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**Freemasons New Zealand support Special Olympics New Zealand**

**Newsletter – Update No 1**

**Background**

As you may know we have entered into an exciting sponsorship with Special Olympics New Zealand (SONZ) to have naming rights for their National Summer Games being held in Hamilton from the 8th - 12th December 2021.

Special Olympics is a sports organisation for people with intellectual disabilities and is a worldwide movement.

This is the first time that Freemasons New Zealand (FMNZ) will be visible to the public in such a positive and high-profile way.

Our sponsorship is worth $100,000, from The Freemasons Charity, and will be known as the ***Freemasons New Zealand Special Olympics National Summer Games.***

We are anticipating that Lodges and members will also be able to get involved with SONZ in a hands-on way.

This is the first of a number of updates and resources for you and your Lodges about what is being planned around this major initiative, and how you can get actively involved.

**When will we make this announcement public?**

We are planning a special media event on 2nd June 2021. We will have senior leadership from FMNZ and SONZ along with some Special Olympics Athletes. The goal is to generate as much media coverage as possible.

**What do we want to achieve?**

The goals for each organisation are outlined below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SONZ** | **FMNZ** |
| Raising profile | Increasing community engagement |
| Increasing the number of volunteers to support the clubs and athletes | Better community outcomes |
| Increasing funding | Supporting members of our community in need who do not have access to other sources of funding |
| Increasing the expertise, capacity and capability of the clubs | Benevolence |
| More athletes participating in more sports | Supporting our Strategic Direction |
| More coaches | Developing our “One Team Culture” throughout FMNZ and other related charitable entities |
| Increasing interest from sponsors, Government, families and athletes | Increasing public awareness/interest in Freemasonry and its work in the community – potential to attract new members who share a common desire to help their communities |

**Our first media release**

If you would like to see our first media release you can find it on our designated page by clicking here:

[Special Olympics 20210521 final press release](https://freemasonsnz.sharepoint.com/sites/FreemasonsArchive/Company/Duane%20-%20Communications%20Magazine/Special%20Olympics%2020210521%20final%20press%20release.docx?web=1)

**FAQs**

* ***Why are FMNZ and SONZ collaborating on this sponsorship?***

This is a mutually beneficial partnership where the values of both organisations are closely aligned. The partnership will allow Freemasons to do what they do best, which is engage in and support the community. This will provide much-needed support to SONZ clubs and ultimately will allow more athletes to participate in sports across New Zealand.

The alignment of our core values around inclusion, fun, courage and respect under-pin the relationship. And both organisations are active in every corner of New Zealand, giving us strong connections across our communities.

* ***What does the sponsorship actually cover?***

The sponsorship is supporting the Special Olympics National Summer Games that will be held in Hamilton on 8 -12 December 2021.

* ***What are the National Summer Games (NSG)?***

The NSG is the pinnacle event for SONZ. The games occur every four years, in a different city, with athletes training and preparing for three years to be able to attend. In 2021 they will be held in Hamilton on 8 – 12 December. We are expecting around 1,750 athletes and coaches from all over New Zealand to compete in 11 different sports at 8 venues. The games are more than just sport, it’s an opportunity for athletes to re-connect and make new friends from all over the country. Further information on the NSG can be found on the NSG website at the link below.

[Nsghamilton2021 (specialolympics.org.nz)](https://nsg2021.specialolympics.org.nz/)

* ***How are the games funded?***

The NSG is primarily funded by athletes, with clubs working hard to fundraise and apply for funding to reduce the costs to the athletes as much as possible. SONZ also applies for grant funding and sponsorship to reduce the cost to athletes and coaches.

* ***What is the intention for the longer-term relationship between FMNZ and SONZ?***

Our sponsorship of the NSG the start of a larger partnership between FMNZ and SONZ. Our sponsorship of $100,000 will go directly towards the cost of the games. FMNZ’s support of SONZ in the wider space will be a longer-lasting partnership. The intention is that the SONZ Clubs and FMNZ Lodges will connect and work together to build community engagement and support SONZ clubs, enabling more people with an intellectual disability to access the opportunities to participate through the SONZ clubs.

