



Veteran Volunteer Joan Walsh

I first met Joan Walsh at her home on a cool Spring morning. Outside, her garden is just coming to life with blooms and greenery; inside, her living room is also filled with colour thanks to the vibrant art created by her daughter, Cindy.

Joan has lived all her life in Victoria, where she and her late husband raised their family of five children. Today she shares her home with her 15 year old dog, Charlie, a poodle shitzu mix. Every morning they walk the Cedar Hill Trail together, though you'd have to get up by dawn to catch them there.

I confess I'm a little nervous meeting Joan for the first time. After all, she has volunteered for Special Olympics Victoria for 20 years, and served in many positions.

Joan has been involved in activities such as skill building for sports, snowshoeing, bowling, and track and field. She has also been a member of the Local Committee, serving at different times as Volunteer Coordinator, Parent Coordinator and Program Coordinator. Besides her commitment to Special Olympics, Joan has also volunteered with Community Living BC and the Garth Homer Society over the years.

When I ask Joan what motivates her to volunteer with Special Olympics, she is more interested in talking about the Special Olympics athletes. Certainly her prime motivator at the beginning was her daughter Cindy.

"You're never too old to volunteer"

Joan quickly realized that "absolute beginner" athletes were always welcome. Once she started volunteering, she soon made friends with other volunteers, but it is the relationship with athletes that continues to make the biggest impact on her.

Joan speaks of Special Olympics athletes with love and respect. She says they are always happy to participate in sport, and they always make her feel good. Their response to volunteers is positive and appreciative. Bumping into an athlete on the street is always a welcome and enthusiastic encounter.

She doesn't hesitate in her answer: "You're never too old to volunteer (Joan was 60 when she started with the Victoria Local), and to experience the effect sport has on the lives of athletes."

A few days later, something Joan said when we met sticks with me. "Special Olympics athletes make you feel like you're somebody." There's no doubt in my mind that Joan is somebody, and the Victoria Local is lucky to have her as part of the team.



Future Volunteer

Michelle Cooper, rhythmic gymnastics coach and public relations coordinator, is proud to announce the birth of her first son, Alexander Rupert Wood. He was born on March 13th, 2010 and weighed in at an impressive 9 lbs, 10 ounces. Congratulations to Michelle and Christopher!

Before I leave, I ask Joan if she has any advice to offer to people wanting to become involved in Special Olympics.



May 2010 - Newsletter



Karen - Aiming for Gold!

Karen has been involved with Special Olympics for over 7 years. She got involved, after Reena, her Mum, through friends found out about the organization and signed her up. Karen has been involved with rhythmic gymnastics, figure skating, bowling and swimming.

Born in Mumbai, India, raised in Bahrain (a tiny island in the Middle East), Karen with her family immigrated to Canada in 1990, when she was 7. Karen likes to be perfect, is very determined and dedicated, is extremely positive in her attitude, and is a very happy and contented person who likes challenges.

She is very people sensitive and takes care to ensure she does not hurt the feelings of any person.

Karen recently completed her study program at Camosun College where she successfully finished the Foodsafe, First Aid, Customer Service and Super Host classes. She has been extremely successful in her work experience assignments through Camosun College and everyone that she has worked for and with has recommended her as a great person with a strong work ethic and a highly motivated individual. She has worked with children at the Greater Victoria Christian Academy and with the His Kids After school care (as a paid employee). She has also worked with Thrifty Foods, Zellers Inc., Boys and Girls Clubs, and New Horizons Senior Centre in James Bay. She also works with children in the church nursery and loves working with children and/or seniors. Every summer, Karen helps in serving at the Seniors Camp at Nanoose Bay Pentecostal Camp.

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Look who's heading to London!

Special Olympics BC Victoria is proud to announce the athletes and coaches for Team BC heading to London, Ontario for the National Games in July 2010.

Athletes:

- Alison McKee (rhythmic gymnastics)
- Avodele Caesar (track & field)
- Boyd Farrell (track & field)
- Carol Anne Stocker (track & field)
- Drew Sabourin (swimming)
- Jeff Martin (Grand Forks Softball)
- Kevin Danchella (Grand Forks Softball)

Coaches:

- Chantal Brodeur (softball: Grand Forks/Kamloops team)
- Michelle Cooper (rhythmic gymnastics)
- Trudy Goodman (Vancouver Track & Field)

Congratulations!



Registration for the 2010-2011 Season

Registration packages will be mailed out the middle of May. Please watch for the registration envelopes. We are encouraging athletes to mail back the completed forms with payment as soon as possible, rather than wait for Registration Night, which is June 11. All the information for filling out forms is in the letter in the envelope.

