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December 2020 Newsletter - Issue #12

Here's to a Healthy and Happy New Year!



Ever Thought of Plunging? Virtually Plunge Without Leaving Home!

Plunge 2021 represents the 25th Anniversary of the Special Olympics Maryland/Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge. Not only is this a Maryland state tradition but it is the largest Plunge in the world.

Given the recent spikes in COVID-19 across the state, Special Olympics Maryland made the difficult decision to cancel its In-Person Plunge. In order to keep this plunge tradition alive, individuals are encouraged to "virtually" plunge from home. Instead, individuals and teams can participate at home or other off-site location of their choice. As a Virtual Plunger, you can fundraise and receive the coveted Plunge sweatshirt and will have the ability to be creative and film your own Plunge at home. Virtual Plungers will also have a chance to take home a Plunger of the Week title and prize pack! Click [here](#) to follow the steps to be a virtual plunger and how to film and submit a video of your "plunge". (Register with our **SOHO Team** by **CLICKING HERE**. SOHO will receive **70%** of the funds raised on this page.). Our Director, Bob, and his family did the plunge already! Check out their plunge on our [FaceBook page](#).

Every week from 12/1/20 to 1/31/21, "plungers" will can submit their Virtual Plunge video for a chance to win big! At least 2 Virtual Plunge videos per week will be selected to have the Plunge Maryland community vote on. The Virtual Plunge video that receives the most votes at the of each week will be named our **Plunger of the Week**, score a Plunge Prize Pack, and be entered in our **Plunger of the Year** contest. For more information and to see weekly plunger videos to date, click [here](#).

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 correctly identified the November scavenger hunt answering the question "In what year was SOHO Director Bob Baker inducted in the Howard County Community Sports Hall of Fame?" The correct answer with its location was 2006 and it was found in the article Inspiration Walk Shirts and Incentive Prizes.

This month's scavenger hunt question is: Name the 5 Orioles players that were guests at our Inspiration Walks. The correct answer must list all the names AND the articles they are found in. The first person to find the clues and email info@somdhc.org with the answer in the correct format will win a restaurant gift card.

New SOHO Website

If you've never wanted to actually jump into the waters at Sandy Point but wanted to be involved in the plunge, virtual plunging is just for you. Have some fun! **PLUNGE!**



Snowshoers on Snow!

Athletes from the Howard County snowshoe team took advantage of the recent snowstorm to practice their snowshoe skills at Centennial Park. A quick shout out to Monica Evans who ran with her

snowshoes on the snow for the first time! (Photo:Calvin Racette at practice.)

Minute Clinic Discounted Sports Physicals for Special Olympics Athletes

Remember that all athletes must have a current medical before they can participate in a Special Olympics program. Even though we have not been having in-person training and competition, 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 get your physical.

Thanks to a national partnership with MinuteClinic, Special Olympics athletes are eligible to receive a sports physical Jay Gibbons at a discounted rate of \$49.00. This **voucher** 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.

Start the New Year with Dancing Feet!

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

January 2nd: Snowflake Ball/Winter Wonderland

January 9th: Motown Night

January 16th: Guys Night. All song requests will come from the guys.

January 23rd: Black and White Night

January 30th: Polar Bear Plunge Theme

February 6th: Mardi Gras/Masquerade

February 13th: Valentine's Day Dance

February 20th: British Invasion

February 27th: Cosplay and all things sci-fi and fantasy

Our new website is up and running. It is located in the same place - www.somdhc.org. The new format really showcases our organization, our athletes and all the volunteers who make this organization what it is. It features lots of information about our organization, sports programs, policies, resources and lots more. We appreciate any feedback. (Send to info@somdhc.org.)

Volunteer Orientations

For 2021, we are suspending virtual Volunteer Orientations until March. Anyone who is interested in obtaining volunteer certification should contact Janet Larrimore (janetlarrimore@somdhc.org) for further information.

All About Maryland ABLE Accounts

If you missed the October presentation by Kelly Nelson from Maryland ABLE (click **here** to view the presentation), she will be giving an overview of the program again on Wednesday, January 13th from 10:00 a.m-11:30 a.m. To register, click **here**.

Maryland ABLE is an investment tool for people with disabilities, designed to help beneficiaries save for their everyday needs, save and invest in a tax-free account, and prepare for the future without losing federal, state or local benefits. For more information, visit the Maryland ABLE web site **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

Recreation and Parks:

January 8th: , 6:30-9:30 pm: Let's Go Sailing, Register [here](#).
February 5th: 6:30-9:30 pm: Sweet Heart Ball. Register [here](#).