* ***Does FMNZ intend to sponsor other high-profile organisations and events?***

FMNZ already donates considerable sums to a variety of organisations and initiatives throughout New Zealand each year. This is part of our strong focus on charity and contributing to our communities. A prime example is the millions of dollars we have donated to support the Malaghan Institute’s Freemasons CAR-T cell research programme.

* ***Who is SONZ?***

SONZ is a sporting organisation for people with intellectual disabilities. They provide training and competition in a range of Olympic style sports that cover both summer and winter sports. Whilst not part of the Olympic movement, Special Olympics have their own World Summer and Winter Games. The next World Winter Games will be held in Russia January 2022 and the Summer World Games will be held in June 2023 in Germany.

* **How do fundraising funds get banked?**

It has been agreed that all funds raised for the Special Olympics by Lodges, Districts or Divisions will be banked into the appropriate Divisional Account.

Northern Division – ANZ Bank 06 0294 0073386 00

Central Division – ANZ Bank 06 0501 0871840 00

Southern Division – Kiwibank 38 9004 0396197 02

Divisional Treasurers will keep a spreadsheet and send this to The Freemasons Charity noting individual Lodge’s contributions. It will also note where Lodges are located in New Zealand. The Freemasons Charity will provide for Lodges a 1:1 subsidy, or if it is a District a 2:1 subsidy to a maximum of $5,000. If it is a Division a 2:1 subsidy to maximum of $10,000 will apply. The Freemasons Charity will pay the money to SONZ who then distribute it to their respective clubs in that area.

* **What can Freemasons do at the NSG?**

There are a wide range of volunteer opportunities that include, volunteer lead/managers, registrations, transport assistance, opening and closing ceremony support and logistics, medal ceremonies, sports officials, general volunteers, photographers etc. The roles range from ½ day shifts to full day shifts to the full five days of the NSG.

Further details and a link to the registration platform will be available shortly.

* **How can you help your local SONZ club?**

There are several ways Freemasons Lodges can support the SONZ clubs in their regions and we have outlined these below. Not all clubs will need assistance in all areas, but this should give a good outline of the types of things they might need help with. Some support may come from individual Lodges or a collective of Lodges in an area, or as a District or a Division. SONZ has Regional Sport Co-ordinators (RSCs) who work with the clubs to support the delivery of training and competition. The RSCs will be at the heart of the relationship to enable us to take learnings from each region and apply them across the country. For any Lodges interested in supporting a SONZ club please email [ceo@specialolympics.org.nz](mailto:ceo@specialolympics.org.nz) and we will liaise with key members from both the Lodge and local club to ensure an appropriate handover.

* **Ways we can help:**

**Committee members** – Each club has a committee to keep things running smoothly and to oversee all club-based sports, fundraising, compliance, and volunteer activities. Often clubs struggle to fill all the roles, so two or more of these roles can fall on one person. The key committee roles are Chair, Treasurer, Secretary.

**Drivers** - Most SONZ athletes cannot drive and may live on their own or in group housing and finding their way to training can be a challenge, especially in smaller towns where public transport isn’t easily accessible. If there are people available to pick them up and take them to their sports this breaks down a huge barrier to participation.

**Fundraisers -** Fundraising in clubs is incredibly important to ensure that cost isn’t a barrier to athletes playing their sports, and there are a couple of different roles within this space:

* Grant funding applications. These often take quite a lot of time and skill. Having someone that knows about funding applications, (or has capacity to learn) who to ask for what, and how to word applications can make a huge difference in the success of those applications.

