

Triumph



Special Olympics New York • AUGUST 2003

Satins, Silks & Stars Provides Something for Everyone

Week of festivities benefiting the athletes of Special Olympics New York was a huge success.

By the time the Satins, Silks & Stars week, presented by GE, wrapped up at Saratoga Race Course on July 27, everyone involved had something special to remember.

Special Olympics athlete Jennifer Delaney and WNYT NewsChannel 13 anchor John Gray earned blue ribbons and cheers for capturing first place in the Equestrian Demonstration. Renowned actress Betsy Palmer received a mild shock when Ron Delaney, Jennifer's father, emerged from the crowd at the Q&A with the Stars wearing a Jason mask. Palmer,

who played Jason's mother in the horror flick "Friday the 13th," smiled and played along with the gag.

Other celebrities included: David Andrew Macdonald, Marj Dusay and Thom Christopher of "Guiding Light;" John James, an Emmy Award winner formerly of "Dynasty" and currently of "As the World Turns;" and Yolanda Vega from the New York Lottery.

It was a Special Olympics athlete who provided perhaps the most memorable

Continued P. 4



Mike Kinney

At the Hot Saratoga Nights Black-Tie Gala, longtime Special Olympics supporter Marylou Whitney (center) poses with Special Olympics athletes (left to right) Greg Cowl, Jennifer Delaney, Karyn Landolfi, Emily Stephen, Hattie Steele, Leslie Federico and Brian Burnett.

Point of View

A Journey to Remember by Sgt. Sal Gerbino.

When I was asked to represent Special Olympics New York, the Law Enforcement Officers of New York and the United States as a member of the Law Enforcement Torch Run's Final Leg Team, I was both honored and proud. And after an extraordinary three-week journey, during which I was part of a team carrying the Flame of Hope from Athens, Greece, across Europe, and into the Isle of Ireland for the Opening Ceremonies of the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games, I am simply humbled.

I'm humbled by the outpouring of

support from the countless thousands of people from the 10 countries and 53 cities and towns that my team ran through. I'm



Sgt. Sal Gerbino poses with Mary McAleese, president of Ireland.

Herb Gelb, CARQUEST

humbled by the magnitude of the commitment displayed by those ranging from the presidents and prime ministers we visited with all the way down through the ranks to my brothers and sisters in law enforcement and the citizens of those communities. I'm

humbled by the Special Olympics athletes who referred to us in their speeches as the world's bravest protectors and as their

heroes when, in fact, they have become our heroes. We see them as the bravest.

And I'm humbled most of all by the athletes who were members of our Final Leg Team, by their enthusiasm, dedication and stamina, especially Kevin Brown, my roommate.

Those 10 athletes didn't just run with us or escort us – they led us.

They ran at the head of our formation, carrying the Flame of Hope for countless miles over country roads and onto city streets the entire way. For my team, with Kevin leading, that meant daily runs of 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) or more through European cities over the first nine days. Then, when we arrived in Ireland, we ran behind Kevin into six different cities or

Continued P. 7

What's

INSIDE

3 Results from World Games 5 Conway Wins 7 National Summer Games

Find up-to-date information on our official Web site, www.specialolympicsnewyork.org and www.sosshopping.com

A Message from the President

Neal J. Johnson is President & CEO of Special Olympics New York, Inc.



For the past 13 years, athletes, friends, sponsors and special guests have gathered in Saratoga Springs for the Satins, Silks & Stars weekend to benefit Special Olympics New York. Stars from the stage, screen, television and sports worlds have traditionally joined us in a generous effort to raise awareness and much-needed funds to support our athletes.

The weekend has always included a Black-Tie Gala, as well as a Gourmet Luncheon and Equestrian Demonstration at the famed Saratoga Race Course, and we've given the public a chance to mingle with our guests – celebrities and athletes alike.

A few years ago we added a 5K run, and this year a walk, called Miles for Medals, became part of festivities. Walkers took a long and winding route through the historic race course, and they were given a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the track before the crowds arrived.

As you'll read on pages 4 and 5, Satins, Silks & Stars was a great success this year, and saw tremendous growth in funds raised and overall publicity.

