

Special Olympics Louisiana



The Torchbearer

Preparing to Celebrate our 40th Anniversary

We need your e-mail for our e-newsletter! Send it to laso@laso.org

Another Milestone Approaches!



To Our Special Olympics Family:

Recently, a national news magazine featured the year '1968' on its cover and devoted almost the entire issue to events that occurred in 1968, detailing how those events are still impacting us today. It seems there are years that change the course of history more than others. For Special Olympics, I would have to agree with the article; 1968 was a defining moment for the intellectually disabled in this country and eventually for people around the world. I sometimes wonder if even Mrs. Shriver could have dreamed of the changes her decision would make when the first games were held in Chicago that year. Fifteen participants from Belle Chasse State School attended those first games and Louisiana became a Charter Member of Special Olympics. In 2008, we, along with the national organization will celebrate our 40th anniversary. What wonderful changes we have seen in those intervening years!

The number of athletes served in our state has grown from those first fifteen competitors to over 8,000 today. The families of our athletes and the general public have come to realize the great potential of our participants. As a country we have moved from warehousing the intellectually disabled to mainstreaming them into our schools, our businesses and our media. With no costs to our athletes, we strive to offer more opportunities for participation in 24 Olympic-type sports, always depending on the generosity of our supporters. The combination of the personal courage of our athletes and the selfless giving of our volunteers is truly a cause for celebration.

In this coming year, we will try to tell our story to everyone in Louisiana. We want people to know that Special Olympics is more than sports; we want to impress upon the general public that we are building character. I know this is true because I have seen Irish law enforcement officers, long separated by the internal strife of that country, come together through the work of the LETR. I have seen the attitudes of the people of China begin to change through the impact of the Special Olympics World Summer Games. Our own country has come a very long way and Special Olympics has been a driving force in those changes. Special Olympics teaches skills which transfer to the workplace while teaching the public about the potential of our athletes. Our organization promotes quality of life for our athletes by teaching them healthy lifestyles and by providing opportunities to learn necessary social skills. Our commitment has never faltered and I can truthfully say that we are succeeding at building greatness. I hope that you will join us in celebrating 40 years of excellence throughout the coming year.

Sincerest Thanks,

Pat Carpenter

Pat Carpenter
President and CEO



Special Olympics
Louisiana

Visit www.laso.org to see our 2008 event calendars!



Contact Us!
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2008 SOLA Staff

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- Lauren DeSoto**
Director of Volunteer & Area Management
- Marie Orgeron**
Director of Communications & Marketing
- Tiffany King**
Director of Special Projects-Southeast & La LETR Liaison
- Bridget Hebert**
Director of Special Projects-North
- Robert "Sonny" Taylor**
Director of Area Management & Outreach
- Tiffany Harvey**
Director of Program & Fund Development
- Rita Drude**
Assistant Accountant
- Roxann Balado**
Executive Assistant
- Glenn Drude, Jr.**
Office Assistant
- Fran Barrios**
Office Assistant

The SOLA staff is always available to answer your questions and hear your suggestions. We are committed to the mission of Special Olympics. To contact an individual, please go to our website for information on how to reach any one of us. We look forward to hearing from you so that we can all provide better service to our volunteers and supporters.

Thanks to our State Partner:



National Sponsors:



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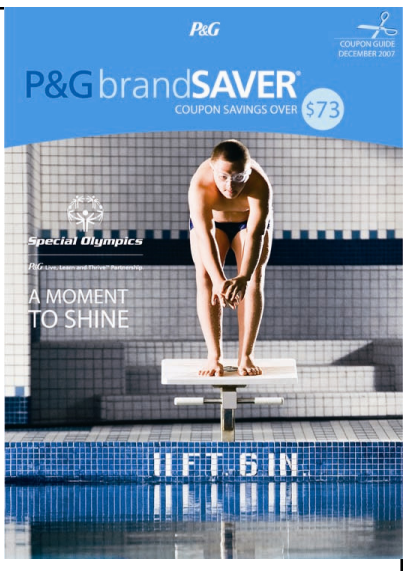
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SOLA Salutes its Games Sponsors!

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P&G has been a supporter of Special Olympics for 28 years. This year P&G will be donating \$500,000 to support the Special Olympics movement.

