Special Olympics

With the creed, “Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt,” Special Olympics (SO) has been changing lives and attitudes for more than 43 years. Eunice Kennedy Shriver started the movement in the early 1960’s when she witnessed how unfairly people with intellectual disabilities were being treated. Recognizing that many children with special needs didn’t have a place to play, she decided to take action. Today, Special Olympics is a global movement changing the lives of athletes and their families and proudly boasts a 500,000 member strong volunteer group.

The vision of SO is to help bring Special Olympic athletes into the larger society under conditions whereby they are accepted, respected and given the chance to become useful and productive citizens. Through this vision, the Special Olympics organization provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities or closely related developmental disabilities. SO gives them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other SO athletes and the community.

All SO athletes, meet the following criteria: Identified as having intellectual disabilities by an agency or professional; Have a closely related developmental disability; 8 years old or older; Athlete Participation Form on file with the state office.

The beauty of Special Olympics rests in the fact that sports opportunities are available for all ability levels; awards are presented to all participating athletes; and there is no charge for participation. If you have not been a part of the Special Olympics Experience, we have an opportunity for you. Wednesday, April 18th, Jackson County will hold their Spring Games at the SMHS track. We encourage you to be a part of the excitement! In your free time, go cheer on an athlete – you’ll be glad you did!

Service Spotlight: Department on Aging

First registered as a North Carolina non-profit in 1981, the Jackson County Council and Department on Aging have spent the last 31 years providing dynamic and vital services to the county’s ever-growing older population.

Since its inception the needs of the older population have changed drastically and the Department has responded accordingly. Housed in a new complex at 100 County Services Park in Sylva (across the street from the SCC campus), the Department now offers a wide variety of resources to the over-50 population. Projects include Meals on Wheels, Project CARE’s building of ramps and rails for seniors’ homes, Adult Day Care available at the Jackson County Senior Services Complex, Medicare and Health Insurance counseling, Project F.I.R.E’s donation and delivery of firewood and computer trainings with on-site public access computers.

Volunteers are needed regularly to deliver meals to homebound seniors, driving vans for special events, assembling and delivering Christmas packages, making home safety repairs and other projects. Volunteers of all skills and skill levels are accepted and encouraged to e-mail aging@jacksonnc.org.

For more information on the Department and Council on Aging visit http://aging.jacksonnc.org/index.htm or contact Director Helen Bryson at 828.586.8562.
that “There’s an environmentalist in each of us.”

While we will not see cities like Sylva, Cullowhee, Whittier, Cherokee, and Franklin mentioned on the world stage this year, we did introduce Earth Hour to our region. Over 200 SCC students, staff, and faculty signed up their commitment to Earth Hour 2012. We were all part of the global initiative to raise awareness for energy conservation. Each year we hope to see our part in Earth Hour grow.

“For me it was an opportunity to teach our children to be good stewards of the Earth,” states Melissa Allison-Brooks, SCC Medical Assisting Program Director. “I was able to discuss how small gestures made by large numbers of people can make a difference. We have incorporated Earth Hour into our monthly family activities. We now call it, Lights Out Family Fun Night!”

We thank you for your commitment and dedication to making the world a better place for us all.

Results: EARTH HOUR 2012

In 2011, 135 countries participated in Earth Hour. This year 152 countries and territories and more than 6,700 cities, towns and municipalities took part in the largest Earth Hour event since it’s inception five years ago in Sydney, Australia. On March 31st at 8:30pm, millions of people became globally connected through one cause.

As Earth Hour made its journey across the globe, there was united response to accept the challenge to Dare the World to Save the Planet. This year more than ever, countries, cities and communities took ownership of what their Earth Hour was all about.

Greece asked what else could be saved if we protected nature, locals in Tripoli and Benghazi celebrated the opportunity to create environmental awareness in a country that was a war zone just months ago, Italy asked its population to confess its "green sins" and China reminded us

“60+”

2012 Spring Fling

On Thursday, April 19th, SCC will be celebrating the season with our annual Spring Fling event! SCC CARES will have a table set up with homemade cards for the elderly. We will have an arts and crafts area set aside so you can design your own cards to share with our elders in our community. We will also have some pre-made cards you can simply sign if case you aren’t feeling particularly artsy that day. The cards will be given to the Department On Aging to be dispersed throughout Jackson County. We will also set up a table at Macon Campus Spring Fling on Monday, April 23rd, to make cards for the elderly in Macon County. You have no idea how such a simple act of kindness can make a difference in another person’s day. Stop by and share your volunteer experiences while you make a card! We’d love to see you!

Find us on Facebook!
For photos and much more detail concerning volunteer opportunities in our communities!

Photo courtesy of www.earthhour.org