

SPIRITED ATHLETES

SABAH

BOLD AT HEART

ISSUE: SPRING, 2023

SABAH'S

2023 CELEBRATION ON ICE

LET'S DANCE

SPONSORED BY *Wegmans*



SABAH'S 2023 CELEBRATION ON ICE
IS BACK ON THE BIG SCREEN!

LET'S DANCE!

FEATURING PERFORMANCES BY SABAH ATHLETES AT
THE BUFFALO NIAGARA CONVENTION CENTER!

THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023, 6:00 P.M.

DOORS OPEN AT 5:30 P.M.

BUFFALO NIAGARA CONVENTION CENTER

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

WWW.SABAHINC.ORG/CELEBRATIONONICE

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Backyard Barbeque



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHEILA O'BRIEN

One of the things I've learned over the past few years is that if you embrace change, even when it is practically forced upon you, it can be quite invigorating. While the pandemic created hardship in our lives, we had to learn the art of "rolling with it" if we were going to help our SABAH family through an emotionally, socially, and even physically draining period in our history. So we did! One of our great adventures during the pandemic was the Walk with SABAH, followed by the Outdoor Series in collaboration with New York State Parks, which is now a permanent addition to our programs.

Another change that will continue, at least for this year, is the format of the Celebration on Ice show. When the pandemic refused to relent during the 2021-2022 season, we decided to videotape each group's performance so that our participants and volunteers would not be in the close quarters of the locker rooms during the day of the show. As the global situation abated, we were able to transform the event into an exciting celebration at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center, complete with a performance from Downbeat Percussion, limo photos, dinner, and performances from each of our groups on one of the largest screens you've ever seen.

The response to last year's video production of the Celebration on Ice show was so positive, that we had many requests to repeat it this year in the same format. As a result, we will, once again, enjoy a night jam packed with fun (including a D.J., dance floor, dinner, and more) followed by our awards presentations and the performances of SABAH athletes on the big screen at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center. We know it is a different experience than in the past, but it also promises to one that is lively and energetic, as well as shared together!

Over the past several years, we have successfully weathered both difficulties and change, all because you have been so incredibly supportive through it all. We have the most amazing SABAH family! Thank you for "rolling with it" with us!

SABAH'S

LET'S DANCE

2023 CELEBRATION ON ICE

March 30, 2023 6:00 p.m.

Buffalo Niagara Convention Center

Join us to celebrate the accomplishments of SABAH athletes on the big screen at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center on Thursday, March 30, 2023. The festivities will include a D.J., dance floor, dinner, and so much more!

The event is free of charge for SABAH athletes and volunteers, but you MUST BE REGISTERED to attend.

All additional guests are \$15 per person. The deadline to register or purchase tickets is March 24, 2023 (or until sold out).

For more information or to purchase tickets, go to www.sabahinc.org/celebrationonice

SUMMER SKATES

SABAH's 2023 Summer Skates offers an adaptive ice skating program during the summer months for any individual, of any age, challenged by disability. The 2023 program will include six sessions at the Bud Bakewell Riverside Rink in Buffalo on the following dates:

Tuesdays, from 5:30 p.m. - 6:20 p.m.

July 11, 2023

July 18, 2023

July 25, 2023

August 1, 2023

August 8, 2023

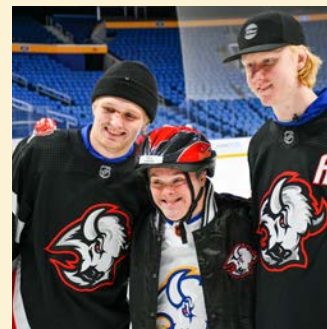
August 15, 2023

The cost for the summer season is \$60 for all six sessions. Participants must be registered by June 30, 2023 to participate in the program.
www.sabahinc.org/summerskates

Volunteers, please register on SABAH's volunteer page at www.sabahinc.org/volunteer.