We set out to infuse some new energy into the Satins, Silks & Stars events, and I believe we've done that by doing such things as adding some splash to the Gala, inviting the athletes to take part in the 5K run and Miles for Medals walk, and aggressively seeking new sponsors, such as this year's presenting sponsor, GE, whose management and employees enthusiastically adopted these events, just like Price Chopper and other sponsors have done for 13 years.

It was the Miles for Medals walk that, to me, demonstrated that great things can happen when we all work together. The walk involved sponsors and their families, athletes and their families, staff and their families, as well as our new friends in the

general public, who picked a great day to begin their friendship with our organization. A walk in Long Island is planned for September and more will be added next year.

As we continue our statewide plan to merge our local programs into more efficient regional programs, I see Miles for Medals as an example of what we want to achieve and how we want to achieve it.

In other words, new energy, plus new friends, combined with a team approach will help all of us keep our focus on the finish line. Together, we can make Special Olympics training and competition available to more athletes, regardless of age, ability or geography. ■

2003 Calendar of Events

AUGUST

- 21 Long Island Region, Long Island Golf Outing – Tam O'Shanter CC
- 24 Long Island Region, Masthead Cove Yacht Club Sailboat Race, Huntington
- 17-23 Long Island Region, Annual Camp Northstar Week – Boy & Girls Harbor, East Hampton
- 17-23 North Fork Horse Classic

SEPTEMBER

- 6 Sections 4 & 5 Softball/Bocce/Soccer NYCC, Seneca Falls
- 8 Capital District LETR Golf Tournament, Ballston Spa Country Club, Ballston Spa
- 13 Miles for Medals Walk, Belmont State Park
- 13 Sections 3 & 4 Softball/Soccer/ Bocce, Collins Park, Scotia
- 17 Million Dollar Duck Race, Manhattan
- 20 Long Island Region, Long Island Fall Classic, Cantiague Park
- 20 Long Island Region, Great Cow Harbor 10K Road Race
- 28 Soccer Jamboree, SUNY New Paltz
- TBD Sections 3, 4 & 5 Equestrian, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs

* For more details, please contact your Director of Field Services or the Special Olympics New York office.

Triumph

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Inspire Greatness

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Back in the US of A

Special Olympics New York athletes return home from Ireland with medals and memories.

They stepped off their flight from Dublin weary and bit disoriented, but equally enthused from a journey that took them to a fabled nation, placed them under a global spotlight and transported them to the edge of so many emotions.

After two weeks at the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games, they were happy to be home, but reminiscent of their experience.

"The Games were fantastic and the Opening and Closing Ceremonies were so beautiful," said Roller Skater Pamela Robbins of Jamestown, who won one gold and two silver medals. "They treated us like kings and queens."

Team USA's New York delegation, which consisted of 33 athletes and coaches, earned 75 medals and ribbons in eight sports.

Leading the pack with the Midas touch were two female athletes: Powerlifter Kim Richards of Binghamton and Roller Skater Kristine Fuller of Jamestown. Richards, who is New York's reigning Female Athlete of the Year, earned three gold medals while dead lifting a personal-best 275 pounds. Fuller also captured three golds. John Woodard barely contained his emotion when he won the 3,000m run.

"I was overjoyed with excitement after I won," Woodard said "The crowd was huge and I could hear people cheering my name, which made me run faster. I went for the gold."

The World Summer Games was the largest sporting event in the world this year, featuring 7,000 athletes from 150 countries. More than 70,000 spectators filled Croke Park for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, which was symbolic of the welcome given by the government, business community and people of Ireland.

Many families made the trip to Ireland. Others checked results on the Internet and via phone, like Christian Russo's mother, brother and sister, who met Christian at Logan Airport. They were ready with signs and hugs.

"Special Olympics has always been a family affair," Russo's mother, Ronnie Micciulla, said. "All of my kids have grown up with Special Olympics."

