

39th SPECIAL OLYMPICS WINTER GAMES

Feb. 5-7th

Special Section • January 30, 2019



SPECIAL TIMES.

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Welcome to the Winter Games



Greetings!

It is my honor to welcome athletes, families, volunteers, friends and fans to the 2019 Special Olympics Illinois Winter Games!

There is truly no better way to kick off the year than with the Special Olympics Winter Games in Galena. So many of our dedicated champions travel from across the state to meet new friends—or reunite with old friends—in this cozy setting.



Dave Breen
President & CEO
Special Olympics IL

And do they ever feel welcomed! The warmth of Galena's residents is enough to offset any winter chill. Truly, the reception our athletes, families, and staff receive is unlike any other on our busy event calendar. There are the many volunteers who work on the committee planning the event for months in advance, the employees of Chestnut Mountain Resort and Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa who make us feel so welcome, the numerous day-of volunteers who brave uncertain conditions to give our athletes the very best quality competition and experience, and the merchants who cater to our athletes and families.

Thank you all!

A very special thanks must also go out to our hosts among the many fine dining establishments and Larry Blankenbaker, who organizes a com-

plementary dinner for the athletes following the Opening Ceremony.

Our bold competitors have been busy over the past few months building to just this moment. Flat farm land? Dry or muddy conditions? It doesn't matter, they'll find a way to complete their training in alpine skiing, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Their dedication is fueled by aspiration and the generous encouragement of our Galena friends.

We invite the people of Galena to come downtown Tuesday, Feb. 5, at 5:30 p.m. for our parade of athletes through the main business loop and Opening Ceremony in front of the post office (featuring the cauldron holding the Flame of Hope) to kick off the Games! You are also welcome to join us at Chestnut to cheer on our athletes as they take the slopes.

We trust we'll leave any of these events feeling as inspired and much a part of our Special Olympics Illinois family, as you make us feel with your kindness and support.

Sincerely,

Dave Breen
President & CEO
Special Olympics Illinois



Kick off the 2019 Polar Plunge season by plunging round-the-clock for 24 Hours!

Join Special Olympics dedicated Polar Plungers, volunteers, families and friends on Feb. 15 for the 2019 SUPER Plunge. Over a 24-hour period, the truly elite Plungers will take 24 icy dips (once an hour, every hour) into Lake Michigan as part of the SUPER Plunge to benefit Special Olympics Illinois.

All SUPER Plungers and their support person will spend the 24 hours in a heated tent on the beach during this fun, round-the-clock event. This year's event will take place on the campus of Northwestern Illinois University, 2311 Campus Dr. in Evanston.

Anyone who is ready to "be bold and get cold" can be a SUPER Plunger!

Each SUPER Plunger is asked to raise a minimum of \$2,500 to participate in this extreme event.

Aside from the SUPER plunge, there are 23 other opportunities to join in on the freezing endeavor.

Each year, the Polar Plunge challenges thousands of individuals at numerous locations across the state.

Polar Plunges will take place from Feb. 15 to March 24. Anyone with a little guts and a warm heart wanting to support Special Olympics athletes is welcome to participate.

Over the past 20 years, 72,000-plus plunges have raised more than \$20 million for the organization. The funds benefit the more than 23,000 Special Olympics athletes and nearly 20,000 young athletes.

Think you have what it takes? The concept is simple: participants raise a minimum of \$100 in donations from friends, family and co-workers in exchange for taking an icy dip in an Illinois lake.

Anyone can plunge—young and old, but only registered plungers will be allowed in the water.

Join the conversation this plunge season by using #FreezinForAReason on social media. Find your local Polar Plunge at plungeillinois.com.

The Polar Plunge, presented by the Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run and GEICO, is a unique opportunity to support Special Olympics athletes by taking a flying leap—a leap into the frigid waters around the state.

