

Triumph



Special Olympics New York • MARCH 2004

Ellenville-Based Winter Games Draw Smiles

Nearly 1,000 athletes and coaches enjoy SONY's 2004 Winter Games.

S smiles ruled at Special Olympics New York's 2004 Winter Games, held at Ellenville's Nevele Grande Resort & Hotel.

"I saw smiles on the faces of Special Olympics New York's athletes all day long," SONY President and Chief Executive Officer Neal J. Johnson said. "And that's how I measure the success of our events: If the athletes are smiling, it's been a great day."

After a full day of competition in near-perfect weather – it was sunny and in the mid-30s – on Saturday, Johnson declared

the Winter Games closed Saturday evening. Twenty law enforcement officials and volunteers bearing torches skied down the Nevele's slope, and Johnson then extinguished the Special Olympics Cauldron.

This was followed by a fireworks display and a Victory Dance for the athletes.

This year marks the sixth time since 1990 that Ellenville has hosted the Winter Games. Approximately 1,000 Special Olympics athletes and coaches from all across New York state participated in six sports: Alpine and Nordic Skiing; Floor Hockey (team and

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SONY Staff / Doreen Hand

Daryle Jennings of Homer won a bronze medal in the Slalom portion of the Alpine Skiing competition at SONY's 2004 Winter Games.



SONY Staff / Jeff Foley

Alan "Buddy" Forrest, godson of Polar Bear Plunge organizer Sgt. Sal Gerbino, celebrated his recent engagement by playing football in Lake Ontario.

Record Crowd Churns up Funds at Lake Ontario

Polar Bear Plunge to benefit Special Olympics New York raises approximately \$40,000.

Even with the thick ice that had moved in overnight, and an air temperature that would get no higher than 20 degrees, Lake Ontario never stood a chance. The fourth annual Polar Bear Plunge to benefit Special Olympics New York, a Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) event, featured too many determined people.

So, once front-end loaders softened up the shoreline, approximately 300 people stormed into the 35-degree water, raising funds for SONY's athletes. They also raised the bar for New York state-based Polar Bear Plunges: There were approximately 20 percent more plungers than in any of the Lake Ontario event's previous

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

A Message from the President

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



Dedication to teammates. Drive to do your best. An ability to play hard when you're tired.

These are qualities that are regularly displayed by the world's best athletes, and they were in abundance at Special Olympics New York's 2004 Winter Games.

As a Floor Hockey official, I witnessed firsthand the spirit displayed by SONY's athletes.

I was there when the Broome-Tioga Panthers and the Genesee Region Finger Lakes Sabres were tied at the end of regulation during their first-round medal Floor Hockey game. I listened as the coaches talked strategy with their players, trying to figure out how to tally that game-winning goal.

I also was there as the two squads battled through four overtimes. I watched the players sweat through each additional period. They endured nicks and bruises as they chased after the puck and a gold medal.

It was, in my opinion, sports at its finest.

Those athletes were all about dedication, drive, and giving it your best when most people would quit. The Panthers came out on top, but both teams are winners.

I also watched SONY's employees – even those who had not officially started working for us yet – perform like athletes.

For example, the Winter Games fell about a week before Stephen Fuller was scheduled to begin as Director of Program for SONY's Genesee Region, but that didn't stop him from attending. He spent six hours in a car on Thursday after finishing a full day of work at his old job and, for the next three days, he was up before the sun came out and he didn't fall into bed until well after the sun disappeared. He ushered athletes during Opening Ceremonies, he helped out at competition venues and he broke down hockey boards.

Roz Hurley, SONY's soon-to-be new Executive Secretary, gave a similar effort, as did every single staff member. SONY's staff, in fact, functioned like a championship team.

And ESPN was there to see it all. The world's premier sports network captured the relentless pursuit of sports success at the Winter Games. How cool is that?

In preparation for the network's 25th anniversary, ESPN representatives attended the Winter Games to capture footage for a celebratory ad campaign. Bright lights and cameras shined on SONY's athletes, coaches, volunteers and staff members.