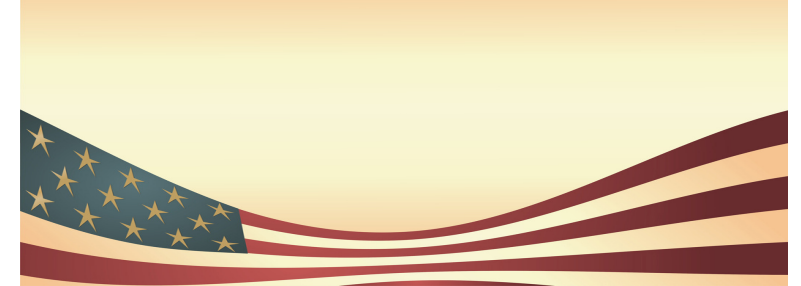


The 2008 "Spirit of Louisiana" Sports Award Banquet will be held on Saturday, June 28, Holiday Inn Select Baton Rouge, LA 6-8 PM

Nominations are being counted and awards will be announced shortly. Look for announcements in your local newspapers and on our website.

Buy your tickets today!
Call 1 (800) 345-6644

*Award winners receive two complimentary tickets



Special Olympics Louisiana is proud of our long time partnership with AT&T, formerly BellSouth. We thank you for all you have done, and will continue to do.



The Louisiana Law Enforcement Torch Run
Executive Committee
&
Paragon Casino and Resort Extends Invitation

The 2008 Torch Run Kick Off Conference will be held in Marksville, LA in January. The event will be hosted and sponsored by Paragon Casino and Resort, located at 711 Paragon Place in Marksville. The dates are Thursday, January 17, from noon to 4:00 PM and continues on Friday, January 18, from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The theme of the conference is "If Not You, Then Who?" Invitations will be mailed shortly, but reservations can be made through Paragon Casino and Resort at 1 (800) 642-7777. Reservations need to be made by January 11, 2008. For more information, contact Tiffany King at 1 (800) 345-6644, tking@laso.org

Sports and Competition News !

World Games

The two athletes selected to represent Louisiana at the 2007 World Summer Games in Shanghai, China did a wonderful job. Both Tara Bounds, Ball, LA and Virgil Atkinson, Livingston, LA came back with gold medals. Tara won in the Softball Throw and Virgil in the 100 M Walk. This was only the second time that this event has been held outside the US and the first time, it was held in Asia. The US selected 400 athletes from this country to participate and Tara and Virgil were the only two from Louisiana. They were accompanied by Coach Cindy Landry and SOLA CEO, Pat Carpenter and many others.



Fall Classic Games

The annual State Fall Classic Games were held in Carencro, LA this past October. As usual, this event featured teams from all over our state competing in horseshoes and softball. The weather was perfect and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Good food wasn't forgotten with the BBQ Team from the Lafayette Marshall's Office, "The Grillin' Dillons," cooking for our athletes. The Executive Director of the Stuller Family Foundation, Scott Brazda, served as Honorary Chair of the event. The beautiful Miss Louisiana, Elizabeth McNulty, signed autographs and took pictures with our athletes. Local celebrity chef, Karl Breaux interviewed some of our athletes and families for a segment of his cooking show. It was wonderful weekend at Pelican Park and our thanks go out to all of our volunteers who made the weekend possible.



**Mark Your Calendars !
Be A Fan !**



**Schedule of State Events
2008**

- February 23** State Equestrian — Sulphur
 - March 7-9** State Indoor Games—Baton Rouge
 - Bowling
 - Basketball
 - Unified Basketball
 - April 20-21** State Golf & Cycling—Monroe
 - May 23-25** State Summer Games—Hammond
 - Athletics
 - Bocce
 - Volleyball
 - Power Lifting
 - June 24-28** Camp Shriver-Baton Rouge
 - July 9-11** Camp Shriver-Shreveport
 - July 25-27** State Unified & Aquatics Shreveport
 - Aquatics
 - Unified Bowling
 - Oct. 17-19** State Fall Classic-Lafayette
 - Horseshoes
 - Softball
 - Unified Softball
- * Please note that all dates are subject to change—go to our website for updates. www.laso.org**

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Truck Convoys Held in North and Central Louisiana

Two successful truck convoys were held in early fall to raise funds for Special Olympic athletes. The first was held in Woodworth, LA in the central part of the state. The hard work of the owners and employees of Protected Cargo, LLC was evident as the 18-wheelers took off down I-49. Music, good food, the inevitable dunking booth, whose "victims" included the local Chief of Police, "Speedy" Gonzales, made for an exceptional day of fun for everyone. Later, the Shreveport area hosted their first truck convoy. The festivities began with a family night of comedy entertainment and music. Beautiful fall weather was a perfect accent for the next day's convoy that paraded through Shreveport and Bossier City. The great truck drivers who made all of this possible were sincere in their hopes to make this event even bigger and better next year. Thanks are due all of the members of law enforcement who helped to make all of this possible! Pass the word along!

2008 Area Directors

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