



February 2021 Newsletter - Issue #2



2021 Inspiration Walk Postponed

This year marks what would be the 20th Anniversary of our annual Inspiration Walk. (For a little bit of history about the origins of the Inspiration Walk, check out the February 2016 newsletter [here](#).) After having to hold last year's Walk virtually, we were looking forward to having a big 20th Anniversary Walk this year. We regret to say that we will not be having the Walk this April as

originally planned due to COVID19 restrictions. However, our Fundraising Chairpersons, Cole Schnorf and Allan Waschak, have been working on having a big event in the fall to include the Walk and an Over The Edge event. Stay tuned for additional information.

The Walk has been our single fundraiser for many years and provided us with much needed funds to run our training and competition programs. We look forward to being able to celebrate this 20th Anniversary in some form.



Thank You to All Our Plungers

We want to thank all those athletes, coaches, volunteers and friends of SOHO who did a virtual plunge (or more), celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Special Olympics Maryland/Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge. Very exciting was another DJ Kopek plunge in Howard County with super plungers athletes Thomas Smith and Christine

Towne and Allan Kittleman at the West Friendship Fire Station. Remember, SOHO will receive **70%** of all the funds raised **as part of the Howard County Team Page**. [Click here to help us reach our \\$10K goal.](#)

Office Hours

The office is open from 4:00-7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. on Thursdays. Individuals entering the office are required to wear a mask and to use social distancing.

Newsletter Scavenger Hunt

Congratulations to **Kenny Long** who won the January Scavenger Hunt correctly naming Maureen and Melba McCarthy as the mother and daughter team who ran Special Olympics Howard County in the mid-1990's. Their names were found in the All About MD ABLE Accounts and Coaches Training Opportunities articles.

This month's scavenger hunt question is **"In what sport did our oldest athlete participate?"** The correct answer **must** list both the sport **AND** the article it is found in. The first person to find the answer and email info@somdhc.org with the answer **in the correct format** will win a restaurant gift card. Also, no one can win two months in a row (in order to give more people the opportunity to win.)

Volunteer Orientations

Super Plungers Allan, Thomas, and Christine talk to DJ Kopec and his family before their final plunge. (See pool behind them.)



The next volunteer orientation will be held virtually on March 29th from 7:00-8:00 p.m. Anyone who is interested in obtaining volunteer certification should contact Janet Larrimore (janetlarrimore@somdhc.org) for further information. Pre-registration is required.

Towson University Health Research Opportunity

A graduate student at Towson University College of Health Professions is conducting qualitative research on the experiences and perspectives of Special Olympics Athletes, as well as their understanding of audiology. The brief survey asks questions related to--- attending healthy athletes, understanding what an audiologist does, and positive or negative feelings about visiting doctors. For further information, see description and survey [here](#).

Outstanding Student Volunteer Scholarship Applications Due March 4th

The deadline to apply to the Outstanding Student Volunteer Scholarships is fast approaching. Applications for all four scholarships are due on **March 4, 2021**.

There are several scholarships and **students are encouraged to apply to scholarships under both groups** (SOHO and Community Foundation of Howard County). Contact the SOHO office if you have any questions.

Scholarships under Special Olympics Howard County:

Jackie Burk Memorial Scholarship for Outstanding Student Volunteer (up to \$1,500) (Created in 2004 by Jack and Linda Burk in memory of their daughter, Jackie, a special friend and volunteer to Special Olympics Howard County.)

Kathy Lindner Memorial Scholarship for Outstanding Student Volunteer (\$500) (Created in 2012 in memory of Special Olympics Howard County's first Volunteer Coordinator)

The application for these two scholarships can be found [here](#). You only need to complete one application to be considered for both the Jackie Burk Scholarship and the Kathy Lindner Scholarship. Completed applications (to include all recommendations) must be received in the SOHO office (8970 Route 108, Suite A-1, Columbia, MD 21045) **by March 3rd**. Applications can be emailed to info@somdhc.org or put in the dropbox outside the office. See above for current office hours.

Scholarships under the Community Foundation of Howard County:

Descriptions of these scholarships, eligibility criteria, and applications can be found [here](#).

Allan Homes Outstanding Student Volunteer Scholarship (Up to \$1,500) Only for students who volunteered with the Special Olympics Howard County Swim Team.

Schnorf Family Special Olympics Volunteer Scholarship (Up to \$1,500) For Special Olympics Howard County student volunteers in any sport or events.

Spread the Word: Inclusion-March, 3 2021

Join the celebration! Schools and communities across the country will be celebrating Spread the Word: Inclusion Day on March 3, 2021! Previously "Spread the Word to End the Word," Spread the Word: Inclusion Day celebrates the our daily commitment to promoting inclusion in our words and actions. SOMD has put together some resources [here](#).

