

Special Olympics runs on lemonade

**Prince's Bay family raises more than \$1,000 for bowl-a-thon Sept. 27
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By MAURA GRUNLUND
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STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- The Special Olympics runs on lemonade. Just ask the Ajello family of Prince's Bay.

They had a lemonade stand recently to promote the Knights of Columbus Special Olympics Bowl-a-Thon, to be held on Sept. 27 at Rab's Country Lanes, Dongan Hills.

Parents Linda and Dan and daughters Erin, 13, and Megan, 15, raised more than \$1,000 at their driveway event on Aug. 24.

The stand was the brainchild of Erin, who is a rising eighth-grader at Paulo Intermediate School, Huguenot. Megan is a freshman at Bishop Ahern High School, Graniteville.

Mrs. Ajello is a Columbiette while her husband is a knight of the Manresa Council, New Dorp.

Erin started the stand last year, when she raised \$275. The family attributes the big boost in revenue to word-of-mouth and e-mails spread by parents, therapists and groups such as the Knights and the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

"All the neighbors showed up and brought their kids, who are also very involved in sports, which I guess is why it was so important to them," Mrs. Ajello said.

Megan has been invited to join in Special Olympics competitions at Hillside Swim Club for the past nine years.

Fundraising is crucial to keep Special Olympics events going. Disabled people participate for free and donations are supposed to cover the costs for expenses such as bus transportation to events.

"With the economy the way it is, a lot of the Special Olympics programs are suffering, a lot of the kids are not able to get to different competitions," Mrs. Ajello said.

John McCue, who is in charge of all of the Knights councils in the Bronx, Manhattan and on Staten Island, and his brother, Jim, Knights administrative state chairman for the Special Olympics, and other members helped with the lemonade stand.

The Bowl-a-Thon will be held from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., with all proceeds going to the Special Olympics. Bowlers need \$100 in sponsorships to enter by Sept. 18. A buffet and beverages will be served at the event.

Contact John McCue at 917-476-4253 for sponsor sheets and other information.

