

Sportsline



Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled
Spring 1998

President's POV

by Mike Comin, MASD Board of Directors

It is hard to believe we are already near the end of another school year. I would like to take this opportunity to update you on some of your Board's activities.

On February 14th, we held an idea generation meeting to focus on fundraising strategies. Board members and other interested parties attended. We discussed fundraising activities that have been successful for us in the past and ideas that could be considered for the future. The following Monday night, the Fundraising Committee revisited the ideas developed at this meeting and made specific decisions about our direction for the rest of this year.

We recently welcomed George Bacon as the newest board member. George works for the Olin Corp. in Chandler and resides in Gilbert. We are very pleased to have him with us.

Rod Lilly, another member of our Board of Directors, was honored recently by the City Manager of Mesa. Rod, who works for the Mesa Fire Dept, was presented with the first City Manager's *Spirit of Caring Award* for his selfless commitment and dedication to improving the lives of Arizona citizens. We are proud of Rod for his work in the community as well as his participation on our board.

MASD was honored by the Mesa Public Schools' Student Services Division as an *Outstanding Community Organization* for our work in the community providing sports, recreation and leisure opportunities to individuals with disabilities. I was honored to accept this award on behalf of all our volunteers and I wish to thank everyone who works with and supports MASD.

Your Board of Directors is looking forward to an excellent year of great activities for all our participating athletes and to our continued growth as we serve our community. Thank you once again for all your help and support.

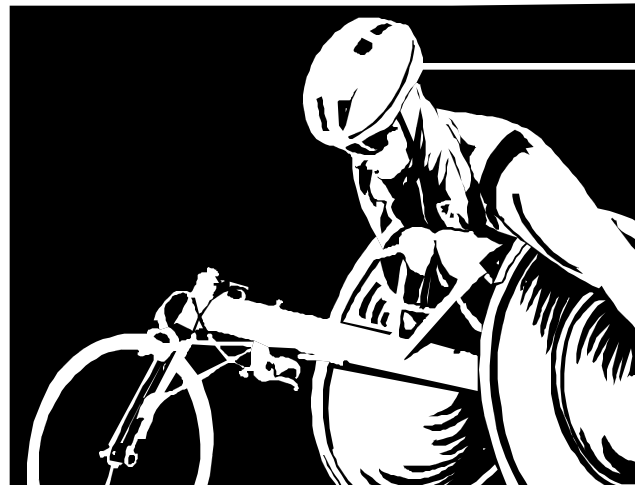


MASD hosts Desert Challenge 98

by Gregg Baumgarten

The 8th annual Desert Challenge Games were held March 19th through the 21st at Mesa High School. Ninety athletes from seven states and Canada participated in the competition designed for athletes with physical disabilities. Competitions were held in track, field, swimming, weightlifting, archery, cycling, shooting, boccia and table tennis. The competition was outstanding this year—several national records which were set at the Desert Challenge Games.

As always, an event of this size cannot occur without the help and support of numerous organizations. Special thanks go to the primary sponsor of our Games, the Desert Club of Mesa, which donated \$3,000, as well as the Mesa Firefighters, several LDS wards, and Kirksville College who all supplied key volunteers. Thanks to everyone who made these games such a success!



SkiAble weekend a success!

by Gregg Baumgarten

The fourth annual SkiAble “Learn to Ski” weekend was held over Super Bowl weekend at the Arizona SnowBowl ski resort outside of Flagstaff. The event was a huge success. Nine adapted ski instructors from the Breckenridge (CO) Outdoor Education Center came down for the weekend with adapted ski equipment and worked with 27 anxious skiers. Many had never been skiing before!

The adapted ski equipment used in the workshop included mono-skis, bi-skis, outriggers, ski bras, and other equipment designed to get individuals with disabilities out on the ski slopes.

Many thanks to our primary sponsor for this event, the Paralyzed Veterans of America-Arizona Chapter, for their grant of \$2,500 to support this program. We also appreciate the people at Arizona SnowBowl and Fairfield Resorts for their support of this program!



Annual Awards Banquet a blast!

by Karen Weber



Board member John Ginty cleans up at the Annual Awards Banquet

The Ninth Annual Awards Banquet was competing with the final episode of Seinfeld but over 170 people said, “Who cares?” Besides being a great turnout, it was a great time. Honey Bear’s provided the barbecued chicken and beef for some scrumptious eats, which the Westwood Cheerleading squad served up with class.

