



## Be a fan!

Here are a few comments we've received from people who have bought a 2011 calendar:

**"I have just picked up the calendars, and wow! They are so awesome!"**

**"How can anyone resist?"**

**"I'll take two they look great!"**

**"Very impressed."**

**"Thank you for these. We would love five."**

**"Our second order and more to come!"**

**"It's wonderful!"**

**"It's gorgeous!"**

Each month features a photo of one of our incredible athletes in action along with a short profile of the athlete. At the bottom of each month is a line from the Be a fan campaign, such as "If you are a fan of fun, then you are already a fan of Special Olympics."

Beautifully designed, these large (A3) calendars are spiral bound at the top with a hook for hanging. All this for \$20!!!! They are perfect holiday gifts and will look great in an office, club room, kitchen, schoolroom, workshop, gym, you name it!

All profits from the sale of the calendars will go towards the 2013 National Summer Games.

Contact your local Club or [bettef@specialolympics.org.nz](mailto:bettef@specialolympics.org.nz) or 027 297 7006

## From the CEO's desk

As 2010 draws to a close, I have been reflecting on an extremely active year. I am thrilled that we launched the national Athlete Leadership Programme and our first class of Global Messengers graduated – they are true ambassadors. That we will be sending our first full volunteer management team to the 2011 World Summer Games was also a key milestone.

We said that 2010 would mark a paradigm shift in getting our internal support systems working more effectively, that we would build more awareness and understanding for people with intellectual disabilities and that we would fine tune our financial management. I believe we are moving positively in the right direction.

In 2011 we will place more energy in supporting our Clubs and addressing volunteer succession planning. We will use a solutions-based approach to improve our connections with the corporate sector and Government.

My team joins me in extending our very special thanks to all our volunteers – from our Board to our community supporters, from our sponsors to our stakeholders – for your tireless support and energy.

Finally to our athletes, you are our purpose for being. The commitment, dedication and respect that you show for each other makes us very proud to support you.

*Wishing you safe and happy holidays! Kathy Gibson, Chief Executive Officer*

## Congratulations, Alex!

Alex Snedden, a member of Special Olympics Tamaki, won this year's "Attitude Youth Award," sponsored by the Wayne Francis Charitable Trust.

The Attitude Awards celebrate the outstanding achievements of New Zealanders living with a disability and have grown out of the Attitude TV series, which screens on TV ONE on Sundays and TVNZ 7 on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Alex (22) is a youth advocate who is continually pushing the boundaries of what it means to live with an intellectual disability. Born with Down syndrome, Alex has made presentations to disabled people, parents, school students and professionals in New Zealand, Australia, Hawaii and Canada. Earlier this year Alex addressed the world Down syndrome conference in Ireland.

Alex relishes the experience of sharing and considers all of this work as making the community a kinder, more caring and just place to live and has a passion for mentoring young people with disabilities.

"It's important to show what people with an intellectual disability are able to achieve." says Alex.



*Helena Francis (Wayne Francis Charitable Trust) and Alex Snedden*

Alex works three jobs, he volunteers at the Auckland food bank and for a youth disability camp. This effort won him recognition from the New Zealand Down Syndrome Association with a national award for his outstanding contribution to the community.

Alex has been active in Special Olympics since 2006 when he competed as a basketball player for Special Olympics Waitakere. He continued playing basketball in 2008 and 2009, culminating in his playing for Waitakere at the 2009 National Games in Palmerston North. In 2010 he competed in two swim meets for Special Olympics Tamaki.



## You like us in real life – like us on Facebook!

Special Olympics New Zealand has a Facebook page where we have news, photos, conversation, announcements of events – all the great Facebook stuff. And remember: when the World Summer Games team is representing New Zealand in Greece, this is where you can follow the action and look at photos. Don't wait! Like us now! Search for Special Olympics New Zealand

## Welcome Global Messengers Class of 2011

Twelve athletes from throughout New Zealand have been chosen to participate in the Global Messenger Class of 2011.

Athletes from the North Island are: Ella Sharples (Auckland Central), Charlie Smith (Hibiscus Coast), Jason Donovan (Kapiti), Michael Conder (Tauranga), Kym O'Grady (Waikato), Judith Porter (Waitakere) and Athol Tipene (Whangarei). The South Island will be represented by: Frank Green (Canterbury), Chris Tilley (Nelson), Christopher Rielly and Thomas Van der Lugt (Otago) and Grant McKenzie (Southland).