Charitable Deductions for Standard Filers

Only good through the 2020 tax year, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed in March, allows taxpayers taking the standard deduction to claim up to \$300 in charitable deductions on the 2020 Federal Tax Return Married-filing-jointly can deduct up to \$600. To qualify, donations must be given to a

Registration for Competitive Fitness Now Open

SOHO will launch **CompFit**, a competitive fitness program that can be done 100% virtually. The general program provides both a training and a competition experience for athletes interested in fitness.

Participants will each select three fitness events from a list of 15, will train in those events and then compete based on the degree of improvement they have in the event. The program is described in [detail here](#) as well as videos describing the fitness events to select from. Participants **MUST** have current medicals. Check the website for registration information or [click here](#). Please ensure you get a "Thanks for Registering Your Athlete" message after clicking Submit.



Are You Ready For Spring Sports?

Although spring sports have not yet been finalized due to COVID restrictions, we're hoping to offer some in-person and online sports. Remember that all athletes must have a current medical before they can participate in a Special Olympics program. It's a good time to ensure that your medical will be current once programs open up again. Medicals last for three years. If you are unsure of when your medical expires, contact info@somdhc.org. Don't wait until the last minute to schedule your physical.

Thanks to a national partnership with MinuteClinic, Special Olympics athletes are eligible to receive a sports physical at a discounted rate of \$49.00. This **voucher (need to add link)** must be presented at the time of the physical. It is also important that the athlete bring the SOMD Medical form with them to ensure the proper paperwork is completed. To find the closest MinuteClinic and to make an appointment, visit www.minuteclinic.com. Please note, this is not an endorsement of MinuteClinic by Special Olympics Maryland or Special Olympics Howard County. We are just passing along a resource for athletes and their families.

Current Status of SOHO Sports Programs

SOHO Sports Currently in Session

Alpine skiing: We got iced out of the last of our lake practices, but the athletes did have fun on the zoom practices on Thursday nights. By our last practice, they were all asking the ski equipment and competition questions, but they loved to exercise most of all.

501(c)(3) non-profit, such as Special Olympics Howard County,. Keep a record of your gifts.

For donors who itemize their deductions and directly write off gifts to charity, the current deduction cap of 60% of adjusted gross income has been lifted to 100% through the CARES Act.



Inspiration Walk Shirts And Incentive Prizes

The 2020 Inspiration Walk shirts and incentive prizes are available in the office. All those who donated \$50 are eligible for a IW long-sleeved t-shirt. Other incentive prizes are available for those that donated or raised \$1,000 or above. Items can be picked up at the office during office hours (10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Thursdays and 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Tuesdays. Send an email to JanetLarrimore@somdhc.org - in advance to let her know when you plan to arrive and what size shirt(s) you need so that she can have items ready for you. Shirts and prizes must be picked up at the office; items will not be mailed.

Helpful Hints If Your Athlete Needs To Go To Hospital

Are you worried about what would happen if your child/adult with special needs was admitted to a hospital while COVID 19 restrictions are in place? Would you be able to stay with them to advocate for their needs? The answer is YES. The state of Maryland has put guidelines in place allowing parents or guardians of individuals with intellectual and bowling developmental disabilities to stay at the hospital even though that privilege is not allowed to the general public.



coach Marissa kept the athletes moving with the Wednesday exercise program and celebrated with a dance party on Feb. 17. As soon as the ice melts, the snowshoe athletes will get together in person one more time for a race event. (Photo: Snowshoe Dance Party)

Snowshoe:

February was not a good month for snowshoe athletes! Hazardous road conditions and Centennial Park closures resulted in cancellation of all the in person practices. However,



Basketball 3x3PD: *On line exercise (former 3v3 PD athletes only.)*

3v3 player Development continues to practice two evenings a week. Turnout has been great. We are seeing lots of improvement and most importantly, everyone is having fun!!

Above:Owen Reynolds with his dad Coach Ian demonstrating a drill.

Basketball 5x5PD: Coordinator Stacy Valentine reports that nine athletes, three coaches, and three mentors practice once a week. One mentor commented that seeing and practicing these skills will likely move the athletes forward in their development.

Special Olympics Maryland Online Programs

SOMD Saturday night dances with DJ Kris Stone. To register, **CLICK HERE**. Dances run from 7-8:30 p.m. February dance themes are:

- March 6th: Virtual Background Night
- March 13th: Hip Hop Night
- March 20th: St. Patrick's Day Dance
- March 27th: 90's Night

Athlete Virtual Leadership and Social Clubs - Among the many activities are Meditation and Mindful Mondays, Cooking Lessons, Morning Coffee Chats, Sports Trivia, Being Internet Awesome, Warrior Fitness, Language and Culture (Hawaii), Karaoke, and many more. Descriptions of events and registration information can be found **here**.

Virtual Movement: This is an online community of athletes, staff, and volunteers sharing what they're doing to stay active, stay healthy, and stay

[Click Here For Info](#)

Car Donation

Through the efforts of longtime coach and volunteer, Duke Silvea, Special Olympics can now accept car donations to benefit our program. If you have a car you would like to donate, please contact the office at 410-740-0500 or email info@somdhc.org. We will come and pick up your car, ready it for sale, and provide you with a tax deduction for the amount the car is sold for at auction. Please help us by donating an unwanted vehicle!