ESPN filmed some of the world's finest athletes doing and talking about what they love most: sports. ■

MAAC Helps Special Olympics New York Gain Exposure

Albany's Pepsi Arena recently hosted a Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference



(MAAC) basketball tripleheader, and Special Olympics New York's logo and message was exposed to the thousands of people who watched the games at the arena and on television.

The MAAC is in its seventh year of helping raise awareness for SONY.

During the three MAAC games, the final two of which were broadcast on MSG, SONY's logo and phone number were prominently displayed courtside. Additionally, public service announcements promoting SONY's mission aired during the broadcasts.

In the first MSG game, Saint Peter's College defeated Marist College's men's team, 70-64. In the second MSG game, and in front of 7,514 fans, Siena College's men downed Iona College, 74-71.

Also, Time Warner Cable aired the first game of the day – Siena's women defeated Marist, 66-55 – and the television crew interviewed a SONY representative during halftime. Viewers were encouraged to get involved with Special Olympics. ■ JF

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Inspire Greatness

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415-Pound Lift Generates Funds for Special Olympics

Police Officer Gerald Willis raises bar and money on behalf of SONY – Long Island.

Special Olympics New York – Long Island has a strong benefactor in Police Officer Gerald Willis, a member of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Police Law Enforcement Explorers (Post 2244). Officer Willis is so strong, in fact, that he won the bench-press competition (198 pounds-and-under division) at the 2003 New York State Police and Fireman's Games by lifting 415 pounds. Additionally, he used the event as a fund-raising tool for Special Olympics.



Photo courtesy of Police Officer Gerald Willis

Police Officer Gerald Willis, center, raised 415 pounds on behalf of SONY – Long Island. Pictured here with members of the Explorers, Officer Willis also has donated more than \$2,000 to SONY – Long Island.

group of 14- to 21-year-olds who volunteer to do community service with the police department," Officer Willis said. "A couple

years ago, one of the Explorers said, 'If you're competing at the Police and Fireman's Games, why don't you get sponsorships and raise money for Post 2244?' And I said, 'How about half for the post and half for Special Olympics?'"

So, not only has Officer Willis won the bench-press competition the past

two years, he also solicits co-workers and friends to sponsor him at five cents per

pound, and he donates half the proceeds to SONY – Long Island.

"Gerald has donated \$2,022 to the athletes of SONY – Long Island in the past two years," said Neal J. Johnson, President and Chief Executive Officer of SONY. "We applaud him on his accomplishments as an athlete and as a fund-raiser, and we appreciate that he uses his strength to help create athletic opportunities for Special Olympics athletes."

In addition to raising funds through the bench-press competition, Officer Willis and his Explorers troop volunteer annually at SONY – Long Island's Spring Games. He also plans to become involved with the Law Enforcement Torch Run in 2004.

"It's definitely inspiring to work with Special Olympics athletes," Officer Willis said. ■ JF

Supporters Needed for 2004 Special Olympics New York Summer Games

Games returning to Hofstra; will feature thousands of athletes and fans.

The energy level was overwhelming as Bay Shore's Sean O'Rourke pulled away from his competition during the 3,000-meter race at the Hofstra University-based 2003 Special Olympics New York Summer Games. The crowd roared as the hometown hero pumped his fist and crossed the finish line in first place, in 11 minutes and 27 seconds.

O'Rourke, who also helped light the Special Olympics Cauldron during the Opening Ceremonies, said: "I wish the other athletes could take my place and feel what I was feeling."

This summer, approximately 2,800 Special Olympics athletes and coaches will indeed get to feel what O'Rourke felt as he ticked off the laps: the thrill of competition.

The Summer Games will return to Hofstra

for the second consecutive year from June 17 to 20. Several thousand fans and family members are expected to crowd into the stands as athletes compete in

Aquatics, Basketball, Bowling, Gymnastics, Power Lifting, Tennis, Track & Field and Volleyball. Olympic-style rules apply to all events.

Volunteers, sponsors and many other types of supporters are needed to make the Summer Games a success.

"Long Island was the ideal host for the Summer Games in 2003, and we're expecting 2004 to be an even better experience for our athletes," said Neal J. Johnson, President and Chief Executive Officer of SONY, which

provides cost-free sports training and competition opportunities to 40,000 children and adults with mental retardation. "The Summer Games are an opportunity for people with mental retardation to enjoy sports and to show the world exactly what they're capable of. And now that the community knows what the Summer Games are all about, we're hoping for even more support."