"The Selection Panel was very impressed with the calibre of the short-listed applicants for 2011," says Kathy Gibson, Special Olympics New Zealand Chief Executive Officer. "The preparation, delivery and attitude shown by the athletes during the interview process was outstanding. Our thanks also go to the supporting Clubs for their input and guidance required to prepare the athletes for the interviews."

Special Olympics New Zealand has again partnered with AUT SHINE Sport to provide the four training programmes for the athletes.

More information about each athlete will be available on the Global Messenger Class of 2011 page on [www.specialolympics.org.nz](http://www.specialolympics.org.nz) in early in 2011.



Chris Tilley (Special Olympics Nelson) provided the artwork for one of the Special Olympics New Zealand 2010 holiday cards.

## Now we're more than friends!



On 19 November 2010, Special Olympics New Zealand and New Zealand Riding for the Disabled (RDA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that seals an already successful relationship.

"Special Olympics New Zealand provides year-round training and competition in 14 Olympic-type sports," says Kathy Gibson, Special Olympics New Zealand Chief Executive Officer. "We are SPARC's lead sporting organisation for individuals with intellectual disabilities but we realise that organisations like RDA have expertise in specific areas. It is to our athletes' benefit that we tap into the knowledge, experience and resources of RDA and its parent body the Federation of Riding for the Disabled International."

"RDA has always been determined to provide the best outcomes for its riders," says Guy Ockenden, Riding for the Disabled Chief Executive Officer. "That goal was at the forefront of why we want to work with Special Olympics New Zealand."

Special Olympics New Zealand and RDA already work together in many parts of New Zealand where RDA provides equestrian training and/or facilities for Special Olympics athletes. The relationship has been beneficial and the two organisations are very good friends. But, as Guy says, "It is one thing to be very good friends. Committing to make a relationship work is another."

The MOU will influence the organisations as they each develop policies and training programmes for volunteers and athletes. It will also provide on-the-ground opportunities for athletes in both organisations.

In the past, says Guy, RDA was a place where riders 'went'. In recent years, he



SPECIAL OLYMPIC EQUESTRIAN RIBBON DAY

Anne Anderson



Ian McKelvie, Chair Special Olympics New Zealand and Joy Durrant, Chair, Riding for the Disabled, sign a Memorandum of Understanding; Guy Ockenden and Kathy Gibson witness.

says, the organisation has developed new opportunities for riders beyond recreational riding. Coming together with Special Olympics New Zealand adds a competition pathway for riders with options for Ribbon Days as well as regional, national and international competition.

That model was put into action during the very week the MOU was signed at two Special Olympics New Zealand Ribbon Days on the South Island. Jan Aitken, Lower South Island Regional Sports Coordinator, says that at both the Wanaka and Dunedin events, riders from local RDA groups competed and, she says, it was the first ever competition for most of them.



# Global Messengers – back where it all began

On 23 November, Special Olympics New Zealand Global Messengers Class of 2010 was welcomed back to Parliament for their graduation ceremony.

Following an official welcome to Parliament by MP Chris Tremain, Chris Linnell extended a welcome on behalf of Special Olympics New Zealand. He invited his fellow Global Messenger Fiona Strong to address the audience. Fiona spoke brilliantly about her experience as a Global Messenger and how she has speaking engagements booked through March! Athlete Michael Holdsworth thanked the audience for attending the ceremony.

The athletes have completed four training sessions through a partnership with AUT SHINE Sport programme and now have skills in areas such as public speaking, goal setting and governance. The athletes will be invited to attend additional seminars in 2011.

The athletes began their Global Messenger experience at Parliament in April when Prime Minister John Key launched the New Zealand programme.



## Greenhithe Giraffes Reach for the Stars

On November 4th, the Special Olympics Greenhithe basketball team had a very special training session with two of the Breakers, Mika Vukona and Alex Pledger. It was a fantastic chance for the young Giraffes to meet their heroes and shoot some hoops with some of New Zealand's best basketball players.



*Fiona Strong speaking at Parliament*



*The Graduating Class of 2010*

## Be healthy!

Volunteer Dina Cole, medical director for the Special Olympics New Zealand 2009 National Summer Games, attended a Special Olympics Health Promotion training workshop in Brunei.

