

Special Olympics Area 5 Grand Forks

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WINTER 2010
NEWSLETTER

Area 5 Volunteers Receive Awards at State Banquet

The Special Olympics North Dakota State Banquet was held on October 9th, 2010 in Fargo. 3 Grand Forks individuals and 1 Grand Forks organization received awards, including Pat Anderson, Amy Martin, Stacy Kusler, and the Kiwanis Club. Congrats!

Pat Anderson won the Youth Service Award for his volunteer commitment since his freshman year of college. Amy Martin received the Continuous Service Award for volunteering in the Fargo, Minot, and Grand Forks programs. Stacy Kusler received the Local Volunteer of the Year award for helping with the Frozen Feet 5k/10k, which benefits Area 5. Finally, the Kiwanis Club of Grand Forks won the Outstanding State Organization for their

continuous help in coordinating the State Bocce tournament. Congratulations to all the honorable mentions from Grand Forks, as well: Ralph Applegren, Erin Baumann, Meredith Baumann, Pat Bierman, Aaron Hummel, Will Kusler, Dan O'Connor, Kristin O'Connor, Josh Parrill, Applebee's, Arby's, Ben Franklin Elementary, East Grand Forks Schools, Starbucks, and Forx Builders Association.



Award Recipients, L to R: Grand Forks Kiwanis Club Representative, Stacy Kusler, Amy Martin, Pat Anderson

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Practice for Winter Games begins November 30

Winter Games season begins November 30, 2010 and includes the sports of handball, down hill skiing, cross country skiing and snowshoeing. Remember that team handball is a unified sport, so we will need partners as well as athletes to compete in handball. All practices will be at South Middle School on

47th Avenue in Grand Forks and will be on Tuesday and Thursday from 6:30 to 8:00pm. Tentative dates for state will be on January 14 and 15 in Bottineau. Be sure to check the new website (www.specialolympicsgf.com), or call the new hotline number (701)732-0101 for January (and other) practice schedules.

Special Olympics Grand Forks Hotline: 701-732-0101.

Athlete Expectations

Be dressed and ready for practice on time.

Remember to listen to the coaches and volunteers.

Have appropriate dress for practice – tennis shoes, sweat pants or shorts (no jeans), and no jewelry.

NO PROFANITY (swearing) will be allowed.

No soda or liquids in the gym areas.

Do your best and work hard.

You will be assigned to a team according to ability level by the coaches.

Most importantly, have a good time!

Youth Council planned

This summer, Grand Forks had the privilege to have 5 representatives of our program attend training in Nebraska during the National Games. The training program had two parts; one part was to involve teachers in our movement and the other part was to involve the youth of our schools in our movement. North Dakota's representative teachers were Kristin O'Connor and Laura Bakken from GF. They came back very enthused about how the schools can become more involved in Special Olympics. Kristin is a long time volunteer with our program and is a Special Ed teacher at Valley Middle School. Laura is an Adaptive Physical Education teacher with the school system. Attending the youth summit was Area 5 Athlete Deion Hanson attending Central High School and also attending Central High School is Special Partner Sara Sand. The youth summit participant chaperone was Area 5 volunteer Joe Sobolik. We will be adding to the membership of this council with Special Partner Kyle Rasmusson and Athlete Tommy Mikkelson. The plan of this group is to develop a youth council who will provide advice to Area 5 in Grand Forks and also to SOND on youth involvement and perhaps to serve as mentors to the rest of the areas in North Dakota. The sky is the limit for the group. We look for good things to come in the coming year.

-Submitted by Meredith Baumann

2010 Sponsor-A-Bowler Fundraiser Smashes Records

Last year's Sponsor-A-Bowler fundraiser reached a high of over \$10,432, which was short of our all time record of \$11,400. This year, we decided to set our starting goal at \$9000 with the idea that if we made our goal, we would take charter buses to Bismarck for state bowling, and have a pizza party after the dance. We were doubtful if we would even make our goal, because after the third week of fundraising, we were only half way to our goal. But wouldn't you know, the next week the bowlers brought in over \$5000, so we reached our goal with a whole week left to go! What a GREAT group of fundraisers we have! But why stop there? After we surpassed the \$9000 mark, the athletes continued to fundraise and we were able to raise a **NEW RECORD OF \$12,800**. What an accomplishment! You guys are amazing! Needless to say we all enjoyed the charter buses and we have reserved a charter bus to Minot

for state basketball, too. Congratulations to the record number of bowlers (58 raised money) who participated to raise this amazing amount.

Top fundraisers:

Erin Baumann: \$2848
A NEW RECORD and 4th year over \$2000!

Sharon Daucsavage: \$1122
3rd year over \$1000!