Virtual Athlete Leadership Events for January and February

All January and February SOMD leadership activities and Social Clubs can be found [here](#). Among the many activities are Meditation and Mindful Mondays, Cooking Lessons, Morning Coffee Chats, Sports Trivia, Being Internet Awesome, Warrior Fitness, Karaoke, and Poetry. Descriptions of events and registration information are on the link above.

Remember, if you are interested in a topic or want to host an evening or if you know someone who has an interesting hobby or knows a lot about a subject, send an email to Jason Schriml (jschriml@somd.org) with your idea or leads.

Virtual Movement: If you haven't done so already, join the **SOMD Virtual MOVEMENT!** This is an online community of athletes, staff, and volunteers sharing what they're doing to stay active, stay healthy, and stay connected while we can't have in-person programs! **CLICK HERE** for more information. Don't have Facebook Brian Roberts? No problem! Visit this **NEW 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

Norma Morales, mother of SOHO athletes Susy and Carlos, passed away from Covid on December 30th. Norma was an impassioned autism mom and community leader. She volunteered as an interpreter and translator for HCAS to support Spanish-speaking

parents, helping the organization expand its outreach and special education services. At the December Howard County Autism Society Annual Meeting, she was honored along with with Marianela Estrada as the 2020 Madhu Thibaudeau Volunteers of the Year for their work in founding and leading the HCAS Latino Parent Group. SOHO extends its deepest condolences to the Morales family.

Holiday Sale on SOHO Merchandise

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 All Bumbry must be given to a 501(c)(3) non-profit, such as Special Olympics Howard County,. Keep a record of your gifts.

For doors 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 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 two thousand six 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

No need to go out to stores. We are continuing our big sale on SOHO merchandise.

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 \$5.00 **

**If you would like to have the mask mailed to you, add \$2.00 for shipping and handling.

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.

Amazon Smile

Did you know that you can donate to Special Olympics Maryland simply by shopping on Amazon? Sign up for Amazon Smile and 0.5% of your eligible purchases will be donated to Special Olympics. Simply **USE THIS LINK** to designate Special Olympics Maryland as your charity. Then be sure to use the same link every time you shop at Amazon. It's that easy to make a difference!

Coaches Training Opportunities

Coaching Special Olympics Athletes (CSOA) -- - **Coaching Special Olympics Athletes** (CSOA) -- SOMD is pleased to offer in-person training sessions for Coaching Special Olympics Athletes, a requirement for all Coaches. (*Due to the conversational and interactive nature of this course, we must have a minimum of 7 registrants at least 3 business days prior to the course in order for it to be held.*)

Saturday, January 23, 2021, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. In-person Training session at SOMD HQ (limit of 20 participants) (*Note: We will make a determination no later than November 2, 2020, whether this session will be held as an "in-person" or "virtual" course.*) To register, **CLICK HERE**.

Principles of Coaching (PoC) - SOMD is pleased to host additional sessions of the Principles of Coaching course, necessary for all coaches wishing to take teams/athletes or serve as a coach to any competition above the state level (including USA Games, World Games, NITs, NIRSA events, etc.). This free course is intended for coaches with a *minimum of two years coaching experience* and, along with appropriate sport-specific training, serves to certify a coach as an Advanced coach. (*Due to the conversational and interactive nature of this course, and the need*

state of Maryland has put guidelines in place allowing parents or Kevin Millar guardians of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to stay at the hospital even though that privilege is not allowed to the general public.

[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 Aubrey Huff 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!

List of Fun for Everyone

The "List of Fun for Everyone" is a weekly list of fun activities for athletes and their families. To get an updated list, simply write an email EVERY WEEK to "ListofFun4everyone@gmail.com" and you'll get an automated response. There is no email "group" that you need to join.

Photos Of Our Athletes

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

[Event Photos](#)

Coaches Resources

Special Olympics requires that all of our coaches be certified by taking

to send "hard copy" course materials to participants in advance of the session, we must have a **minimum of 7 registrants at least 5 business days prior** to a virtual PoC course in order for it to be held.)

Important Note On All Virtual Training Sessions: Given the interactive nature of these courses, if a course gets changed to a virtual training session, participants **MUST** be able to join the Zoom meeting with a webcam, speaker and microphone so we can see and hear everyone during the course. Please also check in advance of the session that Zoom works properly for your computer (with webcam, microphone and speaker) as we will have limited opportunity to provide tech assistance during the session itself. (Zoom's online help has been fairly solid.)

Recreation and Parks Winter Activities

Registration for Recreation and Parks Winter Activities continues. Activities include: Book Club, Collectives Club, Travel, Bingo, Get Social Club, Music Bingo, Supper Club, Disney Trivia and Scavenger Hunts. Details of the activities (including dates, number of classes, cost, and registration number) can be found in the Winter Guide located [here](#).



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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 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.

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Contact SOHC Today