"The people went out of their way to make sure that everyone was accommodated," said Roller Skating Coach Mary Ceci of Jamestown. "The luck of the Irish was there with us every time we turned around." ■ JS

Athletics

Peter Graham –
Long Jump-Gold; 4X100m Relay-Bronze;
100m Run-7th
Sean O'Rourke –
Half Marathon-6th
Christian Russo –
400m Run-Silver; 4X100m Relay-Bronze;
1500m Run-6th
John Woodard –
3000m Run-Gold; 1500m Run-Bronze

Aquatics

Katie Rogan –
50m Freestyle-Silver; 50m Breaststroke-Bronze

Bocce

Paul Amoroso –
Team-Silver; Singles-4th; Doubles-5th
Craig Mumford –
Doubles-Silver; Team-Silver; Singles-4th
Troy Riegler –
Doubles-Silver; Team-Silver; Singles-Bronze
Tim Roland –
Singles-Silver; Team-Silver; Doubles-5th

Cycling

Paul Asaro –
40k Road Race-4th; 25k Road Race-5th
Keith Robbins –
5k Road Race-Bronze; 15k Road Race-8th
Thomas Romeo –
15k Road Race-Silver; 5k Road Race-Bronze
Edward Taylor –
15k Road Race-Gold; 5k Road Race-5th

Equestrian

Christopher Donohue –
English Equitation-Silver; Working Trails-4th
David Hill –
English Equitation-Bronze; Working Trails-Bronze
Jason Hauser –
Working Trails-Silver; English Equitation-4th
Scott Tongue –
Working Trails-Gold; English Equitation- Silver

Golf

Megan Clair –
Level 1 Individual Skills-Gold
MaryAnne Silverstrim –
Level 4 Stroke Play 9 Hole-Silver

Powerlifting

Wendy Hawkins –
Bench Press-Silver; DeadLift-Bronze;
Combination-Bronze
Kim Richards –
Bench Press-Gold; Combination-Gold;
DeadLift-Gold
Jodi Rosen –
DeadLift-5th; Bench Press-6th; Combination-6th
Indiria Upshaw –
Bench Press-Bronze; DeadLift-Bronze;
Combination-Bronze

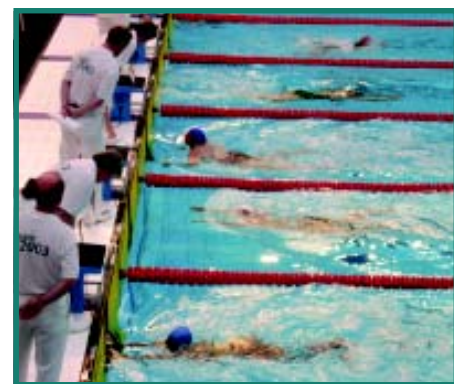
Roller Skating

Kristine Fuller –
Dance Solo-Gold; Freestyle Singles-Gold;
School Figures-Gold
Melissa Kestler –
School Figures-Gold; Dance Solo-Silver;
Freestyle Singles-Silver
Pamela Robbins –
Dance Solo-Gold; Freestyle Singles-Silver;
School Figures-Silver
Jennifer Yost –
Dance Solo-Silver; School Figures-Silver;
Freestyle Singles-Bronze



SONY Staff

More than 70,000 spectators filled the stands at Ireland's Croke Park for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the World Games.



SONY Staff

The swimmers on hand to compete at the World Games ranged in age from 17 to 65. Troy's Katie Rogan, in the second lane from the bottom, captured a silver and bronze medal.



SONY Staff

Golfers at the World Games found Portmarnock to be a challenging course, but professional Seve Ballesteros showed up and offered tips. Megan Clair of Utica, above, won a gold medal and Forestburgh's MaryAnne Silverstrim won a silver medal.

Walkers Go the Distance at Saratoga Race Course

Inaugural Miles for Medals draws 150 participants in support of Special Olympics New York.

The debut Miles for Medals 5K walk at Saratoga Race Course, presented by GE, was a runaway winner as 150 walkers turned out to enjoy perfect weather and a horse's-eye view of the famed race track on July 20.

"Miles for Medals participants directly helped the athletes of Special Olympics New York, so we're thrilled that the walk received so much support in its first year," said Special Olympics New York President and Chief Executive Officer Neal J. Johnson.