Please send the completed forms to the Special Olympics PO Box address noted in the letter. Since some of our sports get filled up quickly, all return envelopes will be dated when received and processed in that order.

Registration night will still be held on June 11th from 6:30-7:30 at the COMMUNITY LIVING VICTORIA CENTRE, 3861 Cedar Hill Cross Rd.

Please check the Program Participation Fee /Registration Receipt carefully for any fee increases. As our costs have increased and our funding has decreased we, unfortunately, have to increase our fees. The exact amounts are not finalized at this time. The information will be in the Registration package.

If you have any questions you may contact the Registrar, Christine Kyles, at 250-477-7106 or christinekyles@yahoo.ca

Upcoming parade - see inside for details!



Roy and his daughter Mayumi have enjoyed the golf program

Local Coordinator, Treasurer, Coach, Parent... is there any role that **Roy Natsuhara** hasn't played in Special Olympics? It is with heavy hearts that after over 20 years of volunteering with Special Olympics Victoria we see Roy start a new adventure on the mainland with his family. We wish him all the best and can't thank him enough for his dedication, enthusiasm and his ability to roll up his sleeves and help out when he can.



Do we have your medical form?

Today you wake up and remember it's soccer night. You're not registered but you are a Special Olympics athlete. So you decide to go to the practice and jump in. Surprise, surprise, you can't play! The Head Coach doesn't have your medical form. But it's in the system, so what's the problem you wonder.

You're right, your form is in the system but what if something happened to you at practice and the ambulance came. What would we say? "Sorry, we don't have the medical form, it's in the system!" How would the coaches know who to reach as your emergency contact? How would the coaches know if you're taking some medications or are allergic to others? It is our legal and moral obligation to make sure you are never at risk. Letting you play without having your medical form is a risk we can't take.

So if you hear coaches say to someone "Sorry, you can't play, we don't have your medical form", please support them. They're sticking to the rules because they care.

Head Coaches – remember to take attendance at every practice and check your medical forms in case there is one missing. If you become aware of a change to a medical form, please send the information to Christine Kyles asap at christinekyles@yahoo.ca

Tracksuits for Sale

The cost of the Special Olympics Tracksuits have changed.
A jacket will now cost \$55 and the pants \$45.

Healthy Athletes

Strong Bones - Strong Athletes!

Bone is living tissue that adapts to the demands placed upon it. Just as a muscle gets stronger and bigger the more you use it, a bone becomes stronger and denser. That is why the bones in the racquet arm of a tennis player are stronger than the bones in their other arm. For strong bones, we need calcium and vitamin D and physical activities that "load" the bones every day. Many activities that work the body against gravity like walking, climbing stairs, jumping rope, running the bases in softball, and dancing will "load" your bones. The good news is that relatively short periods of bone loading activities are needed.

A recent study of elementary school aged children in BC showed significant improvements in bone strength of children who 'Bounced at the Bell' for a couple of minutes three times per day during the school year. During childhood, adolescence and the young-adult years the aim is to achieve the highest peak bone mass possible and during the adult and older adult years the aim is by slowing the rate of bone loss with aging. So, whatever your age, 'load' your bones with physical activity every day.



Run on the spot for 1 minute

Karen - Aiming for Gold *(con't from cover page)*

Her goal for Special Olympics is to make it to Provincial games in any sport. She trains and practices at home getting help from her siblings, her Mom and Rachel, another Special Olympic athlete who is also a close friend. She works hard at getting better in the sport she chooses. She likes figure skating and thinks doing it on one foot is good fun. For Bowling - she likes getting the pins down. For Swimming - she likes diving into the pool and doing lengths. For rhythmic gymnastics, she likes the group of girls she trains with, the music and her coach.

Karen's goal for Special Olympics is to make it to Provincial games in any sport.

Karen loves doing her daily chores at home and cheerfully does more than she is asked to do. She is excellent at housekeeping and also cooks rice and a few other simple East Indian dishes (which she loves especially if accompanied with the "hot" pickles that burn your tongue). She loves her family and will do everything to be together with them. Also, she loves Alice, a shitzu poodle dog, and regularly takes her for walks, makes sure to feed, bathe and clean her. Her hobbies are reading magazines, watching family movies, the sitcom "Friends" or "Criminal Minds" or "Gilmore Girls".

After school is done this spring, Karen's main focus and determination is to get a paid job. Karen likes to volunteer but wants to find work so she can get paid real bucks.