Awards were given out to community organizations who have given so much to our organization, including

- ★ the HoHoKams
- ★ J.B. Rodgers
- ★ Desert Club of Mesa
- ★ Steve Kohl
- ★ Dr. Alan Anderson
- ★ Dr. Vandana Sinha
- ★ Mesa High School
- ★ Mesa Firefighters Local 2260
- ★ KPXM Broadcasting/Garrett Foundation

The highlight of the Annual Awards Banquet was, what else?, the awards! Over 375 awards were given to athletes participating in 10 Special Olympic sports, 4 unified sports, and 5 sports for the physically challenged. The steady stream of athletes parading up to the podium to receive their awards was met with enthusiastic applause and shouts of approval.

The grand finale was the announcement of the winners of the **Jay Coyner** and **Paula Rudow** awards.

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The banquet attendees watch as athletes receive well-deserved awards.



*1998 Jay Coyner award winner
Anthony Cropper*

The Jay Coyner award is named for one of MASD's first wheelchair athletes, Jarrel "Jay" Coyner. Jay, a bilateral amputee, started racing when he was in high school. He was known for his team spirit—he was always helping his teammates maintain and repair their equipment, cheering their victories, and urging them on to faster times. He was also a very good friend to all who knew him. On February 16, 1994, Jay was pushing home from practice when he was struck by a car. After a week in a coma, Jay passed away on February 23, 1994. The Jay Coyner award was established in 1994 to honor a physically challenged athlete who competes as a member of the Arizona Heat. In order to win the award, the athlete must exemplify the same attributes that Jay was known for—being a good citizen, a supportive teammate, and a good friend.

Anthony Cropper from Red Mountain High School was awarded the 1998 Jay Coyner award. He is a 16-year-old athlete and has been a member of the Arizona Heat for 4 years. Tony participates in Track and races the 100, 200, 400, 800, 1500, and 5000 meter events. He has also competed in several local 10K events.

Tony is also a two-time national archery champion in his age group and is the current defending champion. He also participates in the MASD wheelchair basketball skills program.

Tony's coaches say that his attendance at practices is excellent, that he always works hard and gives his best effort, and that he always encourages his teammates to give their best efforts in all they do.

In school, Tony is an outstanding student and takes pride in being a good student-citizen. He recently qualified for his learner's permit and is taking Driver Education classes.

According to his coaches, friends, teammates, and teachers, Tony exemplifies the attitudes and attributes that are required for the Jay Coyner award. He is truly deserving. Congratulations, Tony!

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Rod Lilly presents the Paula Rudow award to Glenn Riggs.

The Paula Rudow Award is named for a special education teacher who was dedicated to our Special Olympics programs. Paul Rudow taught for Mesa Public Schools for over 19 years, first at Fremont Junior High and then at Westwood High and Stapley Junior High. Throughout her years with the district, Paula was a devoted coach, volunteer, and friend. Her energy and enthusiasm were endless. While teaching at Stapley Junior High, Paula learned she had cancer. Despite her personal battle with the disease, she continued to volunteer and support Special Olympics. Our organization lost one of its best friends when Paula lost her battle with cancer in 1996.

The Paula Rudow award is awarded annually to the Special Olympic athlete who exemplifies the qualities which Paula taught all her students: being a good citizen and teammate, having a good work

ethic, being a good sport, and trying your best.

Glenn Riggs has participated in Special Olympics sports for many years, including track and field, and basketball. He always attends practices; if something makes it impossible for him to come, he is always apologetic and works twice as hard to make up for missing. Glenn's attitude and behavior is exemplary. He is kind, caring, patient, and very energetic. He is always cooperative and willing to assist his peers and coaches in any way possible.

Glenn has been participating in the Special Olympics basketball skill division for several years now. This year, he was placed on the MASD Team II on a trial basis, but the trial quickly turned into a full-time spot. His coach, Denise Wolf-Simmons, says, "I have never seen a more confused and yet ecstatic athlete!" He couldn't believe he'd made the team.

Glenn worked hard at practices, evidenced by a great deal of sweating. He never complained about the work, he listened to his coaches and remembered what they had told him. When the team was having trouble completing passes, Glenn suddenly became proficient at catching passes. His teammates started passing him the ball more often and Glenn started scoring baskets. Then he started rebounding when no one else was doing it.

During the state basketball tournament, Glenn played a tough game, working his position at both ends of the court. He did an excellent defensive job on opponents twice his size and maintained his position under the basket.

