news and resources of the R-word campaign into one spot for people to engage, utilize, and activate locally as we all work to build inclusive schools and communities where respecting each person's gifts and abilities is priority number one. The site also makes available R-word logos/resources and merchandise.

Special Olympics Virginia also has its own R-word website. Go to www.specialolympicsva.org/rword.

New Special Olympics Resource Site

Special Olympics, Inc. has a new resource site for volunteers. Go to <http://resources.specialolympics.org> for sport rules, coach materials, athlete leadership information and a wide range of other resources.

New Video Creation Opportunity for Athletes and Programs

The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability (NCPAD) is sponsoring a video contest entitled, "How do you get enough?" NCPAD is a nonprofit organization focused on physical activity and health promotion for people with disabilities

The intention of this video contest is to illustrate to society that people with disabilities do live healthy active lifestyles as well as share various

ways to get physical activity for individuals with disabilities and activity limitations.

Whether it's indoor or outdoor, recreational or competitive, solo or team, easy or intensive, show the world how Special Olympics athletes get enough activity in a 1- to 10-minute video clip.

See the video contest rules and entry form, [click here](#). For a sample video, [click here](#).

Contact Information Reminder

Don't forget to notify your Region Director when your contact information changes or when volunteers join or leave your Area/Local Council. Correspondence is sent from multiple staff members using the information in our volunteer database and we count on that information being correct.

Polar Plunge Raises a COOL MILLION!

For decades, our athletes have been breaking records and achieving personal bests. Feb. 5, thanks to 3,252 Plungers, including 68 VIP athlete plungers who took the icy dip first, and more than 600 5K runners, we also did the best we've ever done. That's right, the 2011 Polar Plunge® Winter Festival topped off at a "cool" \$1 million, the most ever raised in the event's 19 year history.

"Raising a million dollars was more than a goal. It represents an organizational milestone and a huge win for fans of Special Olympics. The funds raised will enroll new athletes, create opportunities for 2-7 year olds through the Young Athlete program and bring more people together to experience the magic of Special Olympics," said Special Olympics President Rick Jeffrey. "Since more than \$100,000 of the funds generated were raised by Special Olympics athletes, parents and volunteers in support of their local programs, to our friends across the Commonwealth of Virginia: thank you for helping us in our continuing effort to build environments of respect, inclusion and unity for all."

And an extra thank you – and congratulations – to Area 11 and Area 2's Team Jonathan for rocking the fundraising charts again this year – Area 11 won the Division 2 team competition with more than \$29,000 raised; Team Jonathan won the Division 4 team competition with almost \$17,000 raised. Other area successes included a "cool" party under the Athlete VIP Tent, during which about 300 athletes, friends and family members enjoyed a tasty Cheeseburger in Paradise lunch, and a new buddy system that helped athlete plungers connect with their parents – and their warm towels – after taking the Plunge.

For more information, including photos from this year's Polar Plunge, visit www.polarplunge.com or friend us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/plungevirginia>.

Athlete Torch Run Opportunity

Region 5 (greater Richmond) of the Law Enforcement Torch Run is looking for a Special Olympics Virginia athlete to serve as a representative on the regional committee. The committee consists of law enforcement officers from Central Virginia and its purpose is to organize and support Torch Run efforts in the region. The athlete representative would attend monthly meetings (through July 2011) and would be the voice of Special Olympics athletes to the committee. The meetings are held at the Hanover County Sheriff's Office. Transportation can be arranged if necessary. If you are interested in this position or know of an athlete who might be interested, please contact Carrie Dyer at 804-726-3023 or cdyer@specialolympicsva.org.

Kroger Fundraising Opportunity

My name is Kelly Kinser and I am the Accounting Specialist for Special Olympics Virginia in Richmond. I want to share my experience with the Kroger Fundraising program. Two of my daughters' extra curricular activities use this plan. It is very easy and there is no selling. In a year, I have saved/earned almost \$450 off of my daughter's tuition for a competition cheer squad.

What you do is register your Kroger club card with a Kroger gift card. You then load the card with cash, check, debit or credit card for whatever amount that you want. You then pay for your groceries, prescriptions, gas or other store's giftcards with this Kroger giftcard. You keep reloading this giftcard and doing this month after month and your money earned just continues to grow. Every month, Kroger sends a check to the gym and my daughter's account is credited. You can also get other friends and family members to participate.

Contact me if you want more details. 804-726-3029 or kkinser@specialolympicsva.org.