Photos Of Our Athletes

You can enjoy photos of our athletes at practice, competitions and other events on our photo page.

[Event Photos](#)

Coaches Training and Resources

Special Olympics requires that all of our coaches be certified by taking training classes at least once every three years. SOHO will reimburse any coach who wishes to take any of the online training courses offered below.

Coaches who wish to apply for any head coach position for an event above the state level must have earned and maintained Advanced-Level Coach Sport Certification. In addition, in order for any team to be considered for possible selection for an event above the state level, its coach must have earned and maintained such certification. Also, any coach who wishes to be considered for one of the Head Coach or assistant coach positions for individual sports on Team Maryland

connected while we can't have in person programs! [CLICK HERE](#) for more information. (Enjoy the many postings of SOHO athlete Charles Gaines!) Don't have Facebook? No problem! Visit this [website](#) for archived workouts, social clubs, and a calendar of events. Don't miss the virtual block party section!

YAPpy Hour: Grab your Young Athletes and join in for the half-hour virtual practices based upon SOMD's Young Athlete Program (YAP) curriculum! We guarantee you'll leave #YAPpy Mondays at 4:30 PM Wednesdays at 4:30 PM Friday at 10:00 AM



In Memoriam

Laura Wetherald passed away on February 19th. Laura worked in therapeutic recreation in Montgomery County for five years before moving to Howard County in 1987 to oversee Therapeutic Recreation. In 1998, she was promoted to Bureau Chief of Recreation. She was involved with several new facilities opening in the County including the Gary J. Arthur, North Laurel and new Roger Carter Community Centers. She was involved in the Play for All Accessible Playground at Blandair Park which will open in the early spring. You

can't help but see her legacy all over Howard County. A tireless advocate for our community, she clearly left this world better than she found it and will be sorely missed. Our deepest condolences to her family.

Vaccine Information:

COVID 19 Vaccine: Pre-Registration Survey Now Available in Howard County for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

The pre-registration survey is now available for adults with developmental disabilities to receive the COVID vaccine. (This is in addition to Howard County Residents age 75+, Howard County Residents 65-74, Educators & Childcare Providers, and Healthcare Providers that are also listed on the Howard County website.) Visit the Howard County Health Department website [here](#).

Mobile Units to Deliver Vaccines to Homebound At-Risk Adults

Howard County's Mobile Integrated Community Health (MICH) team now has two mobile units that will vaccinate specific homebound at-risk adults as identified by the Howard County Health Department. To inquire about home vaccination for adults with developmental disabilities, call the Health Department COVID line at 410-313-6284.

(athletics, bocce, bowling, powerlifting, golf, swimming, tennis) must have earned/maintained Advanced Coach Certification in the sport for which they are applying.

Advanced Sport Certification requires successful completion of the Principles of Coaching course (see below), the next virtual session for which is scheduled on **Sunday, March 21** (Click [here](#) to register.) There is a maximum capacity of 20 for this course (first registered, first accepted). Additional courses may be added if needed.

[Coaches Training](#)

[Coaches Guidelines](#)

Concussion Training

ALL Special Olympics coaches (head coaches and assistant coaches) must complete a concussion training certification process prior to starting coaching and once every three years.

[More Info Here](#)

Newsletter Information

If you are an athlete, parent or caregiver, we highly recommend that you do not Unsubscribe from this newsletter. You will miss valuable information about seasonal sports registration, policies, highlights, activities and other relevant information. Please add info@somdhc.org and bobbaker@somdhc.org email addresses to your address book so that this letter does not go into your Junk Mail folder. If you have any suggestions or questions about the newsletter, please let us know at info@somdhc.org.



Recreation and Parks Activities

On-line registration for Spring and Summer Activities will begin on **March 3rd at 6:00 p.m.** You can see all the opportunities **here** in the new Activity Guide.

SOHO Merchandise for Sale

No need to go out to stores. We are continuing our big sale on SOHO merchandise. Need a birthday gift? Want to thank a sponsor? Lots to choose from.

- Ice scraper \$1.00
- Sherpa blanket \$15.00
- Navy short sleeved T-shirt \$10.00 (limited sizes)
- Maroon long sleeved t-shirt \$10.00
- Foldable umbrella \$15.00
- Foldable Chair \$20.00
- Small foldable stool with carry bag \$10.00
- Seat cushions \$5.00
- SOHO Face Mask **SPECIAL** - \$1.00 each
- Tote Bag - insulated & foldable \$8

Don't miss out on these great prices and show your SOHO Pride with these items!! Contact the office (410-740-0500) or email info@somdhc.org to place an order.



The Lisa Higgins-Hussman Foundation



Special Olympics Howard County

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Contact SOHC Today