Miles for Medals walkers raised funds to support the 40,000 athletes with mental retardation who are served by Special Olympics New York. Each walker who raised at least \$75 received a T-shirt, and some walkers raised more than \$1,000.

"We had a tremendous time during the walk and we look forward to participating in Miles for Medals for many years to come," said Joseph Pinkans, an area retail sales manager for Cingular Wireless, which supports Special Olympics as a national sponsor.

Pinkans organized a Cingular Wireless team (employees and family members) of 15 walkers.

Other Special Olympics New York sponsors in attendance included New York

State United Teachers, GE, Price Chopper Supermarkets, New York Lottery and Fleet Bank.

"It's nice to get a close look at Saratoga Race Course, but it's even better knowing that we're helping the athletes of Special Olympics New York achieve their athletics dreams," said Judy Rucinski, a NYSUT meeting and travel planner.

Rucinski was the captain of a 15-person NYSUT team, and NYSUT matched the funds raised by its walkers.

One of the highlights for Miles for Medals participants was the opportunity to interact with Special Olympics New York athletes.

"The best part of the day was walking around and meeting the other athletes and volunteers and coaches who came to walk and raise money for Special Olympics athletes like me," said Special Olympics New York athlete Kevin Brown

Miles for Medals was the brainchild of the New York Racing Association and Miles for Medals participants were treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of Saratoga Race Course.

"It was inspiring to see everyone supporting Special Olympics New York," said New York Lottery's Yolanda Vega. ■ JF



SONY Staff

The inaugural Miles for Medals walk, presented by GE, drew 150 participants, all of whom were treated to beautiful weather and horse's-eye view of Saratoga Race Course. The group took a 3.1-mile tour of the race track.

Satins, Silks & Stars *Continued from P. 1*

moment, though. Greg Cowl, a 34-year-old volleyball player, brought down the crowded house at the Black-Tie Gala at the Prime Hotel – the gala drew 272 guests – with a one-liner directed at his father, Bill Cowl.

"You should make the most out of the talent that you have," said Cowl, who has won two gold medals at state competitions with his team, the Wildwood Spikers. "That is why for the past 10 years my dad has made us practice every week, all year long." Cowl paused and looked at his father. "Hey, Dad, how about a day off once in a while?"

Satins, Silks & Stars week started off on July 20 with the inaugural Miles for Medals walk and continued on July 26 with the Silks & Satins 5K Run. The fun continued on the evening of July 26 with the Black-Tie Gala and finished up with three

events on July 27, all at Saratoga Race Course: an Equestrian Demonstration; a Q&A with the Stars; and a Gourmet Luncheon at the track.

"This is our very first year sponsoring Special Olympics and it is going to be the beginning of a long relationship," said Wayne Hewett, vice president and general manager of GE Silicones.

Jennifer Delaney, who was on hand for every portion of the Satins, Silks & Stars week, summed up the experience from an athlete's perspective perfectly: "We showed everyone what Special Olympians can do." ■ JF



Mike Kinney

Jockey John Velazquez rode Y Two J (1A) to victory in the Special Olympics race during the Cool Sunday Mornings Day at the Races. Y Two J pulled clear of runner-up Dash 'n Dance and the rest of the field as they came down the backstretch. Velazquez later rode Daydreaming to victory in the Satins, Silks & Stars race.

Hot Saratoga Nights Black-Tie Gala



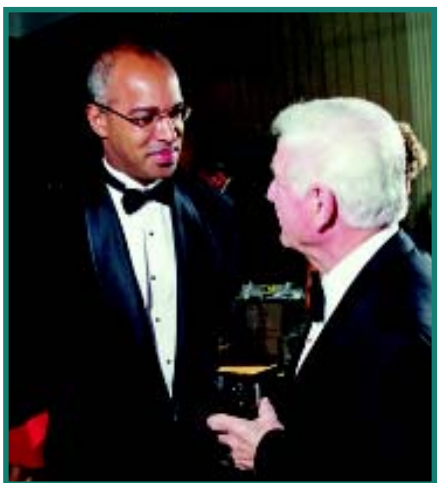
Mike Kinney

Actress Betsy Palmer is bookended by New York State Assemblyman Paul Tonko (left) and actor Thom Christopher at the Gala.