"I'm very impressed with the intensity that Special Olympics athletes compete with," said Tom Parrotta, head coach of Hofstra's men's basketball team, during last year's Summer Games. "They get what sports are about."

For more information, or to get involved in the 2004 Summer Games as a volunteer, sponsor, coach or fan, call 800-836-6976 or visit www.specialolympicsNY.org. ■ JF



Special Olympics New York Adds to Staff

Additions and changes are part of reorganization.

Special Olympics New York President and Chief Executive Officer Neal J. Johnson recently announced the following SONY staff additions and changes:

GENESEE REGION: The SONY – Genesee Region has hired Dave McEneaney of Hilton as Regional Director. Additionally, Marilyn Abel of Greece has been hired as a part-time secretary; Alberta Bennett of Waterloo is an Associate Director of Development; Stephen Fuller of Lima has been hired as a Director of Program; Laurie Johnston of Victor is an Administrative Assistant for the Genesee Region; and Marian Turner of Brighton has been named Director of Development for the Genesee Region.

■ McEneaney, who will oversee all operations in the Genesee Region, has been involved with Special Olympics for more than 20 years. He and his wife Carol started as volunteers at a local competition. McEneaney helped organize Olympic Village and has served on numerous area committees. McEneaney held senior management positions at Xerox and EDS, where he was responsible for Customer Administration, Information Technology, and Business Development. Most recently, McEneaney was President of Peak Performance Consulting, a management consulting firm.

■ Prior to the reorganization that made SONY – Monroe County part of SONY’s Genesee Region, Abel spent five years as SONY – Monroe County’s secretary. She has been involved with Special Olympics for 20 years as a volunteer and coach, and her daughter Megan is a multi-sport SONY athlete. In fact, according to Abel, Megan was the first Monroe County athlete to win a gold medal in Alpine Skiing in the state Winter Games.

■ Bennett brings an extensive background in the planning, development and execution of major promotional functions and special events to SONY’s Genesee Region. She has served as coordinator for the Lake Ontario Sportsfishing Promotion Council since 1996, and she worked as Seneca County’s Director of Tourism Promotion from 1987 to 1995. Bennett earned an associate’s degree in Travel and Tourism Management from Finger Lakes Community College in 1988.

■ As Director of Program for SONY’s Genesee Region, Fuller will be responsible for maintaining training and competition opportunities for the Genesee Region’s athletes. He also will be charged with creating new initiatives to serve the athletes. Fuller has worked as a senior manager at Mary Cariola Children’s Center since 1997. He provided administrative supervision and coordination of all residential services for an intermediate care facility. Fuller graduated from SUNY College at Brockport with a bachelor’s degree in Physical Education in 1990.

■ Johnston previously spent seven years as an Administrative Assistant for SONY – Monroe County. A self-described “jack of all trades,” she is responsible for performing a wide array of tasks in the SONY – Genesee Region office. Johnston earned a Fine Arts/Interior Design degree from Bennett College. Her son Erik is a Special Olympics New York athlete.

■ Turner was hired in 1991 as Coordinator of Special Projects for SONY – Monroe County and she became Monroe County’s Assistant Executive Director in 1995. She became involved with Special Olympics through the Brighton Rotary. As Director of Development, her duties will encompass much of the fund-raising done in SONY’s Genesee Region. Turner, whose work with Special Olympics recently earned her the Morrie Silver Award (presented to someone who has advanced sports in Rochester), has a Master of Education degree from Lehigh University.

LONG ISLAND REGION: Kerrilyn Clausman of Long Beach has been hired as an Associate Director of Competition for SONY – Long Island.

■ Clausman is a 2004 graduate of York College of Pennsylvania. She earned a bachelor’s degree in Sports Management, and she played for York’s field hockey team. As an Associate Director of Competition, she will assist SONY – Long Island Director of Program Joe Angelon with event coordination. She also will be responsible for organizing athlete training clubs in Long Island.

