

Eunice Kennedy Shriver's Dream Evident in Grafton Special Olympians

by Cindy Bissell

Upon her passing August 11th, politicians and celebrities from around the world came to Hyannis to pay their respects to Eunice Kennedy Shriver. But there was also another group who came to say their goodbyes. A team of Special Olympians, holding torches, gave light to the pallbearers as they carried the coffin of the Special Olympics founder to Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver believed that every child, regardless of ability, deserves to live in a neighborhood, attend school with other children, and play any sport of their choosing. The Special Olympics honor guard represented the thousands of families, whose lives have been touched by her dream of a more welcoming world.

Watching the joy and smiles on the faces of the Grafton Special Olympics children playing softball on the field at Grafton High School this summer, it is clear that her dream remains alive.

For the past six Sundays, these kids, along with their fans and coaches Phil Jackson and Wendy Watkins, have come here to play softball.

Special Olympics is about more than winning and losing, it is about courage and sharing and finding commonality. The kids who participate in the Grafton Special Olympics not only gain physical fitness, they have a chance to



From L-R: Wendy Watkins (Assistant Coach), Brendan Griffin, Joey, Lasorsa, Tanner Jelovcich (Unified Partner), Kyle Griffin, Rebecca Trainor, Marika Jelovcich, Phil Jackson (Coach), Theresa Trainor, Eric Bissell, Natalie Lyons, Nathan Lyons (Unified Partner). Missing from Photo: Ashley Falvey (Volunteer), Lisa Davis (Unified Partner), Shayna Davis, Savannah Davis, Lee Coz and Deb Picard.



do something that many children take for granted.

Just about everyone can learn something from the Special Olympics; things like everyone has something to offer, and never to give up no matter how many obstacles stand in your way. Maybe most importantly we can learn that we can accomplish a whole lot more working together than we can going it alone. We are a community and we all belong.

But I don't think any of the athletes playing on the field at Grafton High were thinking about these things. They were just there to have fun. The softball season ended

this past Sunday with a well-deserved ice cream party at Swirls & Scoops, who donated the ice cream.

Looking ahead, the Grafton Chapter of Special Olympics will be starting Bowling Saturday, October 10th at 4:00 p.m. Practices will be held at AMF Shrewsbury Lanes every Sunday where the athletes will get to bowl two games. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Wendy Watkins at s_o_grafton@yahoo.com.

Visit us at our website www.thegrafftonnews.com and click on our PHOTOS link to see these and many more photos.