Travis Storeby: \$768
New personal record!

Kelsey Baird: \$588
\$20 short of all time record!

Andrew Bakke: \$520
personal best!

William Roberts: \$482
New bowler!

Karen Rysavy: \$482
Personal best!

Come to the Banquet on Dec. 1 to find out more results and what prizes will be awarded.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS!

-Submitted by Tim Baumann

Area Management

Team grows

New members to our Area Management Team are:

Sara Sand- youth volunteer representative.

Laura Bakken – youth advisory member.

Tommy Mikkelson – youth athlete representative.

Dr. Pat Moore – medical committee.

AMT will continue to meet the needs of Area 5 with our very capable volunteers. We are always interested in having more people on the subcommittees of the AMT. We are currently looking for 3 more family members to assist in the family committee and about 3 more volunteers to assist with the fundraising committee. The group meets monthly on the 4th Monday of each month (except December) at 5:30pm at the Special Olympics State office in Grand Forks. Contact Meredith if you are interested in volunteering on our subcommittees.

Basketball to Start the First Week of January

Special Olympics Grand Forks is excited for many changes the upcoming basketball season.

This year, we are going to split basketball practices between two locations. Athletes are going to be split by age to determine which practice they should attend.

Adult Athletes (22 or older) will practice at South Middle School from 6:30 to 8:30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Their first practice is January 4th. Youth Athletes (8 to 21) will practice at Valley Middle School from 6:30 to 8:00pm on Mondays and Tuesdays. Their first practice will be January 3rd. Youth practices will be split into two parts. The first part of the practice will run from 6:30 to 7:15pm and include working on developing individual skills. At 7:15, parents will have the option to take their child home for the night or the athletes can stay for the remaining 45 minutes to work on team skills and scrimmaging.

SOGF is also excited to announce that we have been invited to play in an additional tournament this year.

Devils Lake has invited our teams to a new tournament they are hosting on January 22nd. This tournament will be a one-day event. We will leave in the morning and return the same evening. This will be good competition for us early in the year. We will also have our Grand Forks Tournament in February this year. Date TBD. The state tournament is going to be held in Minot, ND on March 11th and 12th. SOGF will also be participating in halftime scrimmages during UND games held on January 20th and 27. Coaches will split the scrimmage between the Grand Forks teams. We will have more information for you closer to the event. Athletes have the option to play at the local events only, or travel to Devils Lake and Minot this year. Please let the coaches know your plans for participation this year. We are looking forward to a great basketball season!

-Submitted by Josh Parrill

Bowling Success!

We had a fantastic and enjoyable year in bowling. We saw an increase in the number of bowlers participating in Special Olympics, including more young people and more ramp bowlers. Although this meant stretching out our Saturday to provide for two shifts of bowlers, we were happy to do so!! We had a great year not only with participation, but also in sportsmanship and fundraising as well. We had 60 bowlers participate in the State Bowling Tournaments in Mandan and more than half of them brought back medals. Everyone had a great time at the dance and "Elvis" came to shake things up as he serenaded us with his music. We were able to raise enough money to take charter buses again so we could watch movies on the drive to Mandan and so

we could have a pizza party after the dance! Thanks to everyone for their assistance - thanks to those that assisted us weekly during our practices - thanks to the chaperones who went with us to Mandan - thanks to everyone who gave money to Sponsor a Bowler - thanks to Tim and Meredith for all they do for us - thanks to Mandan for hosting the State Tournaments and for the great food this year - but most of all, thanks to each of our athletes who put so much energy, sportsmanship, and smiles into the year to make it such a great success. I look forward to a fun-filled year of bowling again next year!

-Submitted by Bowling Coach Sue Schaumburg



It's Banquet Time!

Our annual Special Olympics Area 5 Banquet will be held on Wednesday, December 1st from 6:00pm - 9:00 pm at Holy Family Catholic Church, located at 1018 18th Avenue South. The annual banquet is to recognize the efforts of the athletes, coaches, parents, volunteers, and countless others who contribute all year long to making Grand Forks the best organization in the state! The cost for the banquet will be \$9.00 per person and include dinner and an awards presentation with a special guest speaker. Come and visit with your friends and celebrate a terrific year! Many door prizes will be awarded and other fun things are in store for you. Hope to see you there!

-Submitted by Joan Schultheis

Area 5 Spotlight: Volunteers

We have so many great athletes in the Area 5 program of Special Olympics. From the individuals who have participated from the very beginning of the organization, to the brand new athletes just discovering the joy of competition. In addition to great athletes, we also have great volunteers, which is why the "spotlight" is on them this month. Dozens of individuals throughout the area share their time, energy, and talent to help make Area 5 the best it can be. Some volunteers are present at every sport of every season. Some volunteer for tournaments, some may pick one sport per year to help out with. No matter how much time is spent volunteering, every person counts towards the success of the program. Volunteers, you inspire and motivate Area 5 athletes to be the best they can be both on and off the court or field. Your willingness to share your time and talent does not go overlooked.