* Supporting fundraising activities e.g., sausage sizzle, movie nights, raffles etc. Clubs hold a range of these activities, but they take time to organise and people to run them, so it’s always helpful to have people helping out in this space. For example, the Central Division Charity Dinner, held in conjunction with the Central Division Conference, raised $40,000 for the NSG closing ceremony. In addition, The St Andrews Kilwinning Lodge No 79 is holding a Charity Movie Night, with the film ‘Poppy’ staring Libby Hunsdale, for the Special Olympics.

**Coaches** – SONZ coaches are generalist, not specialist, so you don’t need to have coaching experience; anyone who has an interest in sport and working with athletes will be great! SONZ covers 13 sports so there is something for everyone. If you are very energetic you could coach basketball, or if you want something a bit more low-key try out indoor bowls. For the full list of sports see <https://specialolympics.org.nz/what-we-do/sports/> (Not all clubs do all sports).

**Volunteers** - As well as coaches, clubs often need general volunteers to help out with different roles at training or events to support the athletes.

**Constitutional changes** – SONZ is working through a number of constitutional changes at the moment. SONZ clubs are not currently independent legal entities and the recommendations from SONZ is that they become Charitable Trusts. SONZ has draft constitutions and support that they can provide, but someone to lead this project with clubs would be immensely helpful. You don’t have to be a lawyer, but someone with strong administration skills and who would be confident to help the clubs lead a process.

* **We are already in contact with our local SONZ club, what do you want us to do?**

That is great, but to ensure we are fully coordinated can you please advise Duane Williams at National Office on 04 385 5741 or 0210512020 or [communications@freemasonsnz.org](mailto:communications@freemasonsnz.org) of the type of support you are providing.

* **Leveraging our support in the local community with media**

We want to make sure the hard work Lodges have put in are made as visible as possible, hence we want to leverage any media opportunities. If you have a great fundraising story or event, or you have been approached by the media please get in touch with [communications@freemasonsnz.org](mailto:communications@freemasonsnz.org). We can also help you with social media investment, help you contact local media to create a story opportunity and potentially support you further using National Office resources.

* **We have already had a media enquiry, what do we do?**

While we go public on 2nd June, we realise some information may already be in the public domain. If not, it may soon be. If you have been approached by media, can you please direct them to our public relations consultant Daniel Paul on 021 400 993 or [daniel@theprcompany.co.nz](mailto:daniel@theprcompany.co.nz)

* **What is the timeline?**

A timeline of events and activities is listed below. This is not an exhaustive list, and it will continue to be developed in the leadup to the NSG.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date | Activity |
| 21 May | Official notification to FMNZ Lodges and SONZ clubs |
| 2 June | Ten Pin bowling event with FMNZ and SONZ athletes to officially announce the partnership |
| June | Registrations open for Freemasons to register to volunteer at the games |
| 30 June | Qualification period for athletes to qualify to attend the NSG closes |
| 16 July | Registration of teams for NSG closes |
| July – November | Fundraising by SONZ clubs to attend the games  Training and competitions to prepare athletes and coaches  Planning and logistics sorted for teams attending the NSG |
| November / December | Law Enforcement Torch Run (more details to follow in the coming months) |
| July – December | Local PR opportunities identified around stories of athletes preparing to attend the NSG. SONZ are working on a range of stories with athletes, coaches and parents. |

* **Where can I get the logos and branding for this event?**

All the logos and branding are available on special section of our website. **Here is the link:** [**www.freemasonsnz.org/special-olympics-logos**](http://www.freemasonsnz.org/special-olympics-logos)

* **We have a specific question we need answered now.**

If that’s the case, please contact Duane Williams at National Office on 04 385 5741 or 0210512020 or [communications@freemasonsnz.org](mailto:communications@freemasonsnz.org) in the first instance and he will get the information to you.

* **Resource Centre**

Visit [www.freemasonsnz.org/special-olympics-2](http://www.freemasonsnz.org/special-olympics-2) for resources to support Lodges with possible local area advertising and support, including dealing with your local media as required. Plus, it lists a timeline of various events happening between now the Games getting underway on 8th December 2021.