SABAH'S 2023

Skate-A-Thon



SABAH athletes and volunteers had a memorable night at the KeyBank Center during SABAH's 2023 Skate-A-Thon on January 30, 2023!! For nearly two hours, Buffalo Sabres Rasmus Dahlin and Casey Mittelstadt signed autographs, took photos, and skated with everyone in attendance. SABAH athletes also enjoyed skating with Sabretooth, whose playful antics always make everyone smile.

Because of the support of friends and family members of our athletes and volunteers, we surpassed our goal of \$15,000!! SABAH awarded top prizes for highest fundraising totals to SABAH athletes Matthew Bressette, Nicholas Lake, and Patrick Vasbinder!

Thank you to everyone else who participated or donated to SABAH's 2023 Skate-A-Thon! We are grateful for you!



The Niagara Wheatfield Falcons Hockey Team Dedicates Many Hours of Volunteer Service to SABAH Athletes

The Niagara Wheatfield High School hockey team has never had a bigger fan club. As one of our SABAH hockey players, Matt Bressette tells his father, "You know what dad? I like those guys!" One of the parents of a SABAH hockey player states, "Their patience was appreciated. They were a tremendous asset!" Over the past year, these remarkable student athletes added to their busy schedules by volunteering during their own hockey season to assist with SABAH's Adaptive Ice Hockey program and the annual Skate-A-Thon at the Keybank Center in Buffalo. Their support provided SABAH athletes with 1:1 support and knowledgeable coaching, as well as friendship and fun. On behalf of our athletes, we remain grateful for the volunteer support of these remarkable young men over the past several years.



Photo on right: The Niagara Wheatfield Falcons Hockey team at SABAH's Skate-A-Thon pictured with Buffalo Sabres Casey Mittelstadt, Rasmus Dahlin, and Sabretooth.

SABAH'S 2023 Award Winners

Each year, SABAH announces three prestigious award winners who have made an impact on SABAH athletes, as well as the entire organization, in a profound and selfless way. Two of these awards, the Barbara M. Willhoff Volunteer of the Year and the Gary George, Jr. Unsung Hero, are presented to volunteers who have dedicated countless hours of service and support for SABAH athletes. The remaining award, the Emily Hermance Spirit Award, honors a SABAH athlete who inspires us because of his/her determination and enthusiastic spirit. All three of these awards will be presented during the 2023 Celebration on Ice on March 30, 2023.



THE BARBARA ANN WILLHOFF Volunteer of the Year

The Barbara Ann Willhoff Award is named after one of SABAH's most beloved volunteers. Barbara Ann brought endless joy, encouragement, and confidence to both SABAH athletes and volunteers alike. This award serves as a lasting legacy to Barbara Ann, as well as an inspiration to all of us to love and serve each other in the same way she loved us.



FRED BRESSETTE

"Words are simply inadequate to express what Fred means to our organization," states SABAH's Executive Director, Sheila O'Brien. "And, that might be the most fitting way to describe what Fred Bressette means to us, because his incredible photography communicates more about SABAH athletes than words ever will."

In a world where social media platforms, website design, and marketing campaigns rely upon the visual effectiveness of high quality photographs; SABAH has increasingly grown to depend upon the donation of Fred's gifted skills to the organization. Each week, and at nearly every event, Fred arrives with his camera. While we may politely ask if he is able to attend our programs and events with his camera in tow, he almost always lets us know that it was already his plan to do so. A day or two later, we receive one of a nonprofit's greatest treasures....a bountiful array of photographs that capture the emotions and memories of the program or the event.

And that's just the beginning... As we post Fred's highly anticipated photos on our website and social media outlets, the gift of Fred's talents reverberates throughout the organization. Very quickly, families, friends, and our athletes themselves proudly share those same photos on their own pages. SABAH's Executive Director Sheila O'Brien goes on to explain, "Fred has incredible talent. He is uniquely gifted with exceptional intuition and skill when it comes to capturing an emotion, a memory, or a moment in time. When you look at Fred's photographs, you truly relive the event and often see an emotion you missed when it was happening in person."