SCHENECTADY: New hires Kristen Adalian of Rensselaer, Steven Colburn of Clifton Park, Bridget Hughes of Eagle Mills,

Roz Hurley of Clifton Park, Chris Porreca of Gansevoort and Kristen Thorsen of Clifton Park will each work out of SONY’s Schenectady office. Rebekah Mount of Stillwater, who also works out of the Schenectady office, has been promoted from Administrative Assistant to Associate Director of Development.

■ Adalian will work as an Administrative Assistant in SONY’s Development Department. She comes to SONY from the New York State Office of Mental Health, where she also was employed as an Executive Assistant. Adalian earned a bachelor’s degree in Business Management from Binghamton University in 2003, and she is currently pursuing a master’s degree.

■ As Director of Information Services, Colburn will serve as SONY’s primary Information Technology employee. He will provide support in computer maintenance and system administration, among other areas. Colburn last worked at CORESense Software Development, where he was UNIX Systems Administrator. Colburn also served in the U.S. Air National Guard, maintaining C-5 aircrafts, and he has an associate’s degree in Computer Science from Dutchess Community College. He replaces Julian Urquijo at SONY.

■ Hughes joins SONY as an Associate Director of Development, and her duties will include logistics for a statewide series of walk-a-thons to benefit SONY’s athletes. She also will work on logistics for SONY’s annual Satins, Silks & Stars gala, which takes place in Saratoga. Hughes was previously employed as a communications specialist at Parsons Child and Family Center. She earned a Master of Arts in Communications degree from the University at Albany in 2002.

■ Hurley has been hired as an Executive Secretary, working directly for SONY’s President and CEO, Neal J. Johnson. She previously worked at St. Anne’s Institute as an Executive Secretary. Additionally, Hurley spent eight years as an Administrative Secretary to the Principal at the Cuyahoga County Board of Mental Retardation in Ohio. She earned a Medical Assisting degree from Bryman’s Medical School in 1975. She replaces Trish Bergan at SONY.

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SONY's New Staff Members *Continued from P. 6*

■ Mount has been a full-time SONY employee since 2000 and, as an Associate Director of Development, her areas of responsibility will include telemarketing and direct mail programs, corporate research and support, and donor development research and support. Mount has telemarketing and direct mail expertise from her days prior to SONY; she previously worked for TeleMail Services Group/Xpress Info Solutions.

■ Porreca, who comes to SONY from State Farm Insurance, is a longtime Special Olympics Vermont volunteer. His brother, Mark, competes for Special Olympics Vermont. Porreca joins SONY as an Associate Director of Development, and he will provide logistical support for SONY's annual Silks & Satins 5K Run in Saratoga and the Law Enforcement Torch Run, which is the largest grassroots fund-raising and public awareness vehicle for Special Olympics in the world. Porreca earned a master's degree in Education from Frostburg State in 1998.

■ Thorsen was hired as a Director of Development, and she previously worked

for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, where she served as a campaign manager for the "Light the Night" walks. At SONY, she will be responsible for new initiatives, including a statewide series of walk-a-thons to benefit SONY's athletes. Thorsen earned a bachelor's degree in Sociology from Mary Washington College in 1996.

NEWYORK CITY: David Celentano of White Plains and Thomas Peyton of Wilton were both hired to work with the New York City Board of Education.

■ As a Supervisor of Program, Celentano will serve as SONY's liaison to District 75, which caters to students with severe physical and cognitive challenges. Celentano, who possesses a master's degree in Communications Studies/Public Relations from Iona College, will put together competitions and new initiatives for District 75. A former University of Rhode Island soccer player, he also will seek to increase District 75's involvement in existing SONY programs as well as initiatives such as So Get Into It and Unified Sports. He most recently worked as a manager/coordinator for the ARC of

Rockland.

■ Peyton has joined SONY as a Director of Program, and he will oversee SONY's relationship with the New York City Board of Education. Peyton brings over 15 years of experience as an administrator and teacher in the elementary and secondary education field. For the past four years, he has served as director of the Upward After School Program in East Harlem, creating educationally enriching experiences for 250 children. In addition to overseeing SONY's relationship with the Board of Education, he will work specifically with adaptive physical education teachers to create sports opportunities for their students.