Glenn has come a long way in his skills and his knowledge of basketball. Denise Wolf-Simmons says she is impressed with Glenn for two reasons. First, he was given an opportunity and he seized it. But more importantly, she knows that he's going to be even better next year.



Fundraising fun!

by John Ginty, Chairperson of the Fundraising Committee

The 1997 Fall Round-Up, held October 18, 1997, was a huge success for the future of MASD, raising over \$23,000. Accordingly, we're going to do it again! The 1998 Fall Round-Up is scheduled for **October 3, 1998** at the Confederate Airforce Hangar located at 2017 N. Greenfield Rd. (cross roads: Greenfield and McKellips). The Round-up will begin at 5:30 pm and run through 11 pm. Dinner will be served and guests will enjoy bidding at the Silent Auction. Tickets for this even will be \$100 per couple. If you would like to volunteer to sell tickets, assist in planning the Round-Up, or assist the Fundraising committee in any other way, **please contact Frank Duranti (963-2222) or John Ginty (641-1150).**

What are Special Olympics Sports and Physically Challenged Sports?

Special Olympics is a year-round sports training and competition program designed for children and adults who are primarily mentally handicapped. The minimum age for athletes participating in Special Olympics is 8 years old; there is no maximum age. Students who have a significant developmental delay and are enrolled in Special Education classes are eligible. Adults who are developmentally delayed and have attended, or would have been eligible to attend, Special Education classes qualify for participation in Special Olympics.

Physically Challenged Sports is also a year round sports training and competition program, but this program is designed for children and adults who are primarily orthopedically, neurologically or sensory impaired. The minimum age for participation is 6 years old and there is no maximum age. Athletes must have a physical disability including (but not limited to) Cerebral Palsy, Spina Bifida, Spinal Cord Injury, Traumatic Brain Injury, Osteogenesis Imperfecta, Blindness, etc.





Mesa basketball comes alive!

by Denise Wolf-Simmons



The Thunderbolts put on some speed.

Putting together the skills they learned all season, the Mesa Lightning Bolts took second place in the State Tournament April 4th. During the preliminaries on Friday, I was a little nervous when players weren't playing their assigned positions. But on Saturday, that all changed. The team started out strong and never faltered. Our veteran players really shone. Ryan S. and Elizabeth had strong passing games. Vinny and Ryan L. demonstrated their strength under the boards. Strong, all-around defense was demonstrated by Justin, who challenged even the tallest players. Mike showed his shooting abilities by making a 3-pointer! Who will ever forget the player who not only played strong but entertained us- Brett! Newcomers to the team, Tim and Andy, also had the opportunity to experience some playing time. With the veterans and newcomers we have on this team, we should have an excellent season next year!

MASD II fought harder than ever against tough and physical competition in the State Tournament. They really hustled and got off a lot of shots. Unfortunately, many of them didn't go in. But the attempts, along with great passing and rebounding, are encouraging signs for a good season next year. Keep practicing!



Mesa II show their hustle.

Sportsline is looking for correspondents

If you would like to contribute articles about sports or recreation events and happenings, you can call Gregg Baumgarten at 649-2194, e-mail stories to mesasports@geocities.com, or fax them to 532-7107. We'd love to have more articles about our athletes, volunteers, and programs in this newsletter!

We also need pictures. If you have a picture of the athlete or volunteer in your family doing something great at an MASD event or practice, it's perfect for Sportsline. Call Karen Weber at 497-5247. She'll scan it while you wait and return the original to you.



Say thanks to organizations who support MASD!

by Gregg Baumgarten

The Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled is like any non-profit organization: we are dependent on donations from charitable groups and individuals to provide our excellent programs. Fortunately, the response from our community has been tremendous. Many people have designated the MASD as the recipient of their payroll-deducted **United Way** funds through their place of employment. Others give directly to the Association through individual donations or memorials.

The Association has also been fortunate to have the support of many fine community organizations. The **Mesa Hohokams** have again donated \$10,000 to the Association toward our programs. As you may know, the Hohokams are the civic organization which brings the Chicago Cubs baseball team to Mesa for spring training. What you may not know is that the Hohokams donate the money they raise from spring training to promote sports programs throughout the Mesa area, including our disabled sports programs.

The **Desert Club of Mesa** has also been very supportive of the Association. They recently donated \$3,000 towards our Desert Challenge Games. The Desert Club's main fundraiser each year is the **Christmas Idea House**. We will have more information in the fall Sportsline about this fun fundraiser where an area home which is selected and filled with hundreds of Christmas ideas and crafts. The Desert Club has supported us and we should support them!

