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Oregon Special Olympics Newsletter

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This marks the end of my first year of being Agency Manager for Oregon Special Olympics. As I reflect over the last year, I can honestly say that this has been an incredible experience...a gift. I have gotten to know so many more of you, our athletes, watch them all grow, establish some great friendships, and see the incredible ways in which Special Olympics can truly change the lives of our athletes and our families in general. If I could sum up the last year in just one word it would be...amazing. If anyone had told me me, three years ago, that having my son be part of Special Olympics would impact his life (and mine) in such a positive way, and help him grow in so many ways, I would have never believed them. I have gotten to know the many families who have been in our Agency for many years, and we've welcome some great new families as well, which is so fun to see. My goals for the next year include expanding our Agency by approaching families from preschools on up through the high school ages...all ages. I see the excitement from people as we all continue to grow as one big Oregon family. I enter my 2nd year as Agency Manager with great pleasure and thank all of you for your wonderful support. I could not do

what I do if it weren't for all of you. I still have much to learn...it's a never-ending process, but with the support of all of you, I am excited about discovering new things, promoting continued growth with our Agency, and supporting everyone as we are looking toward wrapping up this year. Thank you...from the bottom of my heart...for your friendships, your participation, sharing your kids, and being there to help our Agency flourish.

My door is always open...please don't hesitate to contact me for any reason.

Be well everyone...

Amy Verheyden
Agency Manager
608-692-1428



Special Olympics Bill

My son, David Thompson, and I had the unique opportunity to be a part of making history! On September 8th, David (and I), along with Dennis Alldridge (President and CEO of Special Olympics Wisconsin) presented testimony to the Assembly Means and Way Committee at the Capital, in the attempt to get the Committee to vote "yes" to a bill allowing for a tax check-off box on the Wisconsin Income Tax forms. I am happy

to report that this bill passed! This will have the potential for raising upwards towards \$200,000/year for Special Olympics Wisconsin, making the possibilities of what they can do for our athletes even greater! See this link to watch the video, and find out more about the bill:

<http://www.specialolympicswisconsin.org/mb/node/204>

Dennis Alldridge has asked David and I to accompany him for the signing of the bill once it gets to that point, which will hopefully be sometime early next year so it's in effect for 2012 tax forms. David spoke SO well. I was a very proud mom!



Leadership Conference

Special Olympics Wisconsin had their first year of the Annual Leadership Conference, September 24 and 25th in Wausau, Wisconsin. I attended, Lori, Ken and Jake Casper attended, Lori Johnson attended, the Haffele Family attended, and Ryan Shields attended. We all took part in sessions that included, but was not limited to, Engaging Youth in Your

Community, Healthy Athletes and Nutrition, Healthy Sexuality for People with Cognitive Disabilities, and Flag Football. I felt, and the feedback I've received, is that the conference was well put-together, especially for a first-year conference. Special Olympics Wisconsin is attempting this conference each year now to try and get more people involved, offer sessions that anyone from coaches, to agen-

cy managers, to parents, to athletes can attend. I am excited for next year already and would be happy to share the information I learned while attending these sessions.

Family of the Year

On the note of the Leadership Conference, I'd like to congratulate the Haffele Family who was recognized as Family of the Year at the Awards Recognition Banquet, held at the Leadership Conference. A big thank you goes out to the Haffele family for all their hard work and dedication over the many years they have provided leadership, time and effort.



Healthy Athlete

The annual conference hosted a section for the Healthy Athlete. First and foremost, here is a website that everyone should visit called www.choosemyplate.gov. This website gives you 10 tips to a great plate. Did you know that 1/2 the plate should be veggies and fruits? Did you know that a 20 oz. bottle of Gatorade contains 2.2 cups of sugar? And this is till less than soda and energy drinks. Did you know you should consult with your doctor before drinking some of those energy drinks, because they can react with meds you may be taking? One athlete from Wisconsin had to be taken to the hospital for this very reason!

Healthy Athlete Events—Special Olympics offers screenings at their State competitions. I always thought you had to be an athlete competing to go to these screenings. That is not the case. You only have to have a current medical on file with the SOWI office to be tested, so if you go to a State competition to cheer on fellow athletes, get checked out by these doctors! The site referenced above will have a list of all the athletes, so take advantage of this. Some of the items the athletes can receive are \$175 shoes free, mouth guards, sneaker balls, eye glasses, prescription sports goggles, sunglasses, toothbrushes and tooth paste. And coming in the future are hearing aids!