"I'm excited about these changes," Johnson said. "Each of these individuals will help Special Olympics New York meet its number-one goal, which is to provide high-quality, cost-free sports opportunities to children and adults with mental retardation throughout New York state. These hirings are part of Special Olympics New York's ongoing reorganization, and each of these people will help us provide consistent services to our athletes." ■ JF

Plunge Brings Out Rochester's Finest *Continued from P. 1*

three years; and the Plunge raised approximately \$40,000, which is about double the amount generated in 2003.

"Wow, I'm almost at a loss for words," said Sgt. Sal Gerbino of the Gates Police Department, who serves as the Plunge's organizer. "Once again, Polar Bear Plungers have proven that the nastier the weather, the colder the water, the more fun they have."

Ten-year-old Faith Schneider of Greece had as much fun as anyone. Plunging for the third consecutive year, the youngster was also the top civilian fund-raiser, bringing in \$1,803.

"I put a bucket at my school, my grampa put a bucket at Woody's restaurant and I went door to door," Schneider said. "I think it's a good thing to do, to help other people."

Since the Plunge is an LETR event

(LETR is the largest grassroots fund-raiser and awareness vehicle for Special Olympics in the world, and it is run by volunteer law enforcement officials) there were many law enforcement officials on hand who share Schneider's sentiment. In fact, Monroe County Sheriff's Department Deputy Mike Goldfine not only plunged twice – Goldfine

went in once on his own and he also assisted a blind plunger – he topped all law enforcement officials by raising \$2,083.

"We owe law enforcement officials a world of

gratitude," said Neal J. Johnson, SONY's President and Chief Executive Officer.

"Police officers, corrections officers, state troopers, law enforcement officials from every walk of life have extremely demanding jobs, but they all band together on behalf of Special Olympics New York's athletes."

Sgt. Kevin Arnone of Attica Correctional Facility serves as a prime example of how dedicated law enforcement officials are to SONY. As co-director of the LETR, Arnone recruited 28 fellow Attica employees, including Superintendent James Conway, to plunge with him. Arnone's painstakingly crafted (cardboard) LETR boat, in which he and his companion entered the water, claimed first prize in the costume competition. Additionally, his 14-year-old son Adam became the first Special Olympics athlete to plunge at Lake Ontario.

"What a great day," Gerbino said. "Everyone came together and had fun for a great cause."

Sponsors for this year's Polar Bear Plunge included: Hot Shots Indoor Beach Volleyball; the Mall at Greece Ridge Center; the Chili Ave. Wal-Mart Supercenter; the New York State Correctional Officers and Police Benevolent Association (NYSCOPBA); Monroe Ambulance; Precise Tool and Manufacturing; LogicalSolutions.net; and 98PXY. ■ JF

"What a great day. Everyone came together and had fun for a great cause."

– Sgt. Sal Gerbino,
Polar Bear Plunge organizer



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2004 Calendar of Events

Picture of the Month



Matthew Mitchell of Area 25 won a bronze medal in Floor Hockey Skills at SONY's 2004 Winter Games.

SONY Staff / Darcie Henderson

MARCH

- 6 Coaches Meeting – *Genesee Region*, Geneseo
- 7 Bowling Tournament, 13 Different Locations in Long Island
- 20 Crystal Ball Olympic Gala – *Genesee Region*, Hyatt Regency
- 21 Long Island Swim Tournament, Suffolk JCC

APRIL

- 17 Section 4 Basketball and Aquatics, Oswego
- 24 Section 1 Basketball and Aquatics, Fordham
- 25 Section 2 Basketball and Aquatics, Marist

MAY

- 1 Section 5 Basketball, Volleyball and Aquatics, Canisus
- 8 Section 2 Volleyball, TBD
- 14 Roller Skating - Horizon FX
- 15 Aquatics – *Genesee Region*, Letchworth Central
- 17 Swing with the Legends Golf Tournament
- 22 Volleyball – *Genesee Region*, Chemung
- 22 3rd Annual Western New York Fire Truck Pull at The Twin District Fire Department
- 29 Spike's Hike – *Genesee Region*, Frontier Field
- TBD Monte Carlo Night – *Long Island Region*, Stewart Thomas Manor

* For more details, please contact Special Olympics New York office.

Mission: To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-style sports for children and adults with mental retardation, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.