Mike Kinney

There were 272 attendees at the Gala, including: (seated, left to right) Marj Dusay, John James, Denise James, Stephen Mitola and Nicole Klein; and (standing, left to right) Sherry Mitola, Frank Mitola, Niccollette Nicola and David Andrew Macdonald.



Mike Kinney

Without honorary co-chairs Wayne Hewitt (left) and Neil Golub, Silks & Satins & Stars week would not have been such a successful series of events. Hewitt is vice president and general manager of GE Silicones and Golub is president and chief executive officer of Golub Corporation and Price Chopper.

Conway Tops Record Crowd at Silks & Satins 5K Run

Albany speedster claims third consecutive race crown as 1,104 runners go the distance for Special Olympics New York.

While more runners than ever before were on hand to vie for victory at the seventh annual Silks & Satins 5K Run on July 26, presented by Price Chopper and GE, it was a familiar face that came across the finish line first.

Albany's Nick Conway used a powerful kick to become the first three-time winner of the Silks & Satins 5K Run. Conway, who also won in 2001 and 2002, pulled away from friend Jamie Rodriguez over the final 400 meters of the Saratoga Springs course to finish in 15 minutes, two seconds, just five seconds shy of the course record he set last year.

Rodriguez was clocked in 15:07 and four men finished in 15:23 or faster.

Among the women, Saratoga Springs High School's Lindsey Ferguson took first place (17:53). She was followed by recent Bishop Maginn graduate Alyssa Lotmore (17:57).

A record 1,104 runners completed the Silks & Satins 5K Run (that's 98 finishers more than the 2002 edition of the race and it represents a 9.7-percent increase in field size) and for the first time in the race's history, there was an awards category for Special Olympics athletes.

Three Special Olympics New York athletes – John Woodard of Queensbury, Kevin Brown of Albany and Jennifer Delaney of Ballston Spa – competed for the inaugural crown. Woodard, a gold medalist at the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Ireland, placed first. The 3,000m specialist finished the 3.1-mile race in 23:57.



JCV Photography

Nick Conway pulled away from friend Jamie Rodriguez over the final quarter-mile to capture his third consecutive Silks & Satins 5K Run.

Conway said the Special Olympics athletes are a large part of why the race has grown from 500 finishers in 1997 to its current size.

"I think it makes a difference to know that you're running for a cause," he said. "And knowing that the Special Olympics athletes were running today made it exciting. It's great that they can be part of an event that benefits them. I'm proud to be part of it, too."

Sponsors for the Silks & Satins 5K Run included Price Chopper, GE, New York Lottery, Cingular Wireless, NewsChannel 13, New York Racing Association, Saratoga Spring Water, Amtrak, Smith Industries, Barnes & Noble, Garelick Farms, the *Times Union* and 99.5 The River. ■
JF



SONY Staff

2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games gold medalist John Woodard (right) stretches under the watchful eye of coach Margaret Martin before the start of the Silks & Satins 5K Run. Woodard won the race's inaugural Special Olympics title in 23 minutes, 57 seconds.

Around the State

DUCK RACE –

On Sept. 17, 20,000 cool little ducks will race from just south of the Brooklyn Bridge to the South Street Seaport, and you can join in on all the East River egg-citement.

For each \$5 donation you make to Special Olympics New York, a rubber racing duck will be adopted in your name and entered into the Million Dollar Duck Race, which will give you a chance to win great prizes, including \$1,000,000.

The Million Dollar Duck Race is sponsored by New York Lottery, Cingular Wireless, OppenheimerFunds and Merrill Lynch. Media sponsors are the *Daily News*, Time Warner Cable, WABC-TV, Radio Disney and *Financial Times*.

Ducks are \$5 each. Special discounts are for available for bulk and group purchases. For more information, contact Victoria Stubrin at 212-661-3963 or vstubrin@nyso.org, or visit www.specialolympicsnewyork.org.