Thank you for all you do!

North Dakota power lifter takes home three golds

The only thing bigger than Ben Wahlstrand's fan following was the smile on his face.



Wahlstrand, from Grand Forks, N.D., had 16 fans with him on Tuesday morning at Kimball Hall. These fans were friends and family from five different states. Some family members traveled all the way from California and Arizona to watch him compete this week, and many other fans watched him from the live online stream.

Wahlstrand has been involved with the Special Olympics for eight years but competed at a national level this year for the first time. He started out in Special Olympics playing basketball and in the past three years found his talent for power lifting.

Wahlstrand's family members could barely find the words to express how proud they are of him. They talked about how he was an over-achiever and is always pushing to do better. He holds two jobs and was the keynote speaker at his high school graduation.

When Wahlstrand was asked to compete at the 2010 Special Olympic USA National Games, he said he "humbly accepted" the opportunity.

He said he likes power lifting because "it makes me feel good inside, but family is what really makes me a success here. They give me something to believe in ..."

Wahlstrand will travel back to North Dakota with not just one gold medal but two. He collected a gold medal in bench press and dead lift, while his teammate Shale Erickson was right behind him with a silver in the same events. This also meant Wahlstrand took home the gold for the combined bench and dead lift, raising his total to three on the day.

Wahlstrand said he enjoyed his week in Lincoln at the USA National Games and loved getting to watch the other athletes compete and, in his words, "do amazing things."

He credits his trainer Adam Sorum for getting him started in power lifting and Will Kusler for coaching him at the state-level games.

Photo Above: Powerlifter Ben Wahlstrand celebrates his gold medal on the podium after the competition. Photo and story by: Emily Sallach, UNL. Re-printed from cojmc.unl.edu/specialolympics

From the Director's Desk



It is my belief that Area 5 in Grand Forks is the best area of the state! I can state that with confidence because of the efforts of the athletes, volunteers, coaches, families and the Area Management Team.

Growth

This fall we were able to grown in both soccer/bocce. For our soccer season, we were able to have 3 teams in the "Under 21" category, as well as 3 "Over 21" teams. We also increased our number of bocce and bowling players. Bowling reached a high of 100 athletes training in the sport. Bowling also grew in the "Under 21" category so much that we were able to

have two shifts of bowling each training day.

Participation

Through our fundraising efforts and our community involvement, Area 5 is showing our community what we're made of! We continue to excel in our fundraising efforts in both the number of people who helped in fundraising and in the total amount of money raised.

We have had the opportunity to participate at two UND women's soccer games at a half time scrimmage. We have been invited to play at half time of UND men and women's basketball games this winter.

Great Volunteers/Coaches

We continue to have many volunteers come from UND and many friendships have developed between our athletes and students. UND Students and student athletes continue to be an integral part of our volunteer base.

At every event, I can count on having athletes well trained with great manners.

Our coaches are dedicated to the sport they participate in and they truly have a good time with the athletes. This is very evident at the dances! A great time is had by all Grand Forks athletes and volunteers!

Expanding AMT

This year, we have added members to our Area Management Team and we have plans to create a Youth Council. Area 5 rocks! I thank all of you for making us such a strong program!

Meredith Baumann

Area 5 Director

area5sond@hotmail.com

Athlete Oath

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

Area Management	Emily Parrill Volunteers	Jolene Mikkelson Fundraising	Sara Sand Youth Council
Team Members	Will Kusler Competition	Francine Davis Fund Raising	Laura Bakken Youth Advisory Council
Meredith Baumann Area Director	Stacy Kusler Public Relations	Dr. Pat Moore Medical	Patty McGlynn Athlete Representative
Tim Baumann Assistant Director	Joan Schultheis Secretary	Kristin O'Connor Outreach	David Dahlgren Athlete Representative
Josh Parrill Training	Sue Schaumburg Fundraising	Cindy Dahlgren Families	Tommy Mikkelson Athlete Representative



Special Olympics
North Dakota
Area 5

The Area Management Team meets the 4th Monday of each month at the Special Olympics State Office (2616 South 26th Street). If you have an agenda item that you'd like discussed, contact Meredith before the next meeting. There are also a number of committees that you can volunteer for. Just look up the committees above and ask that person how you can help. You can help us to make our organization better by being involved!

Special Olympics

Special Olympics North Dakota Area 5
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Grand Forks, ND 58201

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