For the past five years, since Fred's son, Matthew, joined SABAH; Fred has donated countless hours of his time to the organization. It is a gift to our organization; as well as to our athletes and their families, that is beyond measure. As a token of our deepest gratitude for the donation of his time and his skill to SABAH, we are pleased to name Fred Bressette as the 2023 Volunteer of the Year.

THE EMILY HERMANCÉ

Spirit Award

SABAH's Emily Hermance Spirit Award is presented to the SABAH athlete who exhibits a spirit of enthusiasm and determination in spite of challenges. This special award honors one athlete who best exemplifies the courageous and optimistic spirit of the award's namesake.

EMILY REINHART

Her sweet spirit and gentle nature are inextricably combined with the courageous and optimistic spirit of this award's namesake, Emily Hermance. Since she was just four years old, Emily Reinhart has radiated compassion and kindness to her fellow SABAH athletes and volunteers in both SABAH's Sunday morning Amherst program, as well as in the School Day program, where she often serves as a volunteer. While she is soft-spoken and tender, Emily has a vibrant spirit that pushes her to improve her skills each week at SABAH.

As a 28 year veteran of SABAH's Amherst program, Emily is the resident historian of the rink. At just 32 years of age, Emily has lasted through three name changes at the rink and has a wealth of knowledge about everything that has happened there for nearly three decades. She has also been a vital part of SABAH's events and programs including Kickstock, the Outdoor Series, and the Skate-A-Thon. For both her dedication to SABAH and her daring spirit, we are pleased to present Emily Reinhart with the 2023 Emily Hermance Spirit Award.

THE GARY GEORGE, JR.

Unsung Hero Award

Gary George, Jr. was the epitome of quiet strength and compassion. His ability to be there for our SABAH athletes and do what was needed, while drawing no attention to himself, was what made Gary an unsung hero. This award, named in his honor, is given to the SABAH volunteer who exhibits the same qualities that made Gary so special to all who knew him.

CARL MOTZ

It's often the back story that matters. Although, it's obvious that Carl Motz is everywhere for SABAH, including the Hamburg Town Rink program, the School Day Adaptive Ice Skating program and many of our special events. Carl has also been volunteering with SABAH for over 20 years, beginning when he was just a high school student. And, while that number of continual years of service is impressive on its own merit, it's still not the lead story. Sometimes what matters the most are the details hidden well below the headline, especially in the case of an unsung hero.

The Gary George Unsung Hero Award honors a SABAH volunteer who does what is needed without drawing any attention to himself. What most don't know about Carl is that, in addition to being a volunteer for SABAH, he is also a family man with three children and a full-time career that requires him to work overnight hours. He frequently works through the night and postpones sleep until after he puts his children on the school bus and then goes to serve at SABAH's School Day programs. Only then, does Carl go home to rest for his next work shift, only to repeat the process and still volunteer on Saturday mornings at the Hamburg Town Rink. While most would understandably decrease their volunteer service due to the weight of family and professional demands, Carl has continued to increase his support and has enlisted many of his family members, including his children, to volunteer with him. As a true unsung hero for SABAH, we are honored to award Carl Motz as the 2023 Gary George, Jr. Unsung Hero.



OUR MISSION

SABAH, a 501(c)(3) organization is dedicated to the mission of enriching the quality of life for individuals challenged by physical, cognitive, and/or emotional disability by providing education and therapeutic recreation, promoting fitness, and developing social and communication skills.

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how do I donate?

Tax deductible donations can be mailed to SABAH at the following address:

SABAH
2607 Niagara Street
Buffalo, New York 14207

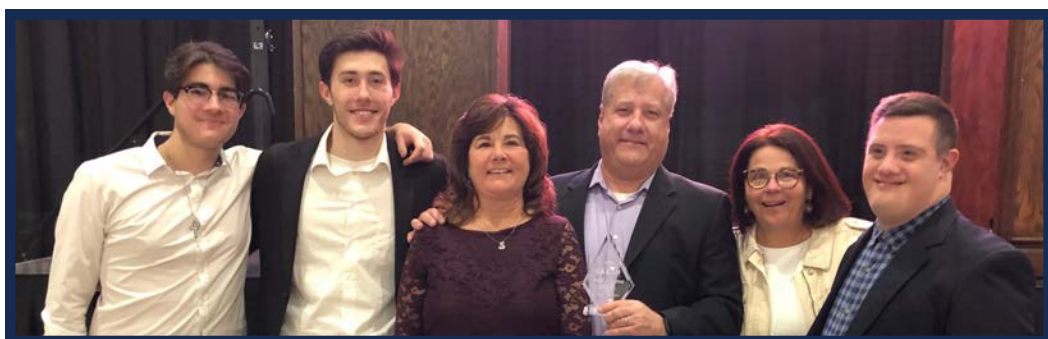
or online at:
www.sabahinc.org/donate

SABAH'S 2023 ADAPTIVE ICE HOCKEY

SABAH's Adaptive Ice Hockey Program resumed in 2023 at the newly renovated Bud Bakewell Ice Rink. SABAH's Adaptive Ice Hockey program invites SABAH's most accomplished and independent skaters to participate in a program that teaches basic skating and hockey skills in a relaxed and non-threatening environment. Along with the assistance of many dedicated volunteers, SABAH's hockey coaches provide an enjoyable opportunity for athletes challenged by disability to learn the sport of hockey. This year, SABAH athletes also received incredible support from the Niagara Wheatfield High School hockey team, which provided weekly assistance to the program by teaching various drills and providing encouragement throughout six weekly sessions in January and February.



2022 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE DAN WAGNER



SABAH's Hall of Fame Award honors the legacy of those exceptional individuals or organizations which have provided unparalleled support and commitment to SABAH. The Hall of Fame was established to annually recognize those who, for at least a decade, have worked tirelessly to promote the values of the organization, have dedicated their time and/or financial resources, and have sought to educate the public regarding the needs of those in our community challenged by disability.

During the Starlight Night Auction and Backyard Barbeque, SABAH was pleased to announce that Dan Wagner was named the organization's 2022 Hall of Fame Inductee. A volunteer for over 17 years, Dan has been an on-ice volunteer for the organization's Evening & Weekend programs, the School Day programs, Summer Skates, and the Adaptive Ice Hockey program. He has also assisted with the Outdoor Series and has participated in many of SABAH's fundraising events including the Starlight Night Auction & Gala, Kickstock, and the Golf Outing.

"Dan is the first to step up for anything we need at SABAH," states SABAH's Executive Director Sheila O'Brien. "His compassion and support are a constant, but the biggest gift he gives our athletes and volunteers alike is fun and laughter."

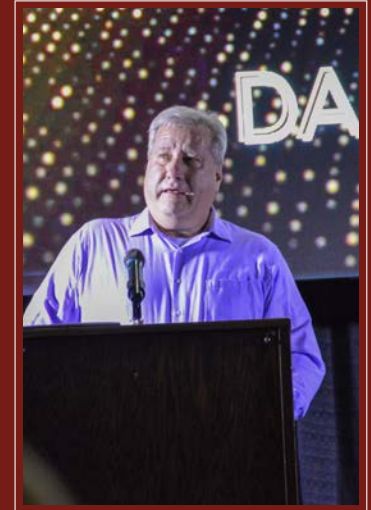
A longtime resident of West Seneca, Dan is the owner of Advanced Home Inspections of WNY, LLC and the proud parent of SABAH athlete, Bryan Wagner. Dan's sons, Jeremy, Jacob, and Austin; as well as his wife, Kim, have also volunteered for SABAH.



SABAH'S
STARLIGHT NIGHT
Auction &
BACKYARD BARBEQUE



Thank you for your support of SABAH's Starlight Night Auction & Backyard Barbeque! After being postponed from it's original November date due to a snowstorm, the event was held on January 13, 2023 at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center. Your support made the event an incredible success and will support the efforts of over 500 SABAH athletes challenged by disability.



SPIRITED ATHLETES

SABAH

BOLD AT HEART

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SABAH'S KICKSTOCK KICKBALL TOURNAMENT

6.24.2023

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