NASCAR AND SPECIAL OLYMPICS –

NASCAR driver Robby Gordon sported a pair of “special” logos on his No. 31 car during an Aug. 10 Winston Cup race at Watkins Glen International. Gordon’s car featured a paint scheme honoring Special Olympics athletes and the New York City Fire Department.

The Special Olympics logo was prominently displayed on the hood of Gordon’s car in part because he is sponsored by Cingular Wireless, also a national sponsor for Special Olympics.

“It’s an honor for me to again be able to help both FDNY and Special Olympics,” Gordon said. “I’ve seen firsthand the hard work and dedication that the people of both these organizations display in their everyday lives. They’re my heroes.”

Gordon recently visited a New York firehouse and gave several Special Olympics athletes a thrill when he pulled the car onto a shutdown street to perform donuts.

By visiting www.nascar.com you can purchase a limited edition Robby Gordon Chevrolet Monte Carlo for \$59.99. This 1:24 scale stock car displays the Cingular Wireless/FDNY/Special Olympics paint scheme.

MAKE THE POINT –

With your help, “Make the Point” will be a slam dunk!

Special Olympics and the National Federation of State High School Associations have joined forces for this national basketball fundraiser, which will benefit the athletes of Special Olympics.

The concept behind “Make the Point” is simple: middle school, high school and college students – all students are welcome to participate; you don’t have to be a basketball player to sign up – will set a goal of how many free throws they will attempt and they will solicit donations per free throw attempt. Then, on October 25, the students will gather in school gyms to turn in the funds they raised and to shoot the promised free throws. There will be prizes for students and schools raising the most money.

Sounds easy enough, right? Well, it is. Plus, “Make the Point” benefits the schools whose students participate. Each school will receive 10 percent of the revenue its students raise.

For more information or to register for “Make the Point,” visit www.makethepoint.org.

Letters

Editor’s Note: *The following letter was addressed to Neal Johnson, president and chief executive officer of Special Olympics New York. The writer, athlete Ezra Canty, recently traveled to Ireland to unveil a stamp featuring his likeness. The stamp commemorated the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games.*

Dear Neal:

I would like to tell you how proud I am to be a Special Olympian. To be honored as I was in Ireland is just one of the many “strokes of luck” that I have received since I began competing in Special Olympics. Please keep up the great work with Special Olympics New York, and thank you to all the coaches, volunteers and supporters – both big and small.

All Special Olympians, myself included, appreciate the recognition we receive for all our sports participation.

Sincerely,
Ezra Canty
Troy



Editor’s Note: *The following letter was written to Neal Johnson, president and chief executive officer of Special Olympics New York.*

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I had the pleasure of volunteering at the recent Summer Games at Hofstra University.

I just wanted to thank you and your organization for providing me with the opportunity to volunteer at such a wonderful event. I am involved in many different volunteer organizations to one degree or another. However, I have never left an event that had such a lasting impression on my everyday life. It has truly changed me in a positive way.

To see firsthand how important this event was to each participant and how much they endured to get to where they are is a true inspiration.

I went to the event expecting nothing more than to donate a few hours of my time, as did my brother Rob. Instead, we attended the Opening Ceremonies on Thursday evening and we worked for about 12 hours on Saturday, doing a little bit of everything. We went home and later decided that we were not satisfied, so we went back to Hofstra for the Closing Ceremonies with our parents. It was truly a positive experience.

I believe we were told that there were about 2,000 participants. That means that Rob and I made about 2,000 friends that Saturday.

I can’t thank you enough for the positive experience you have afforded us. I welcome any future volunteer opportunities that might arise now or in the future.

Sincerely,
Abraham H. Feinblum
Commack

Submit letters to Jeff Foley at Special Olympics New York, 504 Balltown Road, Schenectady, NY 12304-2290 or jfoley@nyso.org.



David Thomason

The Greatest Graces Ireland

Boxing legend Muhammad Ali posed with Special Olympics New York staffer Laurie Kennedy at the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games. Ali took part in the Opening Ceremonies, which attracted approximately 70,000 spectators. ■

Point of View *Continued from P. 1*

towns every day for the next eight days, averaging two miles per location and sometimes exceeding four miles.