THANK YOU



The Victoria Local works as effectively as it does because of one thing: its strong team. Thanks to a diversity of skills and personalities, everyone consciously works towards fulfilling their responsibilities and improving Special Olympics.

Trust and open communication are critical components that contribute to the success of the Local Committee. As the Victoria Local Coordinator, I am blessed to work with a team that challenges me to be my best.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the volunteers I have had the opportunity to work closely with in the last year.

- **Aaron Malmgren**, Treasurer - For having the patience to help us understand the budget and for rolling all the coins.
- **Christine Kyles**, Athletes Registrar - For being diligent and questioning processes to ensure fairness.
- **Diana Frizell**, Fundraising Volunteer - For carrying on despite restrictions and creating successful partnerships.
- **Gord Cooney**, Trip Planning Coordinator - For persisting and setting up a process to make trips run smoothly.
- **Hazel Woodcock**, Volunteer Coordinator - For taking on this new position with fervour and dedication.

- **Ingrid White**, Social Event Coordinator - For making us the benefactor of her frugal mind-set.
- **Liz Wood**, Coach Coordinator - For always reaching for excellence and motivating us to do the same.
- **Michelle Cooper**, Public Relations Coordinator - For successfully juggling multiple tasks and still coming up with new ideas.
- **Rhonda Lonsdale**, Fundraising Coordinator - For always having ideas and agreeing to look at how we can make them reality.
- **Robin Calder**, Athlete Coordinator - For always bringing forth the interests and well-being of the athletes.
- **Sarah Gray**, Secretary - For jumping in with both feet in a new role and volunteering to help in other areas.
- **Trudy Goodman**, Program Coordinator - For your alertness to details and making sure we always act responsibly.

Chantal Brodeur
Victoria Local Coordinator

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Year End Banquet and Annual General Meeting

Dinner and Dance
Friday, June 25th
6:00- 9:00
Garth Homer
\$6 athletes
\$18 guests
Free for volunteers



Tickets will be available the first week of May at Garth Homer and at Special Olympics Summer Sport Venues. You must have a ticket to attend the event.

A very short Annual General meeting will be held at the beginning of the banquet. To satisfy our funders, we must keep a list of the people attending. So every athlete and volunteer will be asked to sign in at the door.

The Special Olympics AGM will include year-end reports and election of the Local Committee.

The list below indicates the individuals seeking either re-election or election. Nominations from the floor will not be accepted.

Local Coordinator Chantal Brodeur
Secretary Sarah Gray
Treasurer Aaron Malmgren
Program Coordinator Trudy Goodman
Coach Coordinator Liz Wood
Volunteer Coordinator Hazel Woodcock
Public Relations Coordinator Michelle Cooper
Athletes Coordinator Robin Calder
Fundraising Coordinator Mary Fox

Come out and have a good time!



19th Annual Special Olympics Walk-A-Thon Centennial Square!

Saturday, June 5th, 2010

****1pm start time**

These shoes are made for walking!



With June approaching quickly it is time to think about this year's 19th Annual Special Olympics Walk-a-thon. On Saturday, June 5th we are calling on Special Olympics athletes to hit the streets with their walking shoes on to raise money for our sports programs. This money is used to pay for the gyms that we practice in, the uniforms that we wear, the equipment we use and the travel costs of tournaments and competitions. So get your walking shoes on and raise pledges for Special Olympics!

Included in this newsletter is the pledge form. So let's get started!

REMINDER!!!!