Health Promotion is another of the Health Athletes initiatives. Athletes visit related 'stations' that have booklets, posters and promotional materials about healthy living and health care. The overall theme, says Dina who works for Mid Central DHB as a Clinical Nurse Specialist - Lead Intellectual Disability, is that health promotion – and taking care of yourself – can keep you from getting something bad.

At the first station, the athletes' blood pressure is taken and an explanation is given about what blood pressure is and why it's important. In the friendly, relaxed Healthy Athletes environment where people speak normal, plain language (and with the companionship of a parent, caregiver or coach), the blood pressure reading taken can be considered a baseline reading.

The other six stations include measurements of and discussions on: height, weight, waist measurement and body mass index; nutrition; sun safety; smoking; exercise; and bone density.

Special Olympics New Zealand is working with Dina to roll-out the programme here.

## Happy 21st!



Nearly 100 people gathered on 28 November 2010 to help Special Olympics Howick-Pakuranga celebrate its 21st birthday.

The Club started with a handful of athletes including Scot Jackson. Scot is the only athlete of the original group still active in the Club and he was on hand for the birthday party – and to help cut the cake!

In 1989, aquatics was the only sport the Club offered. Now more than 60 athletes train and compete in seven sports: aquatics, athletics, basketball, bowling (tenpin), football, snowsports and table tennis.

Laurinne Laing, the Club coordinator, says that guests looked through photo albums, newspaper clippings, AGM minutes and watched slideshows of the last 21 years. "There was a lot of talk of old times and sentences that began 'I remember when...'"





Kwame Williams-Accra at the Special Olympics 2009 National Summer Games in Palmerston North

## Congratulations Kwame and Steven

Kwame Williams-Accra won the Athlete with a Disability award at the 2010 College Sport Wellington Sports Awards. Kwame, a sprinter from Rongotai College has been named to the Special Olympics New Zealand World Summer Games team that will travel to Greece in June next year.

Meanwhile, Steven Ramlose won the ASB College Sport, Auckland, Athlete with a Disability section. Steven is a student at Alfriston College and is a member of college basketball and football teams that came 1st in Division 2 at Special Olympics Schools Ribbon Days.

Steven attended the 2009 National Games as a swimmer for Special Olympics Howick-Pakuranga and plays for school 1st 15 Rugby Team. He was awarded the 2010 Alfriston College Special Olympics Cup and the 2010 Most Valuable Player for Special Olympics.

## Way to go Ray and Sam!

Congratulations to Ray Smith and Sam Clifford from Special Olympics Canterbury. On 20 November, they travelled to Ashburton to run in their first half marathon – that's 21km – at Lake Hood. They competed against 192 other athletes.

In the months leading up to the race, they covered hundreds of kilometres in training and endured sore, blistered feet and aching legs after long training runs. Their hard work and commitment paid off.

They completed the race 1hour 48 minutes and sprinted to the finish line in 44th and 45th place ahead of 145 mainstream athletes.

## WOW Conrad!

One of the nearly 10,000 cyclists who pedaled all or part of the way around Lake Taupo in the 2010 Contact Lake Taupo Cycle Challenge on 27 November was Special Olympics New Zealand athlete Conrad Ryan! Conrad rode the whole 160 km! We bet your legs were sore!

Contact [bettef@specialolympics.org.nz](mailto:bettef@specialolympics.org.nz) if you know of other athletes with amazing achievements.

Check us out in the December/January issue of Unlimited magazine! Read a great story about Special Olympics New Zealand and some of our great corporate partnerships and corporate volunteers, including Datacom and KiwiRail.



## Catch us on Attitude!

On 19 December 2010, Attitude will show a review of Special Olympics Unity Cup that will combine footage from New Zealand and the game in South Africa. Sunday morning, 8.30 am, TV One. This programme was due to air on 19 November but was pre-empted for a special news report on the Pike River Mine disaster.



Special Olympics New Zealand  
Pelorus Trust Sports House,  
93 Hutt Park Road, Seaview,  
Lower Hutt 5010  
PO Box 38344,  
Wellington Mail Centre  
Lower Hutt 5045  
Ph: (04) 560 0360 Fx: (04) 560 0400



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