Kevin never took a break and whenever he was asked how he was doing, he responded, "I'm fine."

When they weren't running, the athletes would often redirect us as we turned the wrong way en route to a scheduled event. If we forgot what the uniform of the day was, they were quick to remind us. For every speech and presentation that we made, each athlete made 10. And those speeches would be made to crowds ranging from 500 to 10,000 people, including everyone from heads of state to foreign delegations of athletes to local townspeople and dignitaries.

The title *Global Messenger* was never more appropriate.

One of my proudest moments occurred when I got to stand at the podium next to Kevin Brown in the Town of Banagher in the Republic of Ireland. There, we both spoke to a crowd of more than 3,000 people and we made presentations while one of our teammates – Robert Eaton, a lieutenant from a Rhode Island Police Department who had become one of Kevin's greatest advocates – held the torch during our speeches. Kevin "stole the show" once again, ad libbing and

telling everyone about his employment with the FBI. He described how hard he had to work to get the job after failing the test the first time he applied. The standing ovation seemed to go on for an hour, and tears flowed while the cheers rang out over Kevin's accomplishments.

Once again, I was learning from Kevin.

Though this Final Leg in its entirety has generated a lifetime of new friendships and memories for me personally, as well as a new brother named Kevin Brown, I will now speak to the most important issue of all: the mission and purpose of the Law Enforcement Torch Run Final Leg, a primary part of which is to heighten awareness for the Special Olympics movement worldwide.

I will say without hesitation that this most important part of our mission was fulfilled beyond our expectations. The participation and involvement of the people in every town and city across Europe and Ireland was of enormous proportions and included tens of thousands of family members and school children in addition to

those already mentioned. They acknowledged that their commitment to the Special Olympics cause would remain strong long after the World Summer Games have left their beautiful country.

The sincerity of their commitment was carried not only in their words, but more importantly, in their faces and in their actions as they embraced the athletes both individually and as teams in the host

towns across Ireland. The Flame of Hope truly has been ignited across Europe, and our Law Enforcement brothers and sisters from around the world have committed to being the Guardians of the Flame abroad just like we have long been committed here in the United States.

I implore all of you now to keep supporting the Special Olympics movement and to reap the endless rewards that follow, those being rewards of the heart.

Point of View is written periodically. To submit a Point of View idea, or a story suggestion for Triumph, contact Special Olympics New York Public Relations Director Jeff Foley at 518-388-0793 x109 or jfoley@nyso.org. ■

"Those 10 athletes didn't just run with us or escort us – they led us."
– Sgt. Sal Gerbino

"A lot of people have worked very hard to make this special dream become a reality."
– Sen. Tom Harkin

Iowa to host inaugural National Summer Games

Three thousand athletes will compete in 2006.

Special Olympics athletes and supporters recently joined Timothy P. Shriver, president and chief executive officer of Special Olympics, to announce that Iowa State University in Ames will be the site of the 2006 Special Olympics U.S. National Summer Games, the first competition of its kind in Special Olympics history.

The idea of a U.S.-only competition is not new, but the driving force behind it becoming a reality was the athletes, said Shriver.

"As a movement we have embraced athlete leadership and, over the past several years, National Games has been a

focus of athlete leaders in the United States," Shriver said at a July 14 news conference. "It is a tribute to them that we

stand here to announce (these Games). The great news is that more than 3,000 athletes will come to Ames. They will come to celebrate the singularly important human idea that everybody counts."

Joining Shriver were Ames and Iowa dignitaries Sen. Tom Harkin and Lt. Gov. Sally Pederson.

"A lot of people have worked very

hard to make this special dream become a reality," said Harkin, who authored the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. "We have said 'no' to determination by others and 'yes' to determination by the individual about how they're going to live their lives."

The Games will take place July 3 to 8, 2006. They are expected to draw athletes from all 50 states, as well as more than 1,000 coaches and official delegates, and 9,000 family members and friends. Nearly 6,000 volunteers are needed.

Sports may include Aquatics, Athletics, Basketball, Gymnastics, Powerlifting, Softball and Volleyball. The New York delegation will be selected in 2005. ■ JS



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