Wisconsin offers Fun Fitness, Healthy Hearing, Opening Eyes, Special Smiles, Health Promotions and Medfest (Medfest needs to have paperwork filled out ahead of time).

Go visit the Special Olympics Wisconsin website at www.specialolympicswisconsin.org, and refer to the athlete section, to learn more about the Healthy Athletes program. It's a benefit you can't afford NOT to know about!

Look for information on Law Enforcement Torch Run and National World Games in the next newsletter!

By Lori Casper

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

Halloween Party

Don't forget our annual Halloween Party/Dance, which is being held on Friday, October 28th.

Place: United Methodist Church

Time: 6:30 pm—8:30 pm.

There are still some items to be signed up for as far as bringing food. They include 2# red grapes, 2# green grapes, 2# brick cheese (sliced), 2 large sticks of sausage (sliced and halved). Please contact Amy to sign up for any of these items. We ask that you have your food there by 6:30. You can reach Amy at 692-1428, or averheydenso@charter.net.

Bring great dancing shoes, a costume, a smile, a friend and get ready to have FUN!



Oregon's New Special Olympics T-Shirts

We went with a completely different look to our T-shirts, so athletes and parents will be able to tell the old from the new. REMEMBER the T-shirts are to be worn for competition or special events you are told about in advance.

Athletes can wear the old ones for practices, out in the community, school or whenever you want.

Those who were at the picnic were given two new shirts. If you could not make it to the picnic, please contact Lori Casper to receive your new shirts at 235-4391.

Bowling Shirts

Oregon will be looking very sharp in our new bowling shirts this year! They were handed out last week at bowling for the athletes to wear at their first bowling tournament, taking place this Saturday (10/22).

When an athlete finds out they will not be moving on to the next bowling competition, they need to turn their shirt in to Gary Haffele.

These shirts can also be used for other events, so we want to keep them looking sharp!

Walking Group

Robin Hunter has been walking with athletes on Tuesday evenings from 6:30—7:15 pm or so. We are attempting to keep athletes active even when not competing. Come join us. Jill Mulroney, Alex Braun and Jake Casper would love to have more of you there. This will continue until further notice (until the weather gets too cold). Please contact Robin if you would like to join the walking group, at 354-1018, and she will instruct you where to meet. You can walk with your athlete, or drop them off and have a bit of time to yourself!

Summer Basketball

David Thompson, Alex Braun, Jake Casper, Dillon and Dusty Holmes all spent some time over the summer working on their basketball skills on Thursday evenings. Good job guys!

Homecoming Parade

We had a GREAT turnout for the Homecoming float this year! Our float was full with excited athletes. "Disney Presents..." was the theme, so we had signs decorating the sides of the float that carried the Disney theme, the two little girls on our float dressed like Minnie Mouse and Snow White, and the athletes had so much fun! A huge thank you, once again, goes out to Jeff (former student of Kristine's) who drove the truck and got the trailer with hay bales on it for our use. Jeff has his own business that does lawn care and snow plowing! Please throw business his way if you can at 220-4025.

Oregon Special Olympics

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



Oregon Panthers

A huge thank you to Lori Casper for helping write articles for this Newsletter! Please feel free to submit articles to any newsletter we post! All you have to do is contact me and email me the article! Coaches??? Info from you is great! Families...pictures and information about something your athlete was involved in is great!

Amy Verheyden

We are now on Facebook under Oregon Special Olympics! Come "Like" us to join us at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Oregon-Special-Olympics/112337815501839>

See our web site at:

www.oregonspecialolympics.yolasite.com

Upcoming Dates/Events

Halloween Dance, Friday,
October 28th from 6:30 to
8:30 pm.

Area Bowling Tournament on
Saturday, October, 22n.

Regional Bowling Tournament on Saturday, November 5th.

State Bowling Tournament,
Saturday, December 3rd
(Milwaukee).

Thanksgiving (Yikes!)

Christmas (Yikes!)

Snow??? (BIG Yikes!)