

# N.B. is ready for the Special Olympics

By Bonni Fiegler  
The News-Optimist

A total of 25 athletes from the Battlefords area, from nine to 50 years old, will be competing in the up-coming Saskatchewan Special Olympics in North Battleford.

There will be 12 North Battleford athletes competing in the competition, which begins Friday, June 17, as well as an athletes from Pierceland, Goodsoil and Unity.

Eight of the local competitors will be in the swimming events, with the other 17 competing in Track and Field.

The older athletes will be participating in the Masters events, which are included in the Special Olympics to allow older athletes a chance to compete. An example of Masters events would be lawn bowling and a 3,000 metre walking race.

With the athletes gearing up for the event, organizers have managed to raise all of the \$36,000 needed to put on the 1991 Saskatchewan Special Olympics.

Len Quiring, the chairman of the North Battleford Special Olympics organizing committee in the Battlefords, announced the official plans for the event at a news conference Friday.

Quiring admitted that when the committee first determined how much the event would cost, they "held our breath," considering the bad state of the present economy.

Despite their fears, the money has been raised just in time, considering the event officially begins this Friday.

The organizers have planned a host of fun-filled events to accompany the Special Olympics competitions.

But the athletes aren't here for fun. The competition is sure to be fierce among the individual athletes, says David Dekker, co-ordinator of promotions for the event.

"Each athlete will be out there giving it his all to win the events," said Dekker.

In total there will be about 195 athletes competing in the five event areas from all eight zones in the province. The event areas are Track and Field, Swimming, Horseshoes,



**SPECIAL SPONSORS** - Pictured are representatives from local businesses which are sponsoring the 1991 Saskatchewan Special Olympics, scheduled to begin Friday in North Battleford. Front (left to right) Darin Manegre, Battlefords Credit Union and the organizing committee finance chairman; David Dekker, promotions manager; Nan Bristow, McDonald's; Len Quiring, chairman of the

organizing committee; and Wayne Ray, deputy mayor. Middle, Don Georgison, Kinamen Club; Jerry Reschny, Co-op Mall; John Larson, Kiwanis Club and Brian Merritt, City Parks and Recreation. Back, Bill Warwick, special services organizer and donor of printing services; Peter Doshan, Knights of Columbus; Ron Boychuk and Glen Butchko, Bank of Montreal; and Maurice Bru, Esso Resources.

Carpet Bowling, and the Super Athlete fun competition.

The age of the competitors range from nine to 50 years, with all types of disabilities and handicaps. As of Friday, there was only one wheelchair athlete registered.

Quiring recommends the public come out to watch the competitions.

"It is a joy just to watch them (the competitors). They may be 28 or 35 years of age, but all of them have the enthusiasm of a three-year-old when they compete," said Quiring.

"It's a real treat to see their exuberance."

If not as spectators, the public is advised to get involved as volunteers for the event. Sheila Johnson, chairperson of the sporting events, said they would like about 50 more volunteers, in

addition to the 200 they already have.

The Track and Field competitions will be happening at Centennial Park Saturday morning and afternoon, organized by the Legion Track Club, chaired by Doug Ulmer.

Swimming events are happening at the Kinsmen Swimming Pool, with Marion Acaster co-ordinating the organizational efforts of the Kinsmen Swim Club. Competitions are both morning and afternoon Saturday.

The North Battleford Horseshoe Club, with Florence Hamel acting co-ordinator, will be organizing the Horseshoe events, happening Saturday afternoon.

Carpet Bowling competitions will take place in the Comprehensive High School gym,

with Ron Plum and the Hillcrest Seniors of Battleford organizing the event, Saturday afternoon.

The Super Athlete competition takes place on the track at 11 a.m. Saturday and is meant as a fun event in which members from the media and celebrities from each zone participate with some Special Olympic athletes in three different events. This event is organized by Greg Hamet.

## Celebrity

The opening ceremonies will be extra-special this year, with the presence of 1988 Olympic gold medalist, Michelle Cameron, who competed in synchronized swimming.

Cameron will be speaking at the ceremonies held at Beaver Lions Stadium Friday at 6 p.m., following a parade of athletes and entertainment.

Also arriving at the ceremonies

will be a torch which is being carried on a relay across Saskatchewan by the province's law enforcement officers. The relay begins in Swift Current tomorrow, with each of the participating officers collecting pledges along the way.

This is the fourth year the relay has been run.

"This is an opportunity for the law enforcement officers to contribute to the community, and to raise funds and awareness for the handicapped," said Quiring.

## Sponsors

Several local businesses and organizations pitched in their contributions to help meet the budget.

Donations of money, food and volunteer time to the Special Olympics organizing committee helped meet the \$36,000 anticipated costs for staging the event.

The Kinsmen Club donated \$500 towards Friday night's bar-be-que, following the opening ceremonies at Beaver Lions Stadium.

The Kiwanis Club will foot the bill for the Saturday morning breakfast. The Co-op will be providing the Sunday morning breakfast.

The City of North Battleford will be donating the use of its facilities, plus an additional \$500 to the organization.

The Knights of Columbus donated a total of \$1,600 for the event. Esso Resources gave \$500.

The Bank of Montreal is donating \$300, and the Battlefords Credit Union's \$600 donation is helping cover the expenses of the lunch served after the banquet Saturday night.

All the participants are being housed at the Tropical Inn.

# Lakeland Library talks back on track