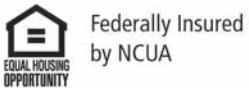




Dupaco is more than local. As a financial cooperative owned by its members, Dupaco Community Credit Union uses sustainable money methods to keep members' money working here, locally. The more our members do with Dupaco, the more we're able to give back through better rates, fewer fees, low-cost insurance, and freebies like on-demand credit monitoring tools, Money Makeovers, and Credit History Lessons. **Empowering members to achieve financial success enriches the whole community.**

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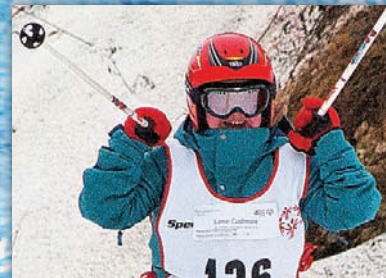


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Above: Special Olympics athletes Louis Pisani and Cole Paravola love to ski and are involved with the DuPage Valley Special Athletes. Louis and Cole, along with their families, spent time in December in Breckenridge, Colo., working with officials at the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center, above and below. Below: Cole Paravola with ski instructors in Breckenridge. *Contributed photos*

Overcoming limits on the slopes

Skiing as a sport is so much more than an athletic endeavor. It is a connection between families and friends. It is a challenge. It is above all else, a sport for all ability levels.

The ski hill is home to many, including, Special Olympics Illinois athletes Louis Pisani and Cole Paravola. Louis and Cole compete with DuPage Valley Special Athletes (DVSA). Both boys have had a passion for skiing for as long as they can remember.

Louis's parents, Paul and Kish Pisani, spend any free time they have on the slopes. On any given Sunday, you could find the Pisani family skiing. Paul and Kish saw their son's love for the sport and wanted to bring that love to other Special Olympics Illinois athletes.

With the hope of others finding the same love in skiing, DVSA was founded in 2014. The Pisanis felt skiing was a great way to spend time together as a family. They felt it brought people together no matter their experience level.

Whether an individual has never been skiing before or is a level three skier, there is a spot for everyone with this sport.

Skiing has given athletes like Louis and Cole the confidence to make great strides in their athletics. This past December, Louis, Cole, and their families took a trip to Colorado. There they spent some time working with the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center (BOEC).

BOEC provides people with disabilities and/or special needs the opportunity to experience a variety of snow sports, one of those being skiing. The boys took a ski racing lesson from the adaptive ski instructors at BOEC. On the slopes, the boys felt confident and fearless. After the trip, they felt ready to take on regional and state competitions back in Illinois.

"Skiing has allowed athletes like Louis and Cole to be recognized by their ability and not their disability," said Kish Pisani. "Skiing is one place where many athletes feel fearless."

No matter what the starting point, anyone can learn to ski. The sport is universal for all individuals. Louis and Cole's passion for the sport of skiing resembles that of the Special Olympics athlete oath: "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."



'Skiing is one place where many athletes feel fearless.'

Kish Pisani, parents of Special Olympics Illinois athlete Louis Pisani



John Deere volunteers, from left, Kelly Fehr, Krista Kruger, and Scott Price with Special Olympics athlete Michael Duffy at the 2018 Winter Games at Chestnut Mountain Resort. *Mark Van Osdol photo*

Deere 'Dollars for Doers' supports Special Olympics

GALENA—Several John Deere employees help with the Special Olympics Illinois Winter Games and donate to the cause at the same time through the company's Dollars for Doers program.

Through the Dollars for Doers program, the John Deere Foundation may provide funds to any eligible organization for which an eligible employee volunteers at a rate of \$25 per hour, with a maximum of \$1,000 per employee per fiscal year while the budget remains.

A portion of the John Deere employees' donations go toward the publication of this special section, while the remainder goes directly to Special Olympics Illinois.

An employee must track their time in the Power for Good tool, within the same fiscal year that the employee volunteered. An employee can track their hours each time they volunteer or in lump sums, remembering there is a chance the program will be fully utilized as the fiscal year progresses.

To maximize impact on our communities,

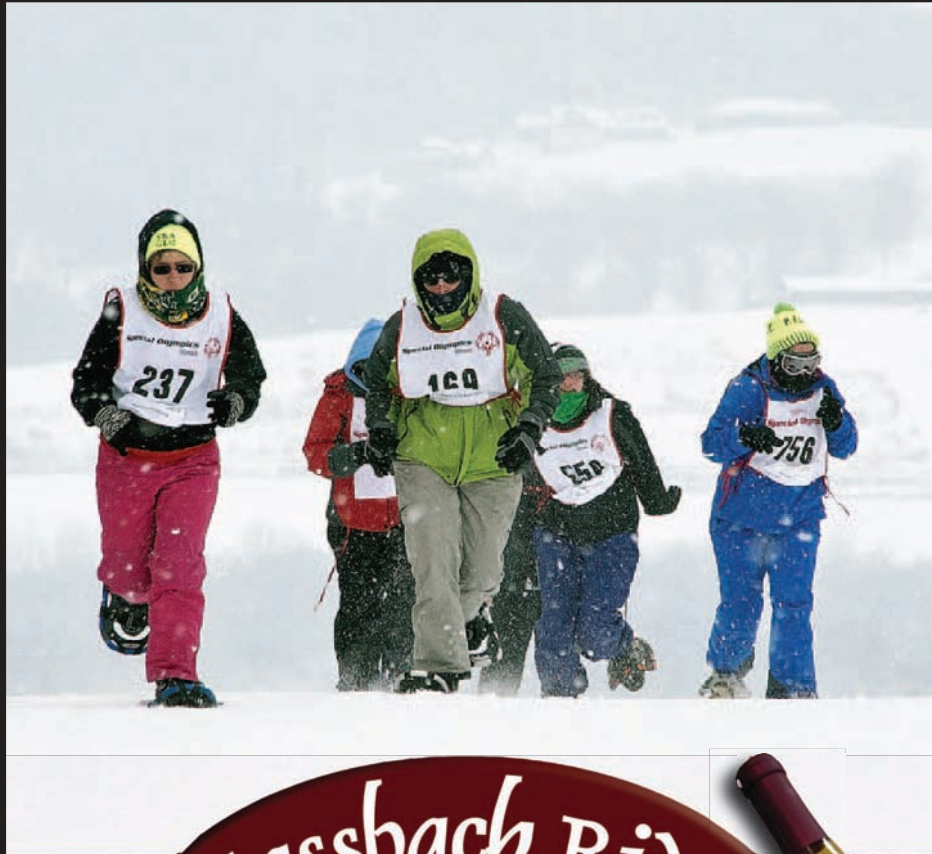
volunteer activities should support the John Deere Foundation's philanthropic focus areas of solutions for world hunger, community development and education.

Employees are also encouraged to participate in initiatives for which they have a personal passion or interest. Both types of volunteerism are eligible to receive Dollars for Doers.

Employees can assist non-profit causes to be reviewed for eligibility by Nominating a Cause in the Quick Links section of the Power for Good tool.

"Whenever I recruit a volunteer from Deere to help at Winter Games, I always encourage them to submit their hours through the Power for Good tool, so that there is a corresponding donation made to SOILL," said Scott Price, a John Deere employee who has volunteered with Special Olympics for years. "Kelly Fehr, who has been helping for two days of Winter Games each year for the last several years always submits his hours, and some of the others do also."

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First Community Bank is proud to support the 39th Annual Illinois Special Olympic Winter Games. On behalf of the Galena community, we extend a special welcome to the athletes, their families and friends. We salute Special Olympic athletes as they develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship. Best wishes to all the participants from your friends at First Community Bank of Galena

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Family is #FreezinForAReason

Clodi Family participates each year in Polar Plunge at Rend Lake in Benton

A family that plunges together stays together! The Clodi family plunges in Benton at the Rend Lake Polar Plunge every year.

It all started with Ray and Megan Clodi. Their first Polar Plunge was in 2010. From there Ray began organizing a Polar Plunge team to get friends and family involved. And then, their son Alistair joined the family fun.

Later, Ray became a special education teacher and started the Mt. Vernon Mavericks Special Olympics team.

Since inception, the team has plunged every year with the athletes and their families. One of Ray's favorite memories is joining his team at the post-plunge party to celebrate the warmth and their "frozen" accomplishment.

In 2016, Ray and Megan's youngest son joined them. Anderson was the youngest polar plunger on the team. Plunging as a family is important to the Clodi's because it is something the whole family can do year after year. Now the boys actually look forward to splashing in the icy water.

Ray's favorite part about plunging is the shock of that first step into the icy water.

"I'd like people to try it one time. They might like it and find that one day they are plunging for their 10th time or more," said Ray Clodi.

This year will be Ray's 10th plunge, Alistair's 8th, and Anderson's fourth.

The Clodi's reason for freezing this year is plain and simple—the athletes of Special Olympics Illinois, more specifically the Mt. Vernon Mavericks.



Ray Clodi and his son gathered with other Polar Plungers at the Rend Lake Plunge in Benton. *Contributed photos*



Ray Clodi, above and at left, plunges into the cold water each year to raise funds for Special Olympics.



Special Olympics Illinois athletes, from left, Grace Seiboldt, Kyle Tuckey, Mallory Taylor, Maria Meyer and Caroline O'Hara, at the fashion show at Water Tower Place. *Contributed photos*



iHeartMedia's Rufio & Paulina of 103.5 KISS FM with Finish Line staff members and Special Olympics Illinois athletes, posing for a selfie at the fashion show.

Finish Line, Special Olympics fashion show

Special Olympics Illinois and Finish Line closed out 2018 with a #SOUnstoppable event! To celebrate the 2018 year end, Finish Line and Special Olympics Illinois collaborated on a holiday fundraising campaign.

Finish Line, in conjunction with the Finish Line Youth Foundation, hosted a unified fashion show to highlight Special Olympics Illinois athletes and their talents.

The fashion show took place on Monday, Dec. 3 at Water Tower Place in Chicago. Five Special Olympics Illinois athletes and five Finish Line staff members walked together down the runway sporting a variety of Finish Line apparel.

Each athlete was given two outfits to show off as they walked down the runway with their Finish Line partner.

As each pair walked down the runway the event emcees read a short bio about each athlete and their on-the-field and off-the-field accomplishments.

iHeartMedia's Rufio & Paulina of 103.5 KISS FM

took part in the event as well. Rufio and Paulina emceed the event.

During the campaign, Finish Line stores displayed images of four exceptional Special Olympics athletes that each represented a region of the country and embodied the campaign theme, "SO Unstoppable."

In addition to in-store donations, customers were also able make online donations as well as round up their total online purchases.

For the seventh consecutive year, Finish Line hosted its annual campaign benefiting Special Olympics from Nov. 16-Dec. 30.

The campaign took place at around 550 Finish Line stores across the United States. The campaign raised awareness for the partnership locally and introduced customers to the Special Olympics movement.

Finish Line is a national partner of Special Olympics that provides robust volunteer support nationwide and generates funds through customer's generous donations.



Fashion show participants from Finish Line and Special Olympics Illinois on the runway at Water Tower Place in Chicago in December.

Congratulations Olympians!

The Market House Restaurant
will be closed for Winter Break
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Wishing everyone the best of luck at the 39th Special Olympics Winter Games

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Alpine skiing tentative schedule of events

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|----------------------|
| Tuesday, Feb. 5 | afternoon | Level assessment (all alpine athletes must report) | evening | Head coaches meeting |
| | afternoon | Depart for Opening Ceremonies | Thursday, Feb. 7 | Levels 1 & 2 |
| | evening | Head coaches meeting | morning | Practice |
| Wednesday, Feb. 6 | Levels 1 & 2 | | morning | Super G finals |
| morning | Practice | | morning | Giant Slalom finals |
| morning | Super G time trials | | early afternoon | Slalom finals |
| morning | Giant Slalom time trials | | Levels 3 & 4 | |
| early afternoon | Slalom time trials | | morning | Practice |
| | | | morning | Giant Slalom finals |
| Levels 3 & 4 | | | early afternoon | Super G finals |
| morning | Practice | | | |
| morning | Time trials for all events | | ***Levels 3 and 4 will be done at the same location. | |
| afternoon | Slalom finals | | Level 4 will be first, followed by Level 3 for all events. | |

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Snowshoeing tentative schedule of events

| | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Tuesday, Feb. 5 | afternoon | 100-Meter preliminary |
| Short Track | 50-Meter young athlete final | Long Track |
| afternoon | 50-Meter preliminary | morning |
| afternoon | | 4x100-Meter demonstration |
| Long Track | | morning |
| afternoon | 800-Meter final | 200-Meter final |
| afternoon | 4x100-Meter preliminary relay | early afternoon |
| afternoon | 200-Meter preliminary | 400-Meter preliminary |
| afternoon | Depart for Opening Ceremonies | evening |
| evening | Head coaches meeting | Head coaches meeting |
| Wednesday, Feb. 6 | | Thursday, Feb. 9 |
| Short Track | | Short Track |
| morning | | morning |
| afternoon | 50-Meter final | 100-Meter final |
| afternoon | 100-Meter young athlete preliminary | |
| | | Long Track |
| | | morning |
| | | 400-Meter finals |
| | | morning |
| | | 1600-Meter finals |

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Special thanks

Chestnut Mountain Resort, Eagle Ridge Resort and Spa, Crossroads Church, Ramada Galena Hotel and Day Spa and Mayor Terry Renner and the City of Galena, DeSoto House, Chestnut Mountain Ski School, Stoney Creek Inn, Stratton Bus Company, Illinois State Lottery, the Special Olympics Illinois Board of Directors and the Special Olympics Foundation Board.

Winter Games committee, key volunteers

Craig Ameal, Nate Bartlow, Don Beaston, Mike Beaty, Brianna Beers, Eva Bellinger, Andy Blankenbaker, Larry Blankenbaker, Dan Burgland, Brenden Cannon, Doug Collins, Dan Conely, Aubrey Deerwester, Bill Dettman, Molly Dill, Mark Einsweiler, Ginger Eisbach, Kelly Fehr, Jordan Feldman, Todd Flack, Trent Geiger, Katie Grisham, Katy Gruen, Kent Henderson, Nate Henry, Dave Hess, Tracy Hilliard, Sue Hillinger, Jeff Holder, Barb Howard, Mike Jones, Nate Jones, Paula Jones, Debbie Kelly, Gary Kistenfeger, Carolyn Klocek, Tom Lobacz, Kayla Miller, Karen Milligan, Amanda Nelson, Kevin O'Brien, Clarissa Orr, Jenny Panico, Bob Poston, Scott Price, Mike Rackov, Frank Randall, Josh Raymer, Megan Reaska, Annie Riddering, Kim Riddering, Maggie Rutenbeck, Don Steen, Mark Van Osdol, Dee Vojta, Jamie Yagunich, Cathy Young, Katelyn Zandi, and Bob Zelm.

Opening Ceremony committee, participants

Steve Ehrler, Ginger Eisbach and Mark Einsweiler. Special thanks to Andy Blankenbaker, Doug Collins, Galena Police Department and Chief Lori

CELEBRATE

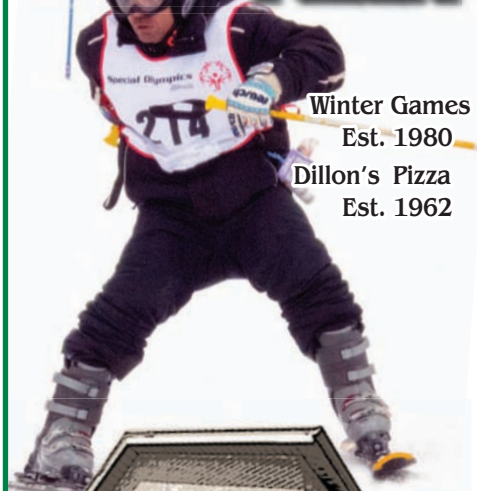


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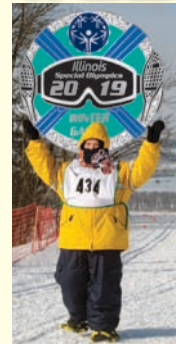
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