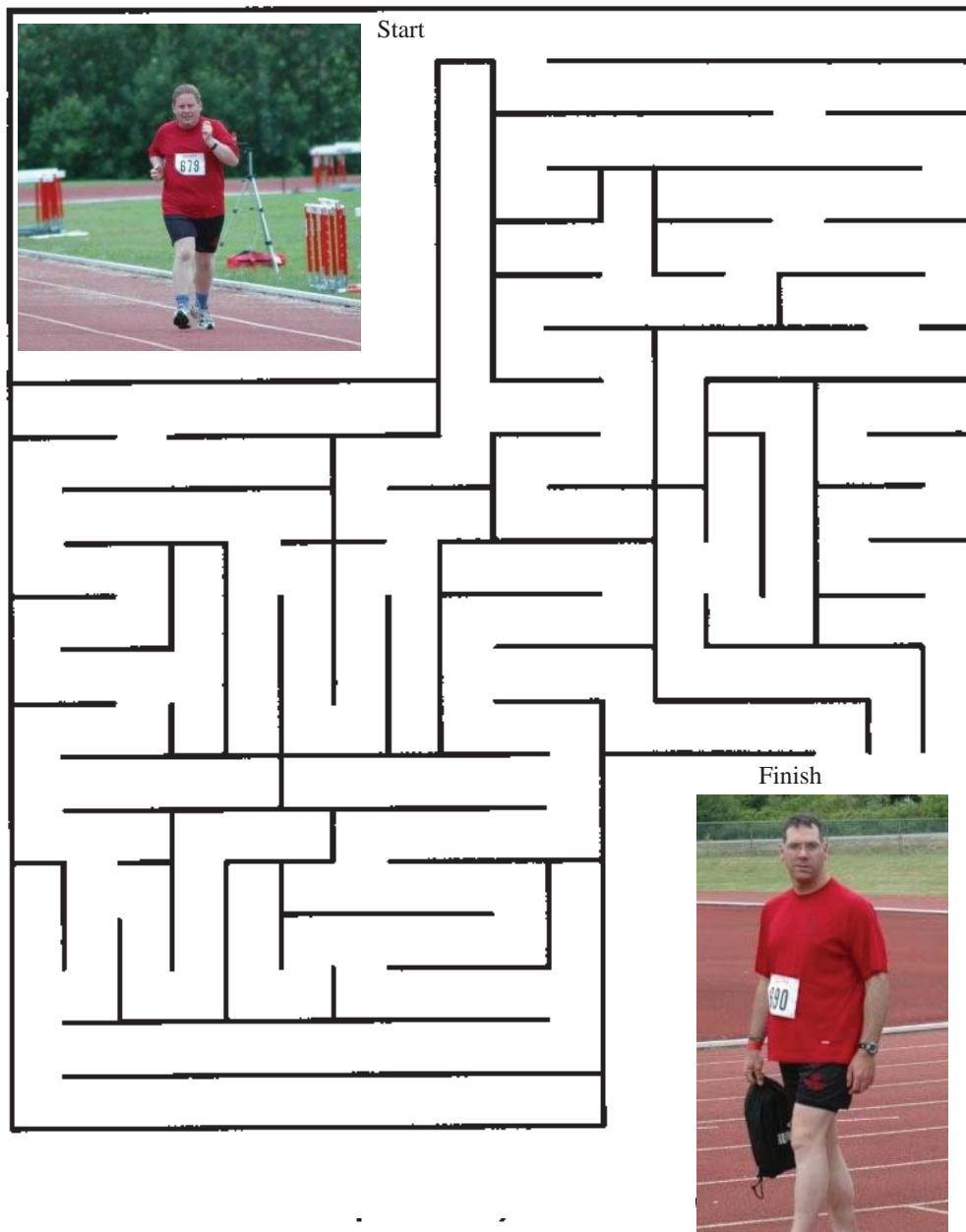
**Registration night June 11th from 6:30-7:30
Community Living Victoria Centre
3861 Cedar Hill Cross Rd.**



Island Farms Victoria Day Parade

Due to the success and great turn-out at last year's parade we are encouraging athletes and volunteers to join us on May 24th, 2010 to march down Douglas Street to promote Special Olympics. This is Victoria's largest parade event with marching bands, floats, clowns, etc. Over 120,000 spectators watch this popular annual event in person and on television. Last year we WOWED the fans with our enthusiasm. Let's repeat that again this year!

Please RSVP with Michelle Cooper (250-665-7351 or mlcoop@shaw.ca) no later than May 20th. Athletes who have not registered will not be permitted to participate in the parade. This is to ensure that we have enough volunteers. Please note that we will be walking the route this year (approximately 3 kms).



19th Annual Special Olympics Walk-A-Thon at: Centennial Square! Saturday, June 5th, 2010

**** 1pm** start time

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

I plan to walk at least _____ kms for Special Olympics.

Dear Potential Sponsor,

I am participating in the Special Olympics Walk-A-Thon. All proceeds will help fund the 16 different sports I could participate in. You can sponsor me for an amount per km or can name a maximum amount that you are willing to contribute. Please make checks payable to Special Olympics BC Victoria.

Thank you!

	Name of Sponsor	Pledge per km (Example: \$5.00)	Maximum Pledge	Amount Collected from Sponsor	Mailing Address for Tax Receipt (donations of \$20 or greater)
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Participants: To reach our goal, we hope that each participant finds 15 sponsors.

Please bring this form and cheques with you on the walk-a-thon day, Saturday, June 5th 1pm.

	Name of Sponsor	Pledge per km (Example: \$5.00)	Maximum Pledge	Amount Collected from Sponsor	Mailing Address for Tax Receipt (donations of \$20 or greater)
18					
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