The Association has also received a grant from the **Paralyzed Veterans of America-Arizona Chapter** for the annual SkiAble Weekend, and the **Knights of Pythias** and **Knights of Columbus** have donated the proceeds from some of their fundraisers to the Association.

We want to thank all who have contributed! MASD could not do the good it does without your help!

Thanks!





MASD recognized for contribution to wheelchair sports

by Gregg Baumgarten

The Mesa Association of Sports for the Disabled was recently honored by Wheelchair Sports, USA for hosting the Junior National Wheelchair Championships last summer here in Mesa. WSUSA is the national sanctioning body for all wheelchair sports in the United States. The Association was lauded for stepping up and hosting the competition after several other organizations had backed out. We received several beautiful awards plaques, which are on display in the display case at the Mesa Public Schools Student Services Center, 1025 North Country Club, just south of Brown Road.

Special Olympics Summer Games

by Jacquie Duranti

The Summer Games were held May 7-9 at Arizona State University. MASD had 19 athletes competing in track events, including the 50, 100, and 200 meter events. We also had three relay teams competing in the 4x100 meter relay. Two teams won bronze medals! MASD athletes also competed in several field events, including the softball throw, shot put, running long jump, and standing long jump.

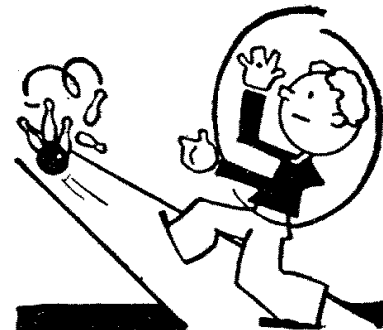
Seven MASD gymnasts competed in the uneven bars, balance beam, vault and floor exercises. Our tennis team sent 10 athletes who competed in skills and in match play events.

Everyone did a super job, giving it 110%, and received medals participation ribbons for their efforts. We are very proud of our athletes. Congratulations!

Unified bowling

by Jacquie Duranti

Unified bowling is made up of teams of two athletes, one special olympic athlete and one non-special olympic athletes. If you are interested in participating in unified bowling, please call Jacquie Duranti (644-3652).



Meet Your Board of Directors

Featuring Karen Weber



Some of you know Karen from her many years as a physical therapist for Mesa Public Schools or for her work with Dramabilities, a drama group for children with disabilities. If so, you might be surprised where her life has taken her in the last 4 years.

Karen graduated with a degree in physical therapy from University of Michigan in 1978. She worked for several years in Michigan before moving to Arizona in search of a more reasonable climate. She worked for MPS for nearly 9 years before retiring in 1994 due to arthritis. Karen regrouped, picked up some new skills, combined them with her therapy training, and is now working as the Medical Editor for Exceptional Parent magazine. She also runs a web business at <http://www.sperience.com/> and is active as a volunteer in several groups on the Internet. She serves as the Recording Secretary for the MASD

Board of Directors, chairs the Public Relations Committee, and edits Sportsline.

Karen's husband, Rick, is co-owner of Get Control, Inc., an electronics firm in Tempe, which designs custom industrial control solutions. Rick is an avid bowler and there's a rumor that you may be seeing him this summer on the Unified bowling team.

Karen and Rick have 8 cats in lieu of the more traditional children. They enjoy cheering for the Suns and Mercury, camping and 4-wheeling, and playing with computers.

Physically Challenged Sports

Swimming
July 22 - October 7

Wednesdays
6:30 - 8:00 pm
Powell Jr. High
855 W. 8th Ave.



Special Olympics Sports

Seniors (Ages 16 and older)

Juniors (ages 8-15)

Stroke Clinic July 6, 7, 8 and 9

6:30-8:30 pm
Powell Jr. High
855 W. 8th Ave.

Learn the strokes: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle

July 14 - October 13

Mondays

Swimming

6:30 - 8:00 pm
Powell Jr. High
855 W. 8th Ave.

July 13 - October 12

Tuesdays

Bowling July 8 - December 9

Wednesdays
3:30-5:00 pm
\$3.50 for 2 games and shoe rental
Fairlanes Apache
815 E. Main St.

Unified Bowling July 11 - December 12

Saturdays
12:30 - 2:30 pm
\$5 for 3 games and shoe rental
Fairlanes Apache
815 E. Main St.

Golf July 15 - October 17

Wednesdays
6:00-7:00 pm
Fiesta Lakes Golf Course
1415